



## Gloucester Masters Swim Club Coaching Report 2021

In my 6th year as Head Coach, I am happy to report that even during the current pandemic and another national lockdown, the Club is still thriving and continuing to move forward. After the lockdown demand was high from swimmers wanting to join our Club and Membership is currently at an all-time high with almost 120 members.

Due to the National lockdown our last swim session in 2020 was on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December at GL1 and we did not return to training until some five months later on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May at the Lido. This summer we were lucky enough to be able to use the whole 10 lanes of the Lido pool, however we will have to review this for next summer as obviously rental cost were a lot higher. We quickly returned to GL1 on 17<sup>th</sup> May with a new Sunday afternoon session which has had mixed reviews from swimmers. We also managed to get further sessions at GL1 on Monday and Wednesday evenings so we were lucky to be training at our normal summer capacity by June. I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks on behalf of the Club to the Staff at GL1 and Sandford Lido for their help in getting us back to training.

Sadly, for the second year in a row we were unable to host our Annual Open Meet; however, we are hopeful of hosting the Meet in April/May 2022. In addition, we were once more compelled to cancel our highly anticipated training trip to the BEST Centre in Majorca, though we have been fortunate and managed to rescheduled the trip for April 2022. Please note that there are still a few spaces available if anyone wishes to attend.

For the first time in over a year swimmers were finally able to return to competition at the Devon Masters and Juniors Meet at Plymouth on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2021. **Colin Stephenson** (60-64yrs) won gold in the 50m, 100m, 200m Free and 50m Backstroke and **Jayne Stephenson** (65-69yrs) matched that with 4 golds in the 100m, 200m, 400m Free and 100m IM. **Leigh Nelms** (45-49yrs) continued his improvement in the pool and won 3 golds 100m, 200m, 400m Freestyle and bronze in the 50m Free in big lifetime best times. **Micaela Morris** (60-64yrs) won gold in the 200m Free and silver in the 50m Free, 50m Backstroke and 50m Butterfly. (Full results on Swim England web site).

Swim England Masters Nationals returned to Sheffield at the end of October 2021 and we had a total of 13 swimmers compete in 54 events winning 10 Golds, 14 Silver and 5 Bronze medals. Our National Champions for this year are **Jayne Stephenson** (65-69yrs) 200m, 400m and 1500m Free. **Jess Wooddisse** (45-49yrs- 800m, 1500m free, 200 Fly. **Colin Stephenson** (60-64yrs) 50m and 200m Free, **Michaela Morris** (60-64yrs) 50m Fly and **Tony Cherrington** (75-59yrs) 50m Free. In addition, versatile **Nia Westlake** (25-29yrs) set 6 new South West regional records in the 400m, 800m, 1500m Free and 200m Fly, 200m Backstroke and 400m IM. Jess Wooddisse swims in the 400, 800m and 1500m Free were also regional records as was **Pete Smiths** (50-54yrs) 100m Butterfly. (Full results on Swim England web site).

The National Inter-County Masters competition returned to Millfield in 2021 after a year's break. I am pleased to report that over 75% of the Gloucestershire Team was made up of Club swimmers and we finished 2<sup>nd</sup> overall by just 6 points in the South West Regional event. On the day our Ladies won 129-120 points and our Men were beaten in to second place by 156-138 points. Club swimmer **Jo Seymour** topped the individual points table for all swimmers with 15 points, **Kate Nimmo** came equal second with 14 points and **Gill Ferris** came equal fourth with 12 points. In addition, regional records were set by Jo Seymour (55-59yrs) 50m Breaststroke 38.10, Kate Nimmo (45-49yrs) 50m Butterfly 32.12, **Tom Morrow** (65-69yrs) 50m Breaststroke 38.30 and **Matt Bailey** (45-49yrs) 50m Backstroke 30.85. Once the National Virtual event took place it was great to see we cracked the top 10 for the first time ending up 7<sup>th</sup> overall just 1.5 points behind 6<sup>th</sup> place Devon. We also had two of our swimmers ranked #1 for their individual events, Jo Seymour (55yrs+) and Tom Morrow (65yrs+) both in the 50m Breaststroke. (Full results on Swim England web site)

Last Meet of the Season was the Swim Wales Masters and Seniors Meet held at Newport on the 27<sup>th</sup> November. Michaela Morris(60-64yrs) was on top form winning 4 Golds in the 400m Free, 200m Backstroke, 50m and 100m Butterfly. Tom Morrow (65-69yrs) won 3 Golds in the Breaststroke events and set a new Scottish and regional record in the 200m with a season's best time of 3:07.80. John Anderson (60-64yrs) made a welcome return to competition with 2 Golds in the 25m Butterfly and Freestyle. Nick McDowall (65-69yrs) won Gold in the 25m Breaststroke and Peter Kendall (60-64yrs) won Gold in the 25m Backstroke. Luis Sardinha (30-34yrs) made his competitive debut for GMSC and won Gold in the 100m Breaststroke 1:24.52 and Silver in the 50m Breaststroke in 37.79. (Full results on Swim England web site)

It gives me great pleasure in announcing this year's Club award winners are:

- **GMSC Male Swimmer of the Year – Tom Morrow** – Tom joined the Club in October 2019 and has regularly attended training sessions and worked hard while at the Club. In 2020 Tom was world ranking #3 in the Long Course Meters (LCM) 200m Br 3:09.32 (60-64yrs). Highlight of the year was undoubtedly Tom setting a new Scottish Record as detailed above.
- **GMSC Female Swimmer of the Year – Nia Westlake** – Nia joined us in November 2019 and has also regularly attended training sessions and worked hard in the pool. In 2020 Nia(25-29yrs) was world ranked #1 LCM in the 200m Fly 2:43.85, #2 in the 400m IM 5:46.62 and #3 in the 200 IM 2:39.93. Highlight of the season was Nia setting 6 regional records at this year's English National Masters Championships as detailed above.
- **GMSC Improver of the Year – Kieran Vickers** – Kieran joined us in December 2020 having previously swam at Newcastle Swim Team in the North East. Kieran initially swam in the middle lanes in training, but he has worked hard and regularly attended training and now trains with our Clubs fastest swimmers. We look forward to seeing Kieran compete in the new year

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Coaches **Craig Skinner** and **Megan Hartery** who attended sessions regularly this year and made a positive impact on swimmers during training sessions. I would also like to thank **Tony Davies** who helped us occasionally during the Lido when needed.

I would also like to thank our main Committee for meeting regularly throughout early 2021 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. Also, thanks to membership secretary and treasurer **Colin** and **Jayne Stephenson** who spent many hours ensuring the Club remained on a sound financial footing and liaising with the various pools we use. Finally, thanks to Fixtures Secretary **Brian Armstrong** who represented our Club at many County and Regional meetings during the year.

Simon K. Cooper,  
Head Coach GMSC,  
December 2021