

BIRMINGHAM MASTERS

September 2011 Newsletter

Edited by Steve Langford (stevelangford@blueyonder.co.uk)

Deadline approaches!

The deadline for entry to the British Short Course Masters Championships in Sheffield on Friday 28th - Sunday 30th October 2011, is just a few days away. Entry must be done online, by noon on Wednesday 28th September. The Sheffield meet is a major event in the BMSC calendar. Dozens of team members go up for the weekend, and Pauline co-ordinates booking rooms in a hotel very close to the pool, plus team dinners on the Friday and Saturday evenings. If you are competing, please let Keith Ingram know, as you may be needed in a relay team. We have a few more national - or even world - records in our sights!

["Ctrl+Click" here for more information and to enter the event.](#)

BMSCMBE

Former Birmingham Master Dr Chris Stockdale was awarded an MBE in the recent birthday honours list 'for charitable services'. He has raised around £300,000 for charities over a period of 30 years from his numerous long distance swims and triathlons, swum the Channel three times, the third of which was part of a mammoth triathlon: a channel swim, then cycling 203 miles from Folkestone to Birmingham and finally running a full marathon. He trained regularly with us for a number of years at a time when there were not so many medics in the club as now. He competed for the club in relays at Leamington.

Swim the length of your local river

We've all been amazed and impressed by David Walliams and his heroic swim down the Thames, and maybe you're even feeling a little inspired. However river swimming is rarely a good idea, so how about challenging yourself to swim the length of rivers around the UK, with British Swimming's My SwimFit programme. Swim in the safety and comfort of a pool, but track your distances online and see your progress displayed on Google Maps. Find out more at:

<http://www.swimming.org/bigsplash/activities/swim-the-length-of-your-local-river>

Seeking your photos...

Preparations are well underway for this year's BMSC Xmas dinner. This will take place at Edgbaston Golf Club, on Saturday 26th November. For the event, we need your photographs, taken at swimming meets during this year. Please send your photos to Harriet Moss, at harrymoss@yahoo.com

KE Pool Closures and Parking restrictions

Wednesday 21st September: No parking on the main school drive.

Friday 28th, Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th October: No training sessions, as we will all be competing in the Nationals at Sheffield instead!

Forthcoming Meets

Arfon Masters (Bangor) on Saturday 8th October

Closing date: Too late!

Good luck to everyone competing.

Our main focus for the club is now...

British Short Course Masters Championships (Sheffield) - Friday 28th to Sunday 30th October 2011

Closing date: 12noon, Wednesday 28th September

Web site for entries: <http://www.swimming.org/britishswimming/masters>

Other meets popular with BMSC swimmers are:

Etwall Eagles, in Derby - Saturday 26th November

Closing date: 31st October

Web site for entries: <http://www.etwalleagles.co.uk/>

Shrewsbury Masters New Year Gala - Saturday 7th January 2012

Closing date: 1st December

Web site for entries: <http://www.shrewsburymasters.com/>

Bursaries towards coaching qualifications

As a Swim21 accredited club, we have access to bursaries towards members working towards coaching qualifications. If you would like to know more, please contact Paul Wolstenholme, at paul_swimmer@blueyonder.co.uk

Payments online

Ian Parker, our Club Treasurer, is reorganising the club's bank accounts, so that in future, members will be able to pay membership fees online. It is also hoped that this will be in place in time for you to pay for tickets to the annual Xmas dinner. More details to follow.

Club website

The club website is frequently updated with new information; please drop in regularly, at www.birminghammasters.co.uk. All offers of help or useful suggestions are welcomed by our webmaster, Peter Undery, who can be contacted at pundery@gmail.com.

New kit bags on their way

Jim Hunt has sourced new kit bags, bearing the club logo and the owner's name. There will be examples displayed on the poolside in the next few weeks, in a choice of sizes. The bags are high quality and competitively priced. Jim will be collecting orders, which could be completed in time for Sheffield.

Jim also has a range of BMSC-branded T-shirts, hoodies or hats. See him at most training sessions for the latest styles and sizes, or contact him at jimp.hunt@birmingham.gov.uk.

