



Coaching Team

As many of you have heard on the 'grapevine' Mark has decided to step down from his Head Coach position after being so successful in this role for over seven years. Mark's decision is due to a combination of work, club and domestic pressures that have left him feeling tired and unable to commit to the time the role demands. He has also been struggling with what he perceives as a lack of enthusiasm from some swimmers and their motivation to train and swim for the club. He decided to step down as he wants the club to be led by someone with "fresh ideas and a strong sense of direction".

The Committee have asked James to take on the Head Coach role and he has agreed saying he will certainly try his best to take the club forwards and hopes that the swimmers will continue to step up their game in order for us to do this. We are delighted to say that Mark has agreed to continue coaching as Assistant Head Coach so his expertise will remain with the club and I'm sure you will all join the committee and coaching team in giving him a huge 'Thank You' for his efforts that have helped the club climb to their current position.

Teaching Groups

Can I remind parents that group assessments will take place on Thursday 29th September and Thursday 6th October. For Group 2/3 these will be on Saturdays 1st and 8th October. Please try and ensure that your children attend those sessions or they could miss out on being moved up! If you have any concerns about your child's progress or on any aspects of their training please speak with their teacher on poolside or speak with me direct. Following the assessments and notifications of moving groups I will be on the Front Desk on Thursday 13th October to answer any queries you may have.

The last teaching session of the year will be Thursday 22nd December and will be our traditional 'Fun Night' for groups 3 and above in the main pool and 1 and 2 in the training pool. For new parents this is the evening when formal lessons are suspended and the teachers and helpers ensure lots of fun activities with floats, mats etc. The Saturday 2/3 group are welcome to attend this event which kicks off at 6.00 until 7.00pm.

Swimming for all teaching groups will recommence on Thursday 5th January.

Ruth Mattocks – Head Teacher

Mini-Galas

2011 has seen The Hastings Seagull Mini-Galas really take off. There has been a huge attendance this year by swimmers in groups 2/3 to group 6 which demonstrates the enthusiasm of our future champions! The atmosphere at both galas has been electric, thanks to the support from the parents and swimmers alike. Most swimmers have achieved at least one personal best time this year, and winners have been presented with their medals already.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all the people who contribute to the success of these fun nights especially the younger helpers who encourage the swimmers achieve their best and are a shining example of the club's values.

Volunteers are always welcome to help, please speak to Tracy or Graham if you would like to join us.

There are two more chances this year to beat your times swimmers, the next gala is on Thursday 22nd September and the last of the year is Thursday 20th October - Good luck!!

Tracy Horner – Mini Gala Secretary

Club Championships

The final two heats of the club championships will be held on Thursday the 13th October and 24th November. We have now registered these events with the ASA as Level 4 Meets. Along with our newly purchased Meet Manager system this means that any swimmers achieving a County Qualifying Time will automatically have this recorded with the ASA Rankings Department for entry into next spring's County Championships.

Look out for the entry sheet that is currently displayed at the Front Desk. As a reminder, all swimmers in Group 7 and above can enter these galas and they are compulsory for swimmers in the Racing Squads.

Club Shop

The Club Shop is open on Thursday evenings alongside the front desk during the training period. Nick Alff is responsible for maintaining order levels on all key stock items such as goggles and training floats, ordering stock from the suppliers and setting the selling price for each item, which is generally the trade price plus vat. If there are any items you need that you don't see on sale on Thursdays it's always worth having a word with Nick or Carol at the Front Desk as it may well be something we can order in for you.

Coaches Corner

Since coming to the club I have seen the squads go from strength-to-strength and I'm glad to report that this progress is still occurring at a steady rate. I am hoping to see more swimmers at counties, regionals and nationals this season and believe wholeheartedly that this is possible.

Last weekend kicked off the competitive season with the County Relay championships and there was some very impressive swimming going on from the whole range of age groups. It was good to see such talent from the youngest of swimmers, both male and female, as well as the usual performances from the more seasoned swimmers. As those swimmers and parents that were there already know, this competition did not run as smoothly as competitions normally do. If you are fairly new to competitive swimming then I really hope that you haven't been put off as I promise you that any other competition that you attend in the future will be much better organised. The next team event will be the Arena League with our first fixture scheduled for Saturday 8th December. Watch the notice board for details of team selection and coach pick-up times.

