

turnout for gala

THE new Mayor of Southampton joined a crowd of over 300 spectators in cheering on 175 young swimmers in the annual Shirley Swimming Pool Club Championships.

Councillor Sue Blatchford was just a few days into her new reign when she gave up her Saturday evening to hand out medals to swimmers as young as five.

The loudest cheers of the night were deservedly for the youngest swimmers who showed their skills, racing lengths of The Quays.

Tiny Megan Thorpe was the stand out swimmer in the five-year old age group, finishing first in the front crawl, breaststroke and butterfly events with three new record times.

Ethan Pearce-Williams (5) won the backstroke.

The evening had started with an exhibition swim by top Southampton Dolphins swimmers from the pool.

Swimmers aged between 9 and 14 years old competed in a "Skins" sprint race, demonstrating their skills in backstroke, front crawl, breaststroke and butterfly.

The slowest swimmer after each length is eliminated until finally only two remain, and the winner of the last race is crowned the champion.

Age was no barrier to 11-year-old Isabella Fraser-Corbridge, who beat off stiff competition from the older swimmers to win, finishing with an impressive butterfly display.

The younger novices continued to show their potential.

Livia Day (6) came away with a clutch of medals, taking gold in the backstroke and front crawl, and silver in the breaststroke and butterfly.

Beth Broad topped the podium in breaststroke and Emily Neil took first for the butterfly, with Lucy Jones and Eva Ferguson sharing the honours between them.

Beau Versey and William Maughan (6) shared the golds in the six-year-old boys, with Beau winning both backstroke and front crawl, and William the breaststroke and butterfly.

Adam Sadlem and showman Luke Sweetnam were rewarded with silver and bronze medals.

Rhyseren Taylor (7) won all four of her events in impressive style, achieving a new club record for the 25m front crawl in just 20.79 seconds from a push off start.

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SHIRLEY POOL SWIMMING CH

GOLD STANDARD: Some of the many competitors hold their medals at Shirley Pool Swimming Annual Swimming Championship at the Quays.
Pics by Ian Hinchliffe. Order: 16610851



RACE TIME: Action in one of the breaststroke races at the Shirley Pool Annual