

Southampton Dolphins Swimming Club entered the British Summer Championships and Swim England Summer Nationals for a third consecutive year spread over two weeks of competition at Ponds Forge Sheffield.



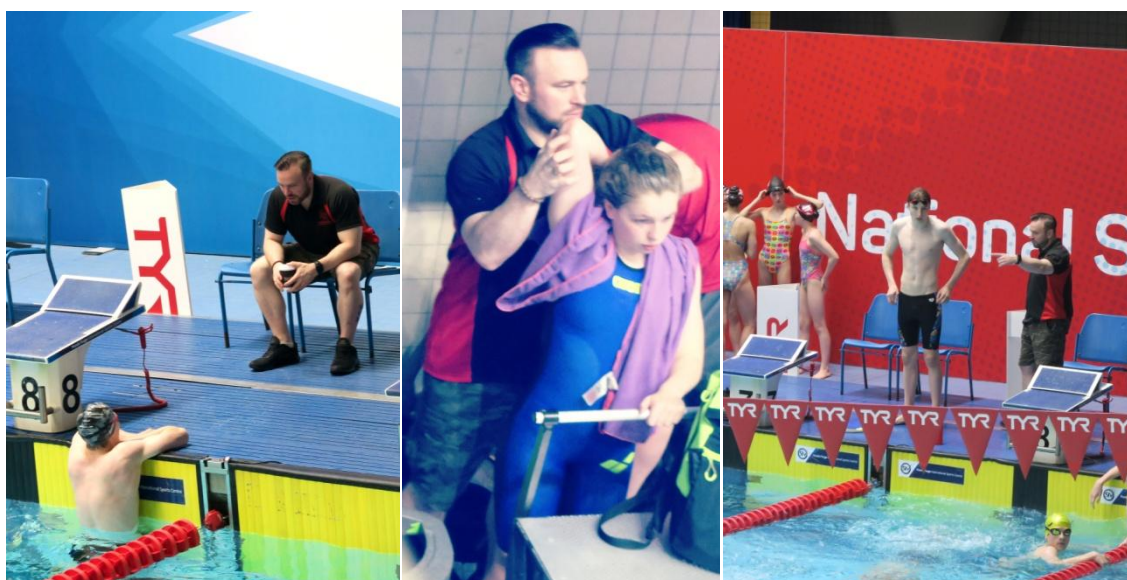
Kate Baxter (13) qualified for a club record 3 events at the British Championships and 6 events at the Swim England Summer Nationals 9 races in total. Max Nugent (16) qualified for the 50m Butterfly at the British Championships and the 100m Butterfly at the Swim England Summer Nationals.

