

BIRMINGHAM MASTERS

August 2009 Newsletter

Compiled by Bob Cramb

News for August and beyond

Summer holidays come and go and before we know it the rugby posts will be back in place at King Edwards and it will feel like autumn. There are some important notes on pool availability, reports on recent events, future events, club kit, and socialising nearer the end of the year.

KE Pool

The weekend of the August bank holiday gets ever nearer and there is no swimming on both the Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 August.

On the following weekend on Saturday September 5 the session starts @ **8.15 am NOT 8.30 am** so that we can be dressed and out of the building for 9.30 am. So do not miss the warm up!

Meet report: Barnett Distance meet (John Tennant)

Colin leads medal rush at Barnet

A small group of our swimmers took part in the Barnett Distance meet over the middle weekend in July. The Saturday evening saw Colin (beating his entry time by 10 sec.) and Pauline Brand open up with 800m freestyle swims and picking up a win and a second place respectively. Our other swimmers saved their efforts for just the Sunday. Colin, despite losing count of his lengths swum, finished the 400m with a good win, as did Hayley, beating her entry time by almost 20 seconds and just missing the 5 minute barrier. As distances slowly reduced throughout the day so a mixture of PB's and poorer swims were clocked up, the big gain for all of us being the race practice, so essential for competitive success. Everyone medalled. Hayley's 400m and 200m freestyle and Jim's 200m breaststroke (entered in the 200m fly by mistake but changed by a very sympathetic meet organiser, Ian Woollard) produced PB's. Colin failed to

make it a complete sweep by getting beaten in his final event but Luke sealed a very successful meet by breaking the 60 sec barrier in his 100m free for the first time in over four years.

Pauline Brand	800m freestyle	21:33:89	2 nd
	200m backstroke	5:54:53	1 st
	100m backstroke	2:51:23	1 st
	200m breaststroke	6:28:18	2 nd
Colin Leiper	800m freestyle	10:50:43	1 st
	400m freestyle	5:05:85	1 st
	100m butterfly	1:14:97	1 st
	100m backstroke	1:20:64	1 st
	200m butterfly	3:05:13	1 st
	200m Ind. Medley	2:50:63	1 st
	100m freestyle	1:05:77	2 nd
Kate Chase	400m freestyle	5:50:38	3 rd
	100m backstroke	1:35:82	1 st
Hayley Bettinson	400m freestyle	5:02:14	1 st
	100m butterfly	1:12:01	1 st
	200m freestyle	2:21:05	1 st
John Tennant	400m freestyle	5:40:19	2 nd
	200m freestyle	2:37:05	2 nd
	100m freestyle	1:09:48	1 st
Luke Swain	400m freestyle	4:56:66	4 th
	100m breaststroke	1:29:28	3 rd
	200m freestyle	2:15:81	3 rd
	100m freestyle	59:80	2 nd
Jim Hunt	100m breaststroke	1:31:27	5 th
	100m butterfly	1:30:35	3 rd
	200m breaststroke	3: 30:60	3 rd

The aforementioned Ian Woollard organises excellent meets at Barnet. They deserve our support, and hopefully rather more of us will be swimming at the sprint meet early in September.

(Eds. Note; if you have not entered the sprint meet by now you are too late!)

**Meet Reports: Isle of Man sea swims; James Flack
(Yes he really did this!)**

While perusing the internet for things to do on holiday in the Isle of Man, I stumbled upon the opportunity to go racing in the sea whilst on holiday there, as part of a locally organised festival. At first I thought, you've got to be joking, but I made my first critical mistake - I downloaded and printed off the entry form, as you couldn't enter ad-hoc, and as the three organised swims were a bargain at £10 the lot.....

I sent of my entry form to compete in the seniors events, and hoped for the best. There were also junior and novices events held simultaneously but I went straight to the top.....

So, on Tuesday 30th June I made my second critical mistake and arrived at Gansey Point, near Port St Mary, to swim a mile in the sea. Following the safety briefing - follow the beacons, keep looking upwards or you will swim in a circle, the kayaks are there to save you and stop you drowning, watch out for the jellyfish as they do sting, and by the way it's only 13oC in there, I dived in wearing my just my Speedos (wetsuits are for wimps!), goggles and a numbered hat.

For the first 30 seconds I struggled to even breathe, never mind swim, as the cold sliced straight through me - a mile in this, there is absolutely no chance of that, shall I just get out now? I ploughed on, avoiding the feet of the other competitors and managed to warm up a bit and kept going - I wasn't sure if the kayaker following me was concerned that I would just disappear under the flat calm sea, or whether I could make it. The course was a basic triangle out into the bay, halfway back to shore across the bay returning to the starting point, and the conditions (apart from the cold) were as good as could be expected - good visibility, clear water and calm seas.

