

# A LIFE TOO SHORT

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**THE morning after the tragedy the play area, which thronged with happy children 24 hours earlier, was silent and empty.**

Bouquets near the spot where 12-year-old Alex Chappell fell into the river rustled in the breeze.

The rope used by the youngster as a makeshift swing before it snapped, sending him plunging into the murky water, hung limply from a tree.

Alex, pictured, brought warmth and joy into the lives of everyone he met during his too short life.

His death was a devastating end to what had been a sunny, carefree bank holiday for him and his young friends.



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KENT men finished second behind Yorkshire in the Achilles Trophy competition and the county's women were fourth in the National Inter-Counties Championships at Bedford at the weekend.

This gave Kent second overall out of 44 competing counties, scoring 10.5 points less

than Yorkshire for the Gemini Trophy. Tom Collins of Medway & Maidstone was fifth in the 3,000m steeplechase final (9.50.83) representing Kent, and club-mate Jo Blair finished sixth in the javelin final (49.50).

David Coleman of Tonbridge was fifth in the discus (53.14) with a personal best.

# M&M make their

## National Junior League

MEDWAY & Maidstone athletes enjoyed individual successes at the National Junior League, Medway Division competition at Tonbridge School on Sunday.

In the sprints, Jane Angus was second in the under-17 100m (12.63sec, pb) and Sophie Ayre won the B race (13.10).

In the under-20 200m, Annie Waghorn won (26.24) and Nicola Keegan was second B-string (26.96), while in the under-20 400m, Kate McGibbon was third with a pb (66.42).

George Vaughan was second under-17 in the 1,500m (4min 36.36sec, pb). Alex Wharfe (16.11) and Mark Cryer (19.59) dominated the under-20 men's 110m hurdles.

The under-20 women's 4x100m (50.71) and 4x400m (4.10.66) relay teams both won their events.

In the field events, there was a win double for under-20 high jumpers Dan Alexander (1.90m) and Tom Howlett (1.80). Ayre's under-17 second

place in the high jump (1.40) was a personal best. Howlett also took the under-17 pole vault B-string (2.85) and under-20 men's long jumper Stephen Sage was second (6.01) with his first ever leap over six metres.

There was more success for under-20 women's long jumpers, Ayre (5.12) and Francesca Baylis (4.76), while Sage added the under-20 men's triple jump (12.46).

The throwing events saw Cryer rewarded with a personal best in the under-20 men's shot (10.16), with Dan Gill (8.46) winning the B-string. Also in the shot under-20, Baylis (8.39) won the B-string.

Howlett (25.56) won the under-17 discus B-string and Reece Dimech threw a personal best of 37.90 in the under-17 men's javelin for the highlight of the throws.



FIELD SUCCESS: Medway & Maidstone AC's S above, tackle the high jump pdl1854889

## WEEK AHEAD

### SATURDAY

UK Women's League, various venues.  
Southern Men's League, various venues.  
[www.southernmensleague.org.uk](http://www.southernmensleague.org.uk)  
Harvel 5, Village Green, Harvel.  
[www.harvelh3.org](http://www.harvelh3.org)

### SUNDAY

UK Young Athletes League, various venues. [www.natyal.co.uk](http://www.natyal.co.uk)  
Beckenham 10k, Foxgrove Road, Beckenham (Kent Grand Prix). [www.beckenhamrunning.co.uk](http://www.beckenhamrunning.co.uk)  
Bluewater Gatorade 10k, Greenhithe. [www.bluewater10k.com](http://www.bluewater10k.com)

## MOTORSPORT: BIKER RETURNS FROM INJURY WITH A BANG WHILE RALLY ACE COOK LEADS LADIES' CUP AFTER TOP-2



TOP GEAR: Maidstone's Louise Cook tackles a jump in the Jim Clark International Rally

## Cook on right road for cup glory

LOUISE COOK finished the weekend lying fourth in the Fiesta Sporting Trophy UK series after the Jim Clark International Rally in Kelso, Scotland.

Maidstone's Cook had to take it easy during the reconnaissance of the course due to an illness to her co-driver and a new note system which they were trialling. The pair eventually completed

all 16 stages without a penalty in the Ford Fiesta ST, finishing 19th overall, and, after four rounds of the British Rally Championship, Cook is leading the Ladies' Cup from Australia's World Rally Championship driver Molly Taylor.

Cook said: "Jim Clark is such an amazing rally, I absolutely loved the jumps.

"Even though we made a few

mistakes and dropped a bit of time, I am so pleased to have got within 3.5 seconds a mile of the fastest Fiesta, Alistair Fisher, on one stage.

"Alistair is at the sharp end of the WRC Academy and was leading the Rally de Portugal until a mistake. To be so close to him in a car that is 3-4 seconds per mile slower I know we are going the right way about things."

## Fit-again Webb

JAMES WEBB made a stunning return from injury by clinching victory at Thruxton in the Harley Davidson Challenge.

Webb, from Tunbridge Wells, was competing for Blade Motorsport and had not raced properly since September after missing the start of this season with a foot injury.

After qualifying in third Webb stayed in contention with the front-runners before making a move on leader Alex Goult on the final lap to take claim the win.

Talking about the winning move, Webb said: "I was on Alex's tail and I knew if I passed him too early he would definitely have a go back at the last turns - a classic Thruxton move. So I knew the last turn I would have to just make a lunge.

"I got a good drive out of Church (corner) and was in his slipstream but we were both so late on the brakes. I felt the front trying to tuck and Alex was leaning on me but the move stuck and I got a really good run through the chicane which I was surprised at because I ran it in deep - and I won.

"Not only did I win I managed to get the lap record too - so it was an excellent result."

Webb's younger brother,

Danny, takes the limelight this weekend when the Motocross series heads to Spain for the Premi Aperol de Catalunya.

Maidstone's Steve meanwhile, is competing in the Isle of Man TT after a last-minute ride for Corless/Jackson Racing BMW bike.

The world-famous event runs until June 12 and Mercer is delighted to be involved after a previous ride for Soudell failed to materialise.

Mercer said: "While I know I won't win the TT, it is more than a big thrill for me and I want to be right up the front.

"I know where I want to go with my head this year but I'm going to say I am going

