

Gloucester Masters Swim Club Coaching Report 2017-18

As Head Coach I am pleased to report a record breaking year for our Club with success in the various swim disciplines. By years end we had a European Champion, five swimmers setting three European records and seven swimmers setting twenty-five British Records. Our club swimmers' main achievements are detailed below.

International Competition

The highlight of this year's international competition saw the LEN European Masters Championships take place in Kranj, Slovenia, from the 2nd to 7th of September. Club sprinter Colin Stephenson (60-64yrs) led the way with Gold medals in the 200m and 100m Free and a Silver in the 50m Free. Jayne Stephenson (60-64yrs) won Bronze in 200m Free and Tony Cherrington (75-79yrs) won Bronze in the 3K Open Water. Stroud SC affiliates Jess Wooddisse (40-44yrs), Sean Kinsey (50-54yrs) and Mark Partridge (55-59yrs) also made the trip to Slovenia. Jess led the way with Bronze medals in the 800m Free, 400m Free, 200m Butterfly and finished 4th in the 3K Open Water event. Sean finished 11th and 10th in the 3K and 5K Open Water swims, while Mark's best result was 12th in the 50m breaststroke.

In the middle of March, Colin and Jayne Stephenson travelled to Pretoria to compete in the 34th South African National Masters Championships. Swimming at 4400ft above sea level, Jayne won 2 Golds and a Silver, while Colin finished with 3 Silvers and a British record of 1:01.03 in the 100m Free

National Competition

In early March four of our swimmers travelled to Swansea to compete in the early season Swim Wales Open Masters Meet. Jayne Stephenson led the way with 5 Gold Medals, Colin Stephenson won 3 Golds, Tony Cherrington won 2 Golds and Keith Williams (60-65yrs) won 3 Silvers.

Our annual Open Meet took place on the 22nd April and proved as popular as ever with 267 swimmers from 91 clubs competing in a total of 1072 swims. Unfortunately, we could not match the 68 GMSC Open Meet records set in 2017, however, swimmers did manage to set 60 new Meet records, 9 British records and 1 European record. Our own Colin Stephenson set a European & British Record of 58.99 in the 100m Free and a British record of 26.91 in the 50m Free. Furthermore, Don Leatherbarrow set another 9 British records and John Liron (70-74yrs), from Jersey, set a British record of 37.68 in the 50m Breaststroke.

The 17th Annual Royal Navy Open Meet was again held in May at Millfield School with five of our Club swimmers taking part. All swimmers swam well and finished with top 3 finishes. Gill Ferris (60-64yrs) won 4 Golds, Brian Armstrong (55-59yrs) won 1 Gold and 2 Silvers, Tony Cherrington won 1 Gold and 2 Silvers, Sue Hodge won 1 Gold and John Anderson (55-59yrs) won 1 Silver and 1 Bronze.

This year's British Masters Championships (50m) were held at the Plymouth Life Centre in the month of June. During the three-day competition, 715 swimmers from 202 clubs in Ireland, Spain, the Netherlands, Turkey and Australia competed. The undoubted highlight for the Club was the 280yrs+ 400m Free Relay Team consisting of Don Leatherbarrow, Jayne Stephenson, Tony Cherrington and Sue Hodge who set a new European record of 5:23.00. In total we had 9 swimmers taking part and we ended up with 16 individual Golds, 4 Silvers and 4 Bronze medals. Don Leatherbarrow won 6 Golds and set 3 British records, Jess Wooddisse 4 Golds and 1 Silver, Colin Stephenson 3 Golds and 1 British record, Tony Cherrington 2 Golds, Sue Hodge (65-70yrs) 1 Gold and 1 British record, Aimee Carter (18-24yrs) 2 Silvers and 2 Bronzes, Stroud SC affiliate Mark Partridge (55-59yrs) made 5 top eight finishes and John Anderson (55-59yrs) had 2 top eight finishes.

