



Nathan Mitchell-Blake is pipped to the post in the 150m in Newcastle at the weekend. Picture: GREAT NORTH CITY GAMES

Beagles stars finish season with runs on the roads of Newcastle in the City Games

Newham & Essex Beagles stars Nethaneel Mitchell-Blake and Rabah Yousif ended their campaigns with an enjoyable day out on the turbo fast streets near the banks of the Tyne in Newcastle at the Great North City Games last Saturday.

Emerging sprint star Mitchell-Blake completed his 39th individual race of his long, but memorable season with a close second place finish in the rarely-performed men's 150m.

The 23-year-old, who brilliantly anchored GB's men 4x100m relay squad to World Championship gold last month at his local London Stadium track in Stratford, was beaten by America's Ameer Webb in 15.24 by just 0.02secs.

Fellow Brit Harry Aikines-Aryeetey and 2003 world 100m gold medalist Kim Collins occupied the

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minor places.

Despite the defeat, that did not put off Mitchell-Blake from entertaining the Geordies.

"I love the atmosphere with the crowd being so close to you," he said.

"I was talking to Harry Aikines-Aryeetey on the blocks and said 'mate this is pretty cool'. You get opportunities like this and I think it brings another side to this sport and I really enjoyed it."

Mitchell-Blake hopes to make a much bigger impact on the world scene next year as he reveals his plans which includes going for medals at the Commonwealth Games and European Championships.

"If I get selected for the Commonwealths I definitely take that pretty seriously and

Europeans," he continued.

"Indoors is all based on how training goes in the winter. I am not ruling it out but we'll see how it goes. It's going to be a long season for a couple of meets for us Brits so you have to be smart.

"I'm just going to see how it goes in the winter. I've had a long season, got to rest up and recover and see how it goes."

Rabah Yousif, who won world bronze for Team GB in the men's 4x400m in Stratford, has set his targets for 2018, with a fifth place 1:01.06 finish in the men's 500m.

"To be honest the season has been done," said Yousif. "It's been very hard to actually get myself out of bed and go training and that because mentally I've just shut down. But obviously you have to race and come with your A plan.

"I've got goals for next year and I'm old enough to go there and get the job done."

sport

Boxing

Billy Joe Saunders returns to east London for the fight that will decide his boxing future when he defends his WBO middleweight title against tough American Willie Monroe Jr at the Copper Box Arena on Saturday.

Saunders was based locally for most of his early career, training under father-and-son duo Jimmy and Mark Tibbs as he beat all opposition in an unbeaten campaign that brought the world crown.

Now coached by Sheffield's Dominic Ingle, the defending WBO champion looks for an impressive defence to set up a unification super fight with the winner of the eagerly awaited duel between Gennady Golovkin and Saul Alvarez in Las Vegas on the same night.

Saunders said: "I am in the best shape of my fighting life and ready to shine on Saturday night when I am 100 per cent sure I am going to get the win."

Saturday's bill, which is to be screened on BoxNation and BT Sport, will also feature title action for two exciting prospects from Canning Town's Peacock gym in explosive light-heavyweight Anthony Yarde and big

punching super-heavyweight Daniel Dubois.

Unbeaten in 12 fights, with only one of his victims surviving the full distance, powerhouse Yarde is fighting for the vacant WBO inter-continental belt on the Frank Warren promotion.

Dubois gets his first title action after four quick-time triumphs when he faces AJ Carter for the vacant Southern Area title.

Former West Ham and Repton amateur Lucien Reid looks for his seventh straight win on the night, that also features the pro debut of another ex-Repton boxer in middleweight Umar Sadiq.

Iford's Sadiq takes on Lewis van Poetsch and said: "I am happy to be making my debut on such a show. I look forward to the experience of being on an undercard and one day I see myself headlining shows.

"It's a great opportunity for me to get used to what things are going to be like."

Welterweight Hamzah Sheeraz, 18, from Gants Hill also makes his debut against Kevin McCauley on a show that also features Joe Pigford, Ryan Hatton, Zak Chelli and Jake Pettit.

Athletics



Asha Philip has had a great season in Newham and Great Britain colours. Picture: PA

Beagles' Asha Philip finished four hundredths of a second behind fellow 4x100m relay world silver medalist Desiree Henry in the women's 100m at the Great North City Games.

"It was a good start, but I think I was really tired, so I just really wanted to come here and enjoy it, which I did," she said. "I'm really happy with the end of season. I'm injury free and I came second in the race."

And Philip was happy with her 2017 season as she plans to compete in all three of the big

championships next year.

"It's been a fantastic year," she said. "Collecting medals like that is just what we want as British sprinters.

"I've been happy at what I have been able to accomplish. I did win the European indoors and I'm happy about that, but that silver medal at the worlds in my own backyard was just amazing!

"The world indoors I want to compete in, you can't miss that, I'll love to do that then aim for the Commonwealths and Europeans."

sport

Karate

Shoujin Karate Kai members kicked off the new winter season in style at the weekend.

A small team of six travelled north to the United Styles Open in Dudley, near Birmingham, and returned with four gold, two silver and two bronze medals.

Jorunas Gorelcenka (right) was the Shoujin star, as the 10-year-old won gold medals in all three

of his kata and kumite events.

Gorelcenka is set to travel to Finland as part of the English Karate Federation's national youth kata squad, with his clubmates wishing him well.

Shoujin Karate Kai hold classes around Newham and anyone interested in attending can contact dsk13@live.co.uk for more information.

