



INVITATION/PHOTOCALL:

Northampton Saints Rugby Ground
Franklin's Gardens, Weedon Road
Northampton NN5 5BG

Tuesday 7th July 2009
Starts 10.00 am (results announced at 4.30 pm)

KIDS GET MEMORY BOOST...

The brain has a limitless capacity, and every day recalls tens of thousands of things particular to every one of us. A good memory is all about how we *manage* our brain's capacity. A super-powered memory involves combining left and right brain abilities to maximum effect.

Left brain processes deal with logic, analysis, words, lists, number, sequence and linearity. Right brain processes focus on rhythm, imagination, daydreaming, colour, dimension, spatial awareness and whole picture thinking. Everyone uses both sides, in every task we tackle – even if we profess to be 'right brain' or 'left brain' dominant.

Now in a nationwide educational partnership, consisting of the **UK Memory Sports Council**, **Inspire Education**, and national government initiative **Aimhigher** is wrapping these all-important right/left brain elements into powerful memory training and exercises which, with practice, can become the intellectual platform for recalling almost anything, instantly. They are passing on these techniques to teachers and pupils at secondary schools throughout the UK – by means of the **UK Schools Memory Championships**.



WHICH BRIGHT YOUNG THING WILL BE THIS YEAR'S SCHOOLS MEMORY CHAMP?

**SEE NATIONWIDE LIST OF PARTICIPATING
SCHOOLS ATTACHED**

The current Top Ten qualifiers come from schools in Northampton, Banbury (Oxon), Towcester (Northants), Lower Gornal (W.Midlands), Irthlingborough (Northants), Staines (Middx) and Edinburgh

This time last year, **HANNAH WARD** (then 14) of Roade School Sports College, Northampton was crowned the first UK Schools Memory Champion. This year, approaching 1,700 pupils at over 60 schools from England, Scotland and Wales have been battling it out for one of the 100 places at the Championships, to be held in Northampton on **Tuesday 7th July**.

Over the past twelve months, eight times World Memory Champion **Dominic O'Brien**, who devised the original concept of the UK Schools Memory Championship, has been spearheading training sessions in Memory techniques for school and college groups of up to 30 students and staff. Each student is given a Memory Training manual, specially written by Dominic, and every school receives a Brain Club resource pack, to aid students in setting up a club to promote memory development and brain training. After the visit, in-school competitions identify the most talented participants, with the top 100 invited to the National Final.

THE ONES TO WATCH!

In the qualifying competitions held so far, the national average for students participating in the Championships is 283 points. The following contestants have done particularly well, scoring between **610** and **816 each**. They are listed in alphabetical order:

Michele Blackwell	Roade School	Northampton
Isabel Garood	Chenderit School	Banbury, Oxon
Tom Holmes	Roade School	Northampton
Becky Jones	Sponne College	Towcester, Northants
Cassie Lovell	Ellowes Hill College	Lower Gornal, W.Midlands
David Luck	Huxlow Science College	Irthlingborough, Northants
Thomas Lynch	Matthew Arnold School	Staines, Middx
Charles Murray	Mechiston Castle School	Edinburgh
Ellen Painter	Roade School	Northampton
Tejumade Soyinka	Weston Favell School	Northampton

These memory whizz-kids are something else! Already, Michele, Isabel and David can memorise and recall 100 words in just 15 minutes, while Tom can do the same with 138 numbers in 15 minutes!

The competitions themselves are led by **Phil Chambers**, Chief Arbiter of the World Memory Sports Council. The competitors apply their newly-acquired memorisation techniques to five different categories: random words, random numbers, fictional events and dates, binary digits and the memorisation of a shuffled deck of cards. These five memory disciplines have been chosen to closely correspond to the World Memory Championships whilst being easily transferable to the learning of school subjects.



“The competition is a great way to embed memory techniques into education and to develop life-long learning skills, which are transferable across the curriculum and throughout life” says **Neil Denley**, Director of Inspire Education, who, with his brother **Stewart** also co-founded the UK Schools Memory Championship.

“We constantly receive excellent feedback from schools, saying that the students’ new memory skills have already had a positive effect on examination preparation and attainment levels – these techniques are then effortlessly applied to their ongoing studies in general.” Adds Neil: “Recent research has shown that training the memory leads to a direct increase in problem-solving ability, otherwise known as fluid intelligence. As well as the realisation that they have acquired a powerful set of skills, this gives the teenagers motivation, and the self confidence to try memorising virtually anything.”

