



June & July 2023

Northgate Swimming Club

Newsletter



WELCOME:
FROM STEVE SMITH,
CHAIR OF NORTHGATE

CELEBRATING
ACHIEVEMENTS,
NEWS AND
CONGRATULATIONS

BEHIND THE SCENES
– GETTING TO KNOW
YOUR CLUB

UPCOMING EVENTS



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Hello,

There have been some amazing swimming performances and individual achievements in and out of the pool since our last newsletter in May so it's another bumper edition this month. We hope you enjoy reading all about them, and if you are just about to finish school / college for the summer, have a brilliant holiday!

Steve Smith, Chair of Northgate Swimming Club

Nuneaton League Round 3

Round 3 of the Nuneaton League saw the team travel to Wombourne on June 17th. It was a busy evening of racing, providing further gala experience for the young swimmers taking part. Rich Homer was keen to praise all of the children who participated in these galas, particularly praising the female swimmers (Charlotte Smith, Alice Oliver, Lois Wiggan, Isla Siegl, Eva Siegl and Olivia Homer), for the sheer volume number of races they had to do over these three weekends!! Thank you also to Emily Gurr for dashing from an event in Sheffield to compete for the club – great team spirit!

Shropshire Summer Meet (24th June 2023)

Some Northgate swimmers headed over to Wolverhampton for this annual meet, which consisted of individual and relay competitions. As always, there were some super individual performances, with Rory Yarnley, Reece Thomas and Jack Cook making huge waves in the 100m freestyle event, with this brilliant trio all claiming gold medals in this race for their different age categories. Well done!!

Shropshire County Junior Schools Swimming Gala

Eleven of Northgate's swimmers competed in the above event, on the 29th June 2023. Held at Wellington Civic and Leisure Centre, Bridgnorth Schools stormed to victory, wrestling the trophy for an event which had been dominated by Telford Schools for the past six years.



There were some incredible solo and relay performances, with arguably two of the highlights coming in the 25m backstroke races. Emily Gurr set a new record in this event (16.33s) for the girls final, whilst Leo Johnson (representing Telford) claimed a memorable victory in the boys equivalent. Well done to all the competitors, all of whom have been presented with the trophy in their respective schools in the past fortnight.



On the subject of schools, huge congratulations to this brilliant team from Castlefields School, who competed in the ESSA National relay final during the month of June. Four out of the five pictured (Emily Gurr, Millie Brown, Sakia Fellows and Eddie Gibbons) are Northgate Swimmers. This is the first time that a school from Shropshire has made this event, and is testament to the hard work and dedication these swimmers put in during their training sessions throughout the year. What an achievement!



On Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd July a number of Northgate swimmers travelled over to the Alan Higgs Centre in Coventry, to take part in their open meet. For many, this was their first experience of a 50m pool, and there were some magnificent performances over two days of hectic activity.



Particular congratulations to Olivia Homer who claimed the first gold medal of the day (100m Breaststroke), and to 3 other swimmers who also joined the Club record books! Finn Lloyd is now the record holder for 100m and 200m breaststroke in his age category, thirteen-year old Martha Gibbard is now our fastest 50m backstroker, and fourteen-year old Dewi Arch is the same for his age category, for the same discipline and distance! Well done to everyone who competed over a great weekend.



The Importance of Ducks!!

For those who attended the recent Wenlock Olympian meet, you may have wondered what was going on with the rubber ducks?! At the Coventry gala detailed above, at various points over the weekend, often when swimmers were on the blocks preparing to race, 'duck music' would play out, meaning that whoever won the heat would be rewarded with a rubber duck. A simple idea but one which certainly seemed to add to the motivation, and was replicated at our recent gala.

Wenlock Olympians, July 2023.

Northgate Swimming Club was delighted to play a small part in the annual Wenlock Olympian celebrations, by hosting a gala at William Brookes for their younger competitors. The event took place on Saturday 15th July, with swimmers from as young as six competing in official races, many for the first time.

It was a short course event and based on swimmer's ages, races varied from 25m (one length) to 100m (four lengths) in distance. There was some absolutely outstanding performances across the different categories, with almost every swimmer having at least one personal best by the end of the evening.

Highlights included:

- Ten-year old Rory Yarnley, who entered the nine events he was eligible for, picking up seven gold medals and two silvers on a busy night of racing!



- Eleven-year old Emily Gurr, who also raced in nine events and went one better, picking up eight gold medals and one silver!
- Eleven-year old Reece Thomas, with a magnificent seven gold medals from seven events entered.
- Eight-year old Oliver Lloyd, who secured podium places, including two gold medals, for the five races he competed in (butterfly, breaststroke, backstroke, freestyle and individual medley).
- Eight-year old Alice Allan-Smith, who replicated this, including a gold medal in the 25m backstroke race.



Northgate Swimming Club would like to particularly thank the support of the Wenlock Olympian Society, and was delighted to welcome their Chair Jordan Spilsbury who is pictured with medal winners. Additionally, Mandy Garrott (Chair, Shropshire ASA) and Jean Childs (Secretary, Shropshire ASA) supported the event – thank you to everyone involved!

Fundraising Update

A huge thanks also to all of those who bought a ticket for the raffle on Saturday, £136 was raised. If you have prizes that you would like to donate for future events, please pass these on to your coach – all of it helps generate valuable funds to support the running of the club.

Upcoming Events

The annual club championships will be taking place between the 16th and 24th September, with precise dates to follow. Take the advice which Mike Owen shares below about the importance of training so you can achieve your ambitions in this gala!



GETTING TO KNOW YOUR CLUB:
Spotlight on: Mike Owen, Seniors Squad Head Coach

What is your swimming background? I learned to swim with Northgate and swam competitively until I was about 16. I swam at regional level in all events except for Backstroke and 1500m Free. My best events were 100m and 200m Breaststroke, which I competed at National Level for.

How long have you been associated with Northgate for? I can't remember how old I was when I started with Northgate, but it was at the beginners group doing widths on a Saturday morning. When I stopped swimming I had a complete break from the sport until my

daughter Emily joined Northgate aged 4.

Best swimming moment? Northgate made the final of the top division in the Speedo League (now Arena League). We were the only non city club in the final and I got to race Nick Gillingham who was the current world champion at the time!

Favourite stroke? Breaststroke.

What made you go into coaching? I offered to help out on poolside on a Saturday morning whilst Emily was swimming, things escalated from there.

Proudest coaching moment / success? That is a tough one! The swimmers are all doing so well and improving so fast – I really don't think that I could pick one particular moment.

Best thing about Northgate? Northgate feels like a real team. This is not just the swimmers but the coaches, parents and other volunteers who work tirelessly in the background.

Advice for swimmers? When attending training sessions don't just turn up to swim, turn up to improve. Do the things that you know that you should do. Work on your underwaters and make the turns fast. Work hard and enjoy the rewards.

Interests aside from swimming? I enjoy cooking – I particularly love to bbq.

If there is one thing you could change about Northgate it would be.... I would love to find the time to do some more social and team bonding activities.

STOP PRESS!! Mike has just been appointed as one of the skills coaches for the West Midlands Regional Development Squad!! Many congratulations Mike, everyone at the club is delighted for you!