The 2018 Swim England National Masters Championships were held at Sheffield in October, and lived up to the usual excitement with many British, European and World records broken. Swim of the Meet went to our Mixed 200m Free Relay 280+ team of Jayne Stephenson, Donald Leatherbarrow, Tony Cherrington and Susan Hodge who set their second European record of the year in 2:14.32. In individual events, our team of 9 swimmers brought back a total of 12 Gold and 3 Silver medals. Don Leatherbarrow again led the way with 7 Golds and set 5 British records, Tony Cherrington 4 Golds and 1 Silver, Jess Wooddisse 4 Golds and 1 Silver, Sue Hodge 1 Gold, Jayne Stephenson 2 Silvers and 2 Bronzes. Other Club swimmers competing in Sheffield were Anne Nichols (60-64yrs), Julie Britton (60-64yrs), Mark Partridge (55-59yrs), Brian Armstrong (55-59yrs), John Anderson (55-59yrs), Nick McDowall (65-69yrs) and all made at least top 11 in their events.

This year's SWRASA Masters Championships were held at Weston in late September and gave swimmers an ideal opportunity to swim events they do not normally swim. Six Club swimmers took part and Mark Partridge led the Team with 4 Gold medals, Don Leatherbarrow 3 Golds and 1 Silver, Emma Williams (18-24yrs), Gill Ferris and Sue Hodge won 2 Golds each and Tony Cherrington won 3 Silvers.

This year's ASA Inter-Counties Masters Championship was held at Millfield on the 18th of November. The Gloucester County ASA Masters Team consisted of 40 swimmers and Coaches, including 17 Club swimmers and 2 Club Coaches. All swimmers competed well on the day and we finished 2nd behind a very strong Devon Team and matched last year's 9th place Nationally. Club swimmer Kate Nimmo swam well and broke a 40-44yrs age group ASASW Regional Record in the 50m Backstroke event.

The annual T30 proved not as popular in 2017, probably because medals were only awarded for the overall men's, women's and team event rather than for each age group as in 2016. Club swimmers impressing were Oliver Wilkinson, 1st place 40-44yrs, Brian Armstrong 4th place 55-59yrs and Tony Cherrington 1st place in 75-79yrs.

The 2017 Decathlon once again saw Gloucester Masters Ladies near the top of the table with a 3rd place overall (out of 428 teams). GMSC men were the highest placed Gloucestershire club reaching 15th spot (out of 476 teams). In the individual event the highest placed Gloucestershire swimmer was Aimee Carter (GMSC) who was 16th (out of 1719) in the lady's

event, whilst the highest placed male was Colin Stephenson who was 31st overall (out of 2155).

Open Water News

As a result of his excellent swims at the World Masters Games in Auckland and the FINA World Masters Championship in Budapest, Tony Cherrington was voted the South-West Region ASA Open Water Swimmer of the Year 2017.

Despite several Club swimmers making the journey, the 2018 Swim England National Championships at the Rother Valley, Sheffield in July was cancelled by the Chief Referee due to poor weather conditions; the first time this has ever happened in the event history.

The Swim England 2018 South West Open Water Championships took place on the 6th of July at Weymouth. Swimmers were bathed in sunshine for the whole day, however, the sea temperature which was initially 17.9OC in the morning for the 5k race - making it compulsory wetsuit - but for the later races the water temperature had increased to a heady 18.5OC, which was technically "wetsuit optional" but very few swam "skins". In the 5K race, Mark Partridge 50yrs+ 1st 1:13:17.63, Jess Wooddisse 40-49yrs 1st 57:11.71 and John Coe 50yrs+ 3rd 1:25:05.40. In the 3k swim Tony Cherrington 50yrs+ 1st 45:58.09

There was more great outdoor swimming by Club swimmers at the Big Cotswold Swim in mid-September at Cirencester. GMSC won the Glenys France Memorial Team Trophy and in the individual swims, Penny Hickson (29:58) and Tony Cherrington (25:21) both won Golds in the men's and ladies +60yrs events, Laura McConnachie (26:12) won Silver in the 17-39yrs, Tony Coleby (24:01) and Becky Harker (25:32) won silvers in the 40yrs+. Other Club finishers in the 40yrs+ were Carol Woodward (27:30) and Lara Crewe-Hergest (27:39). In other Open Water events, Penny Hickson (60yrs+) won a Gold in the July Big Cotswold 2 Mile Swim and in early September a Silver medal in the Exmoor 2K.

