



**LHS YOUNG WOMEN IN SPORT 2019**



## FOOTBALL CHESHIRE CHAMPIONS

*Girls grab the County Trophy  
in thrilling final!*

## CHANGING THE GAME FOR GIRLS

*Improving sport for girls and  
getting girls active*





**LHS YOUNG WOMEN IN SPORT 2019**



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## A NOTE FROM THE HEAD OF PE

At Lymm High School we place a huge importance on the role of physical education and school sport for girls, not only for its educational value, but as a vehicle for improving health, participation and performance. As a team, we are always looking for creative ways to develop the PE curriculum in order to increase engagement levels and drive participation at extra-curricular sports clubs.

We also recognise the national initiatives that are currently campaigning to get more girls to become, and remain, active; we are always looking for long term, effective ways to tackle the entrenched participation gap.

As you can see from our extra-curricular sports programme (a copy of which can be found in this newsletter) there are numerous opportunities for girls to get involved in sport and physical activity at LHS. I urge as many students as possible to try out a club, as the benefits of taking part go far beyond physical fitness.

As the Head of PE and Sport, I am extremely proud of the achievements of so many of our female students. We have had another fantastic year to date, with our U13 and U15 handball teams and the U16 football team recently being crowned Cheshire Champions. In addition, we have had numerous girls perform at regional and national level this year.

I hope you enjoy reading about some of our incredible athletes, and about the profoundly positive impact of physical activity in general.

**Mr J Hampton**  
Head of Physical Education

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# CHANGING THE GAME FOR GIRLS

## ENGAGING GIRLS IN SCHOOL SPORTS

Lymm High School has a long-standing and very strong tradition of sport. Many individuals and teams, both male and female, enjoy success; gaining national honours in their chosen disciplines. Nationally, however, current research suggests that the gap between the amount of exercise girls and boys do widens during their time at school.

According to a recent survey published by Sport England, just 14.4% of girls and 20.2% of boys complete the recommended hour a day of physical activity. It is clear that, as a nation, we need to do more to engender a love of sport and physical activity in every child, though most particularly in our girls.

With the widening participation gap making headlines across the country, getting girls involved in sport is more important than ever.

We are proud to say this is already an area of success for Lymm High School, with many of our female students going on to play professionally, and compete in world class sports events. From GB rower Lucy Glover to Sheffield United's and Liverpool Football Club's, Ellie Fletcher, and many more than we have space to list here, we are immensely – and rightly – proud of our talented sportswomen.

Yet there is still more work to be done.

In line with the 'This Girl Can' initiative, we are aiming to continue to challenge the national statistic; further increasing the opportunities our female students have at Lymm High School to become involved in extra-curricular and competitive sport.

Since it was launched in 2015, 'This Girl Can' has attempted to change attitudes by encouraging women to get active or play sport in a way that is right for them.

Funded by The National Lottery, the campaign suggests that too often, women are put off taking part in physical activity due to a fear of judgement – this might be about the way they look when they exercise, a feeling that they're not good enough to join in, or that they should be spending more time on their families, studies or other priorities.

We are determined to ensure that all girls at Lymm High School can enjoy the lifelong benefits that team sport and physical activity provide - not just in terms of their health and wellbeing, but also in a way that supports their sporting ambitions and aspirations.



Alongside more traditional sports like netball, tennis and hockey, our extracurricular classes now include activities such as girls' circuit training and gymnastics, which have been extremely well-received by our girls.

One of the biggest hits with our female students is the new 'This Girl Can' aerobics class, which is structured and delivered in a way that engages and encourages everyone to participate at a level that is enjoyable for them.

We are extremely proud of the level of engagement in PE at Lymm High School, and take great satisfaction in the fact that our participation rate is well above the national average.

We are able to look beyond getting girls to simply participate, and can instead look to how much our girls can find a love of sport, and use the self-confidence it engenders to see them take on the world, and whatever challenges it throws their way.

#OurGirlsCan

'...getting girls involved in sport is more important than ever.'







# GIRLS RUGBY

## TACKLING A NEW SPORT

Written by Rugby Coach and  
Head of Y7, Mrs Worrall

Girls' and women's rugby is a fast growing sport; every weekend, more than 18,000 women and girls are lacing up boots, taping up legs, running, rucking and tackling. Keen to meet the growing demand, Lymm has introduced girls' rugby in response to a number of girls who said that they would like the opportunity to – excuse the pun – tackle a new sport.

According to [www.englandrugby.com](http://www.englandrugby.com), the official site for the Rugby Football Union, the number of women and girls enjoying contact rugby in England has increased rapidly since 2013, purportedly as a result of campaigns including Pitch Up and Play and Inner Warrior.

This huge surge in popularity has seen 300 rugby clubs across England offer opportunities for more than 25,000 women and girls each season, meaning that both sexes are on the pitch together, playing alongside and against one another for the first time.



Traditionally seen as a male sport, rugby union is a territorial, full-contact, team game, which -contrary to popular belief - is inclusive of all shapes and sizes.

"It is your speed, skill, strength and attitude that will determine where you'll play on the pitch," explains girls' coach Mrs Worrall, "rather than whether you happen to be male or female; our Year 7 girls will often demonstrate this by giving the Year 10 girls a run for their money as they speed up the wing.

'It is a very skilful game; the girls have to use their footwork, pace and strategic thinking to play high-quality rugby and score crowd-pleasing tries. It is definitely not just about the tackling, though that is what most people associate with the sport.'

During training, girls are taught about the core values that lie at the heart of rugby union, namely: teamwork, respect, enjoyment, discipline and sportsmanship. It goes without saying that these values translate into wider experience, and positively impact on the participants' lives both in and outside of school.

We teach our girls the basics of the game, which include: passing drills, footwork, and agility. The girls play a mixture of touch and contact rugby, dependent on numbers and ages, but often enjoy the chance to play together as a mixed team of Year 7 to Year 10, using each other's strengths to get the ball over the try line. Although there is a real focus on developing the finer skills of the game, our girls are never happier than when the pads come out and the gum guards go in for some tackling training!

"I am really enjoying the new rugby sessions at Lymm. Taking part after school and learning a new sport has given me so much confidence and belief in my own abilities," explains Year 10's Charlotte Meacham. "My participation in school rugby has given me the confidence to play outside, too, and I now play for Warrington Wolves U16s."

