



NEWSLETTER – January 2010

Committee Members: Chairman - Roger Allen; Secretary - Sue Warne; Treasurer - Catherine Abbott; Webmaster & Beds ASA – Phil Winder; Team Manager - Nigel Halford; Competition Secretary – Philip Abbott; Welfare Office – Claire Case; Swim21 Liaison – Jenny Trott; Records - Melanie Doyle; Fundraising - Lee Ashton-Rigby; Workforce Coordinator- Sue Gilbertson

A Happy New Year to all swimmers and parents. The end of 2009 saw an enjoyable and successful Club Championship, Becky Gilbertson became President of Beds ASA and us saying good-bye to Diane Brinkler as Head Coach. We are all grateful for the work Diane has done over the years with the swimmers and for the club and we wish her well for the future.

New Head Coach for FDSC

The committee are pleased to announce that Becky Gilbertson has taken over as the new head coach; here are a few words from her:



One month into the job and I have finally found a spare moment to let you know what I think. So far I am really enjoying working with all of the swimmers and I am impressed at how hard some of you have been working, I hope this can continue up to and beyond counties and we can have more great results like the 2 galas we have had already this year. Many thanks to Steve, Nigel, Simon and the pool side helpers that have been helping out at sessions and kept

the training sessions running to a high standard. So let's keep it up and have a successful 2010!!

Most of you are too young to remember me as a swimmer, (that makes me feel really old!) so I thought you would like to hear a little about me so here are some highlights of my swimming career. I swam for Luton and started competing in Disability competitions aged 15. My classification was S8 SB7 SM8. My earliest achievement on the world stage was 8 gold medals as well as 4 world records (200 IM, 100 Breaststroke, 4x50 Freestyle Team and 4 x 100 Medley Team (Fly leg!)) at the Cerebral Palsy World Games in 1997 aged 16. From then on I strived to make it in to the British swimming team and compete at Paralympic events. I finally made it in 2000, competing in Ukraine where I achieved the British long course record for 400m freestyle and the IPC Paralympic qualifying time for Sydney 2000, the time ranked me 6th in the world. At the Swedish Open shortly afterwards I was awarded the top British swimmer for my overall performance despite picking up a virus at the meet, which then unfortunately I didn't recover from in time to be selected for the Sydney Paralympics. Once I had recovered from the massive disappointment of not making it to the Paralympics and having had major surgery, I went off to Nottingham Trent University to study Bsc (Hons) Sport (Science and Management). Having discovered the University swim team I found I still loved swimming, and all it had to offer. So having kept swimming at University, I was able in 2004 and again in 2005 to break the IPC World and European Short Course records for 1500m Freestyle at the Beds County Champs. Over my career I held British long and short course records and actually still hold the 800 Free Short and Long course and the 1500 Free (Short). I was also Luton Sportswoman of the year in 1998, 2001 and 2004, runner up in 1999 and 2005.

I got into teaching and coaching as a volunteer at Luton, I went through my Level 1 and 2 Teachers and helped my Mum run the club's swim school. I did my Level 3 Club Coaches in 2004 and coached the junior squads at Luton, until I left to come to Flitwick as assistant coach in 2007. My 'other job' is working for LIVING SPORT (The County Sports Partnership in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) I started there from University as Swimming Development Officer, until the ASA structure changed, when I was offered the role of Event Coordinator, which means I organise a few big sporting events for the county.

So that is plenty about me, now on to my plans for the club. Here are my top 3 aims over the next few years:

To develop the club's volunteers in teaching and coaching

As a club we do really well getting officials qualified and helping out which is great, I want to expand this to teaching and coaching qualifications as well. Steve, Simon, Nigel and all the volunteers and poolside helpers do a great job, but we need to get more of you qualified and experienced as this will really help the swimmers in the pool. The more people we have with the right skills the more individual attention the swimmers can have to ensure they are training and carrying out skills correctly. The Appointment of an assistant coach will help, but for the long term future of the club it is **YOU** we need to help. (See later in this newsletter for details)

To continue to develop and improve our competitive results particularly juniors / age group

