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Charity trek

A TEAM of Buckinghamshire gym workers have completed a gruelling mountain challenge for the sixth year running.

The six men from Woodbyne Clinic, in Main Road, Lacey Green took part in the Three Peaks Challenge, a 24-hour endurance race to tackle the three biggest mountains in the UK.

The challengers were Andrew Shadbolt, Andrew Frew, Jason Fenney, Richard Palmer, Paul Johnstone and Steve Adams.

Knockout new gym

FORMER world middleweight boxing champion Anthony Farnell has teamed up with his manager to open a gym in Manchester.

The gym has just opened but there will be an official launch by Ricky Hatton in October.

Bid launched to improve staff training

By Nicola Lambert

INDUSTRY leaders have launched a new campaign to improve skills and training in the fitness industry after figures revealed a quarter of gyms have staff that are not sufficiently qualified.

The Institute of Sport and Recreation Management (ISRM) announced its 'Push For Professionalism' campaign to improve standards in the industry through professional training and education - highlighting to school leavers that sport and recreation is a serious career option, not just a part-time job.

Chief executive Ralph Riley said: "For a long time sport and recreation has been seen as the poorer cousin to other careers, with low standards of management and training delivering unsatisfactory customer service and career paths for those in the industry.

"This is changing. The sports industry offers a fantastic opportunity as a career. As an industry we want to improve standards and attract those with the greatest talent. Only by offering an attractive career path, with professional training and recognition can we do this."

In a recent survey, 19 per cent of leisure establishments had vacancies, with three per cent facing vacancies from skill shortages. A quarter of gyms and clubs reported employing staff that were not fully trained.

Ralph added: "There are nearly half a million people working in the industry, from lifeguards to sport centre managers, with the leisure industry contributing 10 per cent of the UK's GDP.

"We need to ensure that, as the industry grows, we set high standards and pursue excellence in the way we operate.

"To do this the industry needs to focus on the training and development of those currently working in the sector and encourage people to think of sport as a career."

There are 43,800 full and part-time staff working in private health clubs, with 36,600 working in public facilities.

Most are aged between 25 and 29 years.

ISRM representatives will be travelling to sports centres across the country over the coming weeks, talking to managers about how to develop the skills and careers of their staff.



The new Powerbag from E.X.F. was demonstrated in front of the thousands of visitors at Leisure Industry Week. Creator Dr Mark Bellamy claims his simple yet effective invention could revolutionise fitness classes because it combines the benefits of free-weights, medicine balls and punchbags, yet is more flexible, versatile and safer.

Multiple UK fitness champion Joey Bull led the demonstration classes - which also featured heptathlete and UK ladies bobsleigh team member Caroline Pearce (left) and Chiraz Hasnaoui, a personal trainer at Gym Box in Holborn, London.

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