The future for women in the sport is looking bright indeed, and at Lymm, we are keen to develop and encourage young women to take advantage of this by becoming part of one of the fastest-growing sports in the world.

**#thisgirlcan**





# EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES FOR GIRLS

## Our Enrichment Offer

We all know that regular exercise benefits both physical and mental well-being. There are loads of opportunities for girls to get involved with sport and physical activities, and we are here to help break down any perceived barriers to participation.

We offer an extensive range of extra-curricular activities which take place at lunchtime and after school. If you are interested in any of the sports on offer for girls at Lymm High School, make sure you check out our extra-curricular timetable on our website.



### FOOTBALL

Lunchtime: Mon & Thurs  
After School: Fri



### RUGBY

Lunchtime: -  
After School: Thurs



### NETBALL

Lunchtime: Every Day  
After School: Tues - Thurs



### HOCKEY

Lunchtime: Tues - Thurs  
After School: Weds & Thurs



### FITNESS SUITE

Lunchtime: Every Day  
After School: -



### DODGEBALL

Lunchtime: Tues  
After School: -



### TABLE TENNIS

Lunchtime: Weds & Thurs  
After School: Mon



### GYMNASTICS

Lunchtime: Fri  
After School: -



### BADMINTON

Lunchtime: -  
After School: Fri



### BASKETBALL

Lunchtime: Mon  
After School: -



### THIS GIRL CAN

Lunchtime: Thurs  
After School: -



### CIRCUIT TRAINING

Lunchtime: -  
After School: Thurs



# GET ACTIVE IN SUMMER

## IN THE SUMMER TERM WE ALSO OFFER:

### TENNIS

#### Our enrichment offer

Our tennis sessions provide students with both a high level of athletic training and competitive skill in both tennis singles and doubles, allowing students to combine intensive training and tournaments throughout the year.

### ATHLETICS

#### Our enrichment offer

Athletics is a collection of sporting events that involve competitive running, jumping, throwing, and walking. The most common type of athletics competition is track and field, but also includes cross country events.

### ROUNDERS

#### Our enrichment offer

Rounders stands out from other sports by placing the emphasis on fun. A tactical and strategic game that requires excellent teamwork and where everyone gets credit.

### CRICKET

#### Our enrichment offer

A bat-and-ball game played between two teams of eleven players, our sessions enable boys and girls of all abilities to play. In the summer, our cricketers have the privilege of playing on the fields with coaching provided by teaching staff.



# CHESHIRE CHAMPIONS

## **LYMM HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS: WORTHY WINNERS OF THE 2019 CHESHIRE SCHOOL'S FA TROPHY**

Lymm High School won the 2019 Cheshire School's County Football Trophy this year, with both themselves and Christleton High School putting in a performance to be proud of.

In what was an excellent contest and a fitting end to this year's competition, Lymm High School's under 16 girls won 2-1 against their opponents, becoming the first Lymm High School girls' football team to ever win the Cheshire County Cup title. The mood from the Lymm side was one of excited determination from the start, and - having been resoundingly beaten by Christleton last year - the finalists knew that they would be put to the test.

As Christleton High kicked off the match, Lymm U16s set a fiery pace, leaving their opponents under no illusions that they were playing to win. Within the first ten minutes, Lymm had not only found their feet, but also had a game plan that saw them create chance after chance. The game itself was the perfect example of sporting spirit, with fans of both Lymm and Christleton getting behind the girls.

Lymm's Phoebe Hampson, who also plays for the Wales women's national football team, supported teammate Lily Parsons in controlling the centre of the field. It was no surprise when, after a surging break, Lymm were awarded a corner, which was taken by Lauren Broadley. Broadley aimed to the front post where the ball was flicked on by a defender, only to be picked up by an unmarked Isabel Gare at the back post.

Isabel Gare gave Lymm High School the lead with a superb goal volleyed into the roof of the net, leaving the score 1-0 Lymm







This early goal gave the Lymm girls the confidence they needed and, five minutes after roaring into the lead, Lymm were awarded a free kick wide on the right. Phoebe Hampson fired her strike goal-ward, and Lymm's supporters groaned in disappointment as the ball glanced off the leg of a defender who was working to keep it out of the net.

Unfortunately, for Christleton however, Hampson's forceful strike proved impossible to deflect, and the ball's ricochet off the keeper made it 2-0 Lymm - a score maintained as the whistle blew for half time.

In the second half, Christleton started well, and although matched by Lymm in most areas, it was inevitable that the rival team would get a shot on goal.

With fifteen minutes until final whistle, Christleton gained a free kick which they thundered towards the goal – an attack which Ella Oldland initially parried, before the ball rebounded back into play. The waiting Christleton attack tapped it home to make it 2-1.

With Christleton refusing to go down without a fight, the final moments of the title game made for tense viewing for the Lymm supporters.

Seeking out weaknesses, the opposing side began to heap pressure onto Lymm's back line, which Emma Parkinson and Evie Thornton had thus far been controlling effortlessly.

In the space of five minutes Christleton's girls hit the bar three times, but Lymm goalkeeper, Ella Oldland, heroically managed to keep the ball out of the Lymm net - sealing the win and the trophy.

Applauded by PE staff from Lymm High School, our girls took time out from celebrating to console their defeated semi-final opponents.

Mrs Slater, teacher of PE at Lymm High School, was delighted with the girl's victory: "It was a fantastic game, played in a good atmosphere. The standard of our girl's football is getting better and better every year and they have demonstrated some fantastic football throughout the competition."

Both sides received medals after the game in recognition of their fantastic achievements in the 2018/19 Girls' Cup, and Lymm High School lifted the trophy to great applause around the ground.

**Final score: Lymm 2 – 1 Christleton**





## LYMM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT SUCCESS DURING JUNIOR SCULLING HEAD

Lymm High School students laid a marker on the national stage during the Oarsport Junior Sculling Head in March.

Four of our girls competed at the Oarsport Junior Sculling Head at Eton's magnificent Dorney Lake, completing two 1,800 metre legs.

It was an excellent opportunity for students to compete at a prestigious national competition, held at a venue that hosted the rowing during the Olympic Games back in 2012.