Going forwards, we need all swimmers to turn up to sessions on time. For racing groups this is 15 minutes prior to when they are due to get in the water to allow time for mobilisation (stretching). There are an alarming number of injuries occurring to swimmers who have admitted to not loosening off properly before they get in the water despite thorough and lengthy warm up sets once in the pool. Please can I take this opportunity to remind you that swimmers in the Racing Squads are also expected to stretch off for 10-15 minutes after the session has ended in order to aid muscle recovery, injuries and flexibility. This is part of your session and should not be missed unless completely unavoidable. Finally, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of those swimmers (and their parents) that have decided to book themselves in for a week in Cyprus next Easter. This runs from the 4th to the 11th of April and will be a fabulous week - I am really looking forward to it. Whilst the training schedule will be demanding (2 x 2 hour pool sessions per day) there will be time set aside for revision for those of you with exams coming up. If you are in Racing One or Racing Two and haven't yet paid a deposit but really want to go, I'm sure we can squeeze you in.

I look forward to another great season. Let's go Seagulls!

James Nock – Head Coach

Open Meets

The club attends various Championship and Open Meets during the year. The Championships include County, Regional, Zonal and National, while the Open Meets range from Level 1 to 4 and are a mixture of short (25m pool) and long course (50m pool) competitions.

The Open Meets that the club attend are advertised on the club notice board at Summerfields and the club website: www.hastingsseagullsc.org.uk

Email notifications can also be arranged at the front desk. If you wish to receive these notifications then please supply your email address to Graham Furness. If you are unsure whether a particular meet is suitable for you then you should speak to either the Head or Assistant Head Coach who will advise you.

Open Meet Reminders:

- Keep an eye on the club closing dates. Although this may not be the same as the competition closing date, time is needed to check and input the data. So please, make sure your entries are in on time!
- Ensure all required information is supplied together with payment. Make sure you know your ASA id and more importantly, your entry times. It is your responsibility to keep a record of all your PBs. If you do not have a PB for a race that you wish to enter or you have not swam a particular distance before, please speak to your coach about estimating a time. Please do not hand in entry forms without times.
- Please ensure that when entering a competition, you use your actual PB (if one exists), as entry times are held on a County/Regional database and they are being checked. It is your responsibility to ensure that the entry time is correct.
- If the Competition Secretary is unavailable then leave entry forms and money at the front desk on a Thursday evening.
- If you are entering an open meet for the first time, then you may need to upgrade your ASA insurance. Please speak to anyone at the front desk for details.
- Note that entry into an open meet is only confirmed once the club running the competition has received all entries. It is common to have entries rejected from busy competitions. Do not let this put you off entering!
- If you (parents) are a qualified official and you are available to help when your child is competing, then please let the club running the competition know that you are able to help officiate. Some Meets do struggle to get officials, so please help if you can. If you would like to consider becoming an official the club can run short courses on what is involved and you can start by becoming a timekeeper at the club championships – It's not as hard as you may think! Please ask at the front desk for details.
- If you have any other questions then please ask the Competition Secretary or anyone at the front desk.

Mini Polo

Our mini-polo section has had a successful few months with 7 swimmers being selected for the County under 12 squad. They have now attended a couple of training sessions at Burgess Hill which has helped progress their skills still further. As a result of the progress of the squad as a whole we have decided to enter a team in this winter's London League to give the swimmers competitive match experience.

If your child is comfortable in deep water and enjoys ball sports, why not give mini polo a try? We swim on Mondays from 6.00 to 6.30 and you are welcome to attend a 'taster' session free of charge. Please contact the Front Desk for details.

Katrina Rolles – Mini Polo Coach

Water Polo

In 2011 the Seagull Water Polo Team has included the first two players who have graduated from the Mini Polo Group. This exactly how we will best develop the team for the future. Well done our two newest TJs (Team Juniors) Michael and Ben. Our other youngsters Ben L and Richie Moon have also contributed well to our results this year. We now have 2 under 14, 1 under 16 and 3 under 18 players training with other clubs representing Sussex in the London League – a tribute to the hard work of our coaches. The latest exciting trip for the senior team was the trip last weekend to Dordrecht to play the Merwede Nautilus Club (MNC). This is an annual event which has been part of the Hastings town twinning activities for over 50 years. We departed from Hastings in two cars at 8.30am and arrived, after a long delay on the Antwerp Ring Rd, in Dordrecht at 7.30pm. We were all overwhelmed by the new MNC Dordrecht pool complex – the new building looks like an enormous space ship - a really enormous flying saucer and it houses not only an Ice Rink and a Speed Skating track but a most impressive swimming complex. This complex includes a 50 metre, 10 lane, racing pool which allows two full size water polo games to be run simultaneously, two 25 metre lap pools and a very impressive play area for the children. There are large changing areas and best of all a dedicated Club Room for all the MNC swimming club members which has a super bar and kitchen and two audio visual screens running club news and relevant polo pictures and enough room for parties and general club activities.

