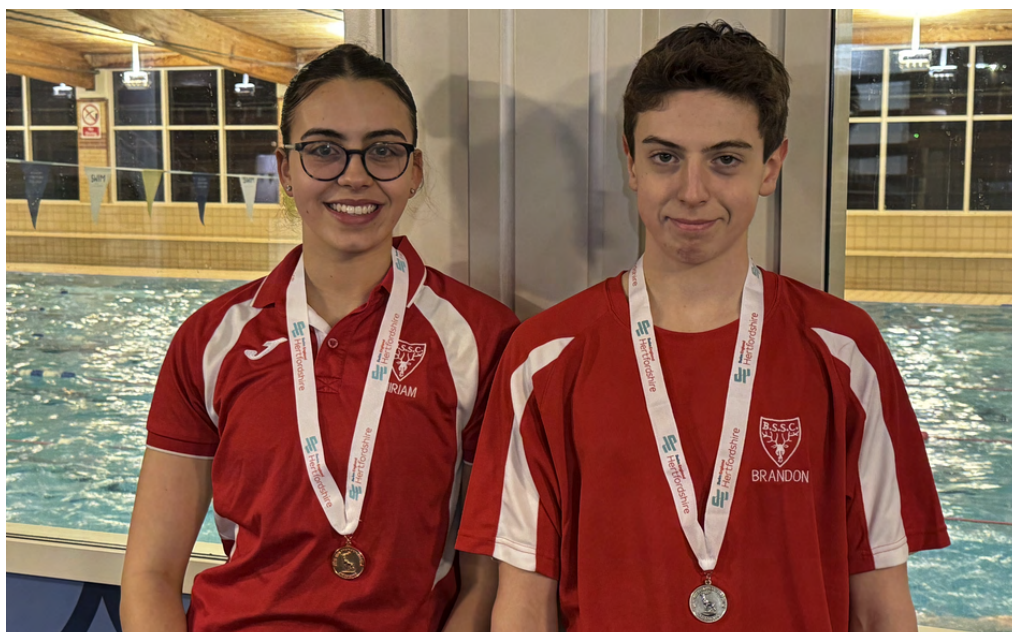




BABBLE

The Bishop's Stortford Swimming Club Newsletter



2023/24 SEASON WINTER EDITION

It feels a little late to be saying Happy New Year given we are towards the end of January already, but we'll say it anyway as we haven't had a chance to see many of you yet. We hope 2024 has started well for you all. It certainly started well for our two swimmers shown above - Miriam Moukdad and Brandon Macdonald-Williams - who won Bronze and Silver medals respectively in the 800m Freestyle at the Swim England Hertfordshire County championships last weekend. Congrats to them both! We have 43 swimmers in action at Counties over the next three weekends, so keep up with their progress on the YouTube live streams or via our social media accounts and website. Time to put all that hard work from training into action!

In this edition we have exciting news about Swimmer of the Month Awards, details on our first Open Meet since 2019 and lots of interesting articles from Team Managers and Officials that will hopefully convince more of you to give it a go! We look back at the successes during the start of the 2023/24 season, including winning promotion to the National Arena Swimming League London Premier Division and the great Club Championships Award night we shared in December. Please take some time to browse through and we really hope you enjoy the content. Also, get in touch and let us know what you'd like to see in future newsletters and on our other communication tools such as social media, our website and the noticeboard.

SWIMMER OF THE MONTH AWARD

We have an exciting announcement from Coach Joe ...

We are thrilled to start off 2024 by reintroducing swimmer of the month!

This will be a in the form of a badge we award to swimmers from Avenirs, Poussins & Benjamins squads.

We will award these badges based on swimmers' showing positive behaviour in and around the pool, their focus and attitude towards training, regular attendance & performances at competitions.



We will start by awarding one badge for Avenirs & Poussins and another for Benjamins, with the hope of awarding one per squad as our Avenirs squad grows. And we will be awarding these badges at the end of each month starting with ones from this month!



HARLOW & BISHOP'S STORTFORD REGIONAL QUALIFIER



As a club we haven't run an Open Meet since 2019 and our March 2020 meet was due to run just as the first Covid lockdown was looming and we had to cancel. So we are very excited to be jointly hosting a regional qualifier open meet on 23rd March with Harlow Penguins Swimming Club. By the time this newsletter is released, entries should have opened on Swim Manager and we will soon be opening up entries for other clubs. Information can be found in Swim Manager or on the [BSSC Open Meets](#) page of our website.

Open Meets can be hard work for those involved in the organisation, but they are great ways for us to raise vital funds for the club and the more people involved the easier it gets. Claire Fields will be in touch with our Officials as we can't run a meet without them. We will also need a team of volunteers and for some of the volunteer roles such as door and raffle sales, there's no special training required and you just need to be a member of the club and Swim England. Those of you with DBS and Safeguarding qualifications we will need for marshalling and changing room duties. Keep an eye on your emails for the invite to volunteer. If you know a member of your family would be interested in helping but they aren't currently a club member, please let our membership secretary know now so she can process the forms in time. Looking forward to seeing lots of you there!

VOLUNTEERING

Support your Club – judges, timekeepers and team managers desperately needed!

We are desperate for volunteer Team Managers and Officials. It might sound scary, but it's not. It needn't take over your life, and the more parents do the training and volunteer, the easier it will be for everyone. Please don't leave it to everyone else! Have a read about what the roles involve, the training cost and commitment, and some insights from current volunteers – and those in training!

The roles

Team Manager (TM)

Swim England revised its policy on club supervision ratios at the end of the summer to ensure our swimmers are properly looked after at galas and that there are appropriate safeguarding procedures in place. This is great news for our swimmers as it will create a higher ratio of supervision per swimmer and ensure they get the best out of the events in a safe way.