Representing Warrington Rowing Club, students Emilia McMonagle, Isabel Potts, Jemima Worth and Martha Farrow from Lymm High school, formed part of the team, with Worth acting as Cox.

Putting in a solid performance amongst a national field, the girls came sixth out of nearly sixty crews from all over the country – no mean feat!

They now had more training and racing ahead in the summer term, with the National Schools' Regatta at the end of May, where they hoped to build upon their success.









# GIRLS' SPORTS TOUR

**Touring a foreign land is an ambition of many sportsmen and women, as it enables them to test their skills and prowess against competitors from around the globe.**

Written by Tour Organiser and PE Teacher,  
Mrs Slater

On the 23rd May 2019, almost fifty of our year 8 and 9 students headed to Marbella, Spain for the girls' sports tour, ready to participate and compete in hockey, netball and football.

We stayed at the prestigious Atalaya Park and Hotel, which is renowned for its outstanding training facilities.

As soon as we had checked in, it was time for the girls' football fixture, against some very tough opposition in the form of Malaga FC, a team comprising a number of national players.

Our girls played a fantastically in scorching conditions against formidable opponents, but finished on a loss.

Sally Dodd and Lucy Williams were jointly awarded the honour of Girl of the Match.

This early loss did not dispirit the team, who appreciated that, regardless of final scores, they were all participating in an experience that will give lasting memories and friendships.



During the first full day of the tour the Tour headed for Gibraltar to compete in netball, and played two clubs from Gibraltar: 'Ocean Magic' and 'Wing It'.

We had four girls' teams, all of whom were incredibly excited to play. First up were the Girls' C Team, and it was an incredibly close game, with Lymm C Team shooting and attacking well in the final quarter, ensuring that the game finished 13-7 in our favour.

The B team were up next and, again, faced some tough opposition, so they had to be at their best. The match finished on a score of 22-4, with Lymm enjoying a much deserved win.

Lymm A team had a fantastic game and demonstrated what a quality team can do when they play their best; some excellent play ensued, particularly from Millie Evans, who was the Girl of the Match. Lymm A team finished on a 43-12 win.

Lymm D team started slowly, but in the third quarter, they started to find their rhythm. Some excellent play from the girls had them in close competition with their opponents, but the lead proved too big to close. The match finished on a respectable 7 goals to 20 in the opposition's favour.

Meanwhile, our hockey team headed out to the stunning Hockey Club Benalmadena, a prestigious and beautiful grounds, with the sea and the mountains forming the backdrop to their game-play. Captained by Clare Davis, the girls played their (hockey) socks off, with Ellie Doherty receiving the accolade of Girl of the Match.

When they weren't busy with competition, the girls enjoyed pool time, aqua aerobics, volleyball, tour awards and - of course - the ever-memorable evening talent show. The tour was a fantastic experience for all involved, and we hope that our girls take from it memories to treasure forever.



# WINNING HANDS DOWN



## **LYMM HIGH SCHOOL'S U15 GIRLS' HANDBALL TEAM STORMED TO VICTORY IN MARCH, TO BECOME CHESHIRE COUNTY CHAMPIONS AND RANK THIRD IN THE NORTH WEST OVERALL**

Having previously won the Warrington finals, the girls travelled to the Northgate Arena, Chester, to compete against other winning schools from across Cheshire.

Our team, comprising Year 9 and 10 students, played some fantastic handball throughout the day, showcasing the high levels of skill and commitment that Lymm High School's handball teams are renowned for.

The girls were unbeaten – tying one match, and winning the other four, ensuring their resounding success, and qualification for the National Handball North West finals.

These took place in Oldham, in May, with our under 15's girl's handball team finishing third in their group.



# 5 REASONS FOR GIRLS TO PLAY SPORTS

## **GIRLS WHO PLAY SPORTS LEARN TEAMWORK AND GOAL- SETTING SKILLS**

Working with coaches, trainers, and teammates to win games and meet goals is great practice for success later in life. Being a team player can make it easier to work with others and solve problems, whether on the field or in the workplace.

## **SPORTS HAVE HIDDEN HEALTH BENEFITS**

Some benefits of sports are obvious — like improving fitness and maintaining a healthy weight. However, sport can also help you to maintain healthy bones, lessening your chance of developing osteoporosis in later life. Bone, like muscle, is living tissue, meaning that it responds to exercise by becoming stronger. Weight-bearing activities such as walking, climbing stairs, and dancing help to improve bone strength. Resistance exercises like weight-lifting and band work can also make bones stronger.

## **GIRLS WHO PLAY SPORTS DO BETTER IN SCHOOL**

A growing body of literature suggests that girls who play sports do better in school and are more likely to graduate than those who don't (Cornelißen and Pfeifer 2006; Miller et al. 2005; Videon 2002). Exercise improves learning, memory, and concentration, which can give active girls an advantage when it comes to the classroom.

## **PLAYING SPORTS BUILDS SELF-CONFIDENCE**

Girls involved in athletics feel better about themselves, both physically and socially. It helps to build confidence when you see your skills improving and your goals becoming reality. Other esteem-boosting benefits of sports participation include getting in shape, maintaining a healthy weight, and making new friends.

## **EXERCISE CAN CUT THE PRESSURE**

Pressure is a big part of life. Playing sports can help you deal with it, since exercise is a natural mood lifter and a great way to relieve stress and fight depression (Richardson CR, Faulkner G, and McDevitt J. et al. 2005). Plus, when you play with a team, you experience the feeling of giving and offering support, and this camaraderie frequently leads to life-long friendships.



# SPORTS WOMEN IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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FROM FOOTBALL TO CYCLING TO ROWING, IT'S A YEAR AT LYMM HIGH SCHOOL WHERE YOUNG FEMALE ATHLETES HAVE BEEN AT THE FORE.

**Proving that 'These Girls Can,' our up-and-coming sportswomen are already making their mark across a number of disciplines. The girls we have profiled are just a few of the extraordinary athletes at Lymm High School.**





# PHOEBE HAMPSON

## Everton & Wales FC

The future is bright for one of Lymm High School's most talented footballers, 16 year old Phoebe Hampson. Hampson, who currently plays for Everton U16s, was selected for Wales U17s in August 2018.

In spite of this, Phoebe is extremely modest about her successes – to the extent that, during this interview, her friend had to push her to talk about her place on the Welsh U17 team!

