

sportbites

Football

Hackney Wick owner Bobby Kasanga is looking forward to their first season in the Essex Senior League.

The local club were only formed in April 2015, but will compete in step five of the National League system after merging with London Bari at the end of last season.

Bari boss Chris Davis has stayed on as manager and Wick's owner and player is hoping they can flourish in their first campaign together and get more fans in to watch them at the Old Spotted Dog.

"With the squad we have I think we should at least reach the top-10," said Kasanga, while speaking on East London Radio's Grassroots Football Show recently.

"But even though I am the joint-owner of the football club, I have told Chris any decision on football matters is his to make.

"If it is to do with matches and fixtures like where they should be or what time they should be played and it is the same with players.

"He actually treats me like one of the players and there have been times during this pre-season where I have not made the squad, but you have to accept that.

"I am 31 now and my playing career is coming to an end soon because I have a dodgy knee, but I think realistically we should aim to be in the top-10."

The team will be made up of both London Bari and Hackney Wick players and Kasanga wants them to be well supported by the local community.

Clapton have built up a brilliant following in recent seasons and had the Old Spotted Dog packed out for league and cup games.

But it has been a different story for Bari with attendance figures usually in the single digits during the 2016/17 campaign.

Wick have a big following from Hackney, however, and Kasanga is confident plenty of people will back the new-look team.

He added: "All of our matches are going to be free to watch, except for the FA Cup game, but kids will be free for that one.

"We want to build the fan base and we are going to try and get our youth teams down to watch, so once they are finished over Hackney Marshes they can come and see the first-team."



Jonathan Broom-Edwards with a successful leap during the World Paras at the London Stadium.

Another silver for Beagle as Broom-Edwards is pipped to the post again by Polish rival

Newham & Essex Beagles star Jonathan Broom-Edwards added another medal to his impressive collection at the World Para Championships on Saturday at the Olympic Stadium.

But once again he proved to be a silver as the 29-year-old T44 athlete was beaten by his arch nemesis Maciej Lepiato.

In 2013 he was second to the Polish athlete in Lyon at the World Championships; in 2014 it was the same story at the Euros in Swansea.

Then it was Doha for the Worlds the following year where Lepiato smashed his own world record to leap 2.18 metres to win and then last year for the Olympics in Rio it was the same story.

And so perhaps we should have expected the same in Stratford on Saturday when the two locked horns once again.

Athletics

It is clearly one of the great rivalries in Paralympic competition, but Broom-Edwards is still waiting for his first big victory over the Pole, by jumping higher over the bar.

Broom-Edwards, who has a clubbed foot and was a basketball player at university, not realising that he was eligible for Disability Athletics, cleared 2.08m in the straight final.

He opted out at 2.10m only to fail three times at 2.12m to give Lepiato the gold at 2.14m.

The Beagle was clearly frustrated on the day against his great rival.

"He was there to be had and I cleared 2.16m the other day," revealed Broom-Edwards, who is coached by Fuzz Ahmed, who also looks after Beagles' Olympic

medalist Robbie Grabarz. "I try not to think of him when I'm competing, but he is my rival and, even though he is such a nice guy, of course I want to beat him on the top stage."

Newham & Essex Beagles congratulated the athlete on twitter and facebook.

With his clutch of silver medals, Broom-Edwards is one of the most successful Beagles athletes over the years, so does he think that he can beat Lepiato?

"With the changes I've made this year, I know I'm in a position to push myself to the next level," he said. "If I can get my jumps right, he will be put off by that."

"He helps push me and I'm sure I help push him. I want to beat him at his best and if I am going to win a gold, I want to do it right."

With that attitude, surely that day cannot be too far away.

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Athletics

University of East London sports scholar Maya Bruney was the star of the show at the European Athletics under-20 Championships, as she raced to a hat-trick of medals for Great Britain.

The 19-year-old produced the performance of her life to win gold in the 200m before winning bronze in the 4x100m and 4x400m relays in Grosseto, Italy.

In the 200m final, Bruney ran a brilliant bend to triumph in a lifetime best time of 23.04 seconds – the fastest time in Europe this year for an under-20 athlete.

Speaking to British Athletics, Bruney said: "That was amazing. I can't believe that I'm European champion."

"I aimed to be in the final, but after getting a PB in the heat I thought I could make the podium."

"After running all out and getting another PB in the semi, I thought my destiny was in my own hands."

"The atmosphere is unlike anything I've ever done before and I had no idea how close everyone was because I couldn't hear anything."

Having achieved her ultimate goal, the UEL graphic design student then added to her medal collection by winning bronze in both the 4x100m and 4x400m.

In the process, she helped GB equal their best ever medal haul at a European Junior Championships with 19 medals.

Fellow UEL student Lauren Russell also enjoyed a successful Championships, running a lifetime best on her way to a fifth-place finish in the 400m.

Having only been called up to squad a fortnight ago after a gold medal performance at the BAUHAUS Junior Gala, Russell followed it up with a personal best of 53.71 in her heat.

Although she narrowly missed out on a medal, that new personal best has seen Russell shave nearly three seconds off her previous best time in only a year.

She said: "I've been working hard with the coaches at UEL, putting everything into training and using all the strength and conditioning and physio help available."

"Since I joined they couldn't have done more to help me succeed in my athletics career and I look forward to improving more while I'm here."

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Athletics

Newham & Essex Beagles' latest sprint star Finette Agyapong was invited to take part in the Diamond League meeting in Monaco on Friday.

The newly-crowned European under-23 gold medalist, rubbed shoulders with some of the best 200 metre runners in the world and certainly did not look out of place.

The 20-year-old Beagle, who lives in Plaistow, managed a personal best of 22.86 seconds at the Championships and though she did not manage to reach those heights, she still performed well in a high-class field.

Agyapong finished in fifth place on the night, clocking 23.22, with fellow Brit Dina Asher-Smith in third place.

The winner was Marie-Josée Ta Lou, from the Ivory Coast, who clocked 22.25, giving a guide to how fast Finette must run in order to reach the next level.

With a gold medal already secured though, this has been a great season for the youngster and she can only learn from experiences like the one in Monaco.