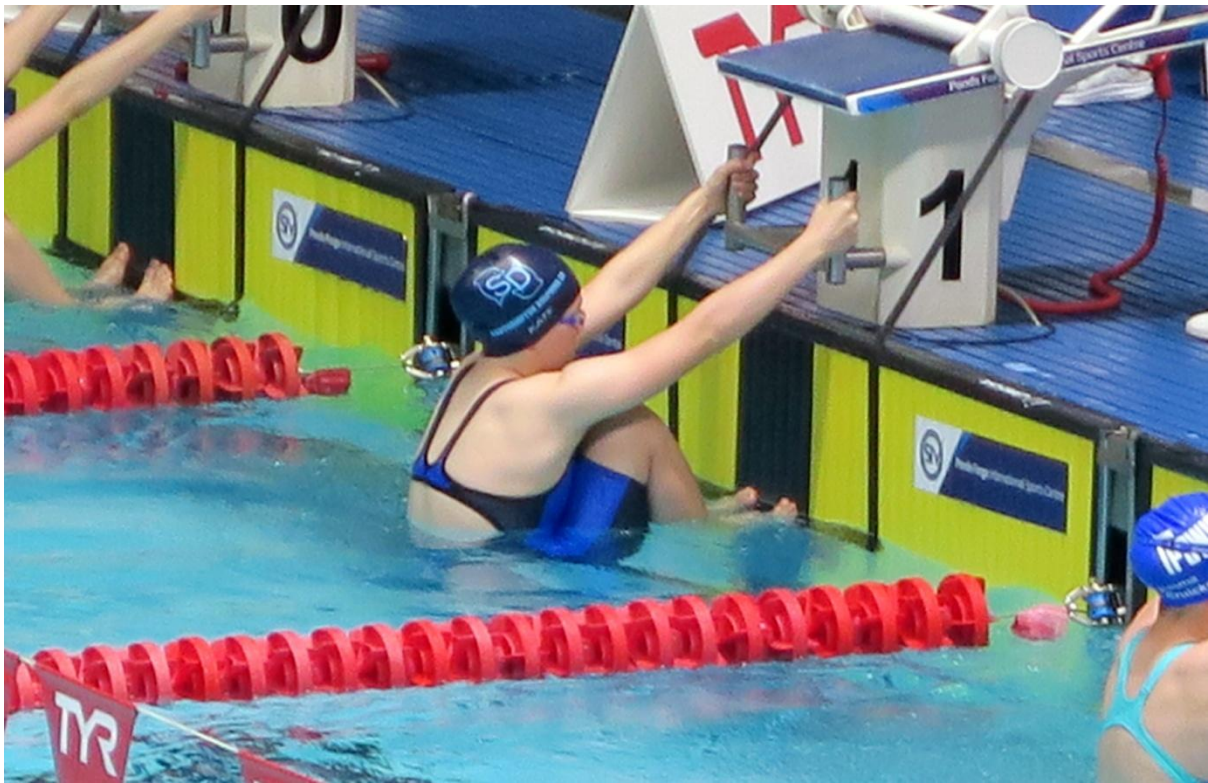




Max Nugent excelled in the 50m Butterfly at the British Championships. This became a historic moment for the Dolphins with Nugent securing a place in the British Championships final, a first for the fledgling club. Nugent swam 26.69 to qualify 8th for the final and swam another personal best of 26.57 to finish 9th in Great Britain in the 16 year boys age group final. It was a very close race in which all 10 places were separated by just 1 second.

Kate Baxter improved on her entry rankings in all 3 events at the British Championships, still only 13. Baxter competed in the 14 year girls age group, securing top 15 finishes in all her events; the 200m backstroke (14th) 2.25.60, 200m freestyle (14th) 2.10.00 and 100m freestyle (15th). Baxter made her biggest improvement in the 100m freestyle ranked 24th on entry she rose 9 places finishing in 15th with a personal best of 1.00.54.

