



BABBLE

The Bishop's Stortford Swimming Club Newsletter

2023/24 SEASON SPRING EDITION



Wow, 2024 is just flying by! Since we last shared a newsletter we've had Counties, hosted our Regional Qualifier with Harlow Penguins Swimming Club, re-launched Swimmer of the Month for Poussins and Benjamins, competed in four other Open meets, and celebrated 26 BSSC swimmers qualifying for the upcoming Regional Championships. Over the coming months there is plenty to look forward to: Regionals, British & English Summer Championships and - for our youngest swimmers - Peanuts League.

There has been lots to celebrate so far this season, so we've had plenty to write about! The new coaching team is now in place, several Club records have been smashed (and it's only April!), 64 top-three finishes were secured at Counties and six Benjamins and Poussins swimmers have been awarded Swimmer of the Month. In this newsletter, you can also find a guide to Peanuts League and how to qualify for events this summer.

We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter!

BSSC COACHING TEAM

We are delighted to announce the new BSSC coaching team is now in place.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Joe Collins for stepping in as acting Head Coach through Counties and to Laure Grattepanche for helping out with the club's coaching needs at short notice.

Our new coaches bring an exceptional amount of new knowledge and experience to the club. Their ambitions on introducing a new club structure, new training methods and an increased engagement with both our swimmers and parents will really allow the club to create a positive swimming community. Working together will help maximise our swimmer's potentials, whilst keeping it fun and enjoyable for everyone involved.

We are also excited by the opportunities that having a larger coaching team presents, bringing much more depth and flexibility to do more events, training camps, galas and to offer a more personalised coaching experience.

The committee thanks all the members for their continued support.

Please join us in welcoming the new team.

**BISHOP'S STORTFORD SWIMMING CLUB**

2024 Coaching Team

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| Head Coach Jamie McLouglin | Ass. Head Coach Joe Collins | Coach Darren Tucker | Coach Ashley Bygraves |
|  |  |  |  |
| Coach Graham Huggett | Coach Amy Gardner | Coach Romesh Paktsun | Junior Coach Jakey Hayes |
|  |  |  |  |

BSSC COACHING TEAM

Head Coach – Jamie McLaughlin

Jamie was the assistant head coach at Dunmow Atlantis for 5 years, and was coaching there for 10 years.

A keen swimmer himself and also someone who has competed at all levels as a youngster, Jamie brings a wealth of experience to the club. He also works as a coach at Bishop's Stortford College and will continue with that role as he takes up the head coach duties for BSSC.



"I am excited to be appointed as the new head coach at Bishop's Stortford Swimming Club. I'm delighted to share that Darren Tucker and Ashley Bygraves will also be joining the existing coaching team. Together we look forward to creating a successful future for BSSC. We can't wait to get started and meet everyone."

Assistant Head Coach – Joe Collins

"I have been a member of this swim club since 2010. I am (was) a Regional level breaststroke swimmer, mostly competing in the 50 & 100m distances. I also competed for Hertfordshire at the 2016 Inter Counties Division 1 competition.

When I finished Uni, in 2020, I wanted to go straight into work using my degree, so when Benoit asked if I would like to help coach and assist with a few of the squads, I jumped at the opportunity, and have upped my involvement ever since.

I now have responsibility for a handful of squads and competitions, such as having taken the lead in our youngsters' Peanuts adventures last year!

Outside of swimming I am a huge sports fan, being a fan of the only football team worth supporting, Arsenal, as well as having interests in any sport that is on the tele at the time."



BSSC COACHING TEAM

Coach – Darren Tucker

Darren was a national swimmer himself and has decades of experience coaching at all levels. He was assistant head coach at Harlow Penguins and more recently was the head coach at Dunmow Atlantis for 8 years until deciding to take a step back at the end of last season.

Darren is a legend amongst his swimmers, and we look forward to him building that relationship at the club.

“I’m really looking forward to meeting the team and all the swimmers and working with you all for a successful future, exciting times ahead team.”



Coach – Ashley Bygraves

Ashley has coached at an extremely high level all his life, initially focusing on swimming where he worked with James Gibson and also helped coach the GB Paralympic hopefuls.

He then broadened his coaching to take onboard Water Polo as well as swimming where he coached multiple players to the GB team.

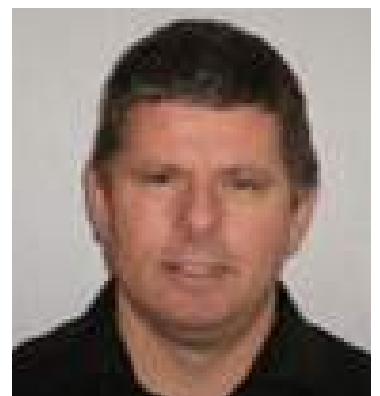
He is head coach at Bishop’s Stortford College, a role he will continue to hold whilst he integrates some BSSC coaching duties.



