

## **DASC at Northumberland & Durham Autumn Graded Series Gala 1** **Middlesbrough, 19, 20 September 2009**

With full training only starting again at the beginning of September, DASC was represented by a squad of 24 Swimmers from Top, A and B squads in our first gala of the new swimming season – the first of the popular N&D Autumn Graded galas at Middlesbrough on 19, 20 September.

Medals were awarded for the first six swimmers in each event and DASC picked up a total of 12 medals over the weekend. In their 68 swims, our swimmers also recorded 32 Personal Best times. For **Jade Cook, Alice Eynon and Abbi Hawkes** it was their first such gala and they performed very well.

The squad of 7 boys won 2 medals. **Michael Cole-Robinson** (16) was just pipped into second place in the 100m Breaststroke and **Michael Patan** (16) came 4<sup>th</sup> in the 200m IM with an impressive time in a slow heat. **David Hookway** (15) managed great PBs all weekend. **Alex Park** (14) and **Richard Coxon** (13) also produced PBs. In the 200m Freestyle Richard had to go back and do an extra tumble when he missed the wall, and still managed to better his previous best time. It was good to see the younger 11 year old boys **Liam Carrigan** and **Jonny van Mourik** produce some great PB swims at this early stage in training.

**Catherine Fenby** (15) led the girls by example, winning the gold medal in the 50m Freestyle and also getting very close to her qualifying time for the NER Championships in November.

The highlight of the weekend was the seven DASC girls swimming in the 800m Freestyle with all of them producing PBs and most of them recording PBs at the 400m split in the same race. In particular, **Jade Fletcher** (11) came 4<sup>th</sup> in a very determined swim, showing great spirit to overcome losing her goggles, hat and hair bobble at various stages of the race. She had a great weekend in her other events too. **Lucy Proctor** (14) showed great style to finish 5<sup>th</sup> in her 800m event. There were also huge 800m PBs from **Rebecca Kell** (13), **Kate Troy** (13), **Fern Turner** (12), **Ineke van Mourik** (13) and **Robyn Wilkinson** (12). Kate also had a good 4<sup>th</sup> place 100m Freestyle swim and Rebecca came 6<sup>th</sup> in her first ever attempt at the grueling 200m Butterfly.

**Elizabeth Fenby** (10) had a great race in the 50m Butterfly coming 5<sup>th</sup> and was close to her NER time in the 200m Freestyle with a 4<sup>th</sup> place medal. In the 9 year old girls category we saw our younger swimmers produce amazing swims with **Alice Eynon** placed 4<sup>th</sup> and **Jade Cook** 6<sup>th</sup> in the 50m Butterfly. Not to be out done **Alana Prior** (9) produced a super swim to be 4<sup>th</sup> in the 200m Freestyle with **Emma Preston** (9) completing the quartet of PB swims. The youngsters put a spark into the event as a whole and a smile on everybody's face with their enthusiasm. Well done to all of the newcomers and youngsters who had a great gala.

**Victoria Fenby, Victoria Pinner, Abbie Hawkes and Anna Troy** also swam with great passion and effort and their continued improvement was also evident.

The medal tally does not tell the full story, or truly reflect the achievements attained by all the swimmers involved. Many swimmers improved their times in all their races, and this is maybe a better indicator of the progress being made. We saw tears at being disqualified in events, we heard the shouting of encouragement to teammates, we watched close races, great swims, best times and medals. But above all the DASC swimmers all seemed to be doing the most important element of the sport.... enjoying it! The season has started so sit back and enjoy the roller coaster ride of emotions.

