

Sports

Siblings swimming to glory

BY SIAGO CECE
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Imagine sharing a love for the same sport with your brother or sister. It would mean shared moments of training together and even competing against each other! What's more? You would have lots and lots of things to talk about and explore in line with your sport.

For Ivan Hart, 12, and her younger sister Alexandra Hart, 10, this is a reality.

The two who are students at Aga Khan Academy Mombasa both share a love for swimming. They have been swimming since they were very young and have many medals from numerous competitions they have participated in.

Their mother Mrs Larissa Hart, is their greatest fan.

Ivan, a Grade 7 student, is in the Kenya national swimming team. When he was very young, Ivan's parents would take him along to the home pool where he would swim without floaters. They taught him not to be scared of water and he learnt to stay afloat.

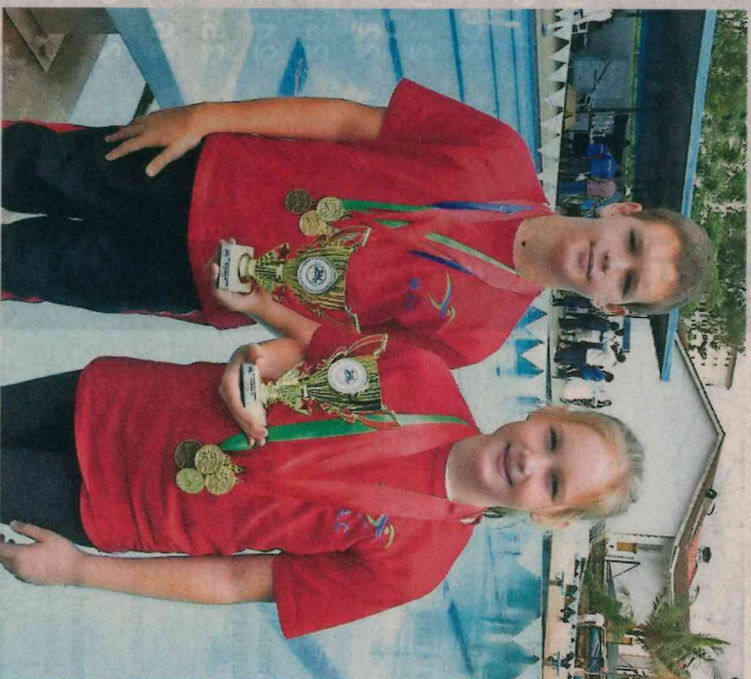
"But they did not teach me strokes," says the older of the two siblings.

It was the same for Alexandra.

Both were introduced to swimming when they were still very young.

However, she adds that it is her elder brother who inspired him to keep swimming.

They would then start attending swimming lessons while they were at Aga Khan Academy nursery school and were



Ivan Hart, 12, (left) and Alexandra Hart, 10, both pupils at Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa. Both are good swimmers. They have also won many medals in various competitions. PHOTO | CECE SIAGO

coached by coach Muli and coach Malik.

And because swimming is a sport that requires regular practice, the young swimmers have training classes every weekday in the evening.

They train every weekday from Monday to Friday at 5 pm and also during the weekends.

Currently, they belong to the Mombasa Aquatics Club managed by Coach Abdulmalik Abubakar who trains them.

It sometimes gets challenging for Ivan, especially when he has to sometimes miss his classes to attend competitions outside the

country, but he still manages to balance between his studies and training.

"In senior school, there is more work to do but I still manage to balance. I was one of the best performing students in the first semester when I got a first class honours," says Ivan who hopes to even perform better.

Through swimming, the two siblings have had lots of shared moments together, including travelling to other countries and winning medals and trophies.

They recently participated in the Coast Amateur Swimming Association (CASA) Age group

and Open Championship, where Alexandra won five gold medals and four silver medals while Ivan bagged eight gold medals and one silver medal.

The gala had swimmers from all the clubs in Mombasa of all age groups compete at the Aga Khan swimming pool.

