



Newbury District Swimming Club

ndsc.co.uk

Chief Coach's News Letter September 2005

Hello and welcome back after your well earned summer break. I hope you are all looking forward to a new competitive Season.

The National Championships took place after we finished training at the end of July but I think most people are aware of the results as they have been posted on the web site. Well done Aman Shah, Rebecca Harris and Emma Harris for achieving the qualifying standard - no mean achievement! – and in particular to Aman Shah for getting a double fourth in the 100m/200m backstroke, just missing out on the medals.

Also towards the end of last year Richard Payne decided to stop coaching with Newbury due to work commitments. I would personally like to take this opportunity to thank Richard for his work and dedication during his time at Newbury. He will be missed, although having since spoken to Richard I am hopeful that he may still be able to help out in the future, albeit on a much reduced basis. In the mean time we have to cover the sessions. I will be taking the Tuesday Kennet am session, Janet Thursday Kennet am and we are looking to coach Friday morning on coach a rota system as we did with Wednesday mornings a couple of years ago. Sunday evening, I will coach Challengers instead of doing the A/B squad land training with Dennis. This is clearly a fluid situation so please bear with us while we cope with this transition period.

Keeping with coaches for a moment, I would like to formally welcome Mark Wright to the coaching team. Many of you will have seen Mark helping Jane Hester out on a Thursday evening last year. Mark is a qualified swimming teacher and also a teacher at Wool ton Hill School. From September Mark will be taking Cruisers and Sprinters on Thursday evening during term time whilst Jane will cover over the holiday periods. Jane will be there as usual on Sunday evening ably assisted by Daryl Payne and James Wolstenholme.

Nowadays land training is an increasingly important part of a swimmer's activities and we are making every effort to follow this lead. Back in July Dennis attended a one day coach's workshop run by the ASA land training guru Bob Smith. I have also spent some time studying and preparing land training programmes as part of my ASA coach's course at Nottingham. Land training needs to be swimming specific; it's not just a question of throwing together the odd exercise at random. On Sunday night, all A/B squad swimmers should start with a general warm up session with Dennis in the main hall. Thereafter a few of the older swimmers that have been given an appropriate programme by me can go into the gym. The remainder - ie the majority! - should stay with Dennis in the main hall where they can carry out a proper planned swimming specific exercise programme. Swimmers are also reminded that on Sunday evening those not taking part in an **approved** land training session should arrive for swimming at 7:30 pm when we have the whole pool.

The A/B squad structure comes into effect this year. Although this came as a surprise to swimmers I have been thinking about it since I've been chief coach and we've been discussing at the coach's meetings for about the last six months. I think it was long overdue. The aim of the change is to put swimmers into squads depending upon ability, commitment and a willingness to train to the required technical standard. This differs from the County/National setup which was fundamentally age driven i.e. a club member would almost inevitably rise to National squad by the age of eighteen at which point they would leave to go to university etc. The system is a parallel structure enabling young

'high flyers' to move through B1 to A1 quickly so that they can receive the necessary training volumes and technical skills. Consequently, A1 has a range of ages, although I should point out that all of the present A1 swimmers would have been in National squad under the old system anyway. Swimmers will notice very little difference initially, especially on Sunday, Monday and Thursday evenings when the swimmer to coach ratio is high. I expect to be doing more of the technical stuff on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. I'm expecting some initial squad changes over the coming months as swimmers (and I) reassess their commitment.

I think it also important to point out that ALL four squads (A1/B1/A2/B2) are competitive squads requiring swimmers to train to a certain standard. Some swimmers may decide they no longer wish to train at this level. As a former competitive swimmer I can quite understand that; I reached that stage myself! Swimmers who do not wish to take part in a structured training programme can move to the Masters and Club squad which currently provides three evening sessions per week (and mornings). This is a section of the club which we are hoping to expand in the future so if you are interested please contact Carolyn McLeod.

The competition program will get underway soon with round 1 of the club championships. This is also the Speedo league season so A/B squad swimmers in particular, look in diary of events for the dates so that you will be available if required. I have also restructured the web site a bit over summer especially under the 'club swimming' drop down' menu. I've created a club download section for information files whilst competition results etc will still appear on the main download page. Under the club downloads section there is a competition plan for the whole year. By all means take a look at this but please bear in mind that this is a working document – I update it as and when the plan changes. Look at 'diary of events' for the actual confirmed events.

Last year around November I gave a presentation for all club members – a sort of question and answer session for parents. This year I have decided to repeat this, but for Challengers/Sprinters/Cruisers parents only. In hindsight I think it was a mistake to include the whole club, as parents of new swimmers want to know entirely different things those parents who have been here for a number of years. I'll inform you through squad reps and 'diary of events' when I've sorted out a date. It'll probably be on a Thursday evening during the Sprinters or Cruisers session so that your children can still swim while you come to the meeting.

This is also the time of year when we elect the new club captains. The junior captains are chosen by the coaches and this year we have decided that the boys junior captain will be Adrian Tucker and the girls junior captain Jessica Francis. Congratulations to those swimmers. Candidates for senior captains can be nominated by any member at the discretion of the committee and, as in previous years, the coaches (Derek and Carolyn) will nominate their preferred choice. However only swimming members above the age of 12 can vote. A sheet will appear on the notice board soon so that members can submit their nominations and a vote can be conducted before the AGM.

Finally an appeal for help!! We are more than keen to welcome new members into the coaching community. You only have to look at Thursday or Sunday night to realise that swimmer coach ratio of 30:1 is not ideal!! You don't need any prior knowledge. You can help one a week, twice a week, on a casual basis – it's up to you. This of course includes land training. Now that I am on the pool side with Challengers on Sunday, Dennis urgently needs help with the A/B squad land training in the hall. If interested in any aspect of coaching please contact me.

Good luck to all for the coming year

Derek Carley (Chief Coach)