



March 2023

Northgate Swimming Club

Newsletter



WELCOME:
INFO FROM THE CHAIRMAN
– STEVE SMITH

CELEBRATING
ACHIEVEMENTS,
NEWS AND
CONGRATULATIONS

BEHIND THE SCENES
– GETTING TO KNOW
YOUR CLUB

UPCOMING EVENTS

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Welcome to our second newsletter. What a month it has been! Our recent Diddy Gala saw our youngest swimmers compete for the first time, supported, encouraged and cheered on by many of our older members. I thought it demonstrated what a great club we have!

We hope you enjoy reading this month's newsletter. If there is something you would like us to focus on, please do get in touch.

Steve Smith,

Chair of Northgate Swimming Club



CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS, NEWS AND CONGRATULATIONS

A number of swimmers have moved up a group since January as a result of their hard work and determination. Well done to:

- | | | |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Alice Oliver | Arthur Gore | Eva Harris |
| Finn Lloyd | Fletcher Harrison | Harry Bolton |
| Jack Cook | Oliver Lloyd | Will Oliver |

Willem Martin

Go Gators!

(If we have missed anyone, please let us know!)



Upcoming events:

Saturday 18th & Sunday 19th March
Wolverhampton Open

Bridgnorth Walk – Monday 1st May

YOUR CLUB



Many of you will have just attended your first gala and had a glimpse at the work involved – in terms of coaching, planning, events, fundraising & generally supporting the swimmers. Every one of us is a volunteer.

If you can spare some time (a lot, or a little every now and then) please get in touch.

Contact:

vicechair@northgateswimming.co.uk or
chair@northgateswimming.co.uk

Bridgnorth Walk 2023

Fancy a challenge...or to sponsor someone who does????

We are hoping to get a team together to do the walk again this year.

You should have by now received an email with the all the information you need to enter!



BEHIND THE SCENES

FUNDRAISING & VOLUNTEERING:

We are keen to develop a fundraising committee so we can coordinate events to raise funds for the club. Coaches have a wish list of equipment, kit and training (big and small!) that they would like the club to purchase in order to best support the swimmers. All of our fundraising efforts go towards this. If anyone would like to support us then please contact Andy at vicechair@northgateswimming.co.uk.

We are very grateful to Bridgnorth Lions and Libra Systems for their kind donations to the club recently.



GETTING TO KNOW YOUR CLUB: Spotlight on: Keith Lewis, Coach

When how and why did you first get involved at Northgate? I started in Northgate in 1999 (I think) when my daughters Olivia and Chloe joined the Teaching Group. I spent a lot of time on those hard, uncomfortable seats on the balcony so soon decided to get involved and volunteered to help on poolside. We swam at Bridgnorth, the Old Wenlock pool (complete with Frogs), Wrekin College and would you believe RAF Cosford. I have been around ever since.

When did you start coaching at Northgate? Initially I was a volunteer lifeguard as we had to provide our own lifeguards in those days. This involved a short course run by the Leisure Centre and then I was let loose on poolside. Luckily, I never got wet which is testament to the great teaching at Northgate. I was encouraged to take my level One Teaching course and then my level Two. I have helped out in all of the groups as my daughters went through the club but my favourite group was always the Juniors!

How many children have you taught over the years? I'm not really sure but it is certainly in the hundreds. You know when you have been there too long when the Children of past swimmers you have taught start turning up!

What was the club like when you started compared to now? You know, the club hasn't changed much over the years. We had 3 groups when we joined which was Teaching, Juniors and Seniors. A second Junior Squad and Masters came along later.

A great change has seen the club embrace computer systems to help run the club as we have grown. The club is run like a small business nowadays which is a bit different to when we started. We used to hand over the session fee in cash to Sue in the Leisure centre Foyer every session. We always need lots of volunteers to take on roles to help run the club. It's not onerous, honest Guv!

Every weekend we seemed to be off to a Club Gala whether it was an Open, the Nuneaton or Speedo league or in those days a Biathlon. It was always a great honour to swim for Northgate and certainly my kids enjoyed every minute of it. We had a great social scene and I have made lifelong friends from Northgate. Sunday Evenings used to be particularly good as this was club night when all the groups swam at Bridgnorth so a great opportunity to visit the pub





What do you like most about Coaching? I really enjoy seeing our young swimmers develop as they move through the club. Not just in swimming (which is a given) but as people. The work ethic and self-discipline required by our swimmers is enormous and this does transfer into other areas at School, University and Work. If they can make it through a 2 hour Seniors Session then they can achieve anything in later life!

What do you find the most challenging part of Coaching? A difficult one but in honesty it is that quiet session that bugs me the most. I used to hate turning up for a two-hour session and only a handful of swimmers turn up. It makes it a very long morning

What is your funniest / strangest Northgate moment? Team Managing at a Gala always used to be a challenge. Trying to remember the order of a medley Relay and getting the swimmers in the right order in the heat of a gala was always fun! I'll leave you to work out the correct order!

What is your proudest Northgate memory? I guess this was 2007 when I was the Junior coach. That year we were finalists in the Nuneaton League and were promoted to Division One. We were relegated the following year! We were also County Champions that year. I still have the hat to prove it! All that hard work paid off.

I was particularly pleased to see all our Young Volunteers at the recent Diddy Gala helping out with the younger swimmers and getting involved in running the gala

My proudest moment though was to see my youngest, Chloe, get Top Girl at the counties when she was 9 years old. A few tears were shed that day.

Do you enjoy swimming yourself? What's your favourite stroke? I still enjoy swimming but I was never a Northgate swimmer or anything like good enough to compete. I enjoyed Front crawl mostly and I could never master backstroke. My Swimming now is all about floating around with a cocktail or two.

What advice would you give to someone thinking about signing up to help Northgate Swimming Club in some way? I would encourage all our parents to volunteer and give something back to the club. After all, it is your club !

We are all Northgate Volunteers, nobody gets paid, and we do this all this work for the benefit of our swimmers.

The Northgate Diddy Gala 4th March 2023

As you may have seen our younger swimmers took part in a Diddy Gala earlier this month. Swimmers between the age of 5 and 12 took part and didn't they make us all proud! This quote from Coach Kerry Pace sums the morning up beautifully!

"The Gators have all loved it today, we had a few tears and "I don't want to do it" at the beginning.....a few hours later they were all smiles and medals and had loved it! They all tried so hard, parents were crying, so proud of their swimmers. Makes it all worthwhile when you see them"

For many it was their first competition, their first time at Much Wenlock pool even, but that did not hold them back. Special congratulations to Arthur Gore and Olivia Homer for setting new club records in their age category in the individual medley.

The event, sponsored by Bridgnorth Lions even included star guest Lenny. Here are some pictures from the day....