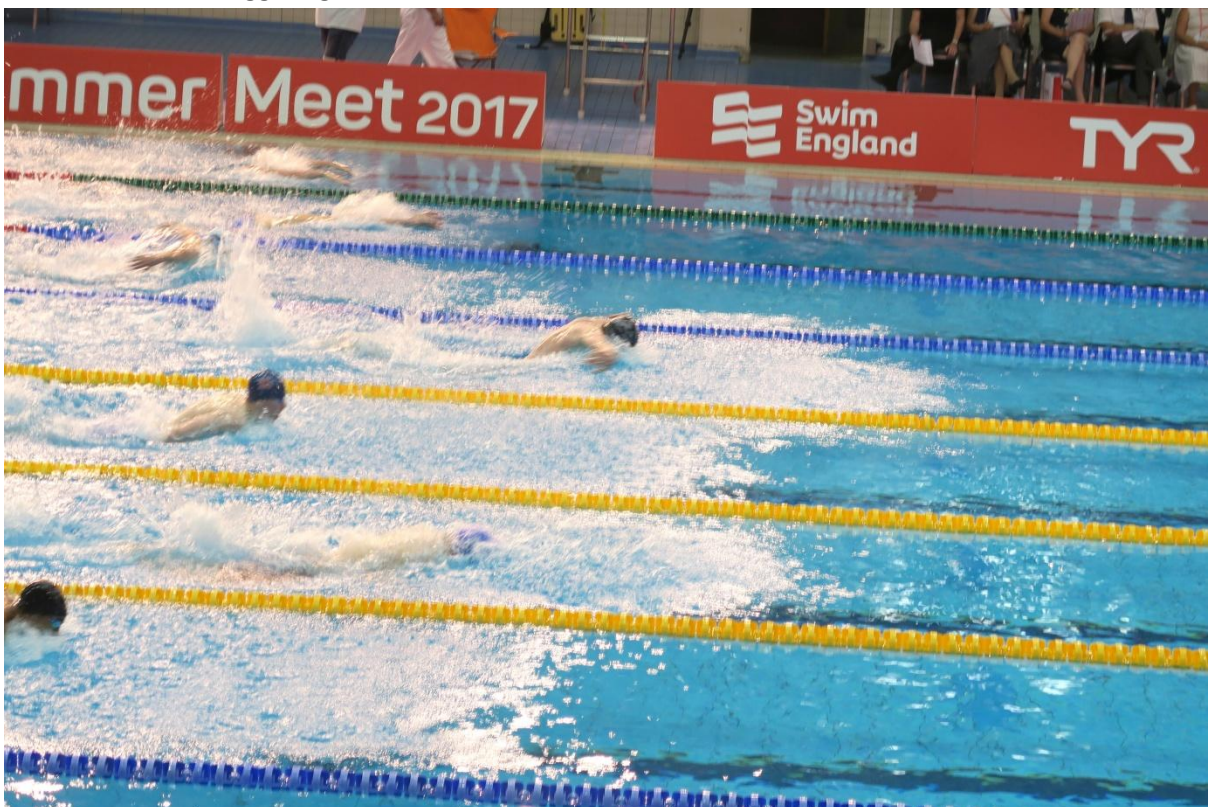




The following week both swimmers took part in the Swim England Summer Nationals. Max Nugent put in a life time best to qualify 3rd in the heats for the 100m butterfly final breaking the minute barrier in 59.76.



In the final Max exploded from the blocks taking the lead after 20 meters he never looked back destroying the field on the first 50 meters swimming just 0.50s off his personal best going out in 27.08, Max held his form and smashed his heat personal best coming home first to take the gold and national title in a staggering 58.11.





Max was making his debut at this level but you could never tell securing personal bests from heats to finals impressed everyone, so much so Max was interviewed by the ASA for an article on their website. Link below

<http://www.swimming.org/sport/max-nugent-claims-maiden-gold/>

Kate Baxter was competing in 6 heat races over 3 consecutive days starting with the 100m butterfly. Kate secure a fantastic personal best in the heat's of 1.06.36 to qualify fastest for the final. In the final Kate led after an amazing start. Kate is consistently the best starter in her age group in Great Britain and faster than most of the female swimmers in the country consistently recording reaction times of 0.60 or under and usually coming up ahead in races.



Kate was in a close race with 10 meters to go with 3 other swimmers. It all came down to the touch and Kate uncharacteristically finished with a small glide and was pushed down to 4th still finishing with a personal best of 1.06.09 just 0.20s off the gold a better finish would have seen her win the 100m butterfly.

Obviously disappointed Kate took to the next day's races with great determination qualifying for all three finals comfortably 5th in the 400m freestyle in 4.38.64, 8th in the 50m backstroke in 32.14 and 1st in the 200m IM in 2.28.50.

The finals were swum in a different order to the heats meaning the 200m IM was only a few races after the 400m freestyle so Head Coach Chris White decided it would be best to withdraw Kate and focus on the 200m IM as it would be impossible for Kate to perform at her best in all 3 races especially with the close proximity.

