

Anna Thornton at the Youth Olympic Games

Written by Administrator

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The Second Youth Olympic Games were held in Nanjing in the People's Republic of China from the 16th to 28th of August. Representing Great Britain in sculling was Anna Thornton, a Becket School pupil and member of Nottingham Rowing Club.

The YOG is an international multi-sport, educational and cultural festival for teenagers, held every two years. In this year's Games, 3600 athletes representing 200 countries competed in 28 summer sports. Sarah Winkless, an international rower, was GB's "Chef de Mission". After a spectacular opening ceremony built around the theme of "Building the Dream" all the athletes lived in an Olympic village. The whole experience is seen as preparation for future Olympians. Athletes attend lectures by Olympic stars and acclimatise to what might well be their future.

In the sculling competition Anna, current National Schools WJ18 Champion and recent winner of a bronze medal at the World Junior Rowing Championships in Hamburg, progressed through the heats to the semi-finals there she was narrowly pushed into fourth place which put her in the B final. Here she came second, an overall position of eighth in the rankings, and as she is still 17 a very creditable result.

Upon her return Anna said: "Nanjing was an incredible experience. It's great to race internationally and to compete against the strongest athletes in the world. There were a few challenges, including racing in a new boat and in a hot climate, but that's all part of competing. Living in the village with all the other athletes was great fun. I had the opportunity to watch a lot of the other sports and meet athletes from other countries."

So a quick break and it's back to school and back to training. Anna spends at least 14 hours per week in the boat, on the rowing machine, weight training, running, stretching and core-conditioning.

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The athletes' village in Nanjing