



Celebrating champion sports science at the National History Museum (London)

How does science help footballers play better and cyclists race faster? How do you train goalkeepers to anticipate which way a football penalty will go? Why do athletes with asthma win more Olympic gold medals than their non-asthmatic rivals? How do scientists use grip strength to assess an athlete's physical fitness?

These are just some of the questions that leading sports scientists from Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) and the University of Kent will be on hand to answer at the Natural History Museum on Wednesday 11 June as part of Universities Week 2014.

Greg Whyte, LJMU's Professor of Applied Sport and Exercise Science, is one of the sports scientists who'll be working at the Champion Science exhibition.

Professor Whyte has trained everyone from Eddie Izzard and Davina McColl to John Bishop and Chris Moyles, helping raise over £10million thanks to his work with Comic Relief.

Professor Whyte said:

"By revealing the science behind major sporting events, like the 2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil and Tour de France 2014, we hope to inspire people to get more active.

"The exhibition is designed to be fun but all of the activities are underpinned by serious research which is helping transform both the performance of elite athletes and our understanding of how physical activity impacts on our health and wellbeing".

Champion Science is one of 44 exhibitions selected to be part of this year's prestigious Universities Week 2014 event organised by Universities UK.

As part of this highly interactive exhibition, you will be able to:

- experience what it's like to be a World Cup goal keeper by anticipating where to direct your penalty save.
- take a look inside the 'human engine room' and watch as experts demonstrate live cardiac and carotid artery scans – the same tests which are carried out as part of a footballer's medical and to help identify athletes at risk of sudden cardiac death.
- measure your own lung function and see how it compares to the UK's top athletes.
- see how your speed and agility compares with the best football players in the country over a 5 metre course (weather permitting).
- complete a cycling challenge and see if you can keep pace with that set by Sir Bradley Wiggins and Chris Froome
- look at the technology behind football match analysis and how this informs coaching, tactical and punditry.

Dr John Dickinson, Lecturer and Head of Respiratory Clinic at University of Kent, said,

"We are very proud to have been selected to present Champion Science at the Universities Week main event NHM. The event provides an excellent platform to demonstrate how our research enhances athlete's performance and translates to training recreational athletes and diseased populations".

Nicola Dandridge, Chief Executive of Universities UK, added:

"The aim of Universities Week is to inspire the public about the world-leading research taking place in our universities. We hope Champion Science will inspire members of the public and give them an opportunity to learn something new about how universities are helping to solve some of the UK's and the world's biggest challenges."

The LJMU and University of Kent sport scientists will be delivering Champion Science activities in the National History Museum's Darwin Centre on Wednesday 11 June as part of Universities Week 2014.

Ends

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Notes to editors

About Liverpool John Moores University

Liverpool John Moores University is ranked equal first in the UK for 4* world-class sport-related research and our School of Sport and Exercise Sciences is rated as 'amongst the very best departments in the world'.

Face to Face with Sports Science is the award winning public engagement interface for LJMU's School of Sport and Exercise Sciences, designed to help the promotion of solutions to health challenges in society.

LJMU's Football Exchange supports the world of football through world class research, high quality education and applied enterprise solutions. Established in 2010, the Football Exchange harnesses all of the University's expertise in this field to create bespoke solutions for football clubs, governing bodies, commercial enterprises, and community schemes. The Football Exchange's client list includes: Real Madrid, Manchester United, Prozone, Professional Game Match Officials, Glaxo Smith Kline, Red Bull, UEFA, FIFA, The Football Association, the French Football Federation and Umbro as well as other Premier League football clubs.