The two games which we played were extremely demanding as they were staged in the deep water pool and they each lasted a full hour. The first game against the MNC 9th men's team was a hard fought event where we lost by just two goals 11-9. We only had 8 players and we were pleased to have three Dordrecht players to give assistance to the Hastings players. It seems hard for us to believe that one club has 9 water polo teams and we were all flabbergasted to learn that they actually have 11 mens teams, 6 ladies teams and a large number of junior age group teams for both boys and girls. Remember there are only 7 senior men's teams in the whole of the Sussex League!

The second game was against the 7th Dordrecht (MNC) team. This team was a team of younger, less experienced, players who they made up for their lack of experienced with a high level of fitness. The result was remarkably similar as it was extremely difficult for the Hastings team to deal with the higher levels of mobility which is always encountered when playing against a younger fitter team.

Notwithstanding the results this visit was an extremely exciting event, seeing the new pool, having the experience of playing different tactics in a deep water pool, experiencing different refereeing techniques and not least seeing how a big club with an impressive club room with an abundance of facilities operates. The MNC team will be playing in the Observer Trophy water polo tournament in Hastings on the 8th of October at which we will try to return their hospitality to a similar level to that which we were given in Dordrecht.

Tim Pearce – Water Polo Secretary

Masters

Since Summerfields reopened in January the 3 lanes on Monday and Thursday nights have been busy. Some new, younger seniors (18-24) swimmers have joined us and the Club Squad that we share with has expanded. Hopefully they will form the basis of very strong masters' team in the next year or so.

The two major events so far this year were at Eastbourne and Aldershot.

Ten Masters swimmers from Hastings Seagulls swam outstandingly at the annual Eastbourne open competition held at the Sovereign Centre on 15th May in both individual and six relay events. Eight individual swimmers won 24 medals and the Club was placed in all 6 relay events. Top individual gold medallists were Lisa Hart (4), and Nicky Wood (2) and Tim Pearce (2). Seagulls were placed third in all but one of the 3 freestyle and 3 medley teams entered. In the last event of the day the 200+ years medley team won its event convincingly beating 5 teams from Mid Sussex (2), Croydon, Eastbourne and Chichester.

Four men from Hastings Seagull's Masters squad won a team race in a record of 2 minutes 34.5 seconds in Rushmoor Royal's open masters' competition held at Aldershot in July. The 200+ team (ages totalling more than 200 years) of Tom Baker (backstroke), Paul Woolger (breastroke), Mike Hazelden (butterfly) and Peter King (freestyle) swam successive lengths in Aldershot Garrison's 50m pool. Paul avoided disqualification for incorrect style in the breastroke leg as his goggles slipped down his face at the start of his leg, ended up in his mouth and had to stay there. Individual successes in their respective (5 year) age groups were achieved in butterfly by Mike Hazelden (gold) and Peter King (silver) and in breastroke by Paul Woolger (silver).

Paul Woolger – Masters Secretary

News from the Front Desk

Session fees are the club's major source of income and, with pool hire fees having to be paid in advance, we would appreciate fees being paid on time where possible. If it is more convenient you can pay by standing order – please speak with us for details of how to set one up. Where parents are three months in arrears we will notify you to prevent the amount coming as an unwelcome shock. If your child has decided to stop attending lessons we would be grateful if you could inform us as soon as possible as, with over 150 children on our waiting list, we try and fill any spaces quickly to give as many children as possible the opportunity to learn to swim.

With both of our pool providers increasing hire fees by 5% we will unfortunately have to raise session fees in the New Year. We will endeavour to keep increases to a minimum and are looking at other ways to generate funds. The first of these will be to re-introduce a raffle during club championships. Your support of these will be most welcome and if you have a prize you could donate please come and see us on a Thursday evening.

