



Gloucester Masters Swim Club Coaching Report 2020

In my 5th year as Head Coach I was looking forward to another successful year for the Club and building on last year's achievements. In the first few months of the year, Club swimmers got off to a great start and managed to win a total of 17 gold medals at various competitions and set seven new Swim England South West (Regional) Masters Age Group Records.

Royal Navy Meet, Millfield, 23/2/20

The season started at the annual Royal Navy Meet at Millfield on the 23rd February. **Gill Ferris** (65-69yrs) had a busy day competing in six events and winning three golds in the 50m backstroke 43.73, 50m breaststroke 47.11 and 100m breaststroke 1:46.66. At the end of the Meet, Gill won her age group and set two new Meet records in the 100m and 50m breaststroke. **Sue Hodge** (65-69yrs) also won golds in 100m freestyle 1:17.67 and 50m freestyle 33.23. **Rachel Curnock** (30-34yrs) won gold in the 50m freestyle 29.02 and silvers in the 200m freestyle 2:15.53 and 400m freestyle 4:50.28. **Bethan Bell** (45-49yrs) also won gold in 100m backstroke 1:15.81 and bronze in the 50m freestyle 31.22.

Swim Wales Masters Meet, Swansea, 29/2-3/1/20

Next Meet up was the annual Meet in Swansea. Eight Club swimmers attended and set a total of five new ASA South West Master records. **Nick McDowall** (65-69yrs) won two golds in the 50m breaststroke (47.41) and 100m freestyle (1:23.49). **Jayne Stephenson** (65-69yrs) won Golds in the 200m freestyle (2:46.43) and 1500m freestyle (23:31.71) as well as a silver in the 400m freestyle (5:59.39). **Simon Wintle** (50-54yrs) won gold and silver in the 200m IM (2:35.28) and 200m backstroke (2:39.19). **Sandy Jones** (55-59yrs) won gold in the 50m butterfly (36.77) and bronze in the 200m IM (3:21.10) and 50m breaststroke (46.35). **Bethan Bell** (45-49yrs) won gold and silver in the 200m (2:47.90) and 50m backstroke (36.12). **Colin Stephenson** (60-64yrs) made a welcome return to competition after injury and in the freestyle events, managed to win silver in the 100m (1:03.78) and 200m (2:26.49) and a bronze in 400m (5:15.09). breaststroke specialist **Tom Morrow** who joined our Club in October 2019, won silver in the 50m (38.41) and 200m (3:09.32) and bronze in the 100m (1:27.00). **Rachel Curnock** rounded off the Meet with a silver in the 1500m freestyle (20:09.09).

Simon Wintle set Regional Records in both his swims, **Tom Morrow** set two new Regional records in the 100m and 200m breaststroke and **Jayne Stephenson** set a new Regional record in the 200m freestyle.

Bracknell 25th Anniversary Masters Meet, Bracknell, 7/3/20

Simon Wintle (50-54yrs) made the trip to Bracknell to get some updated short course times for the season ahead. Simon won gold in the 200m breaststroke (2:41.63), silver in the 200m IM (2:28.75) and both times again set new Regional records.

Staffordshire Masters Meet, Stafford Leisure Centre, 7/3/20

Brian Armstrong (55-59yrs) was our sole entrant at this year's Stafford Meet. Brian won gold in the 100m IM (1:27.85) and 100m breaststroke (1:38.39), as well as a bronze in the 200m freestyle (2:42.71) and the 50m butterfly (38.12).

After an impressive start to the season the Covid-19 pandemic hit just after the Cheltenham Festival and resulted in Lock Down 1. Our last swim session at GL1 was on Tuesday the 17th March and we were also obliged to cancel our annual Open Meet for the first time since 2003. For those of you who are new to our Club, our inaugural Open Meet took place on 11th May 1985 and the event has been an annual success

and major fundraiser for the Club ever since. From 1998-2002 the Meet did not take place due to the refurbishment of GL1, but the event has been a staple on the British Masters Swim calendar ever since.

Our planned March training trip to the BEST Centre in Majorca was also a casualty of the pandemic; however, thanks to Jayne Stephenson who spent many hours dealing with BEST on our behalf, we were able to re-book for March 2021. Places are still available if anyone is interested; please speak directly to Jayne or myself if you wish to attend.

After five long months of pool closures, we were able to restart training on Saturday mornings at the Sandford Parks Lido from the 8th August. We also had the good fortune to restart training at GL1 on Sundays at the new 1:00pm lunchtime slot from the 6th September. On behalf of the Club, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Management and Staff of both GL1 and Sandford Parks Lido for offering us much needed pool time, which was of benefit to us all both physically and mentally.

Lock Down 2 started on the 3rd November and pools again were closed across the country. We had to cancel the proposed Level X virtual competitions, but at the time of writing this report we are planning to restart training at 8:15pm on Thursday 3rd December at GL1. Lockdown 2, however, was not a total loss as the BBC showed the 2nd season of the International Swimming League live from Hungary and it was good to see the skills and speed of the best swimmers on the planet.

We currently have just under 100 members in the Club, most of whom returned to training when sessions restarted. Some swimmers did choose to stay away for obvious reasons, but we are hoping to see them again in the not too distant future. We did have several potential new swimmers contact us during the pandemic and I was slowly offering them trial swims before Lock Down 2. I plan to contact the remaining potential new swimmers in due course and offer them a swim trial when able. If anyone is interested in joining our Club, please contact me via the Club website (www.gloucestermasters.com)

Club Awards 2020

- **GMSC Male Swimmer of the Year – Simon Wintle** – Simon continued his good form from late 2019 where he won a silver medal in the 400m IM at the Swim England Masters Championships. Simon set four Regional records in early 2020.
- **GMSC Female Swimmer of the Year – Gill Ferris** – Gill continued her record-breaking form from last year where she set a total of 3 Regional records. Before the Pandemic hit, Gill won 3 Gold medals at the Royal Navy Open Meet and also set two Meet records.
- **GMSC Improver of the Year – Georgina Hounsome** – Georgina joined our Club in December 2017, has swam regularly despite a recent injury and continues to make excellent progress. Georgina consistently works hard and has recently been improving her freestyle and backstroke pace work with Coach Megan.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Coach **Megan Hartery** who has attended sessions regularly and made a positive impact on swimmers during training sessions. I would also like to thank **Tony Davies** who helped with coaching duties on Saturdays at the Lido and **Tom Howells** who helped us occasionally during the year when needed.

Finally, I would also like to thank our main Committee for meeting regularly throughout the Lock Downs and taking the many actions necessary to ensure we could get back in the pool. Special thanks to Club Secretary **Tony Coleby**, who among his other duties organised the monthly zoom meetings, membership secretary and treasurer **Colin** and **Jayne Stephenson** who spent many hours ensuring the Club remained on a sound financial footing and Fixtures Secretary **Brian Armstrong** who represented our Club at many County and Regional Zoom meetings.

Simon K. Cooper,
Head Coach GMSC,
November 2020