

Gloucester Masters Swim Club Coaching Report 2016-17

As Head Coach I am again pleased to report another successful season for our Club and we have achieved success in various disciplines throughout the year and I will detail the main achievements below.

Undoubted highlight of the year was having 2 of our Club members crowned World Champions in their chosen events. At the end of April Tony Cherrington was our lone representative at the World Masters Games in Auckland, New Zealand. Competing in the 75-79yrs age group Tony showed his speed and stamina by winning Gold medals both in the 50m free in the pool and 2500m Open Water event. Then in August along with 4 other club swimmers Tony competed in the FINA World Masters Championships in Hungary. Tony again excelled in the Open Water event and won bronze in the 3K event. Congratulations also to Helen Kula-Przewanski and Stroud affiliates Sean Kinsey and Jess Wooddisse who finished in the top 8 for their respective events in Hungary. In late January, Jon Coe travelled to Burghausen in Germany to compete in the 1000m at World Ice Swimming Championships. Jon swam without a wetsuit (as usual) in water under 5 degrees C was crowned World Age Group for the 65-69 age group. Jon was also world record holder for the event at one time during the year.

Turning to the National scene, by the end of the season we had 5 swimmers crowned National Champions in the pool, winning a combined total of 21 individual events. In June a small group of 5 swimmers travelled to Aberdeen to compete in the British Masters & Age Group Championships. Ladies Captain Aimee Carter continued her winning ways from last year by winning 6 Golds, while Colin Stephenson and Tony Cherrington won 2 Golds a piece. Then in October at the Swim England Masters National Championships in Sheffield, Aimee won a further 5 Golds, Tony won 4 more Golds and Helen Kula-Przewanski and newcomer Emma Williams won a Gold medal each.

In late July we had 6 swimmers travel to the Rother Valley in Sheffield to compete in the Swim England National Open Water Championships. Our swimmers had an excellent morning in the 1500m swim with both Jon Coe (65-69) and Brian Armstrong (55-60) both winning their age groups and Daisy Bond (25-29) achieving a silver medal. In the afternoon the medal rush continued in the 3K event with Jess Wooddisse and Sean Kinsey winning Gold, Jon Coe and Brian Armstrong winning Bronze and Mark Partridge finishing in a creditable 8th place in their respective Age Groups.

As previously advised the rules for the timing of the annual T30 Challenge changed this year, however, we decided to swim the event just before Xmas as usual. Highlight for the Club was Ollie Wilkinson swimming 2475m, which not only broke the British record for the 40-44 male age group, but also saw him achieve 3rd third place overall in the age adjusted results. In addition, we had 4 individual Age Group wins, 4 Age Group 2nd places and 4 Age Groups 3rd

place finishes. On the team side, out of a possible nine medals available, we won 5 and all 11 teams entered achieved an age group top three placing. Thanks as usual to Brian Armstrong who spent many hours on administering the event for us. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ollie Wilkinson on his 21 mile swim from Catalina Island to Los Angeles which he completed in a great time of 9hrs and 12mins.

In the Masters Decathlon Competition by the end of November our Ladies were ranked in 3rd place, matching their 2016 final position. Unfortunately, there is no sign of our men who have sunk without trace from their top 10 ranking in 2015 !!!

This year's Swim England South West Region Masters Championships saw a change of venue from the usual Millfield School to Horfield in Bristol. I was especially pleased to see our Club with the largest contingent of swimmers from all clubs entered. From a total of 18 swimmers we ended up with 14 South West titles, and it was great to see swimmers try new or different events.

The 2017 South West Regional Inter-County Masters competition was held at Millfield School and our Club provided 21 swimmers Gloucester County Team. In my absence, Brian Armstrong took over coaching duties for the day and it was good to see us improve from last year's 3rd place to 2nd place this year. Hopefully we can continue to progress and regain the Trophy from Devon which we last won in 2015.

Our Annual Open Meet took place on 23rd April and again proved well attended with many good swims and an amazing 68 Meet records being broken on the day. Thanks to everyone who helped out on the day and special thanks to Jayne Ball, Colin Stephenson, Brian Jones and Herbie and Pauline Adams who were enthusiastic as usual on the PA.

The Saturday morning session at the Sandford Lido proved as popular as ever this year and thanks to Lido Staff for their continued support and for allowing us to swim before the official start of the season. Thanks to social secretary Jo Duberley for continuing the annual end of season BBQ tradition at the Lido, and thanks to Jayne Ball who spent time cleaning the BBQ on the day before.

It was with sadness that we learnt of the passing of Club stalwart Gerwen Morris on 18th Feb this year. Gerwen had been unwell with heart disease for many years. Gerwen was in the club from its inception and for many years was a very competitive swimmer especially in backstroke. He had been an active committee member and along with his neighbour and fellow committee member Carole Carpenter was always available to help and welcome new members in the days when we had our own reception desk at the pool. He was a very sociable person and was even known to enjoy an occasional beer ("mine's another Doombur"). In later years he helped out with coaching and had a good eye for pointing out and correcting stroke errors. He continued to keep contact with a number of older club members until his untimely death, he is much missed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Committee members who have worked tirelessly during the year to keep our Club moving forward, and special thanks to Brian Armstrong who in addition to his many Club duties also acts as the County Masters Swim Rep. and has spent many hours at meetings around the South West to promote our sport.

- *GMSC Male Swimmer of the Year - Tony Cherrington*
- *GMSC Female Swimmer of the Year - Aimee Carter*
- *GMSC Improver of the Year - Viv Shinde*

Finally, I would like to personally thank Thomas Howells for his continued support and enthusiasm which has been invaluable to us over the year.

Simon K. Cooper,
Head Coach GMSC,
Nov. 2017