“I am thrilled to join Bishop’s Stortford Swimming Club’s coaching team and look forward to an exciting and successful future together. I am eager to meet everyone in March and begin this new chapter.”

Coach – Graham Huggett

Many of you already know Graham from his officiating roles at many of our meets, and he continues to provide us with his coaching expertise.



BSSC COACHING TEAM

Coach – Romesh Paktsun

“I’ve been involved with BSSC over five years first as a parent helper and now as a coach.

I was brought up in Sri Lanka, and when I was 10 I saw some guys diving off the college diving boards – I so wanted to do it! One massive problem, I did not know how to swim! Within a few weeks, I learned how to do the doggy paddle and my diving career started from there. In a space of six months, I made it to the collage diving team.



At age of 13 I made the cut to represent Sri Lanka and made it to the National diving squad. Since then I represented Sri Lanka in competitions in Asia Pacific Region and in Asian games until the age of 19. I was drafted to the squad to represent Sri Lanka in diving for the Commonwealth games in 1998 and the Olympics in 2000.

Now in my 40s I’m still trying to re live my childhood dream of playing competitive cricket. However, now I represent my local cricket club in Sawbridgeworth as a player and as a coach in the summer. As some of you may have seen me on the pool deck or on the cricket pitch, I am passionate in what I do and take my life experiences and knowledge into my coaching to help a young person achieve their fullest potential.”

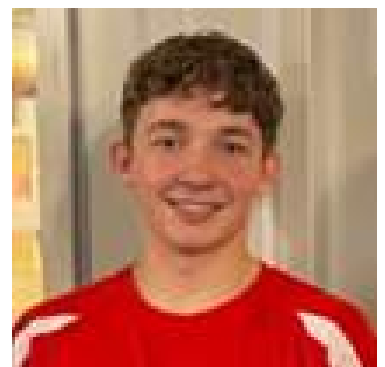


Coach – Amy Gardner

Amy has recently re-joined the club as a coach. She will be focusing on the younger swimmers, where she has already made a big impact.

Junior Coach and Club Captain: Jakey Hayes

Jakey has made a huge impact at the club as Club Captain and is now starting to develop as a very promising junior coach.



THANK YOU AND GOODBYE TO LAURE

As many of you will be aware, Coach Laure Grattepanche left the club early March.

Laure Jorion, as she was known then, joined the club in September 2018 from Lille University Club in France where she had been training the competitive Young and Masters groups. She was a key part of our coaching team until COVID locked us down and many swimmers had great competitive success on the back of her enthusiastic and positive coaching.



Laure was part of the amazing Mount Kelly training camp in 2019 and many of you will remember her leading the singing to George Ezra's Shotgun one BBQ tea time. None of us that were there can hear that song without remembering Laure stood up conducting the kids in a loud rendition!

Laure went on to become head coach at Harlow Penguins where she had great success with the club.

Over the last few years Laure has always been at hand to help the club out whenever we had a shortage of coaches and in November when Benoit decided to step down suddenly, Laure stepped in and despite holding a day job and bringing up a young child, managed to fill the gap seamlessly and has really helped the club. Many of the swimmers Laure has coached over the last few months made it through to counties with many of them medalling.

We just wanted to take this opportunity to thank Laure for everything she has done. Her impact on the club has been significant and she will be greatly missed.



SWIMMER OF THE MONTH AWARD

Announcing our Swimmers of the Month for January, February and March.

We were delighted to start off 2024 by reintroducing swimmer of the month! Every month, Coach Joe will be awarding a badge to swimmers from Avenirs, Poussins & Benjamins squads who have demonstrated positive behaviour in and around the pool, their focus and attitude towards training, regular attendance & performances at competitions.



Huge congratulations to the following swimmers:

January Swimmers of the Month



Anna Grimwood

“Anna made sure she attended as many sessions as possible, and has tried her very best at every task she has been given.”



Luca Tse

“Luca has thrived doing his more set-based sessions recently. His freestyle technique and speed have improved dramatically because of this.”

SWIMMER OF THE MONTH AWARD

February Swimmers of the Month



Kenny Millsom

“Over the past month, Kenny has been keen to listen and keen to learn. He always makes sure he is doing everything as perfectly as possible.”



Guy Spearman-Baines

“Guy has made sure he is well on time for every training session and is always the first to offer a helping hand before we get in.”

March Swimmers of the Month



Olivia Hawker

“Olivia works hard giving her all in training, she has also seen the results from this with some amazing recent personal bests times.”



Harrison Dodwell

“Harrison is always ready for new challenges and always keen for feedback, making sure he does his best to take in the tips he is given.”