The talented midfielder talked openly, however, about her passion for the beautiful game, and how it has flourished during her time at Lymm High School:

"I'm really competitive! I always have been. I played for Manchester City when I was 13, and was selected for Everton when I was 14. I played there for two years, and was picked up for the U16 squad."

"School have been great throughout – I actually got involved in loads of sports as soon as I started in Year 7, and only really settled into focusing on football later."

"There is a lot of choice in terms of what we can do at Lymm, and I definitely took advantage of that in my early years here!"

Phoebe – clearly a talented all-rounder – was also on the school's hockey and handball teams, and enjoyed putting her talents to good use when competing for her Hall.

"The inter-hall competitions in school are really good. I still love them! Everyone gets so competitive, but even if you are not the best at a certain sport, you can throw yourself into it, and there is such a great feeling of all competing together for your Hall."

"The PE staff are incredible here. They genuinely do go the extra mile for you, and are really passionate about their sports. We owe them so much – all of us who compete at national and international level now. We wouldn't have gone as far as we have without them."

In spite of her diffidence, Phoebe clearly has an exciting sporting career ahead of her – as do many of our talented sportswomen. Congratulations, Phoebe!





# NATASHA HILL

## North Cheshire Clarion Juniors

Cycling is, for many of us, an enjoyable pastime and fun way of getting around, but thirteen year old Lymm High School student Natasha Hill is pedalling her way to success!

A member of North Cheshire Clarion Juniors, Natasha competes regularly in both road and track racing at the Manchester Velodrome. Speaking of her passion for cycling, Natasha explains how she became involved in the sport, and how much she enjoys the challenge of racing:

"I love cycling for so many reasons, but most of all because it makes me feel exhilarated and it keeps me fit and strong. I've been really serious about it as a sport, rather than just a hobby, for about three years now. It all started when I climbed to the top of the Col de la Colombiere, a mountain pass in the French Alps, days before the Tour de France rode up it. I remember thinking how amazing it would be to cycle the route."

At the start of 2017, Natasha started racing competitively on the road at the different race circuits around the North West. She describes the challenge of trying to improve herself to do better each time she competes:

"I love racing because of the speed, and being able to push myself to beat my rivals. I have made so many friends, not just from my own club but from rival clubs, too. "

We always encourage each other and I love seeing my friends do well, even if they are from a rival club, and even if it means they have beaten me."

Natasha spent her previous winter racing cyclo-cross (CX), which, she explains, involved competing in "a lot of mud," as well as training at the Manchester Velodrome, where she gets to ride on the same track as the Olympic champions.

"It's not every day you go racing and bump into your Olympic idols! My heroes are the female riders in the GB squad like Laura Kenny, Ellie Dickinson, Elinor Barker, Manon Lloyd and Katie Archibald. Some of them started out just like me - a member and racer for a local junior cycling club - and one day I hope to follow in their footsteps." Natasha stresses the benefits that cycling has provided and encourages more girls to consider taking up the sport.

"I would encourage any girl to get out on a bike ride. It doesn't matter if it's in the park, on the trail, on the road; it just feels great to feel the freedom of being outside, and it keeps me mentally happy and physically healthy."



# OLIVIA MOLDEN

## County, Regional & British Nationals Finalist

Female swimmers have a long history of breaking barriers, and today, there are millions of female swimmers out there that are still trailblazing the sport of swimming. They're not just making an impact in the water, they are also making waves by pushing for equality in sport.

This is certainly true of Lymm High School student and swimmer, Olivia Molden.

Currently in Year 9, Olivia has been swimming from a young age and has been a member of Stockport Metro Swimming Club for the past two years. A mixture of dedication, technique and love of the sport, has seen Olivia compete at both county and national level.

"Many people think I am crazy when I tell them I train twenty hours a week. On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday I do two hours of training before school begins. In addition to this, I also train each evening for two to three hours. Sunday is my only day of rest, unless, of course, I am at a competition!"

This hard work and commitment has enabled Olivia qualify to swim at the Cheshire Championships, The ASA North West Regional Championships, The English Nationals and The British Nationals.

"Last year I qualified for British Nationals in 200 breaststroke and made the final. I qualified for English Nationals in 200 IM, 400IM and 100 breaststroke, making the finals in all of these events."

"This year I am hoping to qualify for The British Nationals that will take place in Glasgow in August. To qualify you have to be ranked within the top 25 swimmers in Britain for your age. The 200 Breaststroke is my favourite event at the moment but I also like to swim 200 and 400 IM. "

"I am looking forward to swimming at such a high level again in August and I would love to win a medal from British Nationals."



# CAITLIN BALDWIN

## International Skier & British Indoor Skiing Champion

Lymm High School rising skiing star, Caitlin Baldwin, has been absolutely flying recently after another notable performance at the British Indoor Skiing Championships.

The school's brightest snow sport prospect came first in her under 14s category, competing against skiers from all over the UK to claim the title.

Already holding a number of British, Scottish, English and British Grand Prix titles, as well as the British Primary Schools, British Ski Cross and European Lowland Championships, each race seems to bring a new triumph.

This most recent performance, at the Chill Factore, in Manchester, also ranked her in second place out of all the females across the 11-18 age group.

Caitlin was introduced to skiing just before her 5th birthday and, incredibly, managed to pass every qualification in the French Ski School system, including the Racing Level, by the time she turned eight.

"I loved skiing straightaway and for some reason, found it really easy to turn. I loved going really fast so I always wanted to turn parallel...even though my instructors didn't want me to!"

However, it wasn't until Caitlin, inspired by the grit shown by British skiing star Chemmy Alcott at the Sochi Olympics, who finished in the top 15 in spite of having a fractured leg, that she decided to race competitively on the Indoor Slopes.

After winning the British Indoor Title and the British Grand Prix series, Caitlin was named on Chill Factore's sponsored athletes' list for 2016, receiving coaching from Chemmy Alcott herself.

More recently, Caitlin moved to Ambition Racing, a team based in Leogang, Austria and balances her school work with her skiing.

"When training, my team gets up at 6am and skis from 7.30am to 12.30. After lunch we go to a local school in Saalfelden for 3-4 hours every day when we aren't racing. This is followed by working on our physical fitness and we review videos of our performance before bed."

