

DASC at Wear Valley Level 3 Christmas Meet 5,6 December 2009

DASC took a large contingent of 22 girls and 6 boys to one of our favourite galas of the year – the Wear Valley Christmas Meet at Bishop Auckland. The chocolate selection boxes and the Christmas fancy dress competition make this a great weekend for swimmers, coaches (Glen Fenby and Emma Hughes) and parents to be a part of. The excellent performances from the Darlington swimmers added hugely to the enjoyment of all.

Out of a total of 139 swims the 28 swimmers recorded a massive total of 50 Personal Bests with another 8 in first attempts at new events.

BOYS

The fast improving trio of A squad swimmers **Michael Patan, Alex Park and Richard Coxon** produced 14 PBs between them, knocking many seconds off previous times. Alex came away with a silver and 3 bronzes in the 14 year old agegroup. The ever busy 9 year old **Richard Murray** swam 5 PBs in his 9 swims, just missing out on medals in a couple of events. **Michael Cole-Robinson** produced some excellent sprinting to record 4 PBs and to win 3 golds, 2 silvers and 2 bronzes in the 15 and over agegroup. **John van Mourik** did a very speedy swim in the 11 years 100m Freestyle for a bronze medal.

GIRLS

The large group of 22 girls gave us plenty to cheer about. 9 year olds **Stella Jones and Hannah Briggs** competed in their first official gala and 10 year old **Britany Sanderson** swam 2 Personal Bests in only her second gala. Our other 9 year olds **Jade Cook, Alana Prior and Alice Eynon** are rapidly growing in experience and look very impressive every time they compete. Between them they gave us 10 PBs. Jade won 4 bronzes and Alana came away with a medal of each colour. 10 year old **Elizabeth Fenby** sets herself big goals and should be delighted with her 7 PBs from 8 swims. With a medal haul of 3 golds, 1 silver and 1 bronze she looks set to be a force to be reckoned with at the N&D Championships. Another 10 year old, **Anna Troy**, swam 3 PBs in the sprint events.

11 year old **Emily Bell** had a gruelling weekend of 8 events competing for the first time in 3 of the toughest swimming events – 200m Butterfly, 400m Freestyle (an especially good swim in all respects) and 400m Individual Medley and being well-rewarded for her hard work and improving fitness with a medal of each colour. In the same agegroup it was good to see **Victoria Pinner** on good form in her 6 events and trying her hand at 400m Freestyle with an excellent first attempt. 12 year old **Victoria Fenby** continued her return to great form and fitness with super PBs in 200m Butterfly and 400m Individual Medley.

Amongst the 13 and 14 year girls there is great rivalry developing to see who can be the first to break through the 1.10 barrier on 100m Freestyle. No one quite managed it this weekend but it is within reach of several of them. In the 13 year agegroup **Kate Troy** swam her fastest ever in all 4 of her events, getting tantalising close to her County qualifying time on 100m Backstroke and just missing out on medals 3 times. **Fern Turner** had a tough weekend with 7 events, producing a great first shot at 400m Individual Medley and 2 other PBs. **Rebecca Kell** again had a very successful competition with 4 out of 4 PBs. What could she achieve if she got round to training like she competes?! **Lauren Bell** should be delighted with her tally of 5 PBs in 6 swims and a very creditable, if painful, first attempt at 400m Individual Medley. It was lovely to see **Claire Heffey** competing for the first time since February and swimming 2 PBs once Glen had put a smile on her face! **Abbi Hawkes** competed in 3 events and is learning that sometimes PBs are hard to come by, but that sticking at it is important if she wants to continue to see her times improve.

In the 14 and over agegroup **Lucy Proctor** swam fast to clock up 4 PBs and a N&D qualifying time in 50m Backstroke. **Helen Murray** continues to quietly chip away at her times and swam 2 sprint PBs. It was good to see **Chloe Shearing** getting back towards her previous best form. **Catherine Fenby** ended up in that dreadful position – 4th - in no fewer than 4 events. **Ineke van Mourik** swam in 3 events and picked up a bronze in the 400m IM.

N&D (Northumberland & Durham County) Qualifying Times

Between them, **Michael, Michael, Richard M, Alice, Jade, Elizabeth, Victoria F and Lucy** improved on and added to our growing number of qualifying times for next term's N&D Swimming Championships and are to be congratulated. Achieving such times can be viewed as the first major goal of our swimmers, giving them the opportunity to compete against the best swimmers in this area. The qualifying times, dates, venues and programme of events for the N&D Championships can be found on the N&D website which can be accessed via the NERasa site.

The Most Important Award!

The most important award of the weekend for the coach in the Best Fancy dress went to our Head Coach Glen Fenby who was caught up in the festive Christmas mood and was delighted with his trophy and bottle of wine. His philosophy that 'Happy swimmers mean fast swimming' was clearly demonstrated this weekend.

The full gala results can be found on the Wear Valley ASC website.