Since I joined in 2007 Bronze and Silver squads have improved in strength and depth, and we have some talented young coming through. The 2009 Junior League season saw us being able to field a full team in all 3 rounds for the first time since I have been at the club. But we still need more swimmers if we are going to field a full team this year and in future years, which will enable us to work towards gaining promotion to Division 1. Alongside Junior League we have had a couple of quieter years at the BAGCAT Regional Championships, I would like to see a lot more of you making qualifying times and taking the step up to regional level. I will be looking at making a few changes to squads and sessions to hopefully enable this to happen. As well as ensuring I regularly get to see all squads training. I am also working with Vix Metcalf, Head Coach at Mid Beds Swim Squad, to improve the links as a feeder club. Anyone wishing to consider training with Mid Beds should speak to me and discuss the options.

Retention of Senior Swimmers

It is my intention to encourage the older swimmers to stay in swimming through their exams and up to and beyond University. If we are to improve our ranking in the Arena National League and in the county we need strength in all age groups. I would like to be able to offer anyone that has come through the club, a squad place to suit their needs and encourage any swimmers 16 years and over to consider taking their level 1 teachers and / or coaches and helping poolside, or taking officials qualifications and giving something back to the sport and the club. I may even consider the addition of water polo sessions!! I hope you will see from my background how swimming can really make you the person you are.

Vacancy for Assistant Coach

We are looking at recruiting a part-time Assistant Coach to enable the club to continue to develop. Please see the website and notice board for more details.

Congratulations to ...

... Simon Liddle, Chris Murphy and Tom Winder, who represented Bedfordshire ASA at the ASA National County Team Championships held in Sheffield on Sunday 18 October.

... Becky Gilbertson (head coach) becoming President of Beds ASA for the year, we wish her luck in this role.

... Claire Warne in September won Silver Medal in the Multi-disability 100m backstroke at the UK School Games.

... Officials Success the following have recently qualified:

Starters: Janet Murphy and Phil Winder

Level 2 Judge: Philip Abbott and Bruce Chamberlain-Clark

Level 1 Judge: Paresh Aatkar

Timekeepers: Catherine Abbott, Michael Case, Stephen Ford, Julie McGeever, Melanie Roberts and Jenny Trott

Young Timekeeper: Natasha Abbott

Courses for officials within the County are available at all levels, anyone who wants to know more should contact Phil Winder. A Young Timekeepers course will be run during the County Championships in March (age 14-19).

Don't forget to check the website regularly for up-to-date details on fixtures, results and all other information about the Club - www.flitwickdolphins.com



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Swim Camp

Becky is organising a swim camp in the February half-term at Bedford for County Qualifiers.

Gala's competed at:

Linslade – Well done to everyone who took part at Linslade Crusaders Open Meet (9th January), it was a good 1st meet after the Christmas break. It was run successfully by Crusaders even though it was their first Open Meet. All the swimmers enjoyed themselves although it was a bit cold in and out of the water. Many medals were won by swimmers for the first time.



Biggleswade – Well done everyone who took part, coached or officiated at the Biggleswade Open Meet (23/24 January). The club won 35 medals in all, 10 Gold, 18 Silver and 17 Bronze, and came 3rd overall behind Hatfield and Lincoln. Will Hawkes won Top Boy. There was great camaraderie on poolside and a total of 14 club records were broken, which could be a record in itself.

National Arena League 2009

Once again the National Arena Swimming League season proved challenging but immensely enjoyable, and once again the club punched well above its weight. The season opened in October with a long trip to Bromsgrove. The gala was combined with long course training in Coventry and the club are very grateful to the parents who ferried swimmers from home to Coventry, across to Bromsgrove and back again. We had a tough draw but came 4th behind Leek, Wolverhampton and Witney, with Perry Beeches (North Birmingham) and Bromsgrove in 5th and 6th. Leek and Wolverhampton were eventually promoted, so it was a great result, and 4th place was enough to secure valuable bonus points.