First up was the 50m backstroke final where Kate secured another personal best of 32.05 finishing 10th. The 200m IM final was extremely exciting; Kate was in the lead after the fly and backstroke legs, then Millfield's Isabella Renwick put in an astonishing breaststroke leg to take the lead by 2.5 seconds. On the final length of freestyle Kate was catching all the way making up over two seconds she finished just half a second behind to claim her first national medal, silver in 2.26.78.

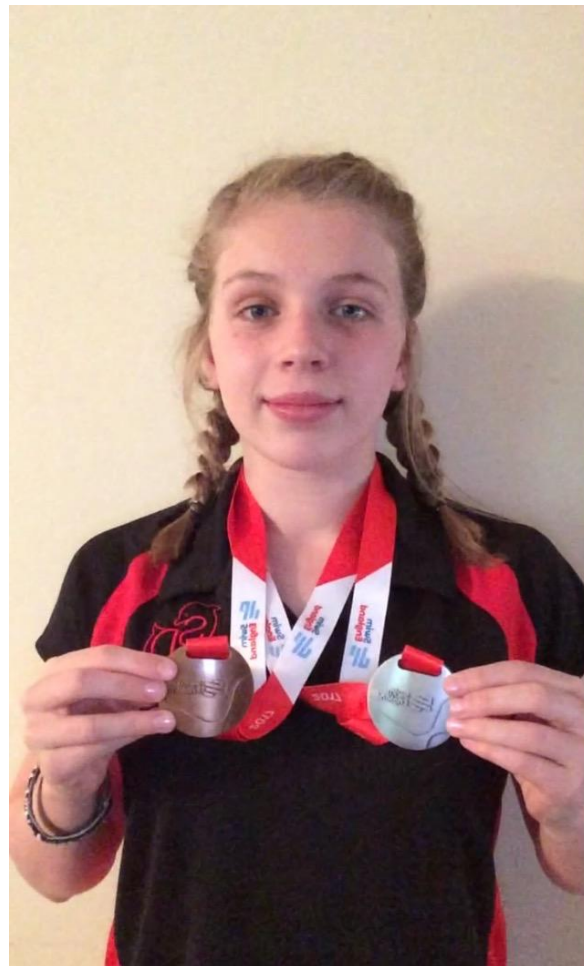


Baxter went into her third day of competition after already competing in 7 races and secured places in two more finals with 2.29.70 in the 200m butterfly to qualify 6th and another personal best in the 100m backstroke 1.08.21 to qualify 4th.

The 100m backstroke final was first and at the half way point Kate was in 6th position having swum 33.14 seconds for the first 50m. Kate maintained her form a theme of her swimming coming back on the second half of the race in 34.12 taking the bronze medal on the finish in another personal best time of 1.07.23. "It looks like Kate comes back in each races closing in on her competitors but she's swimming very evenly which is the best way to do it rather than go out too fast and fatigue in the closing stages. It does making for exciting viewing " said Kate's coach Chris.

Kate went into her 11th race in 3 days taking on one of the toughest events the 200m butterfly. Kate put everything into the race and secured her 9th personal best in two weeks finishing in 5th in the final in 2.28.28.

Over the past two seasons Kate has now qualified for 8 National finals, swum in seven and won two medals. This is great experience for someone aged so young at only 13 Kate's swimming journey has only just started.



Newly appointed club chairman Luke Perry enthused about the results "the club just keeps going from strength to strength results keep improving year on year, that's now 5 national medals in the last two years, Southampton hasn't seen swimming results like this since the 1980's."

The Dolphins have now topped the medal table for Hampshire clubs for the last two years at the Swim England Summer Nationals.



Results could have been even better as talismanic Dolphin swimmers Isabella Fraser-Corbridge (15) and last year's national champ Filip Fraczek-Krygier (15) were unable to compete due to serious illness and injury despite having fast enough times from January of this year. Thankfully both are on the road to recovery and are back in the pool; with a fantastic crop of young swimmers the next few years are going to be really exciting for the Dolphins as they continue to push the boundaries of performance swimming in the city.

