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The University of Birmingham Unveils New Athletics Track



The University of Birmingham is delighted to announce the completion of its new athletics track, which has been built as an international standard training track, and comprises a 400 metre, eight-lane floodlit track with a full range of throws and jumps.

Located on the edge of campus on Edgbaston Park Road, the track has been built on land leased from the Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham. In addition to being home to the University's Athletics and Cross Country Club, it will also be the new athletics venue for pupils of King Edward's School and King Edward VI High School for Girls, the Birmingham Running & Triathlon Club, and a range of other groups.

The University of Birmingham enjoys a proud heritage of attracting talented athletes to study at the University, alongside nurturing athletics talent through an in-house Performance Centre. The track's completion coincides with the selection of Sarah McDonald, a 4th year medical student to represent Team GB in the 1,500m at the World Athletics Championships in London this month. McDonald hopes to emanate the achievements of alumna Hannah England, who won silver in the 1,500m at the 2011 World Championships.

The first athletes to test out the new track were the Jamaican Team as part of their preparations for the 2017 World Athletics Championships, which begin in London on Friday 4 August. Since their pre-Olympic preparation camp in 2012, the University has not only replaced its track, but also opened the stunning new £55m Sport & Fitness Club on Bristol Road, ensuring the camp – which was a huge success in 2012 - was even better from a training and facilities perspective. The Jamaicans enjoyed a truly world class performance environment for their preparations for London, which is set to be Usain Bolt's swansong.

The University's Director of Sport, Zena Wooldridge OBE, commented:

"We're very fortunate to have such a superb new athletics track on a magnificent leafy site. Athletics is a key sport for the University of Birmingham and it will make a huge difference to our athletes' training to have such a fantastic track so close to the main campus. I hope our student athletes and the young athletes from BRATS and local schools will be inspired by the new track and its Jamaican inauguration, and we look forward to seeing more of our own stars of the future training here."

Dr Mark Fenton, Chief Master of King Edward's School, said: "We are delighted to have been able to support the University in the development of this impressive new facility. Not only will our own pupils benefit from the use of the track for games lessons, fixtures and sports day, but through our extensive outreach programme it will also give primary school children across the region the opportunity to train on the same site as Olympic athletes."

If you want to find out more about how to book the running track for your club, please contact University of Birmingham Sport & Fitness at book@sportandfitness.bham.ac.uk or 0121 414 9112.

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Notes to editors

For more information, please contact Harriet Cockill, PR Executive (Sport) on h.cockill@bham.ac.uk / 0121 414 7526 / 07738494099

- The track has been built on land leased from the Schools of King Edward VI in Birmingham, and will be the new athletics venue for pupils of King Edward's School and King Edward VI High School for Girls.
- Pictured: Danielle Williams, Sprint Hurdler / Credit: Alan Spink
- Pictured: Yohan Blake and Senoj-Jay Givans at the starting line / Credit: Alan Spink
- Pictured: Jura Levy and Sashalee Forbes passing the baton / Credit: Alan Spink
- Pictured: Natoya Goule, Middle-Distance runner / Credit: Alan Spink