

OUR CLUB! ISSUE 13: MAY 2010



Welcome to the latest issue of "OUR CLUB" - the newsletter by and for Beckenham SC. A digest of events and information since March. Get your news and photos to me, whether swimming, water polo, or other bits and pieces about other sports or ideas. The holiday season will soon be upon us and volcanic ash or not, your photos of BSC kit in far flung or unusual places would be really good...prizes on offer, too! Contact me via - john@hamo6055.plus.com or 020 8857 4977.

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Surrey v Kent School's gala; GB Commonwealth Trials; Water Polo ; a Grandma's view of an elementary gala; running swimming trials; The National Arena League B Final, and the BSC Open 2010...!

KENT V SURREY SECONDARY SCHOOLS INTER COUNTY - March 2010



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On a Friday night at an (as usual) hot Sevenoaks Leisure Centre the teams representing Kent and Surrey Secondary Schools met to do battle! A good number of BSC swimmers swam for their respective county and swam good times and some good results were recorded during the evening. The final result went Kent's way after some exciting medley and free relays at the end of the gala.
Well done to all!

Michael Gunning's Commonwealth Trials Experience!!

I was nervous and excited at the same time. Last year, I got 1 British Champ time and my race was in the first session and I didn't even stay for the finals. But this year, I was up here for the week, with 5 events and the pressure was on. It all started when my mum and I arrived at the Ponds Forge on Sunday after a long journey, and found out that a gala was taking place in the main pool, so all the competitors of the Trials were escorted to the leisure pool. I got unchanged and walked over the whirl pool when Ellie called me over. We had a good catch up and she told me 'what ever you do, don't go in the whirl pool...I have and got told off!' 😊 I swam a little but was still trying to get around swimming in the same lane as Record Holder Gemma Spofforth, Liam Tancock and one of my good friends Ellen Gandy that all were at Beijing Olympics. After a little dip, and feel good session in the water, I got out and headed back to my hotel for an early night. On the way out, I bumped into Liam Tancock and we got chatting (You know what its like: So...



how amazing was the Olympics???) and I had to ask him for a picture: Already, I had had an amazing time, and I had not even swum the warm-up of the competition!

The next day, was competition time, and they announced some new changes around the pool. "No-one is allowed on poolside due to Media Purposes", "Every swimmer must walk around the poolside (after racing) clockwise" "Every swimmer must walk behind the screens of the blocks while passing the interviewing station." So after the early warm-up at 7.15, everyone had to clear the poolside and go into the gallery. The pool was really done up, with British Gas everywhere,

cameras, lights, but mostly the two enormous boards at both ends of the pool showing different clips of motivation -like at the Olympics. The heats commenced at 9.00, and on the first day I had the 400m Freestyle and the 200m Butterfly. It was really good to swim in the meet that everyone was talking about 'The Commonwealth Trials'. I did not swim as well as I would have liked to, but I was enjoying myself all the same and witnessing a spectacular experience. Due to the challenging qualifying times, not many swimmers were there, so the heats were finished at 11.00! Then the swimmers had the rest of the day to relax ready for the Finals at 6.00. The Finals were absolutely TREMENDOUS!



They put the strong beams on (that blinded everyone's eyes) and witnessing some of the best times in the world being achieved was really amazing.

It took a while to get used to the surroundings of an empty poolside and a crowded gallery watching your every move, but it was not too bad. Tony Beckley was with me for the week, and we had a lot of fun and mid week, Steffi, Steph and Lauren raced on Thursday and came and kept me company.

Later in the week, I had my main event, my 1500, and I was ranked first for my age group. I tried not to get too nervous but when I found out my heat, I panicked!

"Last Heat, Lane 1" I glanced at the sheet and found out that I was racing British Record holders who were 1min faster than me! Before I went up, my coach reminded me "You are as good as them otherwise you would not be here!" when I was in the cool room, Daniel Fogg came and sat next to me. How could I be racing the Best in Britain?? When I swam my race, they all went out fast but I held back because my mind was saying 'they are faster than you' but I came back hard and touched the pad 6th. I was a bit disappointed with my time, but when I walked around to the Swim Down pool (Clockwise lol) my coach said "That was not as good as we hoped but you are still Number 1 in GBR in your age group". My heart skipped a beat, and because I was 1st in the 1994 age group, which meant that I earned a place on the OPEN WATER OFFSHORE CAMP in Italy + France + UK!!!!

