

# Skateboarders Carve a new sporting future

by ADAM BINNIE

TEENAGERS in Rickmansworth are proving their skateboarding aspirations are not just half-pipe dreams, thanks to a new eight-week course funded by Sport England.

Every Friday at St Joan of Arc School a class of beginner skaters weave their way between cones and other obstacles in order to hone their skills.

The course, provided by Wild-child Activities, is funded by Three Rivers District Council and Sport England with the aim of encouraging teenagers into unconventional sports.

St Albans-based Wildchild Activities is run by Keiran Regan, who said: "This was designed to provide confidence for children who aren't the most naturally talented sports people.

"Skateboarding is physically demanding and teaches them skills and agility.

"The children may be wanting to try something new, but see skateparks as being an intimidat-

ing place.

"It's about re-engaging people who had their confidence dented in sport and showing them there are alternatives to the sports on the curriculum."

The course, which runs from 3.15pm to 4.30pm, has been running for four weeks. Last week the class was learning how to "manual", or ride the skateboard on its rear wheels.

Alex Burton, a 22-year-old from Rickmansworth who teaches the course, said: "I've been skating nine years and had the opportunity to set up a school with Keiran.

"Seeing the progression from a kid who can't even stand on the board to someone who can do an ollie [a basic jump] or kickflip is amazing.

"We want them to be confident they are in control of the board, rather than the board be in control of them."

**Have you tried the course? What do you think? Tell us by visiting our website**



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A youngster in action.

Picture 20F3809. PIPPA DOUGLAS

## Clothes show

CLOTHES-MAKING students from South Oxhey are taking part in a three-week textiles course, which they hope will help them dress for success. The 15-hour clothes customisation course, Re-made, Re-worn, started on Thursday and takes place over three separate days at South Oxhey Baptist Church. As an opening exercise the class was split into two teams and students made outfits using dustbin liners and staplers. Pernille Fraser, who worked as a knitwear production assistant for fashion house Shirn Guild, after completing a degree in textiles, will teach the class.

## Wheeled off

TWO valuable cars were left standing on bricks when thieves stole their wheels. The thefts both occurred in Nightingale Road, Rickmansworth, in the early hours of Wednesday, May 19, between midnight and 6.15am, and both involved BMW cars. Numerous other BMW cars have also been targeted by wheel thieves in recent months in Radlett, Ruislip and Pinner. Another BMW was left on bricks in Valley Road, Chorleywood, in January. Anyone with information can telephone police on 0845 330 0222.

## Open day fun

THE newly-opened William Penn leisure centre is holding an open day this weekend. On Sunday from 10am to 4pm, there will be free activities include swimming, taster fitness classes, trampolining, competitions and a guest appearance from Peppa Pig. For more information telephone the venue on 01923 771050.