For every gala BSSC officially attends, we need to provide one coach and one Team Manager per 10 swimmers. So, for a gala with 23 swimmers this means 1 coach and 3 TM's need to be poolside looking after our swimmers.

Currently, we don't have enough qualified Team Managers to cover upcoming meets.

Being a Team Manager isn't difficult at all; it is, essentially, a chaperone role. You'll be poolside with the swimmers (so you'll get amazing view of the races and free entry!) and will ensure that the swimmers go up for their heats at the correct time, and are behaving themselves and representing our club in a positive manner. Most of the older swimmers are old hands at competing and don't need help, so you can focus on the newer or younger swimmers.

Before starting the role, you'll need to complete online Team Manager (around two hours, no cost), and Safeguarding (around three hours, cost of £20) courses. The Club will help you organise a DBS check. Find out more about the [Team Manager](#) and [Safeguarding](#) courses.

To find out more, contact the Competitions Team competitions@bsswimclub.org.uk



VOLUNTEERING

Support your Club – judges, timekeepers and team managers desperately needed!

Officials: Timekeepers, J1 and J2s

The Club is also in desperate need of Officials to help at our own meets (No Frills and Club Championships) as well as Open Meets like our upcoming joint Meet with Harlow Penguins. Running our own meets raises vital funds for the Club and we simply cannot run these events without more Officials. Many of our current Officials no longer have swimmers at the Club, so we really need parents of our younger swimmers to do their bit!

If you're interested in training to become a J1, the first step is to complete the J1 online course. This takes around six hours to complete, and can be done in your own time and in multiple sessions so you can start the course and come back to it when you have time.

The course is designed to help you to understand the roles of a:

- Timekeeper
- Chief timekeeper
- Inspector of turns
- Chief inspector of turns

It also introduces relevant FINA rules along with video footage which will help you to interpret how those FINA rules are applied in practice. You can read more about the J1 course [here](#).

If you would like to know more, please contact Claire, our Committee member in charge of officials on officials@bsswimclub.org.uk



VOLUNTEER PROFILE: CLAIRE FIELDS

Claire Fields, Team Manager and J2

Why did you decide to get involved?

I'm not so sure it was a conscious decision, it just kind of evolved when Emma started. I felt I should help, so I started with timekeeping in 2017.

What training have you done?

I have the Team Manager 1 and 2 qualifications. I've also completed Timekeeping, J1 and J2. For Timekeeping and J1, I attended in-person courses, but J2 was online as it was post-Covid. I also have a Swim England Assistant Coaching qualification that I completed during Covid. The theory was online with others participants, but we did have to attend sessions at both the pools in Hatfield and coach the swimmers!



Did you have a mentor at first?

From memory, you complete your workbook during meets when Officiating, and you get this signed off while you're there. Usually, because you are a J1T or J2T (ie, in Training), you will be mentored in whatever role you are given.

Which events have you officiated at? Have you enjoyed them?

I like being a Team Manager because you are with the swimmers and can help deal with any anxiety, upset or worries that they have, you can encourage them and help them relax. When you are an Official, I try to be friendly, but ultimately I could end up disqualifying a swimmer which I find difficult. However, it does have to be done so that they learn the rules. If I don't disqualify them and they make the mistake at another meet, then someone else will. My favourite meet was East Regionals, as the sessions were pretty short and most swimmers knew the rules so there were very few DQs.

Why would you encourage other parents to get involved?

Being involved gives you a greater understanding of the sport, as you get to see the other side, you see the ups and downs of the swimmer. If your swimmer is quite young and you are poolside with older, more experienced swimmers, you can see what is expected and how fast they can go!

Without Officials we can't hold a meet and nor can other clubs! We really do need more Officials and the more we have, the fewer sessions you'll be needed for - so that's a win! You also really start to understand what your swimmer can get DQ'd for. Plus, you will also usually get tea, coffee, sandwiches, cake and sometimes a bottle of wine!

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: SARAH CASS

Sarah Cass, Team Manager and J1 in Training (J1T)

Why did you decide to get involved?

Both my daughters swim at the Club, one in Minimes and one in Poussins. Having been involved with the Club for a couple of years it has become apparent to me that it really relies on volunteers. It's a huge undertaking.

We also need them in order to enter external open meets. We need to be able to send Officials (those people in white!) as it is sometimes a requirement of entering the meet. As swimmers grow up and move through the Club and then leave, we also lose parent volunteers, so we need to be able to replace them. We should all do our bit to help for the sake of our swimmers.



What training did you have?

The initial training is online and is based on the World Aquatics rules. It's fairly straightforward and shouldn't take too long. Best to try and do it in a few big blocks so you can get to grips with the rules. There are a couple of simple tests at the end and then once that is done you get your handbook and start training at competitions as a J1T.

What's involved, and do you receive have support at first?

Once the online training is completed you need to do 15 hours poolside being mentored by a qualified J1 or J2 - and be signed off by a qualified J1. So you need experience in all the roles poolside.

Which events have you officiated at? Have you enjoyed them?

I have only done a few hours at internal meets as I have also been Team Manager at external events but hope to get some more hours in next year at other meets. It's good fun to be poolside and really interesting to see how the events work.

Why would you encourage other parents to get involved?

It is great to be poolside in the thick of it! It's full on and takes quite a lot of concentration but makes the day go quicker and you get sweets and lunch! The more of us that are trained the less hours we will need to do, and we will be able to share the responsibility. If you're planning on entering your swimmers for lots of galas, please consider signing up as we really need you. Don't wait for others to pick up the slack!

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: LEANNE EUSTACE

Leanne Eustace, J1 in Training (J1T)

I'm training to be a J1 and am really enjoying it.