BSSC CLUB RECORDS KEEP TUMBLING

We started January 2024 with our short course Hertfordshire County Championships and then moved into a mixture of long and short course open meets and some of our swimmers have been in record breaking form already.



At the Hertfordshire County Championships Brandon MacDonald-Williams took nearly 17 seconds off the 1500m Freestyle short course club record he had set back in November 2023 to take Silver in his age group. That 14-15 years record had previously stood since 2005.

At one of the first long course meets of the season, Dylan Davenport broke the 100m Freestyle long course club record of 55.50 that had been held by Craig Ross since 2008.



You might have thought that having a birthday and moving into the Open Age group would slow Brandon down in his quest for records, but at the Norwich Easter meet he took seven seconds off Jago Derrington's 1500m Freestyle Open Age group long course club record that he had set in April 2023.



At that same Easter meet, Emma Fields was on flying form when she broke Amy Young's 2017 Open Age group long course 100m Butterfly record by 0.18 seconds.

Congrats to them all! We're looking forward to seeing what they achieve during the rest of this season. You can find our club records via the Swim Manager menu (website version only). They are split by short vs long course, gender, age group and event.



COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024 - WEEKEND ONE

Although January and February are long, cold boring months for most people, they are exciting ones for many BSSC swimmers as the Swim England Hertfordshire County Championships take place. This year, forty-three BSSC swimmers aged 11-29 qualified for 207 individual events and multiple relays.

Weekend one

The first weekend of the Championships kicked off in style with the 800m Freestyle. BSSC had four competitors up for the challenge of racing 32 lengths of a 25m swimming pool and they all performed superbly.

Brandon Macdonald-Williams snagged Silver in the Male/Open 16 year age group, whilst Miriam Moukdad took Bronze in the Female 17/Over age group with a 9 second improvement on her entry time.

Bobbie Macdonald-Williams was 6th in the Female 15 year age group and Jake Lloyd was 9th in the Male/Open 17/Over group.



Weekend two

BSSC swimmers were on sizzling form on weekend two, returning with twenty-eight age group medals, six Junior Championship awards and nine Championship awards.

The five 10 year olds swimming in the 10/11 year age group at their first County Championships all performed superbly, with Harrison Dodwell, Kenny Millsom and Yana Patel reaching age group finals and Olivia Hawker and Ellyse Harvey both swimming personal best times in their events.



COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024 - WEEKEND TWO

There were BSSC finalists in all of the younger age groups in the male 100m Breaststroke with Guy Spearman-Baines (12 yrs), Eddy Cheng (13 yrs) and Elliot Hall (14 yrs) all swimming personal best times to secure their places. Having taken 2 seconds off his PB in the heat, Eddy repeated that feat to take a further 1.3 seconds off in the final to finish 4th.

In the 200m Breaststroke, all five males finished top 8 and all six females top 9 in their age groups and six medals were won: Gold Molly Greatbatch (14 years) and Ella Greatbatch (15 years); Silver Robert Gor (16 years) & Niamh James (17/Over); Bronze Guy Spearman-Baines (12 yrs) & Lauren Gore (17/Over).



Another notable event was the 100m Butterfly where all five males reached finals, four of them got PBs and 4 medals were won: Gold Dylan Davenport (15 yrs); Silver Noah Conroy (12 yrs), Elliot Hall (13 yrs) & Jake Lloyd (17/Over).

Congratulations to our two club captains, Freya Hadnutt and Jakey Hayes, who were on great form in and out of the pool, supporting all the swimmers and both winning two bronze age group medals (Freya Hadnutt: 3rd 100m Backstroke & 100m Freestyle; Jakey Hayes: 3rd 100m & 200m Backstroke).

The full list of weekend two age group medallists and top 8 finishers can be found [here](#), along with the summary of swimmers who won the Junior Championship (15/Under) and Championship (All ages) awards.



COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024 - WEEKEND THREE

Weekend three

Dylan Davenport added four Gold medals in the 15 year old age group to bring his overall total to eight (6 Gold, 2 Bronze), whilst Brandon added Gold in the 16 years 400m IM and Bronze in the 200m Freestyle to also boost his running total to eight medals (1 Gold, 4 Silver, 3 Bronze) ahead of the 1500m on the final weekend.

Freya Hadnutt recorded personal best times in the heats and finals of the 16 year 50m Backstroke to take Gold in a time that qualifies her for the East Region championships for the first time and also adding two more Bronze (50m & 200m Freestyle) to the two she won the weekend before.

Ella Greatbatch continued her domination of the 16 year old breaststroke events, adding the 50m Breaststroke Gold to complete the 50m/100m/200m trio. She also won Bronze in the 200m IM, keeping her defence of the top girl award alive.



