

In the spotlight...

Toby Glass

Event change proves no barrier to GIAAC's Glass



Toby Glass pictured clearing the penultimate barrier during the under-17 men's 400m hurdles at the junior athletics inter-insular at Footes Lane recently.

(Picture by Adrian Miller, 15383387)

AFTER making the switch from flat racing just over a year ago, Toby Glass is already proving himself to be a 400m hurdler of real talent.

So much so that his 800m days seem a lifetime ago as he prepares for his maiden English Schools' Championship appearance in Gateshead this weekend.

The 16-year-old has achieved a place in the Guernsey team for that prestigious event by virtue of a personal best time of 57.59sec. run back in May on home soil. Since then he has also competed in the England Athletics Under-20 Championships in Bedford, but this Friday afternoon will be his biggest challenge over the barriers thus far.

It is especially impressive because up until the start of the 2015 season, he did not even have the 400m hurdles discipline on his mind. Guernsey's athletics development

Switching from a middle-distance runner to a 400m hurdler has proved fruitful for 16-year-old Toby Glass - he has gained qualification for this year's English Schools' Championships in the event. **Matt Lihou** reports

officer Tom Druce explains more. 'Toby had been part of the endurance training group coached by Ingy [Paul Ingrouille] and Alan Rowe, where he was focusing on the 800m,' explained Druce. 'But then Ingy saw something in Toby that he thought would make him a strong 400m hurdler - which is a completely different event - and encouraged him to give that a go. 'He did and now he is being coached by Dale [Garland] and has done incredibly well

considering that he has only been competing for little more than a year.

'To qualify for the English Schools so quickly - which has really tough qualifying criteria - is an excellent achievement.'

Now it is over the one-lap hurdles race where Glass seems to have a bright future and is one of a number of talented athletes Guernsey has in that particular area.

The presence of the brilliant Alastair Chalmers and Sam

Wallbridge means that Island Games qualification looks unlikely at the moment, but Glass' hopes can still be aimed high.

'The English Schools is probably even harder to qualify for than the Island Games, so it shows how well Toby is running to be in that sort of company,' continued Druce.

'For the next year or two, maybe longer, Toby's main focus is going to be on the national scene and some of the bigger events on the calendar.

'The English Schools is amongst that and there are also next year's age-group nationals, as well as the likes of the South of England Championships and other regional events.

'As long as Toby keeps developing the way he is at the moment under the guidance of Dale, then he has a really strong future ahead of him.'

TOBY GLASS

Age: 16

Sport: Athletics

Event: 400m hurdles

Club: Guernsey Island Amateur

Athletics Club