

DASC at Wear Valley ASC Christmas Stocking (Open) Meet 6,7 December 2008 at Bishop Auckland

A team of 9 girls and 7 boys from DASC competed in the Wear Valley Christmas Stocking gala. This was an open event so swimmers had to have swum faster than the qualifying times to be able to enter. The gala as a whole had fewer entries than in previous years, but it was well run and friendly. The swimmers especially enjoyed their chocolate selection box that every competitor received.

Darlington swimmers had been training towards this gala for several weeks and despite some interruptions to their final preparations because of the weather, they produced a fantastic total of 43 Personal Best times from 73 swims.

Several of our younger swimmers took many seconds off their previous best times, particularly **Emily Bell** with 7 from 8 swims, **Jade Fletcher** with 4 out of 4 swims, **John van Mourik** with 2 out of 3 and **Joe Wilson** with 2 out of 2 all swimming in the 9/10 agegroup. Congratulations are due to Joe for a bronze medal in 50m Breaststroke and a 4th place with a gutsy 100m IM swim, and to John for silver in 100m Breaststroke and a Bronze in 100m Freestyle.

In the 11/12 agegroup DASC was represented by **Kye Cowton** with a huge tally of 7 Personal Best times out of 8 swims, **Adam Howell** with 4 out of 4 swims, **Jonathan Teague** with 2 out of 4, **Fern Turner** with 3 from 6 events, **Kate Troy** with 2 from 3 events and **Laura Johnson** with 4 from 6 swims. Three of Kye's times and one of Adam's have qualified them for N&D BAGCAT (County Agegroup) Championships. Two of these swimmers (who shall remain nameless!) experienced problems counting to 8 on their 200m Backstroke events, and should certainly further reduce their times on this event next time they swim it!

In the 13/14 agegroup, **Chloe Coates** produced a magnificent swim to win the 100m Breaststroke in a time that is less than 0.1 second outside the qualifying time she needs to compete in the National Youth Championships next summer. She also won another 3 medals (one of each colour) in 50m, 100m and 200m Freestyle. She was only able to compete on one of the days due to taking part in a biathlon competition on the other day. **Helena Teague** was suffering from a chest infection but soldiered on to win one gold, 6 silvers and a bronze from her 9 swims including a very good first gala attempt at 200m Butterfly. Chloe and Helena produced county qualifying times in all their events. **Tom Short** produced 2 PBs in 200m Freestyle and 200m IM. **Chloe Shearing** struggled with illness but worked hard on her 200m Freestyle.

In the 15 & over agegroup **Heather Clarke** did 2 PB swims and collected a silver medal in 200m Freestyle, and **Iain Rossington** swam close to 3 of his PBs on sprint Freestyle and Butterfly events, including 2 County qualifying times.

Coach Brenda Seaton was pleased to at last see DASC at a gala in greater numbers and that it had been a productive weekend. She said, ' Now the hard work really begins, and I look forward to 2009 when I hope to see Darlington ASC firmly placed on the competitive map.'

Jane Teague