Seventeen year old Emma Fields added the 50m Butterfly Gold to her 100m Butterfly Gold from weekend two and Laura Burgess secured both the 50m and 200m Freestyle Golds. Eleven year olds Jenson Richards and Noah Conroy were BSSC's youngest medallists, with Jenson taking Silver in the 50m Breaststroke (12 yrs age group) and Bronze in the 50m Butterfly and 400m Freestyle for Noah. The male 400m Freestyle saw a medal haul of one gold (Dylan Davenport), one silver (Brandon MacDonald-Williams) and two bronze (Noah Conroy and Elliot Hall).



COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024 - WEEKEND FOUR

BSSC brother sister duo Brandon & Bobbie MacDonald-Williams were in action in the 1500m freestyle event on the final weekend of the Hertfordshire County Championships. Both recorded superb personal best times, with Bobbie taking over a minute off her entry time to come 4th in the female 15 year age group and Brandon securing Silver in the 16 year age group, taking 17 seconds off the 14-15 year club record he set in November 2023.

The final day of 2024 Counties saw the clubs of Hertfordshire battling it out across eighteen relay events. Thirty-eight amazing BSSC swimmers created twenty-eight relay teams and took to the pool for some fast and furious action.

All six BSSC A relay teams in the youngest age group (13/Under) events finished in the top eight in the County (three 4th place finishes, one 5th and one 8th) and the female freestyle team of Millie Cass, Adeline Chan, Isabelle Earley and Lois Fields secured Bronze ahead of Royston by 0.01 seconds.



The mixed junior championship (15/Under) medley team of Elliot Hall, Molly Greatbatch, Dylan Davenport and Felice Chan held off Hatfield to secure Bronze, whilst three other junior championship teams finished in the top eight (securing 5th, 6th and 8th).

For the second year running, the female championship medley was one of the most exciting events. The 2023 defending champions Niamh James, Lauren Gore, Emma Fields and Laura Burgess were yet again equally matched on every leg by the Hatfield team and there was nothing between them until the final length when Laura Burgess touched for Gold.

Congratulations to all BSSC swimmers who took part in a very successful 2024 Counties. Just qualifying for and competing in an event at a County level is a special moment, but so many of the swimmers took it a step further with recording personal best times, reaching their first County final, getting their first medal, or securing their first Regional level qualifying times. Well done everyone!

IN THE NEWS: COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024

We love sharing the achievements of our swimmers with as many people as possible, so it's been fantastic to see BSSC swimmers featured in the Bishop's Stortford Independent and Bishop's Stortford Flyer nearly every week this year so far!

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Brandon MacDonald-Williams claimed gold in the 16-years 400m individual medley and bronze in the 200m freestyle to also boost his running total to eight medals one gold, four silver and three bronze - ahead of the 1,500m on the final weekend.

Club captain Freya Hadnutt's best counties performance continued as she recorded personal bests in the heats and finals of the 16-years 50m backstroke to take gold in a time that qualifies her for the E-Region Championships for the first time.

She also added two more bronze medals, in the 50m and 200m freestyle, to the two she won the previous weekend.



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Brandon MacDonald-Williams and Miriam Moukddad won 800m freestyle medals during the opening weekend of the Swim England Hertfordshire County Championships.

The former claimed silver and the latter took bronze as Bishop's Stortford Swimming Club enjoyed a fine start to the competition.

The athletes had to race 32 lengths of a 25-metre pool, with the event being the only one contested in the opening round.



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Siblings Bobbie and Brandon MacDonald-smash 1,500m freestyle personal bests for Bishop's Stortford Swimming Club at Swim England Hertfordshire County Championships

By Bishop's Stortford Independent reporter
- newsdesk@bishopsstortfordindependent.co.uk
Published: 12:11, 23 February 2024

Listen to this article



Bobbie and Brandon MacDonald-Williams smashed their 1,500m freestyle personal bests at the Swim England Hertfordshire County Championships came to an end.

The siblings were part of a successful Bishop's Stortford Swimming Club performance overall in the competition.

Bobbie took over a minute off her entry time to come fourth in 53.25sec) while Brandon secured silver in the male/open 16+ age group (17.01.13) off the 14-15 club record he set in November 2023 (17.01.13).

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The five 10-year-olds swimming in the 10/11 age group were competing at their first county championships and all performed superbly, with Harrison Dodwell, Kenny Millsom and Yana Patel reaching age-group finals while Olivia Hawker and Elyse Harvey registered personal bests in their events.

Dodwell took five seconds off his entry time in the heats of the 100m breaststroke and then secured bronze in the final by taking another three seconds off his time.

There were Stortford finalists in all of the younger age groups in the male 100m breast, with Guy Spearman-Baines (12yrs), Eddy Cheng (13yrs) and Elliot Hall (14yrs) swimming PBs to secure their places. Having taken two seconds off his PB in the heat, Cheng shaved a further 1.3 seconds off in the final to finish fourth.