A quirk of the draw for round 2 saw us pitted against the three teams that had beaten us in round one, plus Aylesbury and Stafford Apex. The venue was relatively local at Aquavale, Aylesbury, and we came 5th just behind Aylesbury but ahead of Stafford Apex. That left us safe in lower mid-table for round 3, and another long trip, this time to Droitwich. The draw was much kinder to us and we came 3rd behind the home team and Coventry B, with Eckington and Stafford Apex (again) in 4th and 5th.

Overall the club finished 15th out of 24 in the West Midlands Division 2 league table, exactly the same position as last year. We overcame some big town clubs, and were reminded that there are no weak teams or easy points in this division. The 2010 season opens on October 9th.

Club Championships

The Club Championships ran smoothly and we would like to congratulate all swimmers on their efforts. In total over 80 swimmers took part with 501 PB's, 13 Championship records and 11 Club records. There were also 329 County and 28 Regional qualifying times achieved. Well done to all swimmers, and Thanks to all officials and helpers who help to make the event run smoothly.

Presentation Evening

We had a very successful presentation evening with a large turnout of swimmers and parents, it was good to see you all and thank you for showing your support. We would like to say Thank You to Gaynor Willis from Swim Shop for her raffle donations and Simon Hawkes for his donation of cakes. A big thank you to all who helped make it a successful evening. Numerous awards were handed out on the night including some of our younger swimmers who received trophies for the first time. Well done everyone!!!

Up & Coming Gala's

Counties: 1500m 27 Feb; 5-6, 20-21 March
Norwich Long Course: 2-4 April
Luton Open: 10-11 April
Chiltern League (Round 1): 17 April

Counties

The list of accepted entries and confirmed schedule are now available on the website and notice board. Please check carefully and any errors need to be reported to Philip Abbott as soon as possible. Reminder: Becky must be informed of any withdrawal from any event at least 45mins before the session starts. Flitwick are allocated as poolside helper duties during the Counties, please sign up on the sheet on the notice board if you can help.

Chiltern League

We will be hosting the 1st round of the Chiltern League on the 17th April at the Saxon Pool, Biggleswade. Phil Winder will be looking for volunteers in the near future to help make it a success.

Entering Galas and Open Meets

We encourage all swimmers to sign-up for team meets when selected (we do appreciate that everyone has commitments and cannot always be available). In particular we struggle to get enough of our younger swimmers. They are great fun and parents can usually be persuaded to visit McDonalds on the way home.

With regard to Open meets, we would again encourage swimmers to enter as many as they are able in order to gain experience in competing at different levels, check with your coach if you are unsure of which meets to enter.

Please make sure that when filling out forms for open meet/gala's that they are filled in correctly with the swimmers ASA number, all their details and their actual times for the event. Payment must be made at the time of handing the form in. Forms not correctly completed may miss the gala deadline.

Proposed Club Open Meet

As part of the Club's development in 2010 and to raise much needed funds we aim to run an open meet or gala under our own banner. In order to do this we are looking for volunteers to join some committee members in forming a small team to make this happen. We have a wealth of both internal and external support at our disposal so this is not a daunting task but it does need some proper planning and organisation. If you want to help your club gain long term success please give Philip Abbott (07786 522455) or Roger Allen (01525 840144) a call.

Club Kit

We have polo shirts £11, Swim hats £3.50 and draw string bags £3.50 in stock. We are going to place an order for the Tracksuit Tops, £25 each, orders need to be in by 10th February (payment needs to be made at time of placing order). Please see Steve Trott.

Just a reminder that club kit must be worn to, from and during galas.

If you need to purchase any Swimming Kit please use the Swim Shop link on the website as the club receive a commission for all purchases made through the link.

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Fundraising

A big "Thank You" to all the swimmers and parents that helped at the 2 bag packing events last year. Special thanks goes to Lee Ashton-Rigby who organized them and sorted out the problems with Waitrose. In October we raised £582.84 and at Christmas £446.88 which was not bad after the mix up that Waitrose had with us and the Rugby club.

Fundraising events are vital to the club in helping to raise funds and help in keeping our costs down. Therefore we need EVERYONE, not just the older swimmers, to support these events. These events are great fun and a chance for all the swimmers and parents to mix with each other.