I was really relieved and so happy.

Commonwealth Trials 2010 carried some amazing memories, and I had a truly amazing time!

Michael Gunning

(Thank you Michael for a great article and congrats on your achievement - Ed)

Water Polo at Beckenham, by Henry Knight



After playing water polo since January 2008, I was selected to be a part of the 25 strong Great Britain 1995/96 squad. It was one of my greatest achievements to date.

I have been swimming at Beckenham since I was 7 and I have worked my way up to be a part of Beckenham's Top Squad. But in 2008 I was introduced to the rough sport of Water Polo and joined the Beckenham Water Polo team. I took to the sport like a "fish" to water and loved playing the game. In early 2009 I joined The Regional Training Camp (RTC) which was the next step up from my club polo. I quickly progressed and in the Summer I was invited to a training camp at Millfield School with several other players from my R.T.C and other R.T.C's. We stayed for a week in which we were taught new skills and woken up at 5:00 AM every morning, but the food was really good!

In January 2010 I heard that my efforts in that long, hard week in Millfield had paid off and I had been invited to trial for the 1995/96 GB Squad. My first camp on the 9th-10th Jan in Cardiff had 50 players battling for a place. We did many swim sets and games so the head Hungarian Coach, Chubba, could choose his squad, 15 players were knocked out.

The next weekend camp in Cardiff on the 6th-7th Feb was a lot harder, endless speed sets and constant press-ups and sit-ups. The competition was a lot harder and everyone was fighting for their place in the 25 member squad. Finally we had an hour of matches for the coaches to asses our gameplay; I was really nervous and knew if I wanted to get in I would have to play my "A" game. I started off well and made some good passes but I really started to enjoy myself when I put home a few goals.

After the games we all got out and stretched for 15 minutes before being split into 2 groups, one group got into the squad and the other group went home empty handed. Chubba announced that my group had been selected as the GB squad. I was relieved that the two weekends of pain and hard work had paid off. I worked out that over the course of the weekend we had done 15 hours of work in the pool, and as you can guess I gave swimming training a miss the next day!

I received confirmation of my place in the squad the next day as well as loads of muscle exercises and the news that my Easter weekend would be spent in Cardiff preparing for our game against Denmark in June.

Water Polo is a great sport and with a bit of hard work you can achieve some great things. It was a great experience and I would recommend everyone to give it a try and join Beckenham Water Polo; who knows where you could be in a few years' time!

Henry Knight

(Good luck Henry! Ed)

A GRANDMA'S VIEW - ELEMENTARY GALA MARCH 2010

What better way to spend Mother's Day afternoon?

The sun was shining. Spring was on its way, at last, and a hoard of devoted Mums, Dads, and Grandmas etc. queued to pay their £2 entry fee (plus £1 for the obligatory programme and another £1 for the also obligatory raffle) to watch their beloved offspring compete in a proper swimming race, many for the first time. It was cheap at the price and worth every penny, especially when you win the raffle, but sadly find it was the prize that you had donated! *(Unbelievable! Ed)*

I must come clean and declare my interest. My seven year old grandson was competing for the first time. Would he forget to push off when the whistle blows? No diving in for these babies who have yet to achieve their Competitive Start Award. Will he remember to touch at the other end? Will he also remember not to turn onto his front to touch on the backstroke? What happens if his goggles come off? Will he suddenly disappear to the loo when it is time to be 'whipped'? I could see that I was not alone in worrying as I looked around at the gallery full of supporters signaling with waving arms to their various offspring. One gentleman sitting directly in front of me had to rush off suddenly to buy some goggles as his son had forgotten to pack his.

There were two long 50m events before my grandson's first event. Therefore, being totally impartial, I could be objective and thoroughly enjoyed them. Having watched and officiated at hundreds of galas since 1976, I found that old habits die hard as I carefully followed the programme and noted swimmers who I thought were exceptional in their races. I was very impressed at the quality of the swimming and found it hard to believe that this was only an Elementary gala. Almost without exception the strokes were excellent and the competitiveness of the swimmers was admirable.