Bosworth Open Water - 10th July 2011 - A competition report by Keith Ingram

An intrepid band of eleven Birmingham Masters swimmers participated. It was a warm sultry day with bursts of bright sunlight at a pleasant venue. I took the opportunity this year to walk around the lake before the swimming started. Between the boundaries and the lake there is a 20 metre width of mown grass all the way round and there is potential for a family picnic for Birmingham Masters with young children, so no excuses next year.

Luke Swain, Fred Rennie and Judith Peace were first off in the 3000 metre event. Rumours that the temperature was 18 degrees Celsius were substantiated when the swimmers entered the water, evidenced by a long intake of breath and a lot of jumping up and down. Apparently, after the initial shock the swimming conditions were fine. Luke is an old hand at open water distance swimming and won his age group. This was a first for Fred and to cope with the new experience of navigation and being buffeted by other swimmers and finish a very close second was a terrific result. Judith Peace was by some distance the oldest swimmer in the event and the organisers had made no indication that they were going to apply a cut off time.

However they pulled her out of the water early but had the good grace to award her the gold for her age group. It is to be hoped that they make the rules clear next year.

In the 1500 metre event Diana swam powerfully to win a silver medal in the 25/29 age group followed by Laura Bayliss in third place. Susan Cramb was doing her first open water and was rather amazed when swimming wide of a buoy that she ran aground. Being fairly slim, comments about a stranded whale would be entirely inappropriate. She completed the distance swimming powerfully all the way. It is easy for those in the oldest age groups to feel that they are near to last but when the bulk of those doing the event are under 18 this is inevitable. Janet was competing as usual and got a lot of vocal support and when Susan emerged from the water, the lady on the slipway was searching in vain for Janet's name!

Pauline Cooke won the 60+ age group, having swum round the entire course with a lovely young girl who looked about 12. The little conversation relating to the shared experience as they got out of the water, was lovely to see. Mark Pitts recovering from a recent chest infection was pleased with his second place in the 40-49 age group and Bob Cramb beat Jim Hunt, who told me that he put in a final sprint when he smelled the hot dogs near to the finish, by a short head to record a 1st and 2nd in the 50-59 age group.

Confusion reigned again in the 500 metre event where Roxanna Taylor was shown as 'did not swim' - this was rather odd, as we had seen her emerge dripping wet up the slipway! Subsequently the results credited her with winning the 18-24 age group.

Most of us went to a hostelry in Market Bosworth afterwards, for a late lunch to round off an enjoyable day.

A mile in Wales - A report by Sue Cramb

After an inspiring open water swim in Bosworth early in July (I completed it but no records were broken) I was sufficiently enthused to enter a mile swim in Wales, near where we were holidaying. It is a lovely spot in Pembrokeshire where we have been going for the last 22 years. The mile was from Aberforest to Cwm yr Eglwys and was part of a very small local regatta.

Bob's advice was to acclimatise to the screamingly cold water by daily immersions. We did this for about seven days...and two days before the event, swam without wetsuits! Bob had done this event about six years ago and won it. For this he received a trophy, a lovely medal and £2.50 - a profit of 50p after the cost of entry! However, we didn't think there was much chance of recouping our entry fee this year, as a local boy who had been part of the Olympic squad 2008 was rumoured to be swimming and the entry was up by 200%, such is the enthusiasm for open water swimming these days.

We were deposited by boat to Aberforest, where the second decision was required (the first one was whether or not to enter!) I had to decide, was I a leisure

swimmer or a sport swimmer? Well, faced with the youth, the numbers and the anxiety, I was not sure. If I declared myself leisure, I might actually be at the front, as some said they were swimming breaststroke, and potentially I could go off course (I had run aground in Bosworth!). The leisure swimmers went off first and then it was too late, I became a sport swimmer and all around me were confident, athletic-looking young people. I forgot the advice to keep to the side and set off in the middle (Bob was sensibly at the side and definitely, as a previous winner, in the sport group). The temperature was bearable, but only with full wetsuit and two hats. After the first couple of hundred metres, I was still with the main pack and I found it very encouraging that I had not been left behind at the beginning. I felt comfortable and loved the buoyancy of the salt water and the wetsuit. About half way through I overtook someone! I looked up much less often than I had to in Bosworth as I was aware of people around me and felt I was therefore not too far off course. I saw one jelly fish that did sting my hand, drank quite a lot of sea water, but finished with a stumbled run up the slip way in about 25 mins.