"It is hard work, but lots of the older team members ski for Great Britain already, and I want to follow in their footsteps!"







# GRACE BRADLEY

## County & Wales Hockey

Talented hockey player Grace Bradley has been propelled into the limelight, having been selected to trial for Wales earlier this year.

Joining Lymm High School in 2014, the Year 11 student credits her tenacity to improve for her success, laughing at how far she has come in such a short space of time:

"I started playing hockey when I came to Lymm High and it quickly became one of my favourite sports, mainly because I was so bad at it when I first started! I really wanted to improve so I carried on practicing because I enjoyed it right from the start."

After a year on the school team Grace joined Lymm Hockey Club and was also chosen for the Cheshire Team for her age category that very same year.

"I think I enjoy hockey so much because it is an extremely fast pace game that requires lots of focus and teamwork. There are always skills and aspects of your performance that you can improve on so you always have something to look forward to perfecting"

"For me, hockey is also a huge part of my life at school and is also a great release from exam stress where I can just focus on one thing and relax."

As well as explaining the benefits of playing extra-curricular sport, Grace passionately goes on to urge other girls to try one of the many sporting opportunities available to them.

"I think it is important that girls play sport because it defies the whole stereotype that we can't do as well as boys can in sport; that we can't be competitive or passionate about something physical. When people ask you what you enjoy, or what you want to do with your future, the surprise they show when you mention your sporting success is extremely satisfying!"



# ZOE HATCHER

## Two-Times Captain Drive-in Winner & Girls Golf Rocks Ambassador

Lymm High School student Zoe Hatcher proves age is no obstacle when it comes to playing golf. The 15-year-old made history in 2017, winning two senior competitions inside a week playing for Sutton Hall Golf Club.

Golfing success seems to run in the Hatcher family as Zoe's older sister Bethany made her own piece of history at the same club five years prior to Zoe's success.

Having only played five full rounds of golf, the 31-handicapper, then aged 11, became Sutton Hall's youngest ever winner of a senior competition. With such impressive wins and titles achieved at such a young age, Lymm's star golfer is definitely the one to watch.

Despite her many accomplishments, it is clear that playing golf for Zoe means so much more than trophies and titles.

"I love it. I always look forward to my game – getting outside in the fresh air, keeping fit, having a laugh with friends and family, and just enjoying myself. It's a game you have for life, wherever you are in the world." She is, she explains, a member of the Cheshire girl's squad, and actively campaigns to encourage more young girls to engage with golf.

"In recent years, national figures suggest that only 1% of golfing enthusiasts are female, arguably due to the lack of provision for female golfers. However, by being a part of the Cheshire squad I realised just how many other girls play locally. It's enabled me to make so many new friends and supported me to obtain many achievements."

"I have travelled across the country with the girls from my club, competing against young female golfers from other countries, and was fortunate enough to captain one of these teams."

In addition to representing her county, Zoe is also one of Cheshire's few ambassadors for a programme called Girls Golf Rocks.

Funded by England Golf, the Girls Golf Rocks programme aims to promote golf to younger girls. Zoe goes on to speak with enthusiasm about the initiative:

"This is something I am very proud to be a part of, as it highlights the importance of teaching girls from a young age that they are capable of playing any sports that they want."







# LAUREN SMITH

## Warrington Wolves Handball Squad

Nationally, the profile of girls' sport is increasingly making its rightful way into the spotlight, and this is certainly the case at Lymm High School. While historically, Lymm has a proud reputation for its boys' rugby, the wealth of female talent should not be underestimated.

Year 11 student Lauren Smith, one of Lymm's many capable sportswomen, is winningly humble about her achievements. She is, she explains, a member of Warrington Wolves Handball Squad, and credits the role that Lymm has played in her success.

"There is a family connection for a few of us," she explains. "My sister was part of the team that won the Nationals a few years ago for Lymm, and she encouraged me to become involved with school sports. The teachers are really supportive, and I would not have even started playing if it hadn't been for the extra-curricular opportunities at Lymm."

Lauren goes on to speak with enthusiasm about the support networks that sports allows girls to build, including with alumni who keep in touch via their sports coaching for the teams.

She also speaks passionately about her reasons for partaking in so many of Lymm's extracurricular sporting opportunities:

"For a lot of girls, it's about the competition; they do sport to get better and better at it. For me, it isn't about that. Sport makes me feel good and gives me a bit of a release. Whenever I have an injury (she is currently recovering from dislocating her shoulder), I go stir crazy!"

The benefits to mental health should not be underestimated, especially at a time when other stressors can pile up.

In spite of her commitments to revising for her impending GCSE examinations, Lauren is adamant that she will continue to reap the benefits of the sports on offer at Lymm:

"Football, netball, handball...I do quite a lot!"



# KATIE McLEAN

## Cheshire County Cricket & Appleton Women's Team

Lymm High School student Katie McLean still remembers playing cricket as a little girl... well, more specifically, joining Grappenhall Cricket Club at the tender age of five, where she recalls instantly falling in love with the sport.

Upon joining Lymm High School, Katie continued to play for Grappenhall before being selected to play for Cheshire U13s whilst in Year 8.

With five seasons now under her belt, the future looks bright for Katie, who achieved a batting and fielding award after just two seasons.