I've certainly learned a lot, and have helped out at several meets now and in several different roles: Timekeeper, Chief Timekeeper and Inspector of Turns.

My favourite meet is, of course, our Club Champs!

The first time I officiated, I was quite nervous (more so than my swimmer!) but everyone is really helpful and encouraging. In addition to learning something new and helping your club, you get to see your swimmer poolside and it's free of charge.



I have had a lot of support from the other qualified officials who have been very kind and mentored me poolside. They are very patient, explain what you are looking for, pointing out infractions and common errors and are willing to answer any and all questions! Thank you to all who have helped.

There are lots of friendly faces in the Club who have been through the training recently and are supportive and happy to help with any queries including our Club Secretary, Paul.

If you are considering it but are unsure of exactly what is required or have any questions, please feel free to contact me on 07946542370 or leannepalfrey@hotmail.com

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: RICHARD BAINES

Richard Baines, J1T and (soon to be) Team Manager

Why did you decide to get involved?

At the AGM last year, it really became apparent to me that the Club is crying out for more engaged members, and although paying your fees and supporting the swimmers at meets is great, the Club need 'bums on seats' in order to fulfil Swim England requirements.

My son - who's in Benjamins - gets so much out competing, as I'm sure your swimmers do. These meets and galas, whether it's a No Frills or County Champs, can only happen if BSSC has enough TMs and Officials, and this can only happen if parents step up and volunteer.



What training did you have?

I did the online J1 training course, and am currently working my way through meets as and when I can attend, to build up my practical experience. I work quite a few weekends so can't volunteer at every meet, but that's fine - no-one expects you to! For the Team Manager role, I've completed the online training, and am booked in for Safeguarding training in January. Hopefully I'll then have my qualification in time for Counties.

What's involved, and do you receive have support at first?

For the J1 training, you learn about the different strokes and details of the turns for each stroke. The online training isn't too difficult. When it comes to the practical side of things, you won't just be left on your own to get on with it, you'll be mentored by a qualified J1 who'll walk you through it and tell you what to look out for.

Which events have you officiated at? Have you enjoyed them?

I've done several BSSC no frills, either one or two Club Champs - I can't remember now! - and some sessions at Harlow Penguins Meet and Braintree. We got lunch at Harlow, which was a nice bonus! I think when the event finishes, you look back and in the moment it can be quite serious and you've got to be switched on. Obviously it's kids and young adults' results you're responsible for, so you can't afford to make mistakes.

Why would you encourage other parents to get involved?

Just for feeling that you're helping out not only your own child, but other peoples' children. You've got a vested interest in the Club as you send your child here to train, so why wouldn't you want to see your child and their Club do well at competition level and play your part in that?

2023/24 CLUB CAPTAIN: FREYA HADNUTT

I'm delighted to have been chosen as the female Club Captain.

I spent every Sunday for three months helping to coach Poussins as part of my Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award, and I loved it so much. I enjoyed assisting these younger swimmers in finding their love for swimming and I would like to keep inspiring them.

I may not be the fastest swimmer at the club, but I've worked hard to get where I am, and I am proud of that. Last season I moved through Cadets and into Juniors; and this season now I am in Elites, which takes perseverance and determination. I found it helpful to have people who believed in me and never let me give up when training was difficult.



I would like to be the person who “never lets people give up” to those in the club who may think that they can't do it or just need a little bit of motivation.

As a final point, for those who don't know me I am 6'1” so if you need someone to look up to in the club, I am always here!

Proudest swimming achievement: Going sub-30 on 50 Freestyle.

Do you have a highlight from last year? Finally getting under 1.05 on 100m Freestyle.

What does being Club Captain involve? Supporting all swimmers, no matter their age or ability.

What's your ambition for BSSC this coming year? To place in the top three in Arena League and to move to the Premier Division.

Do you have any advice for younger members of the club? Keep going, your time will come.

Best quote/piece advice: You can do it, just don't give up.

Favourite stroke/event: 50m Backstroke

Best thing about being a swimmer: The support and friends you gain from all different clubs and meets.

Best poolside snack: Haribo Tangfastics

Hat and goggle etiquette: Always keep your hat and goggles with you at meets in case you have to rush to your race and always carry a spare hat.

Hero: Freya Anderson – she trained for a long time before she got the times she wanted, which shows all hard work will pay off.

Best swim hack: Warm up by stretching your muscles before races so you don't injure yourself.

2023/24 CLUB CAPTAIN: JAKEY HAYES

Thank you for allowing me the privilege of continuing as your Club Captain for a 2nd year!

This past year has been great for the club: I was given the opportunity to organise a Sponsored Relay with my fellow Club Captain, Freya Reilly, and you all helped to raise over £2000 which was amazing. We also did brilliantly in both the Peanuts league and Arena leagues and I've enjoyed cheering you on during Open Meets too. It really has been a pleasure!

After my first year as Club Captain I now know how much I can do as captain and how much I can help you, the swimmers. I will remain a cheer leader at the competitions cheering you on from the side lines (whether you like it or not!) and I already have a plan for another sponsored event. I also now have the pleasure to teach some of you as your coach, so I am able to help you progress even more than last year.



Proudest swimming achievement: Achieving qualification times for the 2023 National Winter Championships in 100m backstroke and 200m backstroke.

Do you have a highlight from last year? Organising a successful Sponsored Relay, raising over £2000 for the club.

What does being Club Captain involve? Being a good role model and being able to motivate and push other swimmers to be at their best.

What's your ambition for BSSC this coming year? For BSSC to win Division 1 Arena League and gain promotion to the Premiership.

