



BABBLE

The Bishop's Stortford Swimming Club Newsletter



RETURN TO THE POOL EDITION

Welcome to the first edition of Babble for the 2020-21 season. What a 2020 we are having! None of us would have predicted these events at the start of this year and as we write this, we are keeping everything crossed for pools remaining open as we head through the Winter. Our last newsletter was a lockdown edition and we'd planned this next one to be out as we returned to the pool back in September, but our day jobs have had a nasty habit of getting in the way, along with many other swimming club activities. However, if you're reading this (before Christmas!), then we've made it and we hope you enjoy having a read.

We want to start by thanking (again) everyone who kept us afloat whilst out of the water during lockdown: our zoom exercisers & bakers, land training volunteers, coaches, committee, and of course, the continued support of our members. Since lockdown has eased we've entered a new world of Covid risk assessments and officers and we extend our thanks to Mel Longman, Shereen (BSSC Chair) and Leanne Andrews for tirelessly working through the logistics of getting us into a pool and enabling Benoit's training schedules to happen in a Covid safe manner.

Now we are back in the water the need for your support continues, especially as we navigate our way through an ever changing environment. Covid volunteers are required to keep us operating on a daily basis, and we desperately need more help with activities such as fund raising and raffles and general communications. **If you have skills you think we could use, please do volunteer to help** - the more of you volunteer, the less we need to rely on our committee volunteers and the few key folks who constantly help out. Just email info@bsswimclub.org.uk

Usually this time of year we would have just experienced the fun and thrills of Club Championships and our focus would be turning towards the next challenge. However, Winter Champs are cancelled and County Age Group championships are being moved from their usual Jan/Feb slot. The new window is likely to be late May until 18 July 2021, with a further racing opportunity opening up for counties later in the year so older swimmers sitting exams will be given the chance to participate at an appropriate time. Regional Championships are currently planned to run within their usual window but as soon as we receive more information we will share it.

Although we won't be returning to full competitions anytime soon, Swim England have just announced details of an exciting new competitive format called **Level X** that will see us calling on the support of our volunteer officials. Read on in this edition to find out more about the Level X idea. It looks exciting and should be a great opportunity for all our squads, including Masters, to get the buzz of competing again.

We sincerely hope this newsletter finds you fit and well and enjoying the smell of chlorine pervading your households once more. It's a small price to pay for the happiness brought to our swimmers by being back in their home environment. As parents we are still eagerly looking forward to the day we can meet poolside and complain once more about the heat! Take care, stay safe and stay connected.

comms@bsswimclub.org.uk

Remember you can keep in touch with the club and learn more about us through many different platforms:

Email: info@bsswimclub.org.uk

Website: bsswimclub.org.uk

Facebook: BSSwimClub1 or BSSC Members Only

Twitter: @BSSwimClub1

Instagram: [bsscswimmingclub](https://www.instagram.com/bsscswimmingclub)

YouTube Channel: Bishop's Stortford Swimming Club

A FEW WORDS FROM MEMBERSHIP...

Linda Harold, Membership Secretary (membership@bsswimclub.org.uk)

Firstly, a very warm welcome to our new swimmers. I hope you are all settling in well and hopefully I'll see you on poolside when we run our Level X racing nights!

As we near the end of 2020, can I remind you all that the annual Club and Swim England Membership renewal period will be upon us soon. This applies to ALL members - even those who have just joined us.

Club:

Senior member £45

Junior member £40

Associated member £10 (includes Swim England Cat 3 membership)

Swim England:

Cat 1 (non-competitive swimmer) £17.20

Cat 2 (competitive swimmer) £37.25

Renewals **MUST** be done by 31st December so that the Club Swim England registrations can be done in January.

I will email you all at the beginning of December with instructions. Can I please ask that you act **promptly** to let me know you wish to renew as this is an onerous task for me!!

Please also check that your personal/medical details are up to date. You can access these at any time by logging in to <https://secure.bsswimclub.org.uk/login.php> (Please bookmark this).

Thank you.

2020/21 Squad Coordinators

Poussins Claire Fields & Mel Longman

Benjamins B Linda Yu

Benjamins A Cressy MacDonald Williams

Cadets Elaine Bennett

Seniors Dan Morgan

Juniors Lorraine Hayes

Minimes Danielle Reilly

Elites Sally Webster & Adam Derrington

Masters **Vacancy (any volunteers??)**

Thank you to EVERYONE

Lots of Volunteers (though early mornings are hard to fill)

Lots of swimmers following the new Covid-19 Guidelines

Please let's keep this up, remembering that if we all do our bit, we can hopefully keep swimming without interruption.