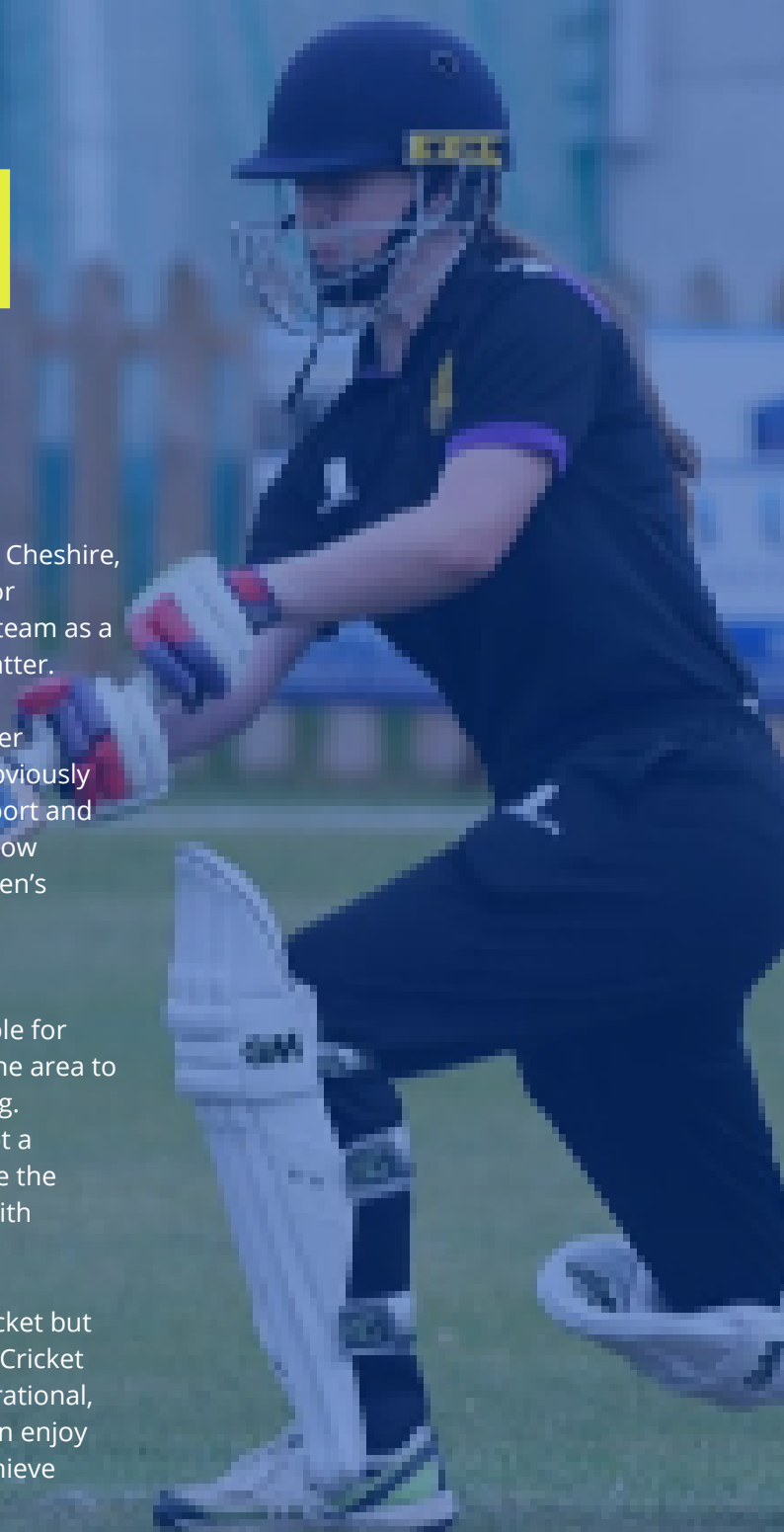
She's one of a growing number of young women taking up the sport, many of whom have been undoubtedly spurred on by the increasingly high profile of England's successful women's team in recent years.

As well as playing for Cheshire, she now also plays for Appleton's women's team as a wicket keeper and batter.

Justifiably proud of her achievements and obviously passionate for her sport and club, Katie explains how momentum for women's cricket is growing:

"It's great that the opportunities available for women and girls in the area to play cricket is growing. Appleton has now got a second team because the sport is so popular with females."

"I've always loved cricket but England winning the Cricket World Cup was inspirational, showing girls they can enjoy playing sport and achieve great things."



A full-page background image of a young woman, Amy Jade Nelson, in a red and white skating costume. She is in a dynamic pose, with one arm raised high and the other extended to the side. She is wearing white inline skates and a red headband. The background is a blurred indoor skating rink.

# AMY JADE NELSON

## Inline Skating Junior World Champion

2017 saw Lymm High School student and Altrincham Ice Rink based UK Silverblades member Amy Nelson crowned inline skating Junior World Champion. Aged just thirteen, Amy secured the Junior Women's Division Four title at the Inline World Championships in Dijon, France, competing alongside 350 participants from 15 countries.

A natural competitor, Amy has competed in rollerblading events since the tender age of 10, and has amassed a plethora of awards from competition in major international events.

The sport, where competitors wear boots with wheels instead of blades, is growing in popularity in countries where they do not have ice rinks, but Amy, like all the girls in her team, is also an ice-skater.

Immediately prior to her win at the World Open Inline Figure Skating Championships, Amy had just taken gold at the International Diamond Skate Trophy competition in Dollo, Venice, proving both her skill and dedication to the sport.

Amy has combined her sporting success with her studies at school, training before and after school, and also at weekends.

Her amazing success demonstrates what hard work and commitment can allow you to achieve, both personally and professionally:

"Over the past three years I have completed in numerous tests and competitions, skated at ice hockey matches, been in Christmas shows, Easter galas, and skated in the Professionals on Ice tour."

"I have made amazing friendships and received some fantastic opportunities. Skating has given me the motivation, drive and courage to push myself and be the best person that I can be."



# FREYA JACKSON

## Ladies handicap Trophy Winner & Lymm Junior Player of Year

Lymm High School's Freya Jackson is another celebrated school golfer, securing a handicap of 11 and making local Lymm Golf Club's Hall of Fame. The two times Ladies Handicap Trophy winner earned the title Junior Player of Year from the club last summer and is looking forward to another exciting season.

Freya's golfing journey to success began two years ago, when she received her first set of Wilson staff clubs at the age of 11.

"I remember my first ever set of Wilson staff clubs; I thought they were great! My brother had started playing a few months before me and after spending so much time at the local club with him, I decided to give it a go myself and hit a few balls!"

Freya who also takes part in Girls Golf Rocks sessions at the club, has fond memories of last year's success and is hoping her experience will provide the platform for another great summer.

"I don't know what this summer holds for me but I hope I get to play lots of new courses and continue to have fun with my friends. I love golf because it continuously challenges you, both mentally and physically. It requires practice and skill, and can be both relaxing and tense all at the same time!"

'Golf allows you to be competitive on an individual level and is a nice change to playing with my teams at school. It is also a great social activity and can be played as much for fun as well as competitively."

Freya received her first handicap of 29 in 2017 after playing 3 rounds of 18 holes, and has continued to play and improve ever since.