Do you have any advice for younger members of the club? Instead of setting yourself big goals, set yourself smaller goals that you can achieve to keep you motivated. E.g 0.5 sec off a pb rather than 5sec. Never give up in a race because you'll kick yourself if you just miss a pb because if it!

Best quote/piece advice: Always try your best in training because you will be rewarded for your hard work.

Favourite stroke/event: 100m backstroke and 100m IM.

Best thing about being a swimmer: The feeling of having a community around you as there's always someone around to talk to. Some of my best mates are swimmers at BSSC.

Best poolside snack: BBQ Graze, closely followed by jelly.

Hat and goggle etiquette: Goggles underneath one hat – it's the only correct way!

Hero: Luke Greenbank because I feel he has motivated me to keep going because I know he plateaued and got faster at a later age.

Best swim hack: Never wear your competition trunks for warm -up, if you can help, it because it will cause extra wear and tear.

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFIERS

The annual Swim England Hertfordshire County Championships kicked off last weekend with the mixed 800m Freestyle and we are looking forward to three more weekends of great racing. Please show your support for all our fabulous qualifiers. We will be sharing lots of updates via our Facebook/X/Instagram accounts and posting articles on our website and in the local newspaper and you can watch events live via YouTube.

**SWIM ENGLAND
HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY
CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024**

13 Jan, 3/4 Feb: Westminster Lodge, St Albans
21/22 27/28 Jan: The Venue, Borehamwood

Congratulations to our BSSC qualifiers

Ellyse Harvey	Felice (Kwan Yi) Chan
Harrison Dodwell	John Deeks
Kenny Millsom	Zoe Opiyo
Olivia Hawker	Beau Reilly
Yana Patel	Brandon Macdonald-Williams
Adeline (Yin Hei) Chan	Ella Greatbatch
Elsbeth Lowe	Freya Hadnutt
Guy Spearman-Baines	Kiera Shaw
Jenson Richards	Robert Gor
Noah Conroy	Alice Longman
Benjamin Palmer	David Badcock
Eddy (Ting Hei) Cheng	Emma Fields
Emilia Cass	George Grimwood
Isabelle Earley	Grace Mason
Lois Fields	Jacob Hayes
Zackary Haslett-Fossey	Jake Lloyd
Elliot Hall	Laura Burgess
Molly Greatbatch	Lauren Gore
Samuel Bird	Lucy Wheeler
Bobbie Macdonald-Williams	Miriam Moukdad
Dylan Davenport	Niamh James
Erin Matthews	



Bishop's Stortford Swimming Club



QUALIFYING FOR EVENTS

There are a few events coming up on our Jan-April calendar where swimmers will need to qualify for times and some will only be suitable for older swimmers. We've put a little guide to each of them below:

Counties: this is the short course (25m) County Championships run in January/Feb each year where our swimmers can race against the best in Hertfordshire. This is the first step beyond Open Meets for a competitive swimmer and qualification for 2024 has already happened.

British Swimming Championships: this is the highest level national championships that British swimmers aim for and our swimmers have one more chance to qualify at Putteridge in March. The event runs in April and is always long course (50m).

Regionals: this is a long course (50m) championships run in May by Swim England East Region where clubs from the six Eastern counties of England compete together. Our swimmers are currently chasing qualification times that have just been published.

For more details on many of these events see our [website guides for members](#)

CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS AWARDS EVENING



It was lovely to see so many swimmers at our BSSC Club Championship Awards Night on Saturday 2nd December. Thank you for making the time to join us.

We were taken through the successes of the year by our BSSC President Sally Winter. It was wonderful to hear a summary of the 2022/2023 season and how well many of our swimmers have done. Sally also presented Head Coach Benoit with his leaving present and gave a summary of his time with the club – we thank him for all he has done during his time with us and wish him best wishes for all the future holds. Paul Palmer, a BSSC Master, as well as a former international freestyle swimmer for England and Great Britain then spoke to the swimmers about overcoming the nerves, giving 100% and the passion to win. Fantastic to hear from a swimmer who has experienced it all, including winning Olympic medals.



Coach Joe Collins, supported by our new Club Captains Jakey Hayes and Freya Hadnutt, then awarded close to 300 medals to the swimmers. A huge congratulations to everyone for their successes.



CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS AWARDS EVENING



We were then fortunate to award 15 brand new trophies to swimmers who have done exceptionally well this year. In a revamped system, trophies were awarded to one person, per age group, based on the number of points achieved from their races at the Club Championships in October. The Coaches Awards were based on attendance, dedication, effort, mental strength and sportsperson ship. A big shout out to our Sponsors to enable us to award these lovely new Cups to BSSC Stars.



Age	Company / Family Name	Swimmer Awarded
boys U9	BSSC Boys U9 Award kindly presented by ITVET	William David Tostevin
boys 10 / 11	BSSC Boys 10/11 Award kindly presented by Monkey Puzzle	Nash Conny
boys 12 / 13	BSSC Boys 12/13 Award kindly presented by Mr Barber	Elliot Hall
boys 14 / 15	BSSC Boys 14/15 Award kindly presented by the Taylor Family	Dylan Devenport
boys 16+	BSSC Boys 16+ Award kindly presented by Choice Physio	Jake Lloyd
girls U9	BSSC Girls U9 Award kindly presented by ITVET	Charlotte Cass
girls 10 / 11	BSSC Girls 10/11 Award kindly presented by the Oswald Family	Eloph Lowe
girls 12 / 13	BSSC Girls 12/13 Award The Patel Cup	Molly Greatbatch
girls 14 / 15	BSSC Girls 14/15 Award The Somers Cup	Zoe Orlay
girls 16+	BSSC Girls 16+ Award kindly presented by Choice Physio	Niamh James
boys Most Improved	BSSC Boys Most Improved Award The Haggerty Cup	Dylan Devenport
boys Endeavour	BSSC Boys Endeavour Award Embracing differences for a better world Neurodiversity	Hayden Bird
girls Most Improved	BSSC Girls Most Improved Award The Haggerty Cup	Lots Fields
girls Endeavour	BSSC Girls Endeavour Award kindly presented by the Cass Family	Catherine Els
Overall Sports Person of the Year Award	BSSC Sports Person of the Year The Winner Cup	Beau Riley



CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS AWARDS EVENING



Our Mens Club Captain, Jakey Hayes then took to the floor to thank the swimmers for their support over the last year, especially in his fundraiser where over £2000 was raised for the club to purchase new back boards. But also to break the news that they have him again for another year. He gave a very inspiring speech encouraging swimmers to give it your all when you turn up to training.

