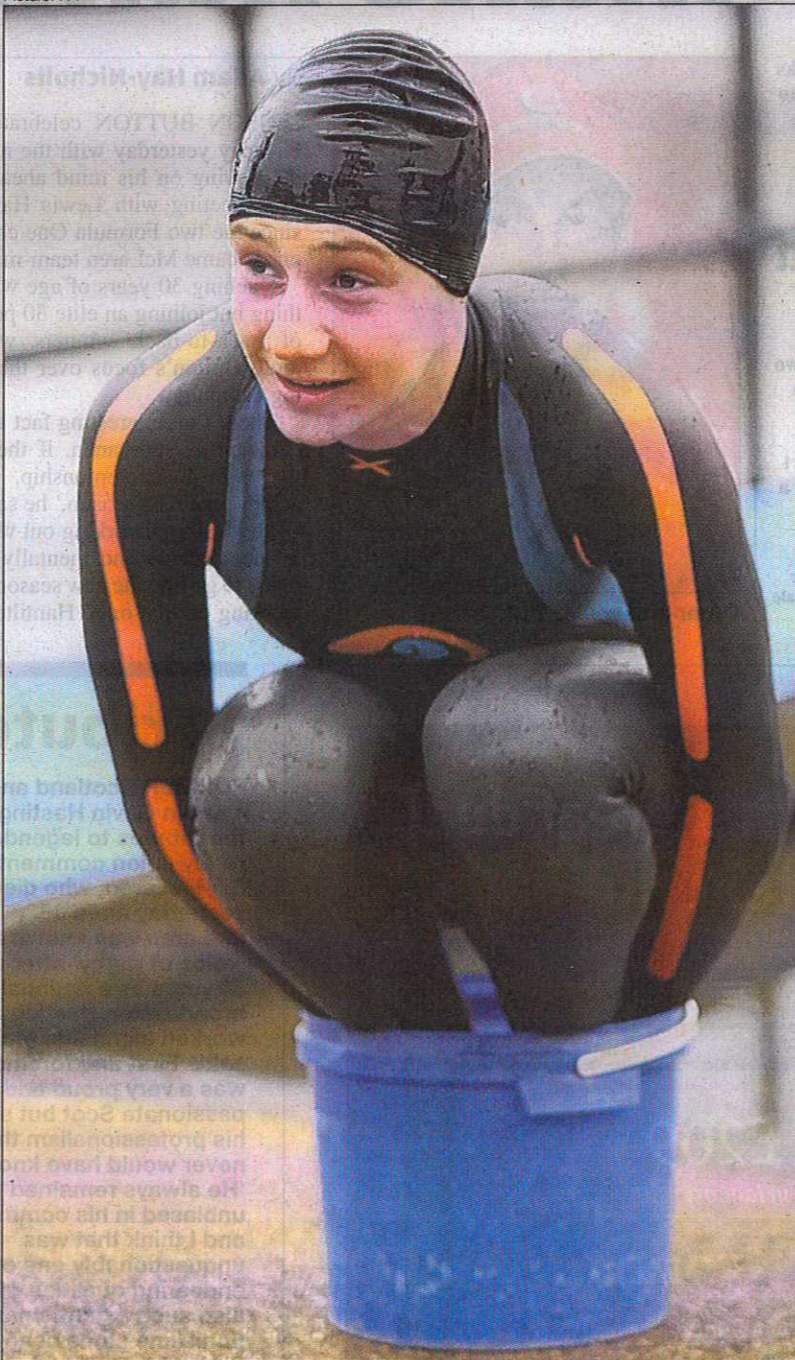


Picture: PA



► Brownlee chasing a bucketload of medals

OLYMPIC hope Alistair Brownlee warms his hands and feet before plunging into London's Serpentine yesterday. The triathlon world champion emerged as one of Britain's brightest hopes for London 2012 last year. The 21-year-old, from Leeds, began last season as a promising youngster having won junior and under-23 world titles, and finished 12th on his Olympic debut in Beijing in 2008. But he swept all before him, winning all four World Championship Series events he entered to leap to the top of the world rankings. Brownlee then claimed victory at the World Championship Series Grand Final in Australia to finish the year with a perfect record. Now Brownlee is back in training for the new season, and admitted: 'It's different. There's more pressure and I guess other guys see me as more of a danger but it's still just a race and when the gun goes it'll be the same. 'I think I can improve myself but whether I can improve on my results I don't know. I had quite a lot of luck last year. I'm quite lucky in that I'm quite even across the disciplines but I want to get better. Hopefully I'll be fitter and stronger this year.'