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IN THE NEWS

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

BSSC & HARLOW PENGUINS REGIONAL QUALIFIER

It was absolutely fantastic to welcome swimmers from ten clubs across Essex and Hertfordshire to Harlow Leisurezone on Saturday 23rd March for BSSC's very first open meet since 2019!

Jointly hosted with Harlow Penguins Swimming Club, our Regional Qualifier saw 45 BSSC swimmers aged from 9 to 23 take part in 145 swims. Our swimmers were on top form, with 99 out of 145 swims resulting in a top three place; 45 gold, 29 silver and 25 bronze medals were won on the day.

Twenty-one BSSC swimmers took home medals for every one of their races, including 9-year-old Poussins swimmer Daniel Cara, who was competing in his first meet with the Club.

Special mention goes to swimmers who secured gold medals in all of their races; Elliot Hall, Emma Fields, Freya Hadnutt, Harrison Dodwell, Joshua Green, Laura Burgess and Molly Greatbatch.

A big 'well done' to swimmers who achieved personal best times and top-three places in all of their events: Daniel Cara, Freya Hadnutt, Joshua Green, Laura Burgess, Linke Groenewald and Volodymyr Ignatiev.

Full medal results by age group are available on our website.



A big 'thank you' to...

Hosting our own meets is an excellent fundraiser for the Club and once the numbers have been crunched from the Regional Qualifier we will share the amount raised through entry and spectator fees and raffles tickets. We hope to host more meets in the near future. However, this is only possible with the help of our fantastic volunteers, so we'd like to say a big 'thank you' to everyone who gave their time to help organise the event, Team Managers, Officials and Poolside volunteers. Without you, this wouldn't be possible! Thanks also to all who contributed to the raffle donations - they looked amazing and were definitely some of the best raffle prizes we've seen at open meets.

RECIPES: POST-SWIMMING SNACKS

Looking for some ideas for post-swimming snacks? We'll be sharing recipes for healthy treats; the following recipes are courtesy of Swim England's Member News.

Protein Balls

Ingredients (makes eight balls):

- 2 tbsp honey
- 1 cup chopped dates
- 1 cup porridge oats
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 3 tbsp instant coffee
- Packet of shredded coconut

Method

1. Soak dates in boiling water.
2. Add oats and cocoa powder into a blender and blitz until smooth.
3. Dissolve coffee in warm water.
4. Drain dates and add to the blender with coffee and honey and blitz.
5. Put the mixture into a bowl and shape them into balls.
6. Sprinkle with coconut.



Sultana flapjacks

Ingredients (makes 12 servings):

- 200g of butter or margarine
- 200g of sugar
- 200g of honey or golden syrup
- 400g of porridge oats
- 75g of sultanas

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180C.
2. Butter a 20cm x 30cm cake tin.
3. Put the butter, sugar and honey in a saucepan and heat, stirring occasionally, until the butter has melted, and the sugar has dissolved.
4. Add the oats and sultanas and mix well.
5. Transfer the oat mix to the prepared tin and spread about 2cm thick.
6. Bake in the oven for 15 to 20 minutes, until lightly golden around the edges but soft in the middle.
7. Let cool in the tin, cut into squares.

If you'd like to share your favourite post-swimming snack, please send the recipe to comms@bsswimclub.org.uk. We can't wait to try them!

UPCOMING EVENTS APRIL-JULY 2024

Coach Joe has already shared an event calendar for January-July via email, but we're including this page as a reminder that the [Events Calendar](#) on our website contains more details of each event, including host club links, schedules, accepted entries etc. If some of the events shown below are new to you, remember that not all squads attend every event as our coaches select the level of competition that is appropriate for each squad. Also, some events require your swimmer to meet qualification times.

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| 01 | | 02 | | 03 | | 04 | | 05 | | 06 | | 07 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | British Swimming Championships 2024 (Day 1) | | British Swimming Championships 2024 (Day 2) | | British Swimming Championships 2024 (Day 3) | | British Swimming Championships 2024 (Day 4) | | British Swimming Championships 2024 (Day 5) | | British Swimming Championships 2024 (Day 6) | | | | | | | | | |
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REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024

The annual Swim England East Region Long Course Championships (aka Regionals) will be running from 20/21 April to mid-May and we will be sharing lots of updates via our Facebook/X/Instagram accounts and posting articles on our website and in the local newspaper. You can also watch events live via YouTube, so please do show your support for our 26 amazing qualifiers:

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| <p>SWIM ENGLAND EAST REGION LONG COURSE CHAMPIONSHIPS 2024</p> <p>19-21 Apr: Inspire Luton Sports Village 4-6, 11/12 May: UEA Sportspark, Norwich</p> <p>Congratulations to our BSSC qualifiers</p> <p>Brandon Macdonald-Williams Benjamin Palmer Callum Davis Dylan Davenport Ella Greatbatch Elliot Hall Elspeth Lowe Emma Fields Felice Chan Freya Hadnutt Guy Spearman-Baines Harrison Dodwell Inhensiko Peterson</p> <p>Jacob Hayes Jake Lloyd Jenson Richards Laura Burgess Lauren Gore Lois Fields Lucy Wheeler Miriam Moukdad Molly Greatbatch Niamh James Noah Conroy Summer Miller Volodymyr Ignatiev</p> |  <p>Bishop's Stortford Swimming Club</p>  |
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QUALIFYING FOR EVENTS

There are a few events coming up on our April-Aug 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:

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.

National Summer Meets: these are long course (50m) championships run in July and August by British Swimming and the Home Nation organisations, where the top ranked swimmers compete together. Our swimmers are currently chasing invitations and we have put an article on these events in this newsletter.

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

Every summer the swimming season is rounded off with the British Summer Championships and the Home Nation Summer meets (England, Scotland, Wales). There are no qualifying times for these long course championships, instead the top-ranked swimmers in each event across specified age groupings are invited based on their long course swims at level 1 meets during the qualifying window, which in 2024 is Friday 8th March to Sunday 12th May. The fastest swimmers get invited to the British Summer Championships and then next set of swimmers get invited to the Home Nation Summer Meets (typically Swim England for our swimmers). If you decline an invite to the British Summer Championships you can't swim that event at any of the Home Nation meets. The invite list for all meets is published twice weekly throughout the qualifying window and can be found at the top of the swimmingresults.org website. Lots of changes happen to the invite list as swimmers attend level 1 meets, including Regionals, during the window so it can be a nervous wait for our top level swimmers. The implementation of the new selection rules across the meets are causing some errors in the invite list in some groupings, so don't get too excited just yet if you spot your name!

British Swimming (recently relaunched as Aquatics GB) and the home nations do like to tinker with the conditions and 2024 is yet another year where many changes have been made to the rules for all the meets. We've done our best to clearly describe them below and we're in the process of also updating our website guide.

2024 British Summer Championships – Ponds Forge, Sheffield from 20-26th July

The 2024 championships sees an increase in the number of swimmers offered the opportunity to compete where the 28 top-ranked swimmers in each event in each of the four younger age groupings will be invited. In the 18 years & over age group, 36 swimmers will be invited to attend with 12 places guaranteed for the transitioning 18 year old swimmers. The only exceptions to these numbers are the 800m and 1500m events, where the top 20 swimmers will be invited across all age groups.

All the usual events are part of the schedule, but the qualification rules are restrictive for the 50m events. Some of the key information updates are:

- Ages for males AND females - 13/14 years, 15 years, 16 years, 17 years, 18 years and over
- There are no 50m events AT ALL (including freestyle) being run for 13/14 years swimmers
- As per last year, qualification for all 50m events is via the rankings for the equivalent 100m event in the 15, 16, 17 years age groups. Only the 18+ years age group can qualify directly for a 50m event via their times on the rankings database.

[Qualifying window dates confirmed for 2024 summer events | Swimming News | British Swimming](#)

2024 BRITISH SUMMER CHAMPIONSHIPS AND HOME NATION SUMMER MEETS CONT'D



2024 Swim England National Summer Meet – Ponds Forge, 29th July – 3rd August

Running soon after the British Summer Championships is the Swim England National Summer Meet. The age groups for the Swim England National Summer Meet differ from the British Summer Championships and for 2024 are: 12/13 years, 14/15 years, 16 years, 17 years and 18+.

The National meet has also seen an increase in the number of swimmers being invited and the invites will go to:

Single age bands:

- 800m and 1500m Freestyle events: 20 swimmers
- All other events: 30 swimmers, including where in a double age band there is only an event for one age group

Double age bands and 18+:

- 800m and 1500m Freestyle events: 28 swimmers, with 10 places protected for the lowest age in each band (this includes 18+)
- All other events: 40 swimmers with 14 places protected for the lower age in each band

The Home Nation meets are also offering all the usual events, but the restriction on selection for the Swim England National Summer meet is even greater:

- There are no 50m events AT ALL (including freestyle) for 12/13/14 year old swimmers
- Qualification for all 50m events is via the rankings for the equivalent 100m event in the 15, 16, 17 years age groups. Only the 18+ years age group can qualify directly for a 50m event via their times on the rankings database.