It was a fun evening, coming together to celebrate with some food and drinks.

We do still have some old trophies if you want to purchase them. You can see which ones are still available on our Trophy Record Book on the website.

Winners of new Trophies. Remember to look after your Cups and to keep them clean and shiny. We will ask for the back next October to get them ready and engraved for the next winners.

Article by Becca Taylor who deserves a HUGE thank you for all her hard work in organising such a fun evening.

If you want to see the photos in more detail, or see results from previous Club Championships, please visit our [Club Championships website page](#)

SWIM ENGLAND TALENT PATHWAY 2023/24

The talent pathway for swimmer development starts at a County level, where promising 11 year olds are invited by **Swim England Hertfordshire** to attend development camps. Noah Conroy is our BSSC representative this season.

The next step up is the **Swim England East Region Development programme**, where up to 48 swimmers 13 years of age (by 31st Dec 2023), were selected based on long course 200m Individual Medley recorded on Swim England national rankings (1st Jan 2023 to 6th August 2023). Exceptional short course performances were also considered. For the current season BSSC is represented by Molly Greatbatch and Elliot Hall.

The highest level of support you can receive as an English swimmer is with **England Talent Swimming**. This involves four stages of swimmer development for athletes aged from 11 to 19. The four stages are designed to help you reach your maximum potential as a swimmer and eventually step up onto British Swimming's World Class Pathway, where you could become a funded athlete.



Swimmer development with England Talent Swimming

Each stage of the national pathway is detailed within a **selection document** released each year that outlines how athletes are selected onto the national framework.

The four stages are:

- Swim England National Age Group 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. Dylan Davenport is attending this programme for the first time in 2023/24 (192 swimmers were selected) and has already attended some events. They have focused on efficiency sets, including stroke count, diving and dry land warm up routines.
- Swim England National Youth Development Programme: for swimmers aged 15 and 16, this four day camp takes place in December and technical and tactical development areas for specific racing events. Ella Greatbatch is attending this programme.
- Swim England Youth Performance Squad: for swimmers aged 18 or under, you could be selected for international camps or competitions to enhance your future performance potential.
- Swim England Senior 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.

Congratulations to Noah, Molly, Elliot, Dylan and Ella on their selections.

2023 NATIONAL ARENA SWIMMING LEAGUE

The BSSC Arena League team had promotion in their sights for a second season running and their campaign started in style with a great second place finish in Division 1 round 1! The annual National Arena Swimming League (NASL) is the premier swimming league in England and Wales, with nearly 400 teams and over 16,000



swimmers racing in individual and relay events across three rounds of fast and noisy competition. Having re-entered the league via Division 2 last season, they gained promotion to Division 1 and were aiming for promotion to the Premier Division.



The BSSC Arena League team continued their bid for promotion with an emphatic first place finish in Division 1 round 2, moving up the league table to second place overall. The BSSC team put on a great performance on the night scoring 263 gala points, 44 points ahead of their nearest rival Leander and 59 points ahead of third place Team Luton.

The third and final round of the 2023 National Arena Swimming League saw the BSSC team having to dig deep and fight hard on every race, but a strong second place finish on the night resulted in them coming second overall in the league and gaining promotion to the Premier Division!



Congratulations to everyone who took part across all three rounds and to all our coaches and volunteers. Click on the paragraphs above to visit the full articles on each round and see more photos of our superb swimmers and their fabulous team spirit.

SWIM ENGLAND EAST REGION SHORT COURSE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Kicking off the 2023/24 short course championship season is the Swim England East Region SC Championships, aka Winter Regionals. Twenty-one BSSC swimmers headed to Luton to compete against the best swimmers that the six Eastern counties of England could offer. A single set of qualifying times per gender category, meant only the super speedy youngsters like 14 year old Dylan Davenport feature on the start lists and they would be battling against experienced competitors in their twenties. Reaching a final meant you were in the top eight swimmers in the East Region for that event, irrespective of age.



Up first were the distance specialists competing in the 800m and 1500m freestyle events and Brandon Macdonald-Williams kicked the competition for BSSC off in superb style, coming 10th in the 1500m and breaking a long standing 14-15 year old short course club record by 6 seconds (new time: 17:18.00). The previous record of 17:24.22 had been set by Thomas Green in 2005.

Six BSSC swimmers reached finals in their events and twelve swimmers finished in the top twenty in the East Region in their event, an outstanding achievement. Although Dylan Davenport was 39th overall in the 50m Freestyle, he was the 2nd fastest 14 year old in the field, whilst Jakey Hayes was the 3rd 16 and under swimmer in both the 100m Backstroke (13th overall) and 200m Backstroke (9th overall). Both Dylan and Jakey continued their recent great form by swimming personal best times and qualifying for the Swim England National Winter Championships for the first time. Dylan will compete in the 50m Freestyle and Jakey in the 100m and 200m Backstroke and they are joining Ella Greatbatch (50m/100m/200m Breaststroke), Laura Burgess (50m Freestyle), Lauren Gore (50m Breaststroke) and Niamh James (50m Backstroke, 200m IM).