Dominic O’Brien himself has been highly enthused by the huge and growing interest in memory training from both schools and students: “After twenty years of studying memory and training my own mind, I am able to perform incredible mental feats, including memorising the sequence of 54 shuffled packs of playing cards. I have boiled down the various brain training methods to three elements which are key to developing a truly efficient memory – and we are now passing on the techniques for using these elements effectively to the children taking part in the national Championships. These elements are: **IMAGINATION** (transforming new information into images that we can easily recall), **ASSOCIATION** (connecting these imaginative images to what we already know) and **LOCATION** (anchoring these associations in our minds).

“The UK Schools Championship has been created to help pupils discover the Mind Sport of Memory and to develop their mental skills to aid them with their studies” he continues. “With exam success dependent on making good use of one’s memory, mastering memorisation techniques early on is a great platform for future success.”

MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS...

"Dominic O'Brien mesmerised his audience with a thoroughly engaging, enthusiastic presentation and workshop. It was entertaining and informative and the students were talking about the session for hours afterwards. All learner feedback was 100% positive and several members of staff have requested that he returns as soon as possible to work with other groups. There is no higher praise than learners wanting to learn - it's worth aiming high!"
Kathy Miller - NESCOL College, Surrey

"This was an excellent seminar – the students were really impressed and the looks on their faces at Dominic's amazing memory techniques was a pleasure to see... I really enjoyed this event myself and the feedback from the participants on the day was really positive – the sessions certainly had the WOW factor"
Ursula Boote - Aimhigher Coordinator in Knowsley Hey School, Liverpool

"Really enjoyed Wednesday's training session - Dominic was a top bloke. The students have been pestering me all week asking when the next one is!"
Richard Weir, Learning Coordinator - Bemrose Community School, Derby



Last year's winners with eight 8 times World Memory Champion Dominic O'Brien (left) and Tony Buzan, originator and joint founder of the World Memory Championships.

"I can't believe I've won! I never expected this... It's been so much fun! When I first heard that Dominic O'Brien was coming to my school to tell us about the new UK Schools Memory Championship, I thought it sounded interesting, but I didn't think I had a particularly good memory..."

Hannah Ward - UK Schools Memory Champion 2008

"It inspires them because it gives them a new way of learning and it makes it interesting for them. It's so much better than just looking at a book trying to memorise the facts"

Parents of Hannah Ward

"The first ever UK Schools Memory Championship has given these young people an unrivalled opportunity to extend their repertoire of skills. These can be used to help them remember the key pieces of information, knowledge and understanding required for success"

Philip Burch - County Manager, Aimhigher Northampton

For more information, or to register your school for next year's Championship, visit www.schoolsmemorychampionships.com

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NOTES FOR JOURNALISTS AND BROADCASTERS

About Aimhigher and Gifted & Talented

The UK Schools Memory Championships are sponsored by national government initiatives Aimhigher and, in some areas, Gifted & Talented.



The **Aimhigher** programme, designed to encourage students into higher education, is run by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), with support from the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS).

Gifted & Talented ensures gifted and talented students have access to the right personalised support to fulfil their true potential; stretching and challenging these students both in and out of the classroom.

RSVP

If you would like to attend the Championships on Tuesday 7th June,

please call **Ms Ray Hodges** on **01628 894793** or email:

r.hodges@hpsgroup.co.uk

PLEASE CONTACT THE PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS DIRECT IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHILDREN ATTENDING THE CHAMPIONSHIPS (see list attached)

AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW

Prior to event, at event (Tuesday 7th June), and after event

To speak to, or arrange interviews with Schools World Memory Championships co-founders **Dominic O'Brien**, **Neil Denley** and **Phil Chambers**, please call them direct:



DOMINIC (*left*) on **01258 473345** or **0797 999 2487**

NEIL on **01344 890126** or **0772 309 1820**

PHIL (*right*) on **0845 451 0451**



PRESS OFFICER ON THE DAY IS JAMES PATERSON

His mobile number on 7th June is: **0781 641 7627**



ALSO AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW ON THE DAY:

TONY BUZAN, co-founder of the World Memory Championships and inventor of Mind Maps

PHIL BURCH from Northampton Aimhigher and **NATALIE LATHAM** from Black Country Aimhigher



To interview **Tony Buzan** prior to or after the event, **please also get in touch with Ray** – *contact details on previous page.*