



Scientist at work: Alison in her home laboratory and below, some of her products

Alison has also developed a body cream for swimmers to counteract the damage chlorine does to skin, after meeting a hydrotherapist who works with children with disabilities for hours on end in the pool. He persuaded her there was a real gap in the market for swimmers left with tight, itchy skin after being in the water.

She used zinc oxide and pro vitamin B5 in her Recovery Phase Swim cream to act as a natural barrier, stopping the chlorine bonding with the skin, as well as providing waterproofing: "Chlorine dries out your body and face. And open water sports and exercise can cause even more damage, with salt water attacking your natural oils and sapping the moisture from your skin."

THE cream has gone down well when they have promoted it at swimming pools and at galas: "There is a huge need in the swimming population for this. Lots of people who try our samples come back to buy and many parents of children who swim say it is helping to clear up dry, itchy skin problems."

It has also won the backing of North Yorkshire-based Olympic Team GB diver Jack Laugher, who took the cream with him to Australia recently, where he won Gold for the fourth time in the Junior World Championships.

Alison and Pete, who have had support from both Harrogate Borough Council Enterprise Scheme and the York Council-funded Science City York, calculate it will take about 18 months to claw back their initial investment.

But the pair, who have designed their own packaging, which features the DNA double helix, and stick the labels on the pots themselves, have ambitious plans for their fledgling company.

They want to develop an after-sports alcohol-free cleansing wipe, to absorb salts and sweat, as well as a cream with sun protection, which won't run into the eyes and sting during exercise. There are also plans for swimming shower gels and shampoos.

"I would love to have a small laboratory in Ripon and create employment for local people. The sports market is enormous, with a huge surge in the number of people doing sports since the Olympics, but our biggest challenge now is getting our products out there."

While Pete still works as an electrical engineer, the hardest thing for Alison has been giving up the security of a salary: "When it has been tough, it has been tempting to go for a salaried position again. Not having a pay cheque is the hardest thing. But I can't give up now."

Ironically, the cream Alison used to use has since recently come back on the market again. "This all started because I couldn't find the moisturiser I wanted. I used to feel unhappy about how



Recovery Phase Rehydration Cream, £9.95 for 50ml pot. Swim cream from £8.95. Find out more on brodieskincare.co.uk, call 07934-113939 or email alison@brodieskincare.co.uk

my skin felt every day. The problem could have been solved straight away if I could have used my old cream. If it wasn't for that need, I would never have gone down this path."

However, since she has become more interested and knowledgeable about the ingredients in her cosmetic products it has made her think again: "I am now obsessed with what is in things. When I read the label of what went into my old cream I realised I wouldn't want to put it on my face now anyway. I wouldn't touch it."

"I have been using my own cream for six months now and all the problems I had with my skin have completely disappeared. I have almost forgotten why I needed to develop it."

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