

**SENT TO THE ECHO (DUE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH MANY PICTURES NEXT WEEK 19-21<sup>st</sup>)**

**Shirley Pool Club Championships at the Quays**

Records tumbled in a night of high drama as swimmers from all over Southampton and beyond took part in the Shirley Swimming Pool Annual Club Championships at the Quays.

Matthew Lowther (9) took half a second off the Club record for 50m backstroke. His time of 41.43 seconds improved the previous best time that had stood for 22 years.

The Hythe schoolboy then went on to smash two more records on his way to 4 podium firsts, beating the 2011 record for 50m freestyle in 35.44 and shearing three seconds from Oliver Cook's 2014 butterfly record in 40.09.

Four years on from that record, Oli Cook is still swimming, winning and creating new standards while taking a clean sweep of the 13-year-old boys. His time of 32.42 for 50m butterfly outdid Max Nugent's previous club record by over half a second. Cook took Max's backstroke title as well, (33.59 and finished with a superb 38.8 breaststroke for three club records.

Two stand out swims of the evening came from the Dolphin girls:

Shirley schoolgirl Isabel Turner became the fastest 11 year old in the club's history, taking nearly a second off the 50m-backstroke record, 34.89. It rounded off a fine season for Issy after recently qualifying for the Summer Nationals at Ponds Forge Pool, Sheffield. In the same age group Maisie Latham kept up the chase and was rewarded with a well-deserved gold in the 50m breaststroke, all the other podium placing went to Evie Turner and Isabelle Perez-Araujo in a very fast age group.

Even greater distance was put between the old and the new as Emily Lowther (12) took one of four golds, swimming nearly two seconds faster than anyone before her, 38.23 seconds for 50m breaststroke. Even though it wasn't her best time of the year, it was good enough for one of four golds as her team mates, Zoey Yates and Mali Belward took second and third respectively.

Freya Latimore (10) and Alana Maddock (9) didn't break any records but were unstoppable in their age groups as they both dominated the podium. Elsia Takacs-Baroni, Lolah Manning, Ruby Latimore, Evelyn Lloyd shared the other medals as they battled for placing's and are sure to make the nine year old age group a strong relay team. Six girls shared the podium in the 10-year-old girls, showing even greater strength in depth: Isla Rutherford, Mila Hunt-Rakic, Emma Lambert, Isabelle Geary and Georgina Pickering.

Freya Manning (13) swam consistently quickly to stay ahead of Karenza Pickering and claim top girl in the age group.

However, it was to be the boys' night in the end, with Zac Lanham being crowned the king of the podium. The 15 year old swam faster than anyone had recorded in the 41 years of the Championships history, racing 50m freestyle in 27.85 and taking just 36.82 for breaststroke. Beating off all comers, Lanham also took home the trophy for the grueling Skins shield.

The stars of the future shone through in the youngest age groups of the swim school races, Elliot Latham (8) and Olaf Krygier (7) the best of the boys. Olaf, cousin to Filip who swam at Shirley from the age of 4 until he reached National Championships, looks set for a fine medal collection, starting with three golds and one silver. Tomas O'Mara managed to pip him in the backstroke for his moment of glory while Max Jenkin went close with excellent breaststroke silver.

Of the eight-year swim school boys, Oliver Killham, Ben Silver and Joe Newman all had a go at stopping Elliot Latham winning but had to settle for silver as he took a clean sweep of the eight year old boys.

At the other end, the eight-year-old Dolphin boys raced over 50m, Fraser Conduct winning 3 of 4 strokes, Jonathon Lambert picking up first in backstroke.

Robert Scott was unchallenged, a clear winner in all the eleven year old races, while the first two medal places were evenly divided between Sarp Lale and Oliver Rutherford in the age group below.

Freya Long (8) looks to have a bright future as a Dolphin, winning all but one of the girls events, Jessica Worthington pinching gold in breaststroke. Sure to be moving up to join them from swim school will be the young swimmers who showed real promise in the 25m races: Olivia Tanner (3 gold, 1 bronze) Amy Van Willigen (1 gold, two silver, 1 bronze) and Maja Pawlus ((1 silver two bronze).

Amy Nice (7), Beatrice South (7) and Lydia Armitage (7) look to be on the VIP list as well, all producing sub 30 freestyle second swims, with Amy just nicking Top Girl.

Top of the Pops in the nine-year-old girls was Violet Christopher, a hair's breadth ahead of Nellie Clark, Hannah Sparrow and Eve Clark Whitehead, a fine crop of young talent sharing out the honours.

In the boys, Henry Tear (9) was a similar distance ahead of Oliver Craig, despite the two golds from the Waterlooville schoolboy. William Pragnall did his best to disrupt their rhythm with a fine breaststroke gold while Sam Wyatt claimed three bronzes.

Sister Maddie Wyatt (10) looks like a Dolphin that may have missed the net, dominating her age group in all strokes except backstroke. Rufus Stone (10) went one better in the boys Turtle class, winning all four golds.

Also dominant in their Dolphin age groups were Olivia Tilley (14) and Stefan Meldere (14). Corie Wooley (11) won the Turtles boys events while Samuel Bhopale was the 12 years champion.

Emotions ran high in the gallery as the tiny six-year-old girls attempted a length of every stroke. Roared on by a packed and over heated gallery of supporters, all was going well as Amelia Megan Lloyd producing a very respectable length of backstroke in 34.85 seconds for one of her three golds. Five-year-old Olivia Osborne Jenkins touched first in the breaststroke and Annika Kramer went home delighted with 4 silver medals.

But the cheer of the night was reserved for the brave swim from little Emma Brunai (6) who kept swimming butterfly, despite having only just started learning the stroke.

After an emotional 2 minutes forty seconds of endeavor it all became too fraught for the lifeguard who dived in and towed her the remaining 5 metres, much to Emma's disgust.

The sheriff of Southampton was on hand to present medals, shields and prizes. Guest of honour was Val Perry (82) who built the original Shirley Pool with husband Frank in 1974.

Other Medals and personal best swims from:

Caitlyn SUTCLIFFE  
Carmen JONES  
Carys BANTING  
Jasmine JULIAN  
Viki NOMASKHOSII  
Alice Shaw  
Maja PAWLUS  
Monica SCOTT  
Olivia DOLMAN  
Shannon WADE  
Hannah SPARROW  
Lexy MAUNDERS-WEBB  
Charlotte WYATT  
Ffion EVANS  
Juliet LITTLE  
Kiana Mc CARTHY  
Mercy BROWNING  
Mya BODYCOTE  
Samiha BEGUM  
Senja VIRTANEN  
Aurelia ROSE  
Polly PAGE

Sophie LANE  
Lola SAYCE  
Mae WARD  
Olivia DACK  
Alexandra GRAY  
Lara PRINCE  
Matthew GINNS  
Angus VIRTANEN  
Isaac LUBEL  
William STRIKE  
Oliver MORONEY  
Pranav BALLEPU  
Sam SAXON  
Andrei BONEF  
James ASHBY  
Lewis TEAR  
William PRAGNELL  
Denzel FERNANDES  
Callum RODRIGUES  
Nathan BOYCE  
Samuel BHOPALE  
Jacob WEBB  
Ollie WILLCOCKS  
Oscar SPRADBERY  
Sarp LALE  
James MOBLEY  
Daniel HILL  
Cameron SHARPE  
Liam PLUMHOF  
Maksymilian KOLODLEJKI  
Armand VIGNE-FLETT  
Issac MADDOCK



6 and under girls: Emma, Annika, Amelia and Olivia (5)