From where I was sitting it all ran like clockwork. I know this is not always the same on poolside, but I had no reason to believe otherwise. The swimmers were all in line and ready for their heats; well done to the whips. All the officials kept the gala running smoothly - and more importantly to time. The recorder's desk and the medal desk looked very efficiently run and how nice to have an announcer that I could hear. I know there were a couple of minor slip ups but I think it was a 'First'. Well done to everyone involved.

Oh yes! Where did my little one finish?

At the end of the gala he ran up to me for a hug with a smile as wide as his face with two medals round his neck. (He finished last in both races ie. third and sixth respectively) but he slept with them round his neck and wore them to school the next day. What a wonderful idea to award medals to the top six. He can't wait for



the next gala now!

A wonderful success! Congratulations to Jackie and her team for all the organising.

Doreen Somerville, President BSC 1996 and 2007

(Thanks, Doreen - if any other parent/grandparent would like to give a 'view from the balcony', I would be delighted - Ed)

It is not all about swimming....some of our swimmers can run a bit too! This piece was in the Newshopper - 13/4/10 -

LEWISHAM swimmer James Allan took gold in the invitational world schools' biathlon competition at Medway Park last weekend. Allan, 15, attends Forest Hill School and was invited to take part in the world competition after winning the London schools' regional event in October. As part of its commitment to developing young talent and inspiring the stars of the future, [Pentathlon GB](#) invited 150 young athletes of each gender to take part in the world schools biathlon.

Allan swims for Beckenham Swimming Club and recently took part in the Kent county swimming championships, where he won a total of 17 medals. He is also a keen runner and since joining Forest Hill School has been the holder of the Lewisham schools' cross country championships for the last four years.

Allan said: "One of my swimming friends recommended I entered the schools biathlon as it combines swimming and running, so I asked my PE teacher about it and he agreed that it would be a good idea to give it a go. "I was amazed when I won the regional event, as this was the first time that I had done it."

Modern pentathlon is a multi-sport event comprising the five disciplines of fencing, swimming, horse riding, pistol shooting and running. It was introduced by the founder of the modern Olympic Games Baron Pierre de Coubertin and is recognised as one of the most testing of all Olympic events. The schools' biathlon involved a 100m swim and 1000m run.

Allan said: "I was happy with my swim time of 57:47s, which is close to my personal best and put me in second place, but I knew that I was competing against some very good runners." The leader after the swim was Marlon Gasparotto, who is also a member of Beckenham SC. Gasparotto's swim time was 56:95s and based on the pentathlon point system, this gave him a two second advantage going into the run.

Allan said: "Marlon and I were warming up for the run together and discussing our tactics, but basically all we could do was run for our lives!" The runners set off on the track and then headed off into the woods. Allan was first back into the arena and managed to keep a good lead into the finish, while Gasparotto finished in third.

"It was a great day and a fantastic experience," added Allan. "Everyone was really friendly and helpful and I will certainly look forward to entering more biathlons in the future. I wouldn't mind having a go at the shooting or fencing, but I am not sure about the horse riding."

(I am sure you could get used to it...Ed) Thanks to the **Newshopper** for this article.

Running the Swimming Trials - April, 2010

On Saturday 17th April, a lovely hot April day, we ran a trial for all the swimmers who had been waiting patiently since the last trial in October 2009. Coaches Di Manley and Susie Goold assessed the 32 swimmers who attended; 27 swimmers were offered a place in a squad suitable to their age, ability and space available.

Thank you coaches!

A few swimmers did not attend on the night and in the next week I received a couple of apologies from swimmers stuck in various countries due to the volcanic ash! 24 swimmers have now joined their new squads and I wish them every success and hope they enjoy a long and happy membership with the club.

A plea - as I cannot be around when all the squads train, so please can everyone look out for any new faces in their squad and make them feel welcome? **Thank you.** The squad representatives for each swim squad can play a huge role in answering queries from new members and introducing the swimmers or maybe more importantly, the parents, to others in the same squad.

Linda Deane opened the Club Shop recently to enable any new (and old) members to buy club kit and it was great to see so many little swimmers in Tadpoles and Development 1 squad swimming in Beckenham Club hats. It may have been my imagination, but I am sure they were swimming better already!!!!