Key Points to Remember

- Parents, please DO stay in cars, especially if waiting in the car park during the session. These are College rules and we don't want to be seen to break them.
- Minimes, Juniors, Cadets, Seniors, Elites and Masters should wear masks on the College Campus.
- DO NOT go into the pool building before the Covid-19 Volunteer arrives or says you can enter.
- DO remember to maintain social distancing once inside. This will save everyone having to self-isolate if someone tests positive.
- DO go to the toilet before coming to training to avoid using College facilities. We have to clean them if you use them.
- DO NOT use the toilet in the foyer, if you have to, use the disabled toilets in the changing rooms only
- DO NOT use the changing rooms for changing. The College is not allowing the club to use them at this time.
- Please don't come to training if you are feeling ill or you have been advised to isolate by NHS Test & Trace or School.
- **Please DO inform the club ASAP if you have you/your swimmer has either been told to isolate, has been sent home from school due to potential exposure, or is awaiting a Covid-19 test result. This also applies if you are a covid volunteer.**

TURNING FRUSTRATION INTO POSITIVITY



by Paul Palmer

As life slowly returns back to some sort of normal and people emerge from their enforced hibernation, blinking in the sunlight, it is only natural for the swim club members to start clamouring for a return to training. Even though some sessions can be hard or a bit dull, they do form an integral part of a swimmer's life and lifestyle and to have had that yanked away so abruptly will have had an effect on most. It will also probably raise some questions (both internally and externally) about what happens when you return from an enforced lay off. As I said a couple of articles ago, whilst it is a unique position that everyone finds themselves in due to the coronavirus pandemic, it is not a unique position for each individual – every athlete has gone through the same thing, so you are not specifically disadvantaged by it. **The key will be how quickly you can turn a frustrating 6 months into a positive end of year and use it as a springboard for 2021.**

If I was trying to put a positive spin on it, it would be that every athlete endures frustrating interruptions at various points in their career so all everyone has experienced recently is something that does happen. For me, I had it happen way back in 1994. I'd come off the back of a memorable (for me) 1993, when I'd notched up my first senior international medal – a silver at the Europeans in the 400m free. I'd also ended that year ranked second in the world at the 400 and so was excited about proving myself further at the 1994 Commonwealth Games and World Champs. There was a bit of a buzz and a scintilla of expectation around me from the British swimming authorities and so they pre-selected me for both the Commies and the Worlds. This allowed me to prepare single-mindedly for these events, without needing to worry too much about the trials.

Unfortunately, a combination of injury and illness scuppered the whole year and, from February to September that year, I was barely able to train. **The disappointment of missing the opportunity to win golds at both events was hard to take** and watching them on tv was not much fun.

However, I had two options – sit around, mope and feel sorry for myself; or **attack what was left of the year** and begin the process of getting back to full fitness. It was a simple choice. To be honest, regaining fitness whilst you're a teenager is easy:

Just attack every session.

Go hard on every main set.

Never miss a session.

Use each session as a competition and fight to lead your lane

[ED: when allowed by the coach - no overtaking right now remember!].

TURNING FRUSTRATION INTO POSITIVITY CONT'D



The fitness comes back really quickly and, working on the assumption the Stortford club will be fully operational by end of September, there is no reason why all swimmers shouldn't be at peak fitness by Christmas. If you just get on with it and don't go searching for excuses, then you will genuinely enjoy experiencing the fitness come racing back – **it's a great feeling when, week on week, your training times get quicker and quicker** and was proper motivation for me.

However, what was harder, was learning to compete in races. With an enforced absence from training (and therefore, competing) the body does forget what it is like to swim flat out for 1 minute, or 2 or 4 etc. **It is vital that each swimmer starts to compete, and compete regularly, when the opportunities arise.** Races prepare the body for that peak exertion which training cannot replicate, so my advice is to enter as many competitions as are recommended by your coaches and re-learn what the body will have temporarily forgotten. From my own personal perspective, I probably didn't compete often enough once I got back into training and paid the price by missing out on gold at the 1995 European champs by a couple of tenths. The knock-on effect of that was that I was still "re-learning my craft" in 1996. It may have had an impact on my results in the 96 Olympics. A silver medal at those wasn't bad, but who knows what may have happened had I attacked the racing element of my rehabilitation as ferociously as I did my training. The chap who beat me was in exceedingly good nick, so it may have had no impact, but you just never know...