Visit our [website article](#) for the full (long!) list of top 20 individual and relay finishes.

Full list of qualifiers: Dylan Davenport (14 years); Beau Reilly, Brandon Macdonald-Williams, Ella Greatbatch (15 years); Alice Longman, George Taylor, Imogen Tang, Jacob Hayes, Robert Gor (16 years); David Badcock, Emma Fields, Grace Mason, Laura Burgess, Lauren Gore, Meisha Trend-Evans, Miriam Moukdad (17 years); Callum Davis, Dan Chada, Jake Lloyd, Lucy Wheeler, Niamh James (18 over).

SWIM ENGLAND SHORT COURSE CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Swim England National Winter Championships (aka Winter Nationals) is the biggest English swimming meet of the winter months and always promises some exciting short course racing from the fastest swimmers in England. Qualification is tough with no split by age and just a single male and female qualification time for each event, but outstanding short course (25m) swims during the past year secured spots for six BSSC members, including first timers Dylan Davenport (14 years) and Jakey Hayes (16 years).



A number of the swimmers were fighting seasonal illnesses so had to withdraw from some events, but all who were able stepped up to the occasion and swam superbly. BSSC's youngest qualifier Dylan Davenport was the 5th fastest 14 year old (108th overall) in the 50m Freestyle and his time of 24.74 seconds broke the BSSC Age 14-15 yr short course record (24.92) held by Dan Chada (now a BSSC Masters swimmer) since 2016. Jakey Hayes continued his fantastic recent form, with PBs in 100m Backstroke (59.86, 78th overall) and 200m Backstroke (2:09.90, 59th overall). Laura Burgess achieved the best overall result, coming 43rd in 50m Freestyle (26.69). Congrats to all our swimmers.

Dylan's 50m Freestyle time was also the 7th fastest short course time recorded by a 14 year old in Britain in 2023. Although they didn't record their fastest times at Winter Nationals, three other qualifiers also recorded swims in the top 25 in Britain in 2023 for their age groups. Ella Greatbatch (15 yrs) in the 50m/100m/200m Breaststroke; Laura Burgess (17 yrs) in the 50m/100m Freestyle; and Lauren Gore (17 yrs) in the 50m/100m Breaststroke.

2023 Short course - British Rankings

Swimmer	Event	Age	Time	Position
Dylan Davenport	50m Freestyle	14	24.74	7
	100m Freestyle	14	55.29	19
Ella Greatbatch	50m Breaststroke	15	33.72	17
	100m Breaststroke	15	1:13.14	20
Laura Burgess	50m Freestyle	17	26.55	17
	100m Freestyle	17	57.92	24
Lauren Gore	50m Breaststroke	17	33.72	24
	100m Breaststroke	17	1:13.56	22

2023 Long course - British Rankings

Swimmer	Event	Age	Time	Position
Dylan Davenport	50m Freestyle	14	25.91	21
	100m Freestyle	14	56.46	16
Ella Greatbatch	50m Breaststroke	15	33.73	6
	100m Breaststroke	15	01:15.0	17
	200m Breaststroke	15	2:43.02	17
Laura Burgess	50m Freestyle	17	27.5	24
Lauren Gore	50m Breaststroke	17	34.32	21

BSSC SHORT COURSE CLUB RECORDS ARE TUMBLING

Sept-Dec 2023 was short course season and three of our swimmers broke club records in the 14-15 year age group. On 3rd November at Winter Regionals, Brandon broke a 1500m freestyle record that had been set by Thomas Green back in 2005 and three weeks later broke the 800m freestyle record set by Jago Derrington in 2021. Ella Greatbatch also had a great Winter Regionals, breaking her own club record of 33.85 seconds that she had set at the 2022 Winter Regionals.



BSSC CLUB RECORD ALERT

800m Freestyle 8:54.08
1500m Freestyle 17:18.00

Ages 14-15 SC records
November 2023



BRANDON MACDONALD-WILLIAMS



BSSC CLUB RECORD ALERT

50m Breaststroke (33.72)

Ages 14-15 SC record
November 2023



ELLA GREATBATCH



Having set a 50m freestyle PB of 25.00 seconds to qualify for Winter Nationals, Dylan got a new PB and a club record at the event in Sheffield, breaking the record set by Dan Chada in November 2016.



BSSC CLUB RECORD ALERT

50m Freestyle (24.74)

Ages 14-15 SC record
December 2023



DYLAN DAVENPORT



Congratulations to them both! We're looking forward to seeing what they can achieve at the County Championships. If you'd like to look at our club records, you can find them via the Swim Manager menu. They are split by short vs long course, gender, age group and event.

Swim Serpentine

On Saturday 16th Sept, a group of BSSC Masters swimmers entered the annual Swim Serpentine open water swim in Hyde Park in London. Geoff and Annabel entered in the 1-mile distance which is a single lap of the lake circuit and Helen, Jake and 2 ex-Masters Karen and Emma entered the 2-mile distance. Rachel had entered the Super Six (6-mile) but pulled out due to illness.

The morning started with fantastic weather and the 2-mile Ladies swim. Helen swam in 59 minutes 57 seconds, finishing 9th in her age group, the 71st female and 245th out of the 3109 male & female swimmers that swam the 2-mile distance. Karen swam 1:03:44 and finished 445th overall. Emma swam 1:16:51 and finished 1436th.