"I have lessons at High Legh Golf Club which are fun. My coach is always making up small challenges for me and the others in my group and I love trying to beat him and the others. We get better every time, without even really realising it!"

In 2017, Freya went on to win a ladies' competition on 54 points, resulting in her handicap dropping to 22 and securing her place in Lymm Golf Club's Hall of Fame. She openly admits her early success encouraged her subsequent competitiveness in the sport:

"After winning the ladies' competition, I was hooked! I love that I get nervous on the first tee and get a real buzz when I am having a good round! Junior events are really fun and I have had the chance to play with some really talented people across the country."

"Last season, myself and two other girls from Lymm qualified to represent Cheshire in an England Golf National Club Champions competition."

Her team were the first ever Lymm girls team to qualify and play in the finals, finishing the competition in fourth place out of 85 players representing their county. On top of junior events, Freya also played in a number of Cheshire County competitions, ending the year with the Order of Merit trophy, coming first in two individual competitions and second in another.

"After such a great summer playing, I found that my handicap had dropped from 21 to 11 and was awarded by my club - for the second year in a row - the Ladies' Handicap trophy and Junior Player of Year. I could not have asked for a better end to my summer."



# ALICE SHIELDS

## **Tennis Doubles & Singles County Champion & Wimbledon 14 and under International Tournament**

Student Alice Shield is one of Lymm High School's leading junior tennis players, competing at Junior Wimbledon through her dedicated efforts over the last few years. She has won a number of regional titles and has played matches against some of the best players in the world.

Speaking of the opportunity to play at Wimbledon, Alice notes the support she received from her school:

"With the help of Lymm High School, I have been able to succeed in my tennis. They support and push you to be the best you can be, with so many extra-curricular session, and matches set up to take part in."

"I competed at Wimbledon in the 14 and under International Tournament, and played against some of the best players in the world, including girls from Japan, China and India."

"I made it through to the last twelve, only losing to the No1 Indian player, who came runner up overall."

If playing at Wimbledon wasn't enough, Alice has claimed an impressive seven regional doubles titles, and six national singles titles.

Despite these impressive personal accolades, Alice is just as proud of her tennis achievements at school:

"We made it to the national finals last year and came 8th in the country. This was a huge success as only two of us had played tennis regularly before the national competition. I made new friends with people I would not have otherwise had the chance to meet, but we all had a common interest and bonded instantly."

"The support from school helps drive you to succeed; they make you feel valued and help you to find the self-belief that every sportsperson needs."



# OUR STAFF CAN

A balanced world is a better world; this is why we celebrate our young sportswomen here at Lymm High School. As well as championing and putting a spotlight on our female students, it invites discussion around full gender equality in sport. We also wanted to celebrate and learn more about the amazing women that inspire our students.

We asked members of our PE team to share what inspires them and helped shape who they are as sportswomen. Below are some of the incredible responses.

## When did you become interested in sport?

**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON:** At primary school, I would play football with the boys on the playground every day – there was one other girl and me, but we knew that we were easily as good as any boy! I played any sport I could at primary school but loved the greater choice of sports at secondary school.

**MRS ASHFORD:** I've always been really competitive and I used to kick and throw a ball in the garden with my parents from as early as I can remember. My sister used to play tennis and it made me really want to play. On my 7th birthday, my parents bought me my first tennis racket - a gold Slazenger mini racket - and paid for my first block of tennis lessons. This is when I really started to get into sport.

**MRS SLATER:** It was definitely when I was at school. My PE teacher was the England Women's Rugby Captain at the time; she was a huge inspiration and got me involved in lots of different sports. My dad also coached my girls' football team when I was very young, so he played a big part in getting me interested in sport.

**MRS WALSH:** At primary school, definitely by the age of 5.

## Who is your sporting idol?

**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON:** Kate Richardson-Walsh without a doubt! Although recently retired, she has over 350 caps for her country and captained Team GB women's hockey for decades. She was a pioneer for her sport, which until recently was hugely underfunded. Her skill, leadership and commitment on the pitch is incredible. Off the pitch she stands for so much more, including equality of women and the LGBTQ+ community, modelling the philosophy that sport is a powerful vehicle to facilitate social change.

**MRS ASHFORD:** Steffi Graf!

**MRS SLATER:** I would say Dame Kelly Holmes. I loved how she came back from injury and won two gold medals when so many people told her that her career was over. She worked relentlessly, and proved everyone wrong...I really admire that grit and tenacity. I am also an Everton Fan, so my favourite players were Tim Cahill and Mo Marley (who is now the U19 England Women's manager). Mo came and did some coaching sessions at our club and she was so inspirational.

**MRS WALSH:** Steffi Graf too! I also really admire netball player Tracy Neville, who - in her playing days as a small(ish) GA - proved that size isn't everything.

## Did your parents support you to become a sports woman?

**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON:** I'm not actually sure, though probably not if I am being honest. Sport wasn't really touted as a career choice, particularly for women, when I was growing up. My parents were proud of my sporting achievements, but didn't really see it as a long term employment opportunity.

**MRS ASHFORD:** Absolutely. My dad used to take days off work. I used to have to take two trains to get to mid-week training sessions with my mum, and they used to travel around the country taking me to tennis competitions. They also helped financially.

**MRS SLATER:** Absolutely - they were always at every football and netball match that I played. They would also take me to all of the extra-curricular clubs I did from dance to athletics. They were such a big support and encouraged me to try lots of different sports.

## What has been your biggest achievement in sport?

**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON:** Honestly, my biggest achievement is the life I have built because of sport - incredibly clichéd, I know! Sport has shaped who I am, and the people I have met have come into my life because of the sports I have enjoyed. I am incredibly proud of that.

**MRS ASHFORD:** Getting to a final on the British tour circuit and beating a Welsh number one in the semi-final. I had the game of my life. I also competed in a 10K event in Manchester, which is a world circuit.

**MRS SLATER:** One is I still hold the high jump record for my old school - a friend's son goes there, and I couldn't believe it when she told me that my record still hasn't been beaten! Two - this year, my netball team has been promoted to the first division. This is a huge achievement for our team as we started as a Back to Netball group, and from there joined a club, and then were entered in to a league as a team. It has taken us five years and after all of our hard work we were so happy to be promoted this season.