This month, Ivan is expected to represent Kenya in a swimming competition in Namibia. Among others, he has participated in competitions in Uganda, South Africa and London. He hopes to study economics when he gets to university.

Their role models are South Africa's Chad le Clos, Michael Phelps (USA) who are great swimmers and Emily Muteti from Kenya.

Apart from swimming, Alexandra loves gymnastics. She also plays hockey, rounders and net ball in school.

For the duo, the best thing about swimming is when they are identified as siblings.

"When we participated in junior galas, I was always Ivan's sister, because he was older and was very good. But when he moved to the age group, I became my own swimmer and everyone knows me now for my own achievements. I am back now with him, but I do not mind. It is good to swim together again and I am very proud of my brother," says Alexandra.

She loves animals a lot and wants to be either a medical or a veterinary doctor. A veterinary doctor treats animals such as dogs or cows.

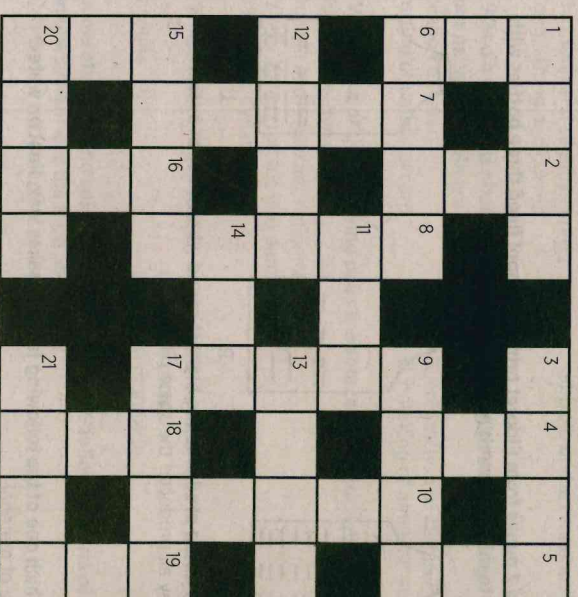
She also hopes to participate in the World Olympics someday.



Ivan Hart, 12. He wants to be a financial economist.

Alexandra Hart, 10. She wants to be a veterinary doctor.

Crossword



ACROSS

- 1.A word that means the same as 'brave'
- 3.A part of a plant
- 6.A prophet in the Bible
- 9.Not hot
- 11.To be ill, usually for a long time
- 12.Prepare
- 13.Not closed
- 14.Kaka wa baba
- 15.Kinyume cha 'anika'
- 17.A piece of furniture in a classroom
- 20.A bucket is also called a ...
- 21.To slide eg, over snow

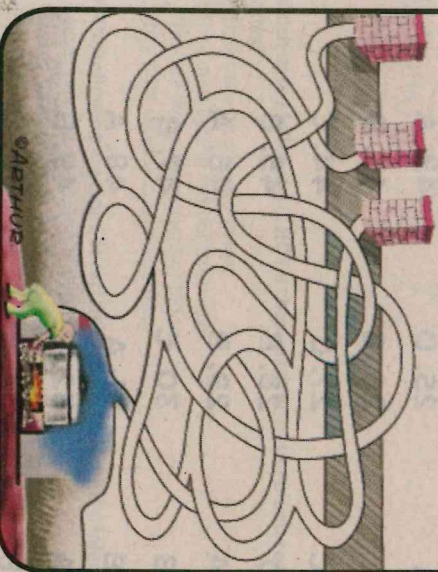
DOWN

- 1.A snake that kills its prey by

ANSWERS

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| DOWN | ACROSS |
| 1. KILLER | 1. BRAVE |
| 2. BUCKET | 2. PLANT |
| 3. MOOSE | 3. MOOSE |
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FROM WHICH CHIMNEY WILL THE BILLOWING SMOKE FIND THE EXIT?



WHAT IS TEACHER LINETTE RUSHING TO PICK IN THE OFFICE? FILL IN THE LETTERS FOR THE NAMES OF THE ITEMS BELOW AND MATCH THE NUMBERS AT THE BOTTOM TO DISCOVER.



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