- There are no 100m events AT ALL (including freestyle) for 12 year old swimmers
- Qualification for all 100m events is via the rankings for the equivalent 200m event for 13 year old swimmers. Swimmers 14 years and older can qualify directly for a 100m event via their times on the rankings database.

h) Competitors will have the following events available to compete in:

| | 12yrs | 13yrs | 14yrs | 15yrs | 16yrs | 17yrs | 18yrs+ |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| 50 Freestyle | | | | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 100 Freestyle | | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 200 Freestyle | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 400 Freestyle | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 800 Freestyle | HDW | HDW | HDW | HDW | HDW | HDW | HDW |
| 1500 Freestyle | | HDW | HDW | HDW | HDW | HDW | HDW |
| 50 Breaststroke | | | | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 100 Breaststroke | | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 200 Breaststroke | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 50 Butterfly | | | | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 100 Butterfly | | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 200 Butterfly | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 50 Backstroke | | | | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 100 Backstroke | | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 200 Backstroke | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 200 I.M | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |
| 400 I.M | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F | H & F |

| | |
|-------|--|
| | = No event available |
| | = Qualification through stroke distance up |
| HDW | = Head Declared Winner |
| H & F | = Heats and Finals |

[National Summer Meet | Event Information and Results \(swimming.org\)](https://www.swimming.org)

Good luck to all our swimmers aiming for invitations this summer!

PEANUTS LEAGUE - WHAT IS IT?!

You may have heard other parents talking about something called **Peanuts** and wondered what they were talking about?! Peanuts League is an annual interclub league competition run during May to July by the **Hertfordshire Swimming League**. For many of our swimmers, this will be the first team swimming event they have entered.

During the first part of each year BSSC coaches will select a team of swimmers to represent our club in The Peanuts League and the Competitions Team will be in touch via email with information on selections, dates and locations. The swimmers will be 9 to 12 (based on their age on the day of the final gala - normally around the end of June to early July) and they will compete in a series of age group individual events and relays over three separate galas (or rounds). The selected team may vary across each round due to swimmer availability.

The league is made up of 3 Divisions with around 12 teams per Division (the bigger clubs may send more than one team) and each Division competes over 3 Rounds:

- **Round 1:** teams from a Division are placed at random into the two different gala locations. Winning teams at each location receive 6 points, 2nd place 5 points, etc.
- **Round 2:** teams with odd placing (first, third etc) in Round 1 will meet teams with even placings from Round 1 in the Round 2 galas.
- **Round 3:** the results after Round 2 split the Division, with the top six competing in the Winners gala and the rest of the teams in the Consolation gala



At the end of Round 3, Pennants are awarded to the top six teams in each Division, the bottom two teams in Divisions 1 & 2 are demoted and the top two teams in Divisions 2 & 3 are promoted ready to do it all again in May-July the next year. We have competed in the top division of the league for many years and in both years post Covid have successfully defended our place in that division, finishing 6th in 2022 and 8th in 2023.

Sometimes as a parent it can seem a long way to go and a lot of time to invest when all your swimmer may do is "just one length in a single relay", but the Peanuts league is such a great opportunity to swim as part of a team in a sport which is mainly self-focused and the evenings are exciting and great fun.

Congratulations and good luck to all those who are selected this season!

Take a look at the [Competitions News](#) for write-ups and photos from the [2023 Peanuts League galas](#)

OTHER COMPETITION NEWS JAN/APRIL 2024

BSSC's youngest swimmers shine at Watford

Twenty-eight BSSC swimmers aged 9 to 28 took part in Watford Swimming Club's Regional Qualifier over the weekend of 2nd-3rd March.

Over the two days, the swimmers took part in 101 swims, with exactly half of swims resulting in personal best times.

The Club's very youngest swimmers did exceptionally well, with 9- and 10-year olds Harrison Dodwell, Cian Millsom, Kenny Millsom, Linke Groenewald and Yana Patel securing medals and PBs.

Congratulations to Cian, who was swimming in his very first meet and took home a Bronze medal in the 50m backstroke.



Special mention goes to the following, who achieved personal best times in all of their events: Alexander Eustace, Beau Reilly, Cian Millsom, Guy Spearman-Baines, Isabella Crotty, Kenny Millsom, Linke Groenewald and Luca Tse.

A big 'well done' to Dylan Davenport, Felice Chan, Niamh James and Yana Patel who secured top three places in all of their races.

Full medal results by age group are given below.