The Christmas Party and Prizegiving is scheduled for Friday 16th December at the Hastings and Bexhill Rugby Club premises. Watch the club notice board for further details.

Over the winter period could we remind parents to keep an eye on the club website or our facebook page during periods of inclement weather where we will put information regarding pool closures (if any).

Finally, we are still on the lookout for volunteers to help with the running of the club. A lot of the jobs have a very small time commitment and plenty of training and support is available. In particular we need a Gala Secretary to help arrange the Sussex and Arena League fixtures. If you feel you may be able to assist have a word with us on the Front Desk and we can tell you about all the areas where any assistance will be most welcome.

Graham Furness - Secretary

Events at Brighton September 2011

Hastings Seagull's 2011-2012 swimming season commenced with two major meetings held at the Prince Regent Complex in Brighton.

The first was what has become the traditional 'curtain-raiser'; the Sussex County ASA County Relays.

It must be said that for such a prestigious event; the organisation was not of an acceptable standard. Parking was, as is usual in Brighton, costly and scarce; many spectators were left in long queues at the venue before being charged full price for standing up, barely able to see the action and swimmers were rewarded for their punctuality with discomfort and crowding; as events were running almost two hours behind schedule.



However; despite all this; the swimmers responded with their customary style and exemplary attitude and the event commenced with a smile as Hastings Seagull swimmers were awarded the Sussex League Division Two Trophy; which they won last season in fine style.

Once the event got underway; there were many exciting races and of the 12 teams that Seagull entered; 7 reached Finals; ranking each of them in the top six relay teams, in their respective age groups in Sussex.

The best girls performance came from the 15 and over team of Victoria Turner, Hannah Keen, Chloe Benton and Charlotte Rouncivell who, after being disqualified on a technicality after finishing fastest in the freestyle final; bounced back to finish 2nd in a thrilling Medley Relay final

A special mention should also go to the aged 9 and 10 years team of Amber Page, Lauren Alff, Lizzy Clarke and Tahlia Winn who all swam personal best split times in reaching finals in both the events they competed in.



In the boys 9 and 10 years age group events; Seagull's team of Harry Kilbane, Thomas Conte, William Saldana and Louis Choron showed great potential in finishing 2nd in the freestyle and 3rd in the Medley whilst the aged 15 and over team of Adam Rouncivell, Courtney Mattocks, Sam Moon and Tom Creed mirrored the achievements of their younger team-mates in finishing 2nd in the Medley and 3rd in the freestyle.

All those who competed on the day can be proud of their achievements having overcome more than the usual challenges that competitive swimmers expect to face.

All the organisational problems of two weeks earlier were soon forgotten as one of the fastest events of the year 'The Ken Deeley Sprints' took place at the same venue last weekend. The event was well run and a thoroughly enjoyable experience for all present.

As with most of the Open Events held at this time of the year; swimmers are striving to achieve qualification times for the County, the Regional and ultimately the National Championships; all to be held in 2012.

The field was strong, the racing highly competitive and the ability demonstrated by all; of the highest quality. Seagull swimmers were responsible for an impressive 58 personal best times on the day; further demonstrating the forward momentum being experienced by all at the Club.

Of the boys; the start performer on the day was the remarkably confident and self assured 9 year old; Louis Choron who swam personal best times in all five of his events; grabbing four 2nd place medals and one third.

The promising and determined 11 year old Thomas Conte; achieved three PBs in his five events whilst earning one 5th and one 6th place medal.



Of the girls; the ever consistent 14 year old; Jodie Shoesmith swam 3 personal best times; whilst winning both the 50m breaststroke and 4 x 25m Individual Medley and bagging two further 4th place medals in the 50m freestyle and the 50m backstroke.

9 year old Charlotte Baker also swam five personal best times and bagged a 2nd place medal with a forceful display in the 50m backstroke event.

PBs and Top 6 medals were also earned by; Lauren Alff, Emily Williams, Nadia Winn, Andrew Paige, Ben Horner and Dan Williams.

Although returning home without medals; Maisy Adams, Tahlia Winn, Amelia Markfort, Chloe Baker, Jessica Fuller, Hannah Kefford, Anerley Cartlidge, Jack Parris, Callum Pearson, Matthew Kefford, Henri Choron and Harry Markfort can all be proud of swimming personal best times on the day as doing so takes them all closer to their own personal objectives.