To wrap things up Jake swam his 2 miles at 15:30, completing it in 50:13, coming 15th in his age group, 24th male and 32nd out of 3109 swimmers. It was a fantastic day with an incredible atmosphere and a very friendly community of swimmers. **The spaces for entering this year disappeared very quickly so if you are interested in swimming the Swim Serpentine 2024 register your interest now. It would be great to see more BSSC swimmers at the lake.**

Swim England Masters Championships

Six BSSC swimmers, across a variety of age groups travelled to Sheffield for the Short Course Masters National Championships. They brought home a whopping 18 individual medals (12 Gold, 5 Silver, 1 Bronze), 2 relay medals (1 Gold, 1 Bronze), and countless records including 4 EUROPEAN records. Out of the 286 clubs that were represented, BSSC finished 27th overall and 1st in Hertfordshire, and with only 6 swimmers competing that was a tremendous achievement. If you'd like to read more please see [Jake's article](#).



Swim England Masters Inter County

Eight BSSC Masters recently represented Hertfordshire in the Swim England National Masters Inter-County competition. The usual youngsters of Callum Davis (18+), Lucy Wheeler (18+), Niamh James (18+) and Jake Lloyd (25+) and the experienced hands of Sally Winter (55+) and Alyson Fordham (65+) were pleased to be joined by two others who don't often compete – Elanor Cadzow (25+) and Helen Shingler (45+). Read more [here](#).



Chelmsford City SC Magnificent Masters Meet 2024

Sally Winter, Alyson Fordham, Lizzie Bellinger, Jake Lloyd, Niamh James, Joe Collins and Ellie Mason had an early 2024 blow out and raced at the Magnificent Masters meet on 6th Jan. The pool is not quite a standard distance so no records could be set, but apparently Alyson's 50 Back was something to behold and great fun was had by all!

OTHER COMPETITION NEWS SEP/DEC 2023

Team Luton Autumn Short Course Open Meet

Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd October saw a small squad of fifteen Bishop's Stortford Swimming Club members aged 11 to 17 travel to Luton for Team Luton's Autumn Short Course Meet.

Over the two days, the fifteen swimmers took part in 55 swims, with nearly half of swims resulting in personal best times. Eight swimmers brought home 24 medals between them (1 Gold, 13 Silver and 10 Bronze), including 11 year olds Noah Conroy and Guy Spearman-Baines (picture right) who secured a great haul of seven medals.



Congratulations to newly re-elected Club Captain Jakey Hayes, who won medals in all six of his races and newly elected Club Captain Freya Hadnutt who won medals in five of her races.

Full medal results by age group are given below.

11 year olds:

- Noah Conroy – Silver 100m Butterfly & 200m Freestyle; Bronze 50m Butterfly & 100m Freestyle
- Guy Spearman-Baines – Silver 50m/100m Breaststroke; Bronze 200m Individual Medley

15 year olds:

- Freya Hadnutt – Silver 50m/100m/200m Backstroke & 100m Freestyle; Bronze 100m Butterfly
- Imogen Tang – Silver 50m Freestyle

16 year olds:

- Emma Fields – Gold 50m Butterfly
- Jacob Hayes – Silver 100m/200m Backstroke & 400m Freestyle; Bronze 50m Backstroke, 200m Freestyle & 200m Individual Medley
- Alice Longman – Silver 200m Individual Medley; Bronze 50m/100m Breaststroke

17 year olds:

- Grace Mason – Bronze 800m Freestyle

Putteridge Winter Open Meet

Thirty BSSC members made the journey to Inspire Luton over the weekend of 18-19 November for Putteridge Swimming Club's Winter Open Meet.

Over the two days, the swimmers took part in 84 swims, with 16 swimmers securing places in the top-three and taking home 34 medals between them. Congratulations to Adeline Chan, Alice, Longman, Dylan Davenport, Jake Lloyd, Laura Burgess, Meisha Trend-Evans, Niamh James and Noah Conroy, who won medals in all of their events.

Full medal results by age group are given below.

10-year olds:

- Adeline Chan - Bronze 100m Backstroke
- Harrison Dodwell (picture right) – Gold 50m Breaststroke; Silver 50m Freestyle & 100m Breaststroke
- Yana Patel – Silver 100m Freestyle

11-year olds:

- Emilia Cass – Bronze 200m Freestyle
- Noah Conroy – Gold 50m/100m/200m Freestyle & 100m Butterfly; Silver 50m Butterfly & 200m IM
- Guy Spearman-Baines - Silver 200m Breaststroke, Bronze 100m Backstroke



OTHER COMPETITION NEWS SEP/DEC 2023

12-year olds

- Isabelle Earley – Silver 100m Breaststroke
- Lois Fields – Gold 50m Backstroke

14-year olds

- Dylan Davenport – Gold 100m Freestyle

15-year old & Over:

- Brandon MacDonald-Williams – Silver 400m Freestyle; Bronze 200m Freestyle, 200m Backstroke & 200m IM
- Freya Hadnutt – Silver 50m Backstroke
- Alice Longman – Silver, 100m Freestyle
- Laura Burgess – Gold 200m Freestyle & 200m Butterfly
- Meisha Trend-Evans - Gold 400m Freestyle & 800m Freestyle
- Niamh James – Gold 200m Breaststroke, 100m /200m Butterfly
- Jake Lloyd – Silver 200m Freestyle & 200m Butterfly; Bronze 800m Freestyle

Hatfield Open Meet

The weekend of 25-26 November saw 43 BSSC members aged 10 to 22 visit Hertfordshire Sports Village for Hatfield Swimming Club's County Qualifier.

Over the two days, the swimmers took part in 184 swims and gained personal best times in 103 of those swims. 33 swimmers – over three quarters of BSSC swimmers who took part – went home with a grand total of 103 Christmas baubles– 39 gold, 41 silver and 23 bronze. Top marks to Hatfield for creative seasonal medal theming!