I already have almost 20 swimmers waiting to trial made up of new enquiries and swimmers who could not attend the last trial, or felt they were too young. We have a lot of swimmers born in 2005 in Tadpoles now and will soon be looking for little fishes born in 2006!!!

A very warm welcome to all the new members!

Jackie Elliott

NATIONAL ARENA LEAGUE B FINAL 25/4/10



Not sure which camera, Gabriel?

"We came, we saw and we swam our hearts out. The Beckenham A team and their band of militant supporters descend on Ponds Forge in Sheffield. They were there to battle for glory in the Arena League B Final. It was noisy, it was hot, and it was a great atmosphere and a wonderful experience for all involved. We finished in 7th place, a great achievement.

Congratulations to Michael Gunning who picked up the male 15 year-old swimmer of the meet award and well done to all of the swimmers, Tony, Di and Sarah the coaches, Tony, Kathy and Catherine our officials, the Gunnings for organising us and the 'barmy army' in the stands". *Kathy Hook*



The full results are on the website www.nationalswimmingleague.org.uk. A memento of the gala on DVD is available for sale via the website.



Arena League! The Walton View

The journey to Sheffield was easy and we spent most of the time texting our friends to see where they were en route. As we approached the car park of the hotel it all looked a bit grim, but once inside it was OK. We quickly unpacked then met up with Steph, Rachel and Ricky to go shopping. We headed straight for Primark to buy blue glitter eye liner and eye shadow ready for the next day. Dinner was early at 5.30 Lasagne, jacket potatoes and salad, followed by fruit and yoghurt (no scrummy pud!).

After we'd eaten Tony gave us a team talk, then some of us went to Mc Donalds for a Mc Flurry - a tradition we'd started the previous year. The rest of the evening was spent either in the bar or someone's bedroom. Calm down parents - only playing cards and listening to music The parents had their meal then stayed in the bar talking, drinking and playing games!!! There was a 10pm curfew, which the children obeyed and the parents and coaches ignored!

Next morning we were up bright and early and down at breakfast for 7.15, the weather didn't look quite as bright as it was raining, but the Blue army was in fine spirits, and after another team talk we armed ourselves with flags and various noisy instruments and set off across the bridge to Ponds Forge.

After team photos outside, the swimmers and supporters separated (swimmers to poolside and supporters to their seats).

Beckenham was in lane 3, and we were soon in the pool warming up. After warm up the Club captains and representatives from every club paraded round the pool to the music they'd chosen. Ours was 'One Step Beyond!' The supporters were all in fine voice from up in the stands (what we really mean is just that they were noisy and there was plenty of flag waving and chanting of "Blue Army" going on). Swimmers and supporters were very buoyant and the atmosphere electric.



Then it was time for the swimming to begin. Everyone swam their very best and at the end of the competition Beckenham came 7th overall and 6th in the Relay challenge. I was really pleased with my 100m fly time as it was a National time, but Lauren was a bit disappointed with her 100m free time as she has gone faster, but it wasn't too bad.

Our Supporters had tried really hard to win the Best supporters' prize this year, but were just outdone by Exeter who were next to them in the stands (and who by the way stole our Blue Army Chant turning it into Green Army!).

There were a few mix ups in the scoring and it wasn't until later that we were to find out that Michael Gunning had won the most improved boy 15/u. Well done Michael. It was all great fun and we really hope we can qualify again next year.

A big "Thank You" to Tony, Di and Sarah, and to Team Gunning for all their organising, all the swimmers and supporters.

Well done to all - a great day, and an amazing experience!

BSC OPEN 2010 - 8th and 9th MAY



A huge amount of work from our meet organiser, Patricia Ugunfeibo, resulted in a well-planned, well-executed - and FUN two days at Crystal Palace on 8th and 9th May. The weather outside was distinctly un-spring like and as a result it was good to be inside!

From the moment that people arrived, the welcome and organisation and preparation showed. The comments from clubs, swimmers, parents and officials all alluded to the way in which BSC not only organised the event but also thought of many things which all went to show that the many hours of agonizing and attention to detail really does make a huge difference.

