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South Leeds



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# ALL BET TO DAZL



● SKILLS: The Peewee Boyz from the DAZL Diamonds cheerleaders show off their moves.

POMS in hand, these are country's first all-boy leaders.

anybody's got a problem with the lads the DAZL Diamonds Cheer Squad they do well to remember they are from south Leeds. Peewee Boyz have just competed against in the world at the three-day International Championships in Coventry. train at the William Gascoigne Centre in Hunslet. Their head coach is Ian Rodley, 26, from

by Charles Heslett

Belle Isle. He said: "We mix break-dancing and street dancing with cheer dancing. "So we're taking things that are predominantly female and male and fusing them together to make them cool and attractive for boys." For Harvey Pratt, eight, from Belle Isle, the appeal of cheer dance (with pom-poms) and cheerleading (with lifts) is simple. He said: "I like to cheer dance with the pom-

poms. You get a good boost with the cheerleading when you get thrown up in the air. It makes your body stronger." His pal Lewis Overhall, 10, from Halton Moor, added: "When I play football the other lads do take the pee but I don't really care. "I just like it and I've been doing it for a year now." DAZL, short for Dance Action Zone Leeds, was set up in 2000 as a charity to reduce health inequalities through dance in deprived areas. The 120-strong squad trains at the centre in Acre Road under the expert eye of Ian and fellow head coach Cherry Brown.

Last year, the Diamonds got first place in the British Cheerleading Association's premier competition and are hoping to repeat that feat. Director Sue Pennycook said: "The squad has a very loyal following with mums, dads and friends following them all around the place and they've really helped with raising the money." DAZL is backed by the council and the local primary care trust and is sponsored by local businesses including South Leeds and Hunslet Cars and Hesco Bastion. For more details visit [www.dazl.org.uk](http://www.dazl.org.uk). [charles.heslett@ypn.co.uk](mailto:charles.heslett@ypn.co.uk)

# Cheerleader champs need £30k for US bid



**CASH TARGET:** The Prep Squad dancers were winners at the International Cheer Championships. Now they need to find £30,000 to compete in Florida next year

## BY CHARLES HESLETT

**SUCCESS** comes at a price – £30,000 to be exact for one south Leeds cheerleading group.

The Prep Squad dancers from the Dazl Diamonds Cheer Squad in Middleton have just been crowned division champions at the International Cheer Championships (ICA) in Coventry.

As the British Cheerleading Association's top divisional squad they are now entitled to compete in the AmeriCheer International Championships in Florida next April.



There's just one problem – or 30,000 depending on your perspective.

Head coach Ian Rodley, 26, said: "We did really, really well. The Prep Squad's win means they can now go to Disneyland in Florida to compete in

next year's AmeriCheer events.

"We had to raise £17,000 to get to the ICA championships, but this is in a different league.

"We're looking at about £30,000 so we've got a lot of fundraising to do between now and then if we're to go."

The Diamonds' Senior New Squad also took first in their division.

And the country's first all boy cheerleaders the Pee-wee Boyz came third in the same competition while the Pee-wee Girls and the Junior Squad also taking second.

The 120-strong DAZL squad which trains at the William Gascoigne Centre

in Middleton under Ian and fellow head coach Cherry Brown.

DAZL is short for Dance Action Zone Leeds and was set up in 2000 as a charity to reduce health inequalities through dance in deprived areas.

It is backed by the council and the local primary care trust and is sponsored by local businesses including South Leeds and Hunslet Cars and Hesco Bastion.

● For details on how to join visit [www.dazl.org.uk](http://www.dazl.org.uk) or to sponsor the group go to [www.bebe.com/dazlidiamonds](http://www.bebe.com/dazlidiamonds)

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# BRIEFLY

## Boy cheerleaders aim to be champs

Britain's first all-boy cheerleading squad, The Peewee Boyz, from Leeds, are hoping to impress at this year's International Cheer Championship, which starts tomorrow. Head coach Ian Rodley, 26, from Leeds, said: "We're taking things that are predominantly female and male and fusing them together to make them cool and attractive for boys."