I emerged 29m 55s later after swimming an estimated 1800m in 8th place out of 13 who started (and all finished) applauded by the 200 or so spectators, had my photo taken for the local newspaper, and promptly fell over completely disorientated. It took about 20 minutes to stop shivering but I was delighted with what I had achieved, having never raced in open water before. The jellyfish that attacked me on route left its mark but no more severe than a wasp sting and I survived to swim another day.

After a couple of days rest, I arrived at Port Erin on Friday 3rd July to compete in the second stage of the races, again a triangular swim around the bay but although advertised as a mile, some last minute changes to the course because of tides and safety concerns shortened the course to about 1200m. Thus as Andy Murray bowed out of Wimbledon, I splashed in again to start part two. I had tried to prepare myself for the cold by warming up first but it was still a hell of a shock and again I was slow starting while adjusting to the cold. This time there was a considerable swell from the open sea, creating rolling waves which washed over us sideways on, but again a bit of adjustment got me to the turning point and the conditions eased on the way back, as we were closer to the shore. Luckily there were no jellyfish to contend with and I finished 12th out of 21 starters in 19m 28s.

On Sunday 5th July, I arrived at Port St Mary beach to complete the last swim. This time it was in the afternoon, rather than the evening and the conditions were still good. The course comprised two 500m laps of the bay and this time it was seaweed rather than jellyfish that provided the entertainment as it wrapped around my neck - oh joy... Having had more time to acclimatise to the conditions I got a much better start and finished 9th out of 17 who finished (one retiree) in 16m 27s. This time I actually had to race against people next to me in the water, as the previous two (once away from the start) were pretty much solo efforts, thus making it more enjoyable, and I was pleased to note that I beat some of the competitors in this swim who had been considerably ahead of me (particularly in the first swim at Gansey).

Thus overall I finished 10th out of 21 who completed at least one swim, and enjoyed it immensely once I got used to what was going on. The event was well organised and as the only non-islander who competed I was made to feel very welcome.

It was the first time this event had been organised and there is already talk of repeating it next year and hopefully attracting more entrants, either from the Isle of Man or further afield. I was certainly a bit concerned about doing this when I entered but I am glad I did - it was a really good experience and certainly completely different to swimming in a heated pool.

Would I do it again - most definitely.....

Swimming Club Kit

When we appear at swimming competitions it really is a big morale boost to wear our club swimming kit. We have a very competitive club and there is psychology in letting the opposition know who you are! To encourage everybody to buy kit we are having a special event on September 13 & 20 with some bargains in club kit so roll up and see Jim to ensure that you get the hoodie to annoy fellow swimmers or the tee-shirt that keeps to warm before swimming in the Isle of Man!

British Short Course Masters

Now in case you do not know the short course master's championships are in 11 weeks, yes 11 weeks, so you need to get back to the pool and start that training for the event of the year. Even if you do not decide to compete individually there are relay teams that often could do really well if only they had that vital team member and it could be you. Pauline very kindly deals with the accommodation and I enclose with this email, the reply form that she requires to secure your accommodation at Sheffield. We have a very good price negotiated at the hotel that is a skip and a jump away from the pool and a 'swimmers meal' arranged on the Saturday night (rumour has it that the Crambs are not going to a party elsewhere on that evening!). So please get your act together and complete the form for Pauline to secure your place in the hotel (and remember to do some training!).

The entry forms are due to be released within the next week and you can look at the events and sessions on-line (<http://asa.sportcentric.net/db//files/serve.php?id=6028>)

Email address: John Tennant

John has recently changed his email address. Check with John that you have the correct address for him.

Qualifications

Do you have any swimming lifeguard, instruction or coaching qualifications (even if out-of-date) then please let John Tennant know.

Club Social Events

Now in keeping with the details of the rugby posts going up at KE you should also remember about the very important club social event of the year. There is really no excuse that should be given in missing the Christmas (I did really write that word) party, to be held on Saturday 28 November at the Edgbaston Golf Club. There are prizes to be won and awarded and a review of the year by the Club Chairman.

In the interim time Harriet is trying to get tickets for the Michael McIntyre shows in November. You may have seen him on television and as one who has seen him live I can recommend him as a comedian not to miss. So if Harriet gives thumbs up for this event please do not miss out.

There are also a number of impromptu events that will occur (one this Sunday 16 August) so by the time you read this the Selly Oak Tavern will have seen an invasion post training.