So, my recommendation is to enjoy getting back in the water, train bloody hard and race just as hard. **It'll be tough work, but incredibly rewarding when you start getting PB's again.**

When Paul wrote this piece for Babble we weren't properly back in the water, but now we are and Level X is coming, it's a perfect time to reflect on his experience and apply it to your own return to the water.





What is Level X?

A brand new virtual competition created by Swim England for swimming clubs. It will allow us to compete with other clubs across England from our home pool.

How will it work?

Details of exactly how we will run it are still being finalised by the Benoit, Mat and the committee but the concept is that we will take times from all four strokes and individual medley races across a variety of distances at events run by us at the College pool. The times will be collected throughout the competition timeframe and posted online to Swim England Level X rankings.

Schedule

The first phase begins on 23rd October with staggered submission times to enable swimmers to build up their training to the longer distance events. A second phase will be held in 2021 in the hope more clubs will be able to take part.

Series 1 Schedule

Level X Racing Series 1 runs from 23 October 2020 through to 31 December 2020.

Events	Submission Cut Off Date	Leaderboard Published
50m and 100m all strokes and 100IM	24 November 2020	30 November 2020
200m all strokes and 200IM	8 December 2020	14 December 2020
400m Freestyle and 400IM	31 December 2020	7 January 2021

National Rankings

After each distance is completed, the quickest swimmers in each age group will feature in a national Level X leader board that will be published across Swim England's website and social media channels. Swim England will publish a male and female leaderboard for each event in the following age groups and categories:

- 11yrs, 12yrs, 13yrs, 14yrs, 15yrs, 16yrs, 17yrs, 18yrs, Open
- 18-24yrs, 25-29yrs, 30-34yrs and every 5yr Masters age group with submitted times

Conditions

Swimmers wanting to take part in Level X must be a Swim England Category 2 member. To encourage as many swimmers as possible to get involved, current Category 1 members who take part will be automatically upgraded free of charge. This temporary Category 2 membership will be valid until 31st December 2020.

Officials

This is an unlicensed meet, but it still requires a minimum of 2 Technical Officials and a timekeeper per racing lane. Get those whites at the ready!

FUNDRAISING NOTES



We have an [East Herts Lottery](#) page where you can sign up to support us and other local causes for just £1 per week (less than the cost of 1/2 a cup of coffee!) and win prizes of up to £25,000. 50% of tickets sold from our page goes to us, and 10% to other great local causes. 26 members have bought tickets so far, potentially raising us £1508 in the next 12 months and two have already won more tickets. **It's a WIN WIN for us all!**

Keep Stortford Swimming

Watch out for emails, tweets, posts etc coming your way with details on our new crowdfunding challenge giving us access to matched funding from Sport England.



Get up to £10,000 to keep your community physically active
Crowdfunder and Sport England have teamed up to make £1 million of match funding available to help the sport and physical activity sector through the ongoing coronavirus crisis.

Right now we need your help making us a more attractive proposition to donators, by offering incentives to reward them for their donations. Cakes, food, wine, events, vouchers etc will all help. Please let us know what you can offer.



EASY FUNDRAISING

Don't forget to raise funds for our club every time you make purchases online.

Just register once with [EasyFundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and choose BSSC as your cause, then raise donations every time you shop online through their App or this link:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/bsswimclub/>



PRO SWIMWEAR

We have a ProSwimwear club specific website page and any purchases made through this page raises money for the club:

www.proswimwear.co.uk



STORTFORD SPORTS SUPPLIES

<http://stortfordsportssupplies.co.uk>

Stortford Sports Supplies is the place to pick up your club swim hats, tops, onesies, hoodies, rucksacks, kit etc. and new for this season will be some lovely additions - hats and towels. The link above will take you straight to our club page on their website. More information on the hats and towels will be shared with you all shortly so keep an eye out for emails, but get ready to react quickly as orders will be needed by end Oct/early November to ensure Christmas delivery!

Woolly club hats:

Perfect for keeping your head and ears warm on those cold winter nights after training! The final photos are on their way, but the idea concepts can be seen below. With and without bobbles, with some being personalised. Not all will come in both adult and child sizes.



Personalised Club Towels: we think these look great!

They are approximately 135 cm long and 72 cm wide, and will be made of 70% cotton and 30% microfibre



LEARN TO SWIM RETURNS



Remember when your swimmer first started lessons?

