

# GOLD4 GLASGOW

Fast-tracking Scotland's sporting talent

[www.gold4glasgow.com](http://www.gold4glasgow.com)



## TALENT PROGRAMME

Newsletter 1

Winter 2010

### Talent application for all athletes now open

With the recent success of the Gold4Glasgow Judo and Cycling initiatives, we have now opened applications for anyone who truly believes they can succeed in world-class sport. We are looking for committed and motivated individuals with any sporting background who, over a series of assessments, will be challenged in a variety of ways. Successful applicants can expect to find themselves fast-tracked into elite programmes, working with top Scottish coaches and sportsScotland institute of sport staff.

The Talent Team has adopted a very targeted approach to identifying and developing Scottish sporting talent. This direct approach allows the team to make the most of coaching expertise and resources by working within the sporting areas that will profit the most.

If you think you have what it takes to achieve success on the world-class stage, or know someone who fits the profile, find out more and sign up at our website [www.gold4glasgow.com](http://www.gold4glasgow.com). There is no closing date for applications.



Emma Baird: Football to sprint cycling (black kit) racing Victoria Pendleton in the UK Championships



### Athlete Profile: Emma Baird (cycling), aged 21

From a young age I have always been involved in sport but at high school I was asked to trial for the girl's football team. I loved it and continued to train and compete in football for 6 years, winning a total of 6 Scottish cup medals and completing a season with Hibernian FC. In the mean time, I had been sprint training with an athletics coach and took the decision to concentrate on sprinting when I was 16. Unfortunately, several injuries resulted in me giving up the sport.

I heard about Talent ID at University so researched sports I might be good at and decided cycling might be the answer. I went to a local club at Meadowbank in Edinburgh in January 2009 and trained once a week until I heard about the Gold4Glasgow programme through my coach.

I was invited to the testing day but didn't know what to expect. I had no idea what any of the numbers I scored meant, but I later discovered I had scored the highest power outputs in the country!

Since starting cycling I've found the training to be a great challenge. I've enjoyed learning all the different attributes that have to be considered in order to be successful. I enjoy cycling more than my athletics as it's cured the chronic shin pain that put a great damper on my sport. I felt like giving up but cycling has given me a new exciting goal.

The toughest aspects of the programme are gaining the skills to be up against women who have been cycling from a very young age. The physical aspects are much more trainable, however skills are gained from race experience which I hope to gain more of this year. Developing skill can be tough in Scotland because of the limited training facilities.

My favourite part of the programme is the challenge. The challenge of having 4 years to get to Commonwealth level motivates me every day to give it my all. In addition I have met such a nice group of athletes and coaches. I learn something new every day in relation to training and cycling and this is an exciting element of being part of the G4G programme.

This year I hope to be in the top 3 at the Scottish track championship having just finishing in 4th place last year. I also hope to make progress on my nationals result from last year. My main goal however lies in 2014 when I hope to represent Scotland at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

### Gold4Glasgow Judo Update

In September 2009, we held a unique event with Judo Scotland to identify new athletes for the sport. Such an event had never been carried out before with a martial art, so the Talent Team enlisted the expertise of Malcom Fairweather, Head of Sport Science and Innovation at the sportsScotland institute of sport. Together, we developed a series of assessments and challenges for potential athletes who signed up to the project. Around 30 athletes applied, of which 9 were invited to the assessment day. Two male athletes were successful in making it through to a 'confirmation' period to assess their long term potential. Simon Willet and Iain Leeson, both former rugby players, have joined the elite squad in Ratho and have been given the opportunity to train alongside GB and Scottish Internationalists. During their time in the squad, they will be tracked and assessed to measure their potential to represent Scotland at judo.



