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TV's Becky Jago on her exciting new anchor role at Anglia

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Becky's back in the news

Becky Jago grew up watching Helen McDermott on Anglia TV, but never did she think she'd end up reading the news. **Claire Milner-Smith** met the latest anchorwoman at ITV Anglia.

PICTURES: IAN BURT



Becky wears Love Moschino navy dress, £132, and Dolce & Gabbana shoes, £195, both Ginger, Norwich, 01603 763158.

A decade or so ago I was ticked off – well, I received a strongly-worded letter – by somebody who wanted to take me to task for having the audacity to describe the then 20-something Becky Jago as the region's favourite weather girl.

I may have the memory of an elephant to remember the stinging criticism but, as it turns out, perhaps my illustration of her popularity with TV audiences wasn't too far off the mark.

After taking the national stage by storm, landing jobs on Channel 5's *The Wright Stuff*, BBC's *Newsround* and co-presenting on the Capital FM breakfast show alongside the likes of Chris Tarrant and Johnny Vaughan in the process, Becky Jago is back.

Albeit a few years older, happily married and a mother

of twins, she's once more a permanent fixture on regional TV, as the new anchorwoman of ITV Anglia's pan-regional evening news programme, alongside Jonathan Wills.

The pre-presenting jitters, anxiety dreams, sleepless nights and, what her husband, Pablo, describes as PJT (Pre Job Tension) have passed, and she's settling into her new high-profile job.

"It's going really well, I'm enjoying it and Jonathan and I are having fun and hopefully that comes across," she tells me.

"The programme may not look that different to the viewers but there's quite a lot going on behind the scenes, which makes it a different job for us all, because it's not just me and Jonathan, there's a huge team of people working hard.

"I think there were a few people walking around on

the first day, me included, wringing their hands and thinking: 'Oh my goodness, is this going to be OK?', but actually, it all went really well.

"Once I got the first show or two over with I thought: 'OK, this is fine I can do this', and I feel like I've been doing it a lot longer so it's all good, everybody's pleased and hopefully the viewers like it too."

The launch of the new-look programme signalled the end of a very uncertain time at Anglia following ITV's announcement of widespread redundancies.

And, although the restructuring efforts turned out pretty well for Becky in the end, she wasn't immune from the worry that went hand-in-hand with the dreaded R-word.

"Like everybody, I worried about what would happen if I was put in that position, I thought about all sorts of things I could do; I considered nursing, and because both my parents were teachers that has always been something I'd quite like to do.

"But at the end of the day I love

working at Anglia and in the media, this is what I feel I'm good at and really enjoy doing, so I'm just pleased to have been given the opportunity to stay with it," she tells me.

However, a number of ITV Anglia employees were not quite so fortunate and the company's restructuring process led to the departure of a few familiar faces from our screens, including Becky's on-screen colleagues, her predecessor Clare Weller, of course, and fellow news presenters Tim Curtis and Caroline Oldrey.

Does the loss of these much-loved presenters put extra pressure on you, I ask?

"Inevitably there are going to be difficulties when a company goes through that turmoil and it was difficult but everybody was very professional about it," Becky explains.

"I did wonder how people would react to me because they loved Clare, Caroline and Tim, but I'm not a new face at Anglia, and I hope it will help that people know me from reporting and the weather.

Becky's life off-screen

For Becky Jago, those days of nipping to the gym or working out to an exercise DVD at home have been replaced by games of Ring a Ring o'Roses and horsey rides around the sitting room with her two sons, Hugo and Chester.

Nowadays she's more likely to be blowing away the cobwebs at Cromer or letting off steam among the prehistoric creatures at the Dinosaur Adventure Park at Lenwade.

Although Becky, who lives with her family on the outskirts of Dereham, insists she doesn't go out a lot – it's always tricky trying to find a babysitter – her favourite places to eat out are The Last Wine Bar in Norwich or the city's Shiki Japanese Restaurant in Tombland, which serves as a pleasant reminder of time spent living in Japan in her 20s.

She's also a keen supporter of the county's breast cancer charities, in tribute to her much-loved mother who died at Christmas in 1999.

In fact, later this year, Becky is set to comper a large-scale charity event in October, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, in a bid to raise money for the charity and to help increase understanding of the disease and its treatment.

"Everybody is working for this new programme now and we're all looking forward; I know these are big shoes to fill and I'm certainly not thinking that everyone is saying: 'This is fantastic', I can but try," she explains.

The 32-year-old, who turns 33 this month, grew up in Stowmarket. At the age of 18 and in a flood of tears, she started a media performance course at university in Luton (apparently, she continued to cry solidly for two days after her parents first dropped her off at university).

However, she adapted to her new student life and soon loved every second of it. It appears that even in those very early days she was suited to broadcasting.

In fact, during a news-reading workshop at university, a former ITN newsreader taking the lesson, told her she had a future in the business.

"I don't think I thought I actually would, or could, but it was nice to hear," explains Becky.

After landing a job at the former Vibe FM radio station, she appeared in an Anglia TV documentary that caught the attention of the powers-that-be and was offered a job as "the region's favourite weather girl" in 1999.



Becky wears Ralph Lauren navy jumper, £132, Ralph Lauren shirt, £110, and Dolce & Gabbana white cropped jeans, £135, all Ginger, Norwich, 01603 763158.

Becky with her three-year-old twin sons, Hugo and Chester.

Although that was nearly 10 years ago now – she left Anglia in 2001 for the BBC's children's news programme, Newsround – she has fond memories of her stint presenting the weather.

"It was a great job and people were so lovely to me. I used to get loads of letters and cards, and it felt as though people were really behind me," she says.

It was also a period of change in her personal life, as she juggled 5.30am starts working on Five's topical chat show, The Wright Stuff, coupled with late nights compiling and presenting the weather for the day's news bulletins.

More importantly, she also met Pablo Dimoglou, the man who, some years later, would become her husband and the father of her three-year-old twins, Hugo and Chester.

The couple proved long-distance love could work when she moved to live in London to present Newsround,

while he remained in Norwich.

"It was pretty obvious, after a little while, that we knew it was going to be really serious. Both of us fell in love quite quickly."

When a family friend and the local parish priest from Stowmarket suggested St John's RC Cathedral in Norwich as the venue for their wedding, they thought it was a great idea. Becky and Pablo married there just before Christmas 2004.

"I think I filled about four pews," she says, laughing.

The nuptials were followed by a reception at the former Georgian merchant's house in Coltishall, The Norfolk Mead Hotel, complete with Christmas trees, crackers, mulled wine and twinkling lights.

However, while it was exciting to be living in London, it took a little getting used to, particularly for the Suffolk-born

woman who enjoyed living in the countryside where there was space to breathe.

And although the job was amazing and she loved the shopping, Becky hated going on the Tube, and the hustle and bustle of life in the capital.

"I remember thinking: 'I wonder how long I'm going to stay here'. I never ever completely settled into London life," she tells me.

In fact, London was the location of one of the most memorial moments in her career, even if it was for all the wrong reasons, when she made a gaff on the celebrity version of the BBC show, The Weakest Link.

TV's ice queen, Anne Robinson asked her what was the safest way to read a firework instruction manual: a match or a torch. Suffice to say, Becky didn't get it right.

"I've never had stage-fright before, but



Dolce & Gabbana pink bow top, £154, and Dolce & Gabbana skirt, £194, both Ginger, Norwich, 01603 763158.