From the friendly welcome and cups of tea and coffee as well as excellent food for lunch/breakfast for officials and coaches, and also the sweet tray/water deliveries and so on all made for a 'stress free' group of officials; we had over 50 different officials over the weekend, and were able to have people mentored and still have more than the required number of officials - no mean feat! Thanks to John Handley for getting that part of the show on the road.

The parents and swimmers had happy faces to greet them, and a very good and different raffle main prize and plenty of good raffle prizes for the main draw, sweets and all sorts of things to buy.....at the swim shop on site.... And to add to it all - great music!

And, well done to Grace Archer of Wandsworth Swimming Club who achieved a Commonwealth Qualifying time in the 400 IM in a time of 4:47.53.



Some comments received to date:-

"Indeed well done everybody - you were all fab.....

After many years of a BSC Open, this was undeniably the best I've experienced!!!

Well done Patricia yet again - let's hope we can coax you out of retirement again next year.

"Dj Denoir" - great work again fella! Rich (Richard Collins - aka refreshment guru)

Plus, Hats off to Chris Bedford for single handedly carrying out his magic on the scoreboard. Shaun Gunning

"Thank you for all your hard work. It was our first time at Crystal Palace and me and daughter really enjoyed it, it was helped by some good swims by my daughter so the fact that she is happy, means I am happy, it was a very long weekend for us from Basingstoke as we were out for over 13 hours each day so I think the next couple of days may be a bit tiring.

Many thanks again, I did speak to Patricia about please once again thank her from us. See you next year; hopefully the timing may be better in that our older regional swimmers will not clash with the same weekend.

Oh and the gifts you gave were very well appreciated.

Sally "(*Basingstoke Bluefins* official and swim mum)

Thank you- I thought the gala was a great success.

I liked all the extra touches-croissants etc for breakfast!

Thanks for the chocs too!

Della (*Bromley* official and swim mum)

I thought the weekend went very well. We were very well cared for. Thank you to the catering team - they did a splendid job. The car parking worked well - the chap at the gate had our names -- Lauren loved the fact that we were so close to the pool (especially on the way out!).

Thanks again - we'll be there next year!

Chris Joy/Tony (*Thanet* officials and swim mum/grand dad)

And from the *organiser-in-chief* -

Thank you for your tireless hard work this weekend - the whole weekend! I think that together, we put on a very good show. Each of us played a vital role in what I believe was a very enjoyable meet for our guests. People commented on our friendliness, the announcements, the programmes, the speed at which the results were produced, how the entrance was monitored etc. etc.. Gratefully,
Patricia

THE JACK PETCHEY FOUNDATION NEEDS YOUR HELP!



"As part of the Jack Petchey Foundation's tenth anniversary celebrations we are undertaking a survey of youth attitudes - this survey is called **"Listen Up"**.

We need your help with this...

We want to know what the young people at Beckenham Swimming Club think about a whole range of different subjects including education, work, politics, health, ambitions and hobbies.

The survey results will be published in a Jack Petchey Foundation report, "Listen Up", which we will use to make sure that people in positions of influence and power, understand and react to what young people REALLY have to say and think. In this election year, it is more important that young people's voices are heard.

How can young people give their views?

All of the young people at Beckenham Swimming Club that are aged between 11-25 can complete the "Listen Up" survey by clicking on the following link:

www.surveymonkey.com/s/ListenUp

They can also access the survey through the "announcements" section of the Jack Petchey Foundation website.

It will take a maximum of ten minutes to complete and when they have submitted their survey they will be invited to enter a prize draw to win an IPOD TOUCH!!!

We really do need your help, so please forward this link to the young people of Beckenham Swimming Club - Just ten minutes of their time will make a huge difference.

Many thanks.

The Jack Petchey Foundation Team

Many thanks to our contributors:- *Henry Knight, Kathy Hook, Michael Gunning, Doreen Somerville, Rebecca and Lauren Walton, The Newshopper and Jackie Elliott*



WANTED - roving reporters for duties at Nationals, White Horse League, London Youth Games and any other events between now and September, 2010; please report to the Editor!

DON'T FORGET YOUR T-BAG/POLO SHIRT PHOTOS ENTRIES!!

Next issue - any ideas/suggestions/articles about swimming/other sports or other interesting information to Hilary by September 1st, 2010 for the September, 2010 issue.

May 2010 Issue