

APRIL NEWSLETTER

SHEFFIELD OLYMPIC TRIALS

By the time you read this Tomp will probably be flying back to Australia. Did you catch sight of him training at Summerfields – he seems to be even bigger and stronger but that is what six months intensive training does for the body. I posted the times he did at the British Olympic Trials on the Notice Board, quite impressive weren't they and just think he comes from little Seagull SC down here in Hastings. I believe his next two dates are in Mexico and Belgrade, lets hope he keeps on getting even faster at those two meets.

GILLINGHAM IN THE SNOW

Thirty six of our swimmers spent the day that it snowed in North Kent at the Black Lion pool in Gillingham. Apart from the snow which made the world look totally different and turned our proposed picnic area into a snowfield, which gave the swimmers an excuse for a snowball battle at half time and gave a new meaning to “warm up” in the pool before the second session. There were several incidents which made the day quite memorable, for instance we won 47 medals, did 48 PBs, achieved 16 Regional QTs and we came SECOND with an overall points total of 172 against the other 28 clubs competing. But the highlights of the day involved one man in white. Were you at the final of the Speedo league at Sevenoaks in December, well the little man in white who shouted at the swimmers telling them to keep away from the edge of the pool on that evening was the Official Starter at Black Lion and his day started to go wrong in the final heat of the 1st event – the Girls 200mIM. Tillie and Sarah were swimming for us, Tillie was winning and Sarah was in 3rd place. As Tillie went under the Flags 5m from the finish our man in white twisted the pole holding up the flags so hard that he snapped the string which dropped the flags right in front of Sarah, stopping her so that she finished fifth. Chaos resulted so much so that the result for this whole event of six heats was not published on the day. I can't really blame him for what happened next but his starting mechanism stopped working – No BEEP to start – apparently the battery was flat so they had to take it away to recharge it. In his wisdom our man decides he will continue by starting the heats by saying “Take your marks” and shouting “GO”, no whistle just him shouting!! Eventually a Starting Pistol arrived poolside and our swimmers who were already laughing at him christened him “Pistol Pete”. By the second session they had recharged the battery

and the electronic timing system was back to normal but it should be remembered that a lot of swimmers from all the clubs had come to try and achieve Regional QTs at this Licensed meet and obviously the “Times” recorded during the chaos would not be recognised by the ASA. The final strange event of the day was when Alex looked at the Silver medal he had won in the 200m Backstroke he found that it said that he had swum 2000m! How about that for a collector’s piece.

THE COUNTIES AT K2 CRAWLEY

The final weekend at the Counties produced more fantastic results by our swimmers and by the end of the Championships we had brought our total of RQTs to 48, a year ago we couldn’t dream of a score like that. In addition it must be remembered that our 10,11 & 12 year old swimmers do not have events at the Regionals for 50m or 100m and can only enter 200m events. As usual the results for all recent competitions – the Mini Gala, the Club Championships, the Counties and Orpington Ojays have been put on the Notice Board for you to look at and record your swimmers times so that you can keep a track of their PBs - you do that don’t you!! From the results at the Counties you can see how well the younger ones swam in their shorter distance races – well done to them all. As usual the K2 Car Park was packed by the time we got there, on one day as well as our swimming Championships there was a Boys Regional Gymnastic Championship and on the other day there was a Regional Martial Arts Competition. The place was packed but don’t forget according to some grey suits around Hastings, Rother and Lewes there is no money in having a Sports Complex and 50m Pool. When the Car Park is full an overflow comes into operation which is a good 5 minutes walk away which isn’t too bad on a sunny day but this was one of the days when the rains came down as we were going home which is really nice after ten hours at the pool. During the meet one of the timing pads stopped working which eventually caused the whole electronic system to stop by the pool, but the organisers immediately used extra hand held timekeepers so that the times would be recognised as Regional and National QTs. The other fact that transpired from this was that the placement judges could not see sufficiently well across the eight lanes to be sure of the places in a close finish. I don’t think there is any need for me to make any further comment on this at this time.

POOL CLOSURE

The Battle Abbey pool in Bexhill has been closed for a refurb for four weeks and we have been fitting our Racing squad swimmers into some extra pool time at Summerfields and Rye. At this time of year we can’t afford to lose time in the pool, our top swimmers normally only get about

8 hours per week compared to the 16 to 20 hours per week that the swimmers they compete against are getting – the playing field isn't very level. What it shows is that we get remarkable results from the training we get but what could we do with more. Just remember the training sessions are meant to improve your swimming both technically and physically so our swimmers need to concentrate and really try every session to make the time in the pool quality time.

SUSSEX LEAGUE

The next round of the Sussex League is a Home match at Summerfields on Saturday 10th May. The team for this will be published shortly and in this competition every placement scores points so if selected makes sure you swim flat out for the finish to try and squeeze an extra point. By the way if you are selected please make yourself available.

THE SOUTH EAST REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

3rd and 4th May, Garrison Pool Aldershot here we come. At the last count of heads the following will be going – Hannah, Tillie, Sarah, Emily, Nathan, TomH and Alex. We wish you all the best of luck.

SHINEY NEW POOL

Terry, Graham, Mike, Ian are still trying to persuade local politicians and council managers that the idea of a new Sports Complex would be a good idea and should be built between Hastings and Bexhill. I am writing this Newsletter while the final afternoon of the World Short Course championships are being shown on TV. I break off to watch the actual races and listen to what the legend Grant Hackett has to say about training. Woops there goes another World record, I hope you found the time to watch some of the broadcasts because apart from the incredible GB results it has been like a Master Class in swimming technique. Twenty Four medals for GB is unheard of in the past but on closer examination you can see why we don't win – it's in the turns and finishes – hopefully they will iron out these faults before Beijing. Remember these points when you are training, go into every turn as if you are in a race – hit those walls – and practice your finish. The Americans look in a different class on these points. This is supposed to be about a new pool but Manchester is dominating my thoughts, I presume that everybody knows that the World Championships are being held in TEMPORARY pool and that it was built in TEN days and after Sunday afternoon it must be taken to pieces in NINE days and returned to it's former use – yes that is all true. My question is do you know any billionaires or even lots of lottery millionaires who would like to do us a big favour and give or even lend us a few million, we only need about £25m for our Complex.

HELPERS NEEDED

Another plea for help, we need volunteers to help poolside. The Club is run by volunteers and we depend on Mums and Dads coming forward to take on jobs within the Club. At the moment we particularly need people who are prepared to get ASA qualifications – timekeepers, judges, starters, coaches – all the Ladies and Gentlemen who help at the moment are volunteers who have learned about swimming as their children have grown up and worked their way through the club. We know that eventually they will need to be replaced so we need help now so that we can get replacements trained.

A FINAL WORD

Yes, I know we won twenty four medals at the World Short Course Championships in Manchester but remember there were several top swimmers not here – Michael Phelps going for 8 Golds in Beijing – an Australian girl broke two world records but she came third in her trials and is not swimming those two events in Beijing. So my judgement is that getting into Finals will be like winning medals this week and if we actually get FIVE medals of any colour we will have done really well. Maybe I am a pessimist and our swimmers will improve by loads of seconds by August and prove me wrong. Yes and I will be shouting at the TV screen for them.