It was fantastic to see three of the Club's youngest swimmers, 11-year-olds Guy Spearman-Baines, Jenson Richards and Noah Conroy, reaching the Finals; the 200m IM, 50m Breaststroke and 100m Butterfly respectively.

Congratulations to all swimmers who competed in the Finals, particularly those who went on to improve on their times after a tiring day's racing: well done to Brandon Macdonald-Williams, Felice Chan, Freya Hadnutt, Isabelle Earley, Lois Fields, Noah Conroy and Robert Gor.



Full medal results by age group are given below.

10-year olds:

- Adeline Chan - Gold 100m Freestyle, Bronze 50m Breaststroke
- Harrison Dodwell – Gold 50m Freestyle, 100m/200m Breaststroke & 50m Butterfly; Silver 100m Freestyle and 100m IM
- Kenny Millsom – Silver 50m/100m/200m Breaststroke; Bronze 50m Freestyle
- Yana Patel – Gold 50m Butterfly and 50m Backstroke; Bronze 100m Freestyle

11-year olds:

- Emilia Cass – Gold 50m Freestyle; Silver 100m Freestyle, 50m Breaststroke; Bronze 50m Butterfly
- Noah Conroy – Gold 100m Freestyle, 50m/100m Butterfly; Silver 50m Freestyle & 100m IM

OTHER COMPETITION NEWS SEP/DEC 2023

- Isabella Crotty – Bronze 200m Freestyle
- Jenson Richards – Gold 50m Breaststroke
- Guy Spearman-Baines – Silver 100m/200m Breaststroke & 200m IM

12-year olds:

- Benjamin Palmer – Gold 200m Freestyle; Silver 50m/100m Freestyle
- Eddy Cheng – Silver 200m Breaststroke
- Isabelle Earley – Silver 100m Breaststroke
- Lois Fields – Gold 100m Freestyle; Silver 50m Freestyle, 50m Butterfly; Bronze 100m Backstroke
- Meha Patel – Silver 100m Individual Medley; Bronze 100m Freestyle & 50m Butterfly
- Sebastian Smith – Bronze 50m Breaststroke
- Zackary Haslett Fossey – Silver 50m Backstroke

13-year olds:

- Elliot Hall – Silver 400m Freestyle, 50m/100m Butterfly; Bronze 50m Freestyle
- Molly Greatbatch – Gold 200m Breaststroke; Bronze 400m Freestyle & 100m Backstroke

14-year olds:

- Bobbie Macdonald-Williams – Bronze 400m Freestyle
- Dylan Davenport – Gold 400m Freestyle, 100m Butterfly, 50m Backstroke & 200m IM; Silver 200m Butterfly
- Erin Matthews – Bronze 50m Breaststroke
- Felice Chan – Gold 100m Freestyle; Silver 50m Breaststroke

15 year olds:

- Beau Reilly – Silver 200m Freestyle
- Brandon MacDonald-Williams – Gold 50m Backstroke & 200m IM; Silver 100m/400m Freestyle
- Ella Greatbatch – Gold 400m Freestyle
- Freya Hadnutt – Gold 100m/200m Backstroke; Silver 50m/200m Freestyle & 50m Backstroke; Bronze 100m Freestyle
- Robert Gor – Gold 200m Freestyle & 200m Breaststroke; Silver 50m Breaststroke; Bronze 100m Breaststroke & 100m IM

16 year olds & Over:

- Jacob Hayes – Gold 50m/100m/200m Backstroke; Silver 100m IM
- Emma Fields – Gold 100m Butterfly; Silver 100m Freestyle, 50m Butterfly
- Grace Mason – Gold 200m Butterfly
- Laura Burgess – Gold 100m Freestyle; Silver 50m Freestyle; Bronze 100m Butterfly
- Lauren Gore – Silver 50m/100m Breaststroke
- Niamh James – Gold 200m Freestyle

Congratulations to all our swimmers who have taken part in meets this season. We've reported on the "bling" in the three articles above which is great fun to jingle home with, but so many swimmers performed brilliantly in getting season best times or even just getting onto the blocks for the very first time. We're sorry we don't have the capability to celebrate every success, but you know what you achieved and WELL DONE to you all!

IN THE NEWS

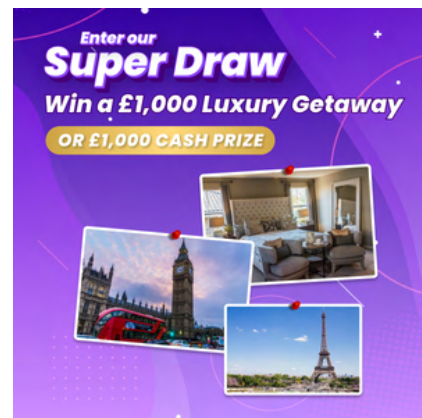
Our archive of news articles published in the local newspaper can be found [here](#)

WELFARE OFFICER

Just a reminder that **Brian Neill** is our Welfare Officer and actively supporting the club. If you have any welfare concerns please do contact him on welfare@bsswimclub.org.uk

FINAL FUNDRAISING NOTES

Thank you to all our members who continue to support us through the **East Herts Lottery**. **In the past 2 years they have won over £1100 in return!** For just £1 per week (less than the cost of 1/2 a cup of coffee!) you can fund us and other local causes AND win prizes of up to £25,000 AND right now you could also **win a £1000 luxury getaway or £1000 cash!** 50% of tickets sold from our page goes to us, and 10% to other great local causes.



EASY FUNDRAISING

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

Just register once with **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, towels etc. as well as other swimming kit supplies. As a club we benefit from your purchases.