It's been a mammoth task, involving a lot of effort from many people who are owed a HUGE thank you, but we are pleased to share that our BSSC Learn to Swim school is starting to get back in the water! So far we've returned around 130 swimmers across Stages 2-10 and Swim Fit on Sunday afternoons at the College from 3-5pm. As with our main competitive training, sessions are not completely back to normal and lots of new restrictions are in place, but the team are working hard to get children back as soon as it is safely possible. If you know of friends or family looking for a swim school, then please do point them in our direction at learntoswim@bsswimclub.org.uk



Once swimmers have achieved a good standard, we aim to transition them from Learn to Swim to our main competitive squads. We are running regular trials for those squads and have recently welcomed a number of new members.

Year of Birth	Age by 31/12/21			Year of Birth	Age by 31/12/21	
2002	19	SENIORS (Goal = 2-3 sessions)	MASTERS	2002	19	
2003	18			2003	18	
2004	17			2004	17	
2005	16			2005	16	
2006	15	CADETS (Goal = 5-6 sessions)	JUNIORS (6-7 sessions)	2006	15	
2007	14			2007	14	
2008	13	BENJAMINS A & B (Goal = 5-6 sessions)	MINIMES (6-8 sessions)	ELITES (7-8 sessions, 2 gym)	2008	13
2009	12					
2010	11	POUSSINS (Goal = 3-4 sessions)				
2011	10					
2012	9					

For those of you who are new to the club and for those of you who have just forgotten, this is the competitive squad structure for the 2020/21 season. The full entry criteria for each squad can be found on our website, along with lots of other useful information:

<https://bsswimclub.org.uk/>

IMPROVING HEALTH & WELLBEING

Barry Chandler

BSSC Coach and Specialist exercise instructor
weight management & diabetes

About 16 years ago an American doctor, Dr Judith Hibbard, proposed a new approach to helping people make sustainable healthy lifestyle changes; this has subsequently been adopted parts of the UK. The system (called '**patient activation**') helps identify the approach health care workers need to take with an individual in supporting them develop the confidence and capability to manage their own health.

The system works by stratifying people into one of 4 levels based on their belief in their own ability to influence their health. People at level 1 tend to have less confidence in their ability to manage their health and subsequently are more likely to have multiple long-term health conditions, increased visits to emergency services and miss their appointments. People at level 4 tend to be the opposite to this and their health outcomes are much better.

The levels are generated based upon a person's answers to a 10- or 13-point questionnaire and the different levels indicate different coaching approaches to be taken. It all revolves around **developing knowledge, skills, and confidence to improve health and make healthy habits stick.**

This approach is independent of a person's education, socio economic status or how ill a person is and the results seem to very encouraging, with coaching strategies helping the majority of people increase their self-belief with subsequent long term benefits for their health. Consequently, this should also help ease pressure on the NHS and reduce the rate at which health costs rise.

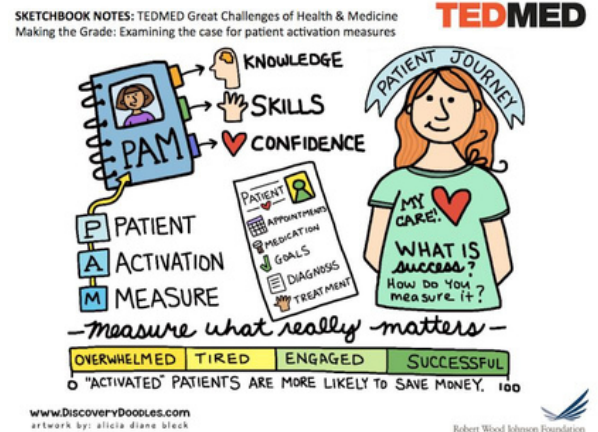
Once stratified, the person is helped to identify the pros and cons to their current lifestyle habits against healthier options that they agree would benefit them more. Goals are broken down into steps that are personally achievable and effectively become motivators to go on to the next step in the pathway.

Having the right knowledge to help us make choices is of course important but so is using our own individual traits and tools to help us get to where we want to be.

Another important aspect is **involving others in making change stick**; it can be a lot easier when you have others to share in the challenges and successes in what you are doing.

This latter point resonates with me as a swimmer and a coach; think about the support you can get from, and give to, the people in your lane to help optimise training performance. After all, each session is but a small step towards what you want to achieve; turn up physically and mentally to each session, and work as a team.

You will leave the pool buzzing and give yourself the best chance of fulfilling your ambitions!



TRAINING FISH OUT OF WATER ... AKA LAND TRAINING



Long before the pools opened, small group outdoor training was allowed again and we welcomed headcoach Benoit back to establish a schedule aimed at preparing our fish for their return to the pool. Regular land training sessions at Grange Paddocks were offered to most squads from our great team of coaches Benoit and Barry, and volunteers Martin Tang (who featured in the Lockdown edition) and James Hollis.



