

ALL THE LATEST FOUR OAKS DARTS LEAGUE RESULTS

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Observer Sport

Telephone: 01827 848596 | fax: 01827 848640 | email: sports.editorial@cintamworth.co.uk | www.thisissuttoncoldfield.co.uk

Main picture: Victoria Bell in action and inset: with sister Florence (right).



Downhill ski sisters on the up after international calls

SKIING

By DAVID HUGHES
Sports Reporter

TALENTED Streetly skiing sisters Victoria and Florence Bell have been selected to represent Ireland in two prestigious international competitions next month.

Firstly, 18-year-old Victoria will compete in the Slalom and Giant Slalom at the World Alpine Ski Championships in Schladming, Austria, taking place from February 4-17.

Florence, 16, who competes in the same two events, hits

the slopes at the European Youth Olympics, held in Brasov, Romania, from February 17-22.

The sisters, who are students at King Edward VI School, Handsworth, spoke to *Observer Sport* of their delight at selection.

Victoria said: "I feel extremely honoured and excited about being selected."

"It will be an incredible experience to compete with the top athletes in the world."

"And I can imagine how incredible the atmosphere will be with it being held in Austria, a country where they

are so passionate about ski racing.

"My goal for the World Championships is to beat known competitors from other small nations. I can't wait!"

Florence added: "I competed at the Inaugural World Youth Olympic Games in Innsbruck last year and achieved the best result that Ireland has ever had at a winter Olympics."

"So it would be nice to do better than that, if I can."

The girls' father, Brian Bell, was understandably thrilled at his daughters' achievements.

He said: "I feel very proud of

Victoria and Florence, and the dedication, hard work and sacrifices they apply to their sport."

"Their mother Jane and I will be rushing from Schladming in Austria to Brasov in Romania after watching Victoria's last race at the World Alpine Championships so that we can be in Brasov in time for the opening ceremony of the European Youth Olympics."

"It's a complicated journey but obviously one we are delighted to have to make so that we can watch both our daughters compete."

Selection for the two events is the latest in a series of milestones for the young skiing siblings, who both took up the sport aged just two, but they have their sights set even higher.

Victoria said: "My goal for the future is, without doubt, to compete at the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, in 2014."

Florence echoed her sister's ambition, adding: "Ultimately, I would love to compete at either the Winter Olympics in Sochi in 2014 or in Pyeongchang, South Korea, in 2018."

Sixsmith is relishing indoor final challenge

HOCKEY

By DAVID HUGHES
Sports Reporter

SUTTON Coldfield Hockey Club legend Jane Sixsmith has spoken of her excitement in the build up to Sunday's Super Sixes Final against Reading at Wembley Arena.

Record ticket sales have been reported for finals day - the highlight of the indoor hockey calendar - which is being broadcast live on Sky Sports.

Sixsmith, who has won Olympic and Commonwealth medals for Great Britain, said: "I'm really looking forward to it. Sutton is my first and only club, and club hockey has always been really important to me."

"It's a fantastic day for the whole club, not just the 12 players in the squad, as we haven't reached the final of the competition for about 30 years."

"We have 100 fans travelling down, and they've all got tickets together in the crowd, so everybody will get to share in the experience and the fantastic atmosphere."

Victoria will see Sutton earn the right to compete in Europe next year, but they face stiff opposition in the form of a Reading side packed with internationals.

However, when the two sides meet in the group stages of the tournament, Sutton are not out comfortable 7-2 winners.

Sixsmith said: "We were surprised when we came off after that game - we really didn't expect that scoreline."

"But it showed that we have nothing to worry about on Sunday, and we'll be confident. We are a good unit that works really well together, and we have superb team spirit and we've definitely proved that we keep fighting to the end."

She showed that spirit in the semi-finals when they were 3-2 down to Bowdown with less than 30 seconds to go but two



Jane Sixsmith believes Sutton can lift the Super Sixes title this weekend

dramatic late goals sealed an unbelievable 4-3 win and booked Sutton's ticket to Wembley.

Sixsmith said: "In my career I've never played in a game like that. But we know now that the game is never over, and that if we keep going there is always time to score a goal."

The Maxfuel Super Sixes Finals Day is live at 3pm on Sunday on Sky Sports 2.

Published by Central Independent News and Media, Tonworth. Printed by Northcliffe Press Midlands.

ISSN 1369-0009



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