Some of the spectators were friends and acquaintances, who were so surprised that I had done it, that it was almost worth it for that alone, but I did enjoy it and, yes, I would recommend it. I was worried about being in such deep water on my own, but I never felt unsafe - canoes were hovering - and the sense of achievement was enormous. It did take me a while to warm up and rehydrate and, no, neither of us got our entry fee back, but it was worth every penny!

Barnet Sprint Meet - A report by John Tennant

The first Sunday in September, and the first of the final chances for essential race practice before Sheffield, saw only four Birmingham Masters taking part. For most of us there were some good and some not so good performances, but for all some of the cobwebs were hopefully blown away. Colin, in an attempt to get onto the decathlon score sheet, entered all nine events, only missing out on the 25m sprint, which doesn't score in the decathlon: - 50's and 100's on four strokes plus the 4 x 25 IM. He medalled in all his swims with a mix of good and satisfactory times. Steve, our editor, only swam in seven events, including the 25m dash, where he came second in a creditable 13.22sec. Three more second places came his way with a greater emphasis being put on breaststroke than we usually see from Steve. The best race of the day being the 100m breaststroke, where he and Colin swam alongside each other, taking turns to lead. Steve came home in 1min 27.37sec with Colin just behind him in 1min 27.99sec. For Jim and me it really was a 'cobwebs away' meet. Jim swam the four 50's, managing to swim faster on breaststroke than on fly, a very mediocre backstroke and a good 50m freestyle. My three swims are best forgotten, the slowest times I have done since coming into masters in 1996, the only consolation being the weakness of the opposition in the age group, so I did actually win them all.

What the meet brought home very clearly was just how necessary it is to race regularly if we have any hope of achieving anything near our potential at the big

meets. Nothing in training can replicate the adrenalin rush and nervous energy of open competition. Hopefully between now and the end of October, a lot more of our swimmers will have competed somewhere so members are better prepared for National competition.

Training with the BEST - A report by Elaine Fenton

Swim training camp at the B.E.S.T. - Bluewater Elite Swim Training Centre, Colonia de Sant Jordi, Mallorca, 4th September to 11th September, organised by Allison Stoney from The City of Coventry Masters Swimming Club.

For more info about Bluewater and the BEST Centre, visit www.BESTswimcentre.com

I have always wanted to train in an outdoor pool under the warm sunshine, so I joined the trip to Mallorca. A total of 18 people went which included five non-swimmers who just went for a holiday.

Bluewater organised accommodation in the Hotel SUR, in an All Inclusive package (except for flights). The hotel was only a 10 to 15 minute walk to the ten lane 50m pool.

The 'BEST' swim centre arrange your preferred hotel option and your pool time needs, which can be booking the lanes and using your own coach, or just swimming. We used the coach at the centre.

Patrick was our Coach who put us through a gruelling swim programme of 12 x 2 hour sessions, so five of the days we were swimming for four hours and **over** 10,000 metres each day. Warm ups used to take about an hour with varying swim programmes with lots of IM's, but we always followed the format of KICK > DRILL > SWIM. It was good to have the time to fine tune the drills. Patrick wanted all the drills to be done correctly and made sure we did. You soon realised there is no place to hide! We practised diving, tumble turns, push off's, streamlining, backstroke starts (using a few whacky ideas from the previous Chinese Team), core strength and how to use it.

I went to Mallorca with an open mind and my brain switched on 'receive'. The intensive hours of training time is great for starting where you stopped the previous session, unless too many Gin & Tonics have blurred the memory.

There's a lot to do in Mallorca so take the whole family. I couldn't leave the island without walking up mountain 'Puig Timor' - at 1104m, with great views.