

Written by John Crumlish
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British gymnast **Kelly Simm** told IG that competing at last weekend's American Cup in Chicago helped her assess her readiness for this weekend's British gymnastics championships in Liverpool.

Simm placed fifth all-around at the American Cup and is eager to show she is still going strong after recovering from multiple injuries. Simm, who turns 23 on April 23, is now the second-oldest member of the British women's squad after 2008 and 2016 Olympian **Becky Downie**, 26.

"Chicago showed me that we are definitely heading in the right direction," said Simm, whose parents traveled to the United States to cheer her on. "I was very happy to put out four solid routines, and I haven't competed an all-around competition in a big arena like that for a while, so I was very happy to do that. Going into the next few competitions, I am going to keep working on my execution on all events and concentrate on my landings, especially on floor, which should come more consistent as my routine stamina improves."



Simm said competing in Chicago has motivated rather than fatigued her as she prepares for Liverpool.

"It has been a quick turn-around from the American Cup, but we are taking it one day at a time in training and trying to get the balance right between training and recovery," said the Southampton native. "I felt very honored to be selected for the American Cup and it has made me even more excited for the British championships."

Simm is coached by **Debbie** and **Keith Richardson** at the Dynamo School of Gymnastics in Southampton. In 2014, she was the British vault champion and helped England win gold at the Commonwealth Games. Her breakout year was in 2015, when she won the all-around gold medal at the University Games in Gwangju, South Korea, and helped Great Britain to a historic third place at the world championships in Glasgow, the first world championships team medal

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for the British women. That same year, her impressive upgrades included a full-twisting double back off beam, making her possibly the first British gymnast to compete the ultra-difficult dismount.

However, a stress fracture in her back and then an ankle injury limited Simm the past two seasons, keeping her out of the 2016 London World Cup and last year's British championships. With an eye on other upcoming competitions, Simm said she is eager to again prove herself at Liverpool's Echo Arena as one of her country's top gymnasts.

"It's great to compete there," she told IG. "A lot of the coaches and girls from the club come and support, too, which is lovely. I want to show that I am back up there with everyone else and that I am continuing to improve."

Simm is also preparing for her second Commonwealth Games, which take place next month in Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia. She is the only returning member of Team England's gold medal-winning squad from the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

"Because I've been coming back from injury towards the end of last year, I haven't have the chance to get my new skills into my routines, as competition season began so early this year," she said. "So after the Commonwealth Games, I am hoping to get some new skills routine-ready for the rest of the competitions this year."

The 2018 British Gymnastics Championships began today with the Espoirs (Hopes) competition and continue Friday with the junior all-around. The senior all-around for men and women is scheduled for Saturday, followed by apparatus finals on Sunday.