

# Hillingdon Swimming Club

Established 1964

## Commencing the report

from April 2008, Hillingdon BEST has made great strides both in performance and in holistic development. The base for more improvement is evident and there are exciting times ahead for the club.

## Competition and Achievement

Both Francesca Marr and Sophie Wilson posted fast enough times to qualify for the British Championships that were held in Sheffield. Francesca's time on the 100m breaststroke was fast enough to qualify her for the European Junior Championships in Belgrade (Serbia) on 50m and 100m distances. This was an incredible achievement as a swimmer competing in the younger band of a 14 / 15 year age group. Francesca is the 1<sup>st</sup> swimmer from Hillingdon Swimming Club to represent her country for 10 years following their last European Junior Champions Jenny Hunter (Freestyle) and Sarah Lawrence (Breaststroke).

The World Short Course Championships were also held in April and Faisal Bhatti was selected to represent Pakistan in the 100m and 200m distances. This opportunity ended up a fantastic experience for both Faisal and myself being so close to the World's best swimmers and Faisal also posting personal best times in both events.

In addition, Callum Mitchell qualified for the Scottish Nationals where he competed well and made numerous finals.

The London Regions 2008 were very successful. In the Youth competition HSC had a total of 27 FINALISTS from which 18 medals were collected (3 Gold, 9 Silver, 6 Bronze, 18 Medals). The BAGCAT competition was a huge success where a total of 93 FINALISTS of 43 medals were collated (13 Gold, 12 Silver, 18 Bronze). The outstanding performer in this competition was Karely Mann where she entered 8 individual events and claimed gold in all.

The swimmers that did not qualify for the National Age or Youth competition travelled south to compete at the Plymouth Leander meet in late July. It was a great meet to finish the season with a tremendous personal best tally and even swimmers posting what would have been National Qualifying times. Hillingdon Swimming Club end the meet as top club.

HBEST's highest performing swimmers travelled north to Sheffield where there was much success. Karley Mann ended her outstanding season with 6 top 15 placings, of which 3<sup>rd</sup> on the 200m backstroke was her highest. This result resulted in Karley achieving her first ever National medal; Karley also made two other finals. Sophie Wilson swam to four top 10 final positions in the 14 years age group. Adam Wood claimed 13<sup>th</sup> on the 200m backstroke and 23<sup>rd</sup> on the 1500m free. Sarah Proctor swam to 25<sup>th</sup> on the 100m free and joined teams Jaycee Sibley, Fiona McAndrew, Karley Mann and Lucy Taplin to come 25<sup>th</sup> on the Medley Relay and 20<sup>th</sup> on the Freestyle Relay.

In September 2008 the season recommenced leading to an enjoyment first 3 months up to December. Hillingdon came 3<sup>rd</sup> at the London Interborough Championships and finished the 1<sup>st</sup> training cycle with our Annual Hillingdon 100's where many best times were posted.

In January, following a hard