Talent assessment day in September in Ratho

## Athlete Profile: Eilidh Wells (cycling), aged 20

From a very young age I learnt to swim, cycle and play badminton, though I enjoyed all three sports, it was badminton that I was drawn to. I competed regularly for a few years in clubs and at school. With in this time I was still keen to try out new sports, such as tennis, horse riding and figure skating. I figure skated for about 9 years and competed in several events as I worked my way up the grades. Reaching NISA level 6 at the age of 16, my interests drifted towards music after injury. This reduced my time and physical ability for sport dramatically.

It was not until University two years later that I started picking up sports again and joined a number of sports clubs. It was around January last year when my mum handed me the G4G article from the newspaper. At first I thought, how could I know where I will be, or what I will be doing in the next four years, but this was not an opportunity to be missed!

The assessment day was great for meeting other like minded girls enthusiastic about sport. The data taken from the bike session meant nothing to me, so I had no idea how well I had done. All I knew was that I had tried my hardest...and have never felt so nauseous after exercise in my life as I did after the last 3 minute effort on the bike!

I thought my chances of getting through to the next round were slim as all the girls in my group has so much more experience on a bike than I had. I almost fell off my seat when I received the follow up email – I couldn't believe it!

The whole G4G programme has been quite an experience, and I have loved every minute of it. From building up relationships with the other G4G girls and coaches and meeting new people who are all so enthusiastic about the sport. They've really encouraged me to push myself physically and mentally and rise to every challenge.

I have learned so much over the last 7 months it would be impossible to create list – given that I had never been on a road bike or even seen a track bike before May! I am continuously introduced to different aspects of the cycling world and I love it, to the point that not being able to get out on my bike for a good few days feels wrong! However, balancing training, University study and rest can be tough.

I can see myself cycling for years to come, setting myself bigger challenges and getting more races on the go. The more experience the better – all in good preparation for the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014!



Above: Eilidh mountain biking.  
Below: changing tyres on camp



## Gold4Glasgow Cycling Update

In May 2009 we held first round testing to identify new female athletes in cycling. 44 athletes showed up on the day of which 13 were selected into a 'confirmation' group aimed at assessing their long term potential. Over the last seven months, the girls have been put through their paces over a number of training camps and races. Scottish Cycling coaches, Graeme Herd and Mark Young, designed individual programmes for the girls to follow between camps that will develop the fitness and skills they require for the sport. Over the next two months, the girls will have to prove their place in the group as we prepare to invite another group of athletes for initial testing. When talking about the programme, Graeme Herd said " G4G has been a very positive initiative for the Scottish Cycling performance programme and for cycling as a whole. It's been an opportunity to unearth some potential talent for Scotland in the period running up towards Glasgow 2014. In working very closely in partnership with the Talent Team at the sportscotland institute of sport, it has been a challenging process that has evolved continuously as it has developed. However, we are confident that it will prove to be a robust means of identifying and developing talented bike riders."



G4G Cycling group on camp in Greenock, October 2009

## UK Sport Tall & Talented Assessment Day in Stirling

On Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January, UK Sport held one of five UK wide assessment days at Stirling University which was designed to identify tall athletes for rowing and basketball for the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. With the sportscotland institute of sport Talent Team assisting at the event, over 70 Scots turned up for a series of strength, power, endurance and agility tests. The athletes really impressed staff with a number of test records being broken. With testing now complete over the five UK venues, successful applicants can look forward to hearing from the UK Sport Talent Team in the next few weeks. For more information on the UK Talent process, visit their website [www.uksport.gov.uk](http://www.uksport.gov.uk)



Strength testing at Tall&Talented



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## Contact the Talent Team

If you would like more information, have any questions or suggestions, you can contact the Talent Team:

**Talent Manager:** Tony Stanger-[tony.stanger@sisport.com](mailto:tony.stanger@sisport.com)

**Talent Scientist:** Sarah Hood- [sarah.hood@sisport.com](mailto:sarah.hood@sisport.com)

**Talent Coordinator:** Karen Collier- [karen.collier@sisport.com](mailto:karen.collier@sisport.com)