Some events that we are hoping to hold in the near future:

- Car Washing (when the weather is warmer)
- Bag Packing at Easter

And there is also our '100 Club' that we run each month.

100 Club

Pick a number between 1 and 100 at £1 a month, 50% of the money every month goes to club funds and the remainder is split into 3 prizes. The winners are drawn by the committee each monthly and winners are notified on the notice board. See Catherine Abbott for your number.

Calendars

We still have some FDSC 2010 calendars available at £5 each, please see Catherine Abbott.

Welfare Office

Claire Case has just taken over the position of Welfare Office for the club, if you have any issue please see Claire, she is usually at Flitwick Monday and Wednesday training sessions.

Volunteers Required

To run the club successfully we require volunteers, either helping run the club or on poolside. If you can volunteer to help at any poolside session please contact Jo Aatkar on jo.aatkar@ntlworld.com or if you can help with the running of the club, (even just an hour a week), please contact any committee member (names above), it does not have to be much but any help is much appreciated.

We do have some vacancies on the committee if you would like to have some involvement in your child's swimming club.

Seeking New Swimmers

We are always keen to recruit more swimmers, in particular between 7 and 9 years old. Once swimmers are 9 they can represent the club and it is very important that we have enough swimmers to field relay teams, but that they should join us early enough so that they learn the required skills and be prepared for competitive swimming. So tell your friends about us, they can contact Becky on coach@flitwickdolphins.com

Training to be a Swimming Teacher or Coach

If you are interested in taking any swimming training courses for example Teaching/Coaching Level 1, or would like to find out more information then contact Sue Gilbertson (Suegilbertson1@yahoo.com).

Level 1 courses would suit any session managers or senior swimmers who want to further their skills and the only pre-requisite is that candidates are at least 16 years old at the start of the course. Funding may be able to assist with the cost of the courses, but does need to be planned and applied for.

SwimLine

The service is provided for anyone involved in swimming where the welfare of a child or young adult is at risk. This could be through neglect or abuse, bullying or fear of someone, or anything that is worrying you and you don't know who to discuss it with

SwimLine calls are free and do not appear on itemised bills unless the call is made from a mobile phone. SwimLine does not use the 1471 code or any other call return or call display facility.

SwimLine **0808 100 4001**

Swimfit

Parents may be interested in looking at Swimfit, powered by British Gas. It is available at www.swimfit.com and is an online program which allows you to set your own swimming goals and gives you structured sessions to do while you are in the pool. The newly designed site is split into four different areas depending on your level of swimming ability and goal: Health, Shape up and Tone, Fitness and Competitive.

Swimfit provides you with useful information on a range of topics from advice on nutrition to challenges you can take part in. The site also provides you with sessions that you can do in the pool to give structure to your pool time and help you achieve your swimming goals.

There is also Diamond squad if any parents would like to train on a Wednesday night at Flitwick (8-10pm) and from March Sunday morning at BHS (7-9am) will also be offered to Diamond Squad members. If you are interested please contact Becky on coach@flitwickdolphins.com

New swimwear rules – important information for all swimmers

From 1st January 2010 all competitions in England, Scotland and Wales will be applying the FINA rules below in relation to Swimsuits for swimming (excluding Masters and Open Water) competitions.

Current FINA rules state:-

- GR 5 SWIMWEAR
 - GR 5.1 The swimwear (swimsuit, cap and goggles) of all competitors shall be in good moral taste and suitable for the individual sports disciplines and not to carry any symbol which may be considered offensive.
 - GR 5.2 All swimsuits shall be non transparent.
 - GR 5.3 The referee of a competition has the authority to exclude any competitor whose swimsuit or body symbols do not comply with this Rule.
 - BL 8.2 In swimming competitions the competitor must wear only one swimsuit in one or two pieces. No additional items, like arm bands or leg bands shall be regarded as parts of a swimsuit.
 - BL 8.3 From January 1, 2010 swimwear for men shall not extend above the navel nor below the knee, and for women, shall not cover the neck, extend past the shoulder, nor shall extend below knee. All swimsuits shall be made from textile materials.

Date for the Calendar – AGM is to be held on Sunday 20th June 2010, all are welcome.

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