

GASP accolades are no surprise for aces

THE achievements of students taking part in GASP Motor Projects across the county were recognised at the charity's second awards ceremony – and where better to host the ceremony than at the modern home of local motorsport.

Ricky Marques from the Pyrford Centre, Morgan Painter of The Park School and Tasbiya Kham from Bishop David Brown School were among the 16 young people singled out for their accomplishments at the illustrious prizegiving at McLaren's Technology Centre.

Rewarded

GASP uses motor mechanics and practical engineering as the key motivator to deliver accredited AQA courses to some of the most marginalised teens in society, and to students with Special Educational Needs.

The group worked with more than 170 youngsters during the academic year 2013/2014 and, from that number, selected the very best to be rewarded.

Along with framed certificates, all prizewinners received a socket set and a McLaren cap.

After the presentations, winners and their guests enjoyed a



DREAM TEAM – these GASP Motor Project youngsters have been the stars of the show over the last year

once-in-a-lifetime Boulevard Tour of the state-of-the-art McLaren Technology and Production Centre. They were also photographed with one of the latest McLaren Formula One cars.

"This event is the GASP equivalent of a school prizegiving," explained GASP Chair of Trustees, Sally Varah.

"The recipients should all feel very pleased with themselves."

Guests on the day included Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, Michael More-Molyneux; the Chairman of Surrey County Council, Sally Marks; and county council Chief Executive, David

McNulty. Sally added that the charity is indebted to all their supporters, particularly their hosts on the night: "As a small charity, GASP is immensely grateful to McLaren for championing our work, and for this global giant's willingness and enthusiasm to recognise and reward our young award winners in this way.

"GASP is a small charity doing some quite big things, quite differently.

"We taught youngsters new skills in different ways, outside the classroom – to help them discover talents and achieve things they probably never

thought they could. At GASP they learned how to strip down an engine, and how to deconstruct and then reconstruct a go-kart.

"But along the way, at GASP – maybe without even realising it – they also learned a whole range of other things: we call them life skills.

"That is why the GASP Awards event not only recognises motor engineering skills development – we are also rewarding your enthusiasm to learn, perseverance, and total engagement, and recognising those who have shown a positive attitude to learning, and been a role model to their peers."



Legacy blazes on

FOLLOWING a visit to the Olympic Park at Stratford, London, on Wednesday I attended the Sport Woking Awards at the HG Wells Centre where talented local sports performers, coaches, volunteers, teams and clubs were recognised and rewarded for their outstanding achievements in the previous 12 months.

There has been some concern that the legacy expected following the Olympics has faded, but there was no suggestion of that at these awards.

The many sports which were nominated by the public proved that participation continues to be strong in Woking.

The Mayoress and I spent two very interesting hours on Wednesday visiting the New Life Church in Kingfield and discovering their many community activities.

Presented

We dropped into the Little Seeds Toddler Group and the Foundations Pre-School where we were presented with specially made medals created by the children and enjoyed their singing.

We were shown the South Woking Community Food Bank which supports families nominated by local schools.

We later attended an assembly at Westfield Primary School to present certificates and prizes to pupils for their winning entries in the International Day of Peace competition.

The final night of the 57th Woking Drama Festival at the Rhoda McGaw Theatre on Saturday was a real treat with three performances recalled from all those previously presented.

The wide range of one-act plays performed over two weeks by adult and youth drama groups were of a very high standard.

Congratulations to the winners of the many awards and to Woking Drama Association for super organisation.