In the BLDSA Windermere 10.5-mile swim, Steve Taylor led Club swimmers with a time of 4hrs 53secs, Nigel Dawson swam 5hrs 3secs, Jonny Rawlins 5hrs 15secs (in a wetsuit?) and Jon Coe 6hrs 44secs.

In mid-June ex-club coach Simon Wintle took part in the 4k Lock to Lock swim in the Thames River downstream from Eynsham Lock to Kings Lock. In Simon's only competitive outing of the year he finished a creditable 4th place overall in 49:54.80.

On the 24th February Jon Coe (65-70yrs) competed in the 1000m IISA sanctioned British Ice Swimming Championships at the Hatfield open water centre, Sheffield, where a 25m swimming pool had been created in the open water lake for the competition. In a cool 3.6 degrees, Jon won Gold with a time of 18:30, just missing the World record by some 5 seconds. Following his efforts, Jon has been selected to represent GB in the World Championships in Russia in March 2019.

At the end of June Brian Armstrong travelled to Arrow Lake, near Redditch, to compete in the ISOMAN event. In the 3 Lap race Brian matched his 1st place from last year in a time 48:27.40.

If you are interested in taking part in any of these events in 2019, please speak to Brian Armstrong in the first instance.

Other News

In the ITU World Aquathlon, GMSA's Kate Nimmo (40-44yrs) won silver in both her age group and as overall non-elite lady. In addition, at the European Biathlon Championships "Masters A", Kate finished with an individual bronze. Kate's A races for 2019 are also already confirmed having qualified for the World Sprint Triathlon championships in Lausanne and the World Aquathlon Championships in Spain along with Sean Kinsey.

Club stalwart Sandy Jones took part in the Prudential Ride London on 29th July and cycled 100 miles raising over £300 for the Alzheimer's Society, a cause close to her heart.

Club swimmers Tom Curwell and Tim Shattock took part in a successful 3-man channel relay and raised over £1870.00 for the charities Cyclists Fighting Cancer and the Sandford Parks Lido.

Please note, I have tried to include as many results as possible above but please accept my apologies if I have omitted anyone. In the future will all Club members who compete in any aquatic events please ensure I get a copy of the results and ensure the results and/or a report is placed on our Club Facebook page.

The Saturday morning session at the Sandford Lido again proved very popular with many swimmers visiting us from other Clubs, including a return to the Club from Gloucester native, and ex-GB International swimmer Duncan Rolley. I would say we generally had around 30+ swimmers attending in all weather, and many more when the sun shone!!!! We did not have our annual end of season BBQ this year but we did, however, have a party on the last Saturday to continue the tradition established by Mike Phelps in the mid 1990's. As usual most swimmers were saddened when the Lido closed and they realised they had to return to indoor swimming for the Winter. Thanks to all the Staff at the Lido who as always made us very welcome during the season.

As you will all be aware our Assistant Coach, Thomas Howells, decided to take a few months off in the autumn to travel in the southern hemisphere. Luckily we were able to secure the services of ex-Club Swimmer and Swim Coach Tony Davies to replace him. I think Tony has been a great asset to our Club and I thank him for his services. I would also like to thank Daisy Bond who has coached for us several times during the year but will be leaving us soon relocating to Coventry. We wish her good luck in the future and hope to see her at a pool somewhere in the future.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Committee members who have worked tirelessly during the year to keep our Club in the black and moving forward. Special thanks go to Treasurer Jayne Stephenson and Fixtures Secretary Brian Armstrong, who is currently the Gloucestershire ASA County President and makes sure our voice is heard on many county and regional committees. I would also like to thank the friendly staff at GL1 who ensure the pool is set up for us at each session during the year.

Club Awards

- **GMSC Male Swimmer of the Year Don Leatherbarrow** - Don finished the year with an incredible 10 Short course British records, 8 Long course British records, and was a member of both 280+ European Relay team records.
- **GMSC Female Swimmer of the Year Sue Hodge** - Sue broke 1 Long course British record and was a member of both the 280+ European Relay team records.
- **GMSC Improver of the Year Paul Bright** - Paul joined us from a non-swimming background but has attended training regularly, persevered and is showing improvement every week. Furthermore, he is looking forward to taking part in his first competition at our Open Meet on Sunday 31st March 2019.

Simon K. Cooper
Head Coach GMSC
November 2018