

## Bright future for martial art

The Olympic sport of Taekwondo is thriving in Tower Hamlets thanks to a link-up between Hadri Taekwondo Club, run by Esrar Ahmed (pictured) and Bishop Challoner School.



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## Footballers crowned

Raine's Foundation School's footballers won the Tower Hamlets and Hackney Cup against Bishop Challoner.

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### Sport

# Smallbone high kicks his way to British title

## Taekwondo champion leading Hadri club's charge to the 2012 Olympics

BY DAVE BROWN

**THE Olympic sport of Taekwondo is thriving in Tower Hamlets thanks to the Hadri Taekwondo Club's link-up with Bishop Challoner School.**

Nearly 100 students are participating in the Korean martial art at the Wapping school, ranging from complete beginners to 2012 Olympic hopefuls.

The club's head instructor, Esrar Ahmed, whose father founded the club, has high hopes for John Smallbone who recently travelled to Manchester's Velodrome to compete at the BTGB (British Taekwondo Control Board) National Championships.

The six weeks of intensive training he put in at Bishop Challoner clearly paid off as he was crowned national champion, beating elite competitors from across the UK.

"It was a fantastic performance and John showed immense focus, discipline and determination," Esrar said. "He displayed true martial arts spirit."

After battling through the early rounds of the 72kg section John was tired by the time of the

final, but he had clearly set his mind on gold.

In an explosive bout Smallbone scored with a spectacular hook kick to the head within seven seconds and after a flurry of body and head shots the referee declared it a technical knockout within 30 seconds.

He was presented with his medal by current British Taekwondo Olympic bronze medalist Sarah Stevenson.

Members of the club are now preparing for their club championships in a few weeks under the watchful eye of 5th Dan black belt Esrar.

"Our students are achieving fantastic results and the talent in Tower Hamlets is amazing," he said, adding that he receives great support from the school.

"I would like to say a massive thanks to Steve, Malik and Mark from Bishop Challoner School's Learning Village, who support the club and helped during the preparations for the Nationals.

"We have plenty of spaces for more students at Bishop Challoner School and want the next Olympic gold medallist from this borough."

Taekwondo is not all about



Winner John Smallbone and instructor Esrar Ahmed

combat. It is also a great for fitness, building confidence, learning leadership skills and enhancing mind, body and spirit, Esrar added.

Classes take place at Bishop

Challoner on Thursday (7-9pm for ten years and over) and on Saturdays 12.30 to 2pm (four- to nine-year-olds).

For more details contact Esrar on 07946 376435.

# Brid's four golds

**SWIMMER Brid Cudmore of Bethnal Green Sharks excelled at the recent Middlesex Counties Spring Development Gala in Enfield.**

Cudmore won golds in the under-14 200m butterfly and breaststroke and the 100m individual medley. To round off a great effort she won the 50m freestyle.

In the same age group team mate Paige James won a gold medal in the 50m backstroke and a silver medal in the 50m freestyle together with a bronze

in the 100m individual medley. India Kelly, 15, won a gold medal in the 50m breaststroke and a silver for the 50m backstroke. She also picked up a clutch of third places.

Sian O'Loughlin, 12, won the 200m freestyle and was second in the 50m backstroke.

Youngster James Martin, 9, won the 200m and 50m breaststroke while Loula Piazzi won a gold medal in the 200m freestyle.

Esme Cudmore won two penants in the 100m and 50m breaststroke.

# Senrab are third

**SENRA B Girls wrapped up third place in the league with a 2-1 victory in their final match against a West Ham team that needed three points to win the title.**

In a hard-fought match Senrab took the lead through ex-West Ham player Ashleigh Lewis-Shodeinde after ten minutes and Courtney Lowther

added a second midway through the first half.

Just after the restart West Ham scored a scrambled goal, but in a hectic finale Senrab held on to their lead with some splendid defending by Tayla Humm and Daisy Davis.

**Senrab Team:** Charles, Davis, Humm, Gillard, Owens, Hudson, Davis, Lowther, Lewis-Shodeinde, Yuksel.

# Harriers in good shape at O2

PARIS Walker and Omar Abdulla were both in action at the second Assembly League meeting last week at the O2 Arena.

The runners from Victoria

Park and Tower Hamlets completed the course in respectable times. Omar clocked 17 minutes 38 seconds while Paris managed it in 22 minutes 24 seconds.