

Sussex County Championships 2011 Final Weekend

Swimmers from our premier local swimming club, Hastings Seagull, achieved more outstanding results over the final weekend of the 2011 Sussex County Championships at K2 Crawley in March.

This year's event was the Club's most successful for almost 30 years and consequently, the Club is now established as one of the top three Clubs in Sussex in many categories.

Over the two days Seagull swimmers achieved 48 personal bests (21 of which were South East Regional qualifying times), 32 age group finals and 14 medals of which 5 were Gold.

Of the girls; the three youngest swimmers were 9 year old **Daisy Earl**, **Lauren Alff** and **Charlotte Baker** who all swam personal best times. Lauren finished as an Age Group County Finalist in the 100m IM and Charlotte demonstrated outstanding potential, excellent technique and a steely determination in grabbing the Age Group Silver Medal in the 50m backstroke event.

The consistently outstanding 11 year old **Emily Williams** made it seven out of eight Age Group County Finals swimming two personal best times; one of which was a South East Regional qualifying time.

There were also impressive performances from 12 year old **Liliana Winn** and her 14 year old sister; **Nadia Winn**. Liliana swam two personal best times whilst Nadia went one better with three; one of which included a particularly determined and powerful swim in the 50m backstroke which led to her finishing 8th in the County and thus reaching the Age Group Final.

Another 14 year old **Hannah Kefford**; demonstrated her growing style and consistency in swimming four personal best times and reaching the Age Group Final in the 200m backstroke.

The unruffled and powerful 15 year olds; **Chloe Benton** and **Charlotte Roundcivell** both achieved considerable success. Chloe swam three personal best times in reaching two Age Group Finals and Charlotte swam four personal best times; two of which were South East Regional qualifying times. Charlotte went on to reach three Age Group Finals; including a County Age Group Silver medal performance in the 50m backstroke.

There were more majestic performances from 16 year old, **Victoria Turner** who finished as a finalist in three out of three Age Group events and achieved two South East Regional Qualifying Times in the process. The exemplary Victoria bagged an Age Group County Gold Medal in the 50m backstroke and a Silver in the 200m backstroke.

18 year old **Grayling Clayton** swam a personal best time whilst finishing 8th in the 50m backstroke and the inspirational **Hannah Keen** swam an awesome personal best

time of 26.38 in winning the 50m Open freestyle and as such confirming her position as the fastest female sprint freestyle swimmer in Sussex.

Once again; surpassing all in both consistency and results was the magnificent 13 year old **Jodie Shoemith**.

She swam three Personal Best times in her three events. Two were south East Regional qualifying times and in doing so, she bagged two Gold and one Silver; Sussex County Age Group Gold Medals.

Of the boys; 11 year old **Ben Horner** swam a Personal Best time in finishing eighth in the 200m freestyle and in doing so became another Age Group County Finalist.

14 year old **Darius Khalesi** continued his excellent Championship performances. He swam four Personal Best times and in doing so reached two Age Group County Finals in the 50m and 100m breaststroke events.

The two 16 year olds; **Angus Siberry** and **Courtney Mattocks** both had success. Angus swam four Personal Best times and Courtney two. Courtney was also an Age Group County Finalist in the 100m backstroke.

13 year old **Dan Williams** and 17 year old **Sam Small**, although perhaps disappointed not to have swum Personal Best times at the event; can feel justly proud of having qualified for the prestigious event and as the tough competitors they are; they will be back to their best very soon.

Another 17 year old **Adam Roundcivell**; demonstrated his breadth of talent by putting in some powerful and consistent performances over various disciplines and distances. Adam swam one personal best time and also became another Age Group County Finalist in the 100m freestyle.

The understated, yet awesome 15 year old **Tom Creed** continued to show why he not just one of the best racing swimmers in Sussex but he is fast becoming one of the best in the Country.

Tom swam two Personal Best times. He achieved Age Group County Finalist status in all five of the events. All five of his times were South East Regional qualifying times and he bagged three Gold Medals.

Not content with this feat. He then went on to another Personal Best and South East Regional qualifying time in the 50m breaststroke in the Open 50m breaststroke final whilst finishing fourth. This time ranks Tom in the top ten in the UK, in his age group, over this distance.

Once again, in the Open Championship Events; the Club's awesome 23 year old sprint specialist, **Kevin Pickard** achieved a set of incredible results.

Kevin swam inside South East Regional Qualifying Times in all three of his Open Heats and in doing so qualified for all three Open Finals.

Kevin then upped his game and swam faster than his Heats; in all three finals; bagging one Gold County Championship Gold Medal and two Silvers.

Three of the four Hastings Seagull Relay Squads were also successful.

The Open Men's 4 x 100m freestyle team, finished a creditable fourth.

In the boys aged 16 and under 4 x 50m freestyle event; Seagull entered two teams. The B team finished 14th whilst the A team performed admirably in finishing 2nd and in doing so; grabbing the Silver Medal.

A similar feat was achieved by the Open Women's 400m Medley Relay team but the team performance of the weekend, perhaps even the entire Championships, was that delivered by the girls 16 and under 200m Medley Relay Team of ***Chloe Benton, Victoria Turner, Jodie Shoemith and Charlotte Roundcivell.***

This truly remarkable and talented foursome won an event which is one of the hardest fought and prestigious events of the Championships.

The girls' performance was crammed full of excitement, togetherness, skill, determination and excellence.

It was as wonderful as it's scheduling at the end of the Championships, was appropriate.