We were incredibly fortunate to have James volunteering with us this summer and inspiring our youngsters. He was a London 2012 Paralympic Swimmer and the S10 200m Butterfly World Record Holder & Multiple international medallist.



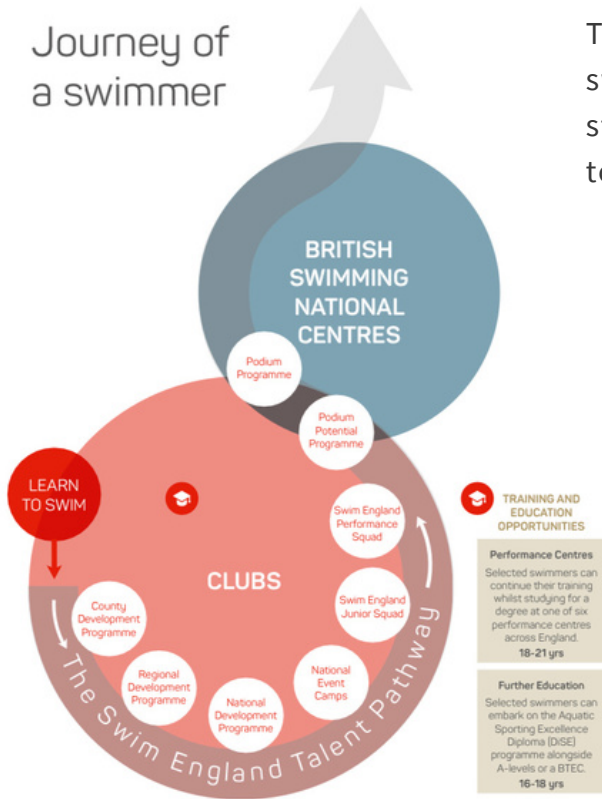
Having grown up locally and attending the Epping Forest District Swimming Club, he moved to Loughborough University to study BSc Sports and Exercise Science and MSc Musculoskeletal Sports Science. After university he moved to the national Para-swimming training centre in Manchester. Since retiring in Dec 2018, he has been a strength and conditioning coach, and the Lead performance lifestyle mentor for Loughborough University swimming.

Thanks James and best wishes for all your future endeavours!



SWIM ENGLAND TALENT PATHWAY

Journey of a swimmer



The highest level of support you can receive as an English swimmer is with England Talent Swimming. It involves four stages of swimmer development for athletes aged from 11 to 19:

Swim England Development Programme: generally for swimmers aged between 11 and 15, these camps involve a mixture of swimming coaching and education and take place between April and December.

Swim England National Event Camps: for swimmers aged 15 and 16, this four day camp usually takes place in December and covers technical and tactical development areas for specific racing events.

Swim England Junior Squad: for swimmers aged 18 or under, you could be selected for international camps or competitions to enhance your future performance potential.

Swim England Performance Squad: the England squad is the final stepping stone towards the British Swimming World Class Programme for those who haven't already been selected. The squad swim at an end-of-season competition and are aimed towards qualifying for a major international event.



Having previously been selected for National Event Camps, Millie Fields joined around 330 16 to 19 year olds in being enrolled on the **Diploma in Sporting Excellence (DiSE)** delivered by Swim England and Loughborough College. The two-year course will provide Millie with the opportunity to gain skills, competencies, knowledge, university credit and a qualification while performing within the elite sports training and competition environment.

Last year Kirsty Neill attended a Regional Development event, but early October she attended her first Swim England National Development Programme learning and engagement day.

Congratulations to Kirsty and Millie on their selections!

WELFARE OFFICER

Our club Welfare Officer is Lorinda Pietersen. If you have any concerns over a child's welfare, Lorinda can be contacted either by calling **07885 370843** or by emailing **welfare@bsswimclub.org.uk**

Our club AGM was held on Wednesday 23rd September 2020 and the committee for 2020/21 is listed below:

Chair	Shereen Catton
Vice Chair	Lorinda Pietersen
Club Secretary	Graham Spratt
Membership Secretary	Linda Harold
Swim England Registration Secretary	Graham Spratt
Competition Secretary	Pam Spratt
Treasurer	Nicky Fields
Communications Lead	Kat Gore
Swim Mark Coordinator	Pam Spratt
New Member	Mel Longman
New Member	Danielle Reilly

Welcome to our two new members!