

LEISURE SAFETY

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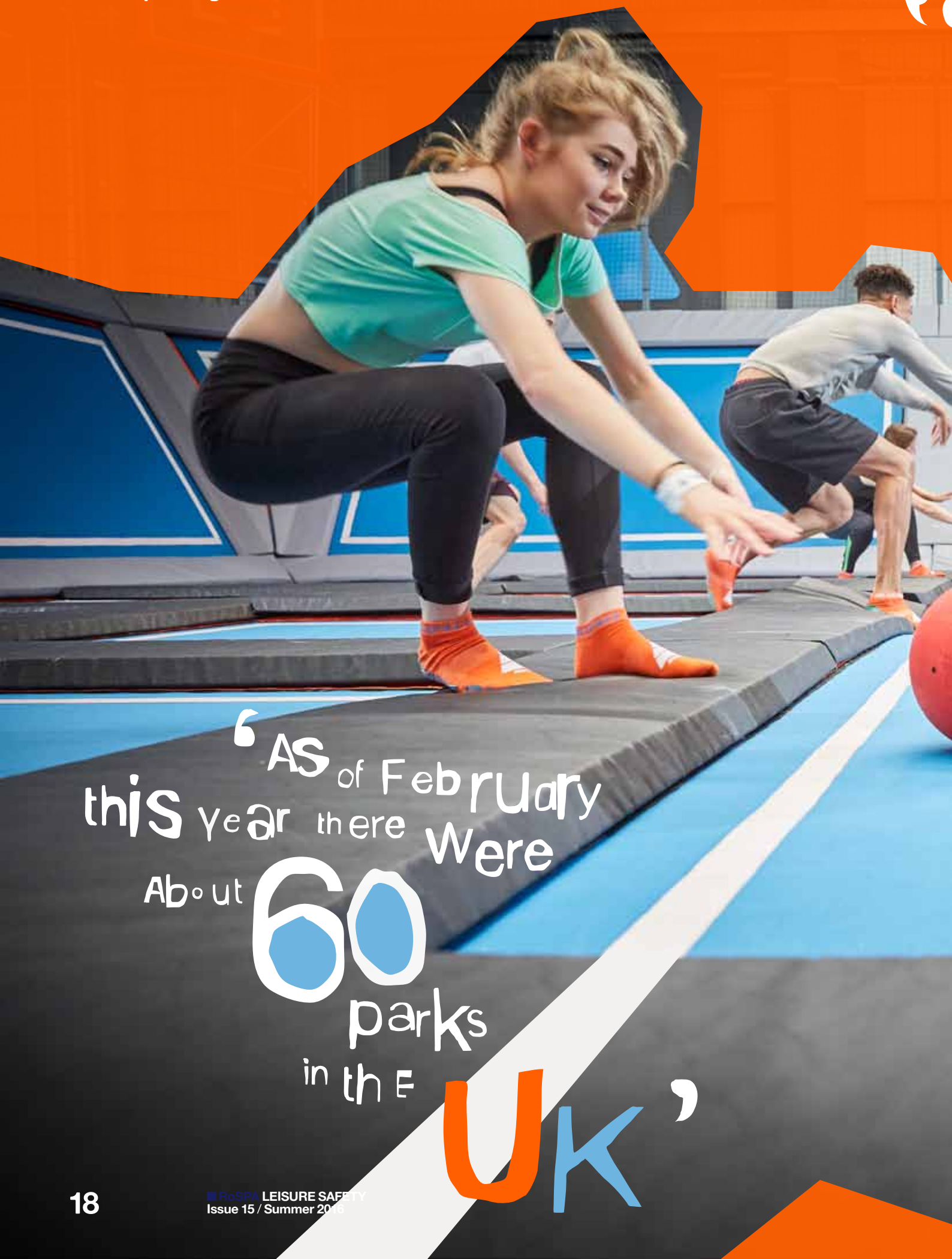
MpOLiNE

parks



TRAMPOLINE PARKS, WITH WALL TO WALL BOUNCING AREAS, ARE SPRINGING UP ALL OVER THE COUNTRY AND ENJOYING GREAT SUCCESS. HOWEVER, SOME CENTRES HAVE BEEN A FOCUS OF CONCERN WITH HIGH RATES OF INJURY AND HOSPITALISATION.

PETER BROWN, CHAIR OF UK SUB COMMITTEE IATP AND TECHNICAL AUTHOR OF THE BSI PAS, LOOKS AT THE KEY ISSUES AND WHAT IS BEING DONE TO RAISE STANDARDS ACROSS THE INDUSTRY.



‘AS of February
this year there were
About **60**
parks
in the **UK**,’

play”



“have fun”

Tampoline parks offer a great way for children and adults to play, have fun and, importantly, take part in physical activity. First arriving to the UK in 2014, the parks have enjoyed huge growth.

Many hundreds of thousands of customers have safely enjoyed trampoline parks and the activities they contain. However, they are a high risk environment and it is impossible to completely remove this risk. As of February this year there were about 60 parks in the UK, with more opening on a weekly basis. With the industry still in its infancy it has been a challenge to keep up with its speed of growth and pass on the knowledge that the more established operators have gained.

In order to provide a collective approach to concerns regarding accidents and consistent standards, an industry working group, including park operators, representatives from local authorities and British Gymnastics, was

formed. This then moved into a committee of the International Association of Trampoline Parks (IATP). The UK Sub Committee of the IATP focus is to share best practice and accident data and to look into how best to ensure the safety of trampoline park customers across the UK. This group shares knowledge and practice internationally through its links with the International Association of Trampoline Parks (IATP).

An early task was to hold the UK's first operational conference, attended by over 75 people from all aspects of the industry, including constructors, operators and insurers. All aspects of park design, construction and operation were touched upon during the day. A second conference was held in June this year with approximately 90 participants representing all sectors of the industry.

A key task for the group is the drafting of a publically accessibly British standard. Led by a cross section of operators, members of UK-IATP and RoSPA, it is hoped this will be available within the next 12 months. In the interim period, the UK-IATP recommends that an independent inspection of the facility is a sensible approach to formulating a safety case for the design and construction of a park.

It is the group's intention to help all interested parties to better understand the design, construction and operation of a trampoline park, allowing the industry to go from strength to strength.

RoSPA's leisure safety manager, Dave Walker, said: "Trampoline parks have seen an explosive growth over the past few years and unfortunately some communities have seen a rise in A&E visits as a result. It's heartening to see the sector organising and sharing good practice and we are supporting the International Association of Trampoline Parks and the British Standards working group to draft nationally recognised operational guidelines. This should provide a clear framework for parks and regulators to work towards."