**MRS WALSH:** Being invited to play three sports for County - Lancashire (Netball, Badminton and Hockey), and playing tennis at Wimbledon in club finals.

## Name three things you like about being part of a team sport?

**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON:** The friends you make - you can share your successes and failures with someone else. Knowing that other people are reliant on me also makes me perform better!

**MRS ASHFORD:** It's a great sense of pride when you succeed and you succeed together; the supportive environment - when winning and losing - and having a sense of shared purpose. Working together to achieve success is the best way to get there.

**MRS SLATER:** I would say the relationship you have with your team. You go through so many ups and downs together and you form a special bond with each other. The enjoyment and laughter (you have so many fun times with your team) and the social aspect - you get to spend time with your friends while doing something you love and keeping fit and active.

**MRS WALSH:** Competition, high intensity work and team mates.

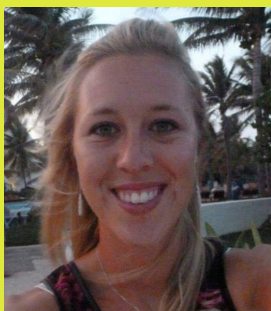
## What is the best part about competing?

**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON:** Winning! That's a terrible thing to say! There are so many games that I have lost which I have enjoyed. But honestly - nothing beats the feeling of success!

**MRS ASHFORD:** Winning! Playing well and knowing you couldn't have tried harder.

**MRS SLATER:** The buzz and excitement of it. Match day is always a nervous one, but when you're out there, you feel amazing and the adrenaline makes you want to perform as well as you possibly can.

**MRS WALSH:** Winning!



**MRS ASHFORD**



**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON**



**MRS SLATER**



**MRS WALSH**

### What emotions do you feel when you play well?

**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON:** Pride.

**MRS ASHFORD:** You feel proud of yourself. It increases your level of confidence and self-esteem, knowing that you are a good player.

**MRS SLATER:** Excitement, happiness, and elation.

**MRS WALSH:** Pride, enthusiasm, and determination to keep getting even better.

### What's it like to be a PE teacher at LHS?

**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON:** Awesome! In the summer...best job in the world! Genuinely, our students are so talented and committed to sport.

**MRS ASHFORD:** The best job in the world. I get to work with a great team of people in a beautiful setting and - most importantly - have an impact on the young people I work with. The students at Lymm make it a great place to work.

**MRS SLATER:** It is amazing to be a PE teacher at Lymm; the facilities at the school are fantastic and the new 3G pitch will allow us to improve further. The pupils are amazing, and it is so rewarding to see them enjoying PE and Sport, and getting involved in leading festivals for local primary schools. Our pupils are the best thing about being at the school.

**MRS WALSH:** It is great - really rewarding and fun.

### What do you think the main benefits are for girls getting involved in sport at Lymm High School?

**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON:** definitely the health benefits - mental health in particular. Sport enables your mind to relax and focus on what's in front of you at the time.

**MRS ASHFORD:** There are so many opportunities to get involved in so many different sports. If girls at school join an extracurricular club, the chances of lifelong participation and wellbeing are so much higher. Sport has such a positive influence on lives, mentally, physically and socially.

**MRS WALSH:** I think socially, physically and mentally, it is so important for girls to get involved in sport. There is a trend nationally that at KS4 there is a drop-off with girls in sport, but I feel that this is the most important time to be involved! The pressures and stress from exams, social media and friendship issues can be alleviated by physical activity.

**MRS WALSH:** Sport is important in helping us learn to cope with winning and losing, and becoming resilient. All of the sports offered at Lymm help to develop the mind and body.

### How do you make PE lessons fun?

**MRS ASHFORD:** Music! It always goes down well. Listening to feedback from the students is important. I have high expectations from every student in order to get the best from them, and give lots of encouragement and positive reinforcement.

**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON:** My dazzling personality! That aside, I hope I try to make things feel achievable and tailored to where groups are at.

**MRS SLATER:** Lots of different ways - one of the most significant ways this year, is we have a new speaker system in PE so that we are able to motivate and encourage the girls through music while they are taking part in sport. Music has been a great motivator for the pupils in PE lessons.

**MRS WALSH:** Variety of activities and competition are really important, and so is positive feedback.

### What have been the stand out moments for you during your time at Lymm?

**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON:** Taking my U14 team to the north semi-finals of the National Schools Competition. They went on to be such an incredible senior team, who finished runner up in the county schools hockey tournament, and went on to play and represent at their own clubs at a high level.

**MRS ASHFORD:** Winning the U16 Cheshire cup for girl's football! Getting students who have really low confidence and avoided PE to enjoy coming to PE lessons and participating happily within lessons.

**MRS SLATER:** Standout moments are definitely winning the girls' Cheshire Cup with the football team - once in 2014 with the U14 team and then this season with the U16 team. It has been fantastic seeing the girls play together from year 7, and then - in their final year before leaving - winning the Cheshire Cup together as a team. Lastly, the World Sports Tour to South Africa was probably one of the most rewarding experiences ever...seeing sport bring together our pupils with the students from South Africa was truly wonderful. If you have the opportunity to go on a Sports Tour, I cannot recommend it enough.

**MRS WALSH:** Wow, so many! Winning the Cheshire Netball Seniors (quite a few years ago!) and coming second this year. Canada Tour 2000, Australia Tour 2004, Tennis National Finals for many years, BTEC trips to La Manga, Handball victories, Netball C team players in year 7 being the first on the team sheet in year 11 and getting county honours!

### What would you say to female students who are considering taking part in extra-curricular sport at Lymm but who are maybe a little apprehensive?

**MRS LOWRY-JOHNSON:** Come and chat to us! Let us know what's making you nervous and I'm sure we can help. Also, give it a go! You won't regret it!

**MRS ASHFORD:** You can join any time. It's never too late. Teachers are always there to be a friendly face and will make sure you will make friends. Once you have been to a couple of sessions, you will feel so much more confident about going. It just takes that first step!

**MRS SLATER:** : I would say, "what have you got to lose?!" Get involved, meet new people, and get fit and active. There is a sport out there for everyone, so try as many sports as you possibly can and find yours!

**MRS WALSH:** You will love it - give it a go! We are all pretty lovely - staff and extra-curricular students alike. And remember - everybody had to start somewhere!





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