10 year olds:

- Cian Millsom (Bronze, 50m Backstroke)

11 year olds:

- Harrison Dodwell (Gold 50m Breaststroke, Silver 100m Breaststroke, Bronze 50m Freestyle)
- Kenny Millsom (Silver, 50m Breaststroke)
- Yana Patel (Gold 50m Butterfly, Silver 50m Freestyle)

12 year olds:

- Guy Spearman-Baines (Silver 50m Breaststroke, 100m Breaststroke and 200m Breaststroke)
- Noah Conroy (Silver, 200m Freestyle)

13 year olds:

- Eddy Cheng (Gold, 100m Breaststroke)
- Lois Fields (Silver, 100m Backstroke)

14 year olds:

- Elliot Hall (Gold 50m Breaststroke, Silver 200m Individual Medley)

15 year olds:

- Dylan Davenport (Gold 50m Freestyle, 50m Butterfly, 100m Butterfly, 200m Individual Medley, Silver 50m Backstroke and 400m Freestyle, Bronze 100m Backstroke and 50m Breaststroke)
- Felice Chan (Silver 50m Freestyle and 200m Freestyle)

16 year olds:

- Beau Reilly (Bronze 50m Freestyle, 50m Butterfly)
- Freya Hadnutt (Bronze 100m Freestyle, 50m Backstroke and 100m Backstroke)

18 year olds:

- Miriam Moukdad (Gold 50m Breaststroke, Bronze 200m Freestyle, 400m Freestyle and 100m Breaststroke)

Over 18s:

- Niamh James (Gold 100m Breaststroke, Silver 50m Butterfly and 100m Butterfly)
- Jake Lloyd (Bronze 100m Backstroke and 200m Individual Medley)

OTHER COMPETITION NEWS JAN/APRIL 2024

40+ Long Course PBs secured at Putteridge National Qualifier

A jam-packed March continued with a trip to Inspire Luton over the weekend of 8th-9th March, with 26 BSSC swimmers competing at Putteridge Swimming Club's Long Course National Qualifier.

Over the two days, the swimmers took part in 75 swims, with a massive 42 Long Course personal best times secured. 10 swimmers won a grand total of 14 medals – 5 gold, 3 silver and 6 bronze.

Special mention must go to Molly and Ella Greatbatch, who secured top-three places in all of their events.

Full medal results by age group are given below.

13 year olds:

- Lois Fields (Bronze, 200m Backstroke)

14 year olds:

- Molly Greatbatch (Silver, 50m Breaststroke; Gold 100m Breaststroke and 200m Breaststroke)

16 year olds:

- Brandon MacDonald-Williams (Bronze, 1500m Freestyle)
- Ella Greatbatch (Gold, 50m Breaststroke, 100m Breaststroke and 200m Breaststroke)
- Freya Hadnutt (Bronze, 50m Backstroke)

17 year olds:

- Jacob Hayes (Bronze, 50m Backstroke)

18 year olds:

- Emma Fields (Silver, 50m Butterfly)



Long Course PBs keep on coming as BSSC return to Luton!

Twenty-two BSSC swimmers returned to Inspire Luton over the weekend of 15th-16th March to compete in Team Luton's March Long Course Meet.

The Long Course personal best times kept on coming, with a whopping 45 out of 59 swims resulting in Long Course PBS. Twenty-one top-three places were secured.

Congratulations to Emma Fields, who won medals and secured PBs in all of her races.



OTHER COMPETITION NEWS JAN/APRIL 2024

Full medal results by age group are given below.

11 year olds:

- Harrison Dodwell (Gold, 100m Breaststroke)

12 year olds:

- Guy Spearman-Baines (Silver, 50m and 100m Breaststroke, Bronze 200m Breaststroke)
- Noah Conroy (Silver, 400m Freestyle, Bronze 200m Freestyle)

14 year olds:

- Elliot Hall (Gold, 50m Breaststroke, Bronze 200m Individual Medley)
- Molly Greatbatch (Gold 100m Breaststroke and 200m Breaststroke)

15 year olds:

- Dylan Davenport (Gold, 200m Freestyle, Silver 100m Freestyle, 50m Butterfly and 100m Butterfly)

16 year olds:

- Brandon MacDonald-Williams (Gold, 400m Freestyle, Bronze, 100m Backstroke)

17 year olds:

- Jacob Hayes (Bronze, 200m Backstroke)

18 year olds:

- Emma Fields (Gold, 100m Butterfly, Bronze 100m Freestyle)
- Laura Burgess (Gold, 50m Freestyle)
- Miriam Moukdad (Gold, 50m Breaststroke)

Club records smashed at City of Norwich Easter Meet

The Easter weekend saw 21 BSSC swimmers head to Norwich Sportspark for City of Norwich Swimming Club's Easter Long Course Meet.

Over the two days, the swimmers took part in 87 swims, with over half of swims resulting in personal best times. It was fantastic to see more Club records tumbling, with Brandon MacDonald-Williams and Emma Fields both making Club records at the meet.

Emma PB'd the 100m Butterfly to get into the Final, before going on to break the Club record in the Final with a time of 1:04.60.

Brandon MacDonald-Williams secured a win in the 1500m Freestyle, also breaking the Club record with a time of 17:46.15.

Congratulations to them both!

Congratulations to all our swimmers who have taken part in meets so far this season. We've reported on the "bling" in the 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!

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 an iPhone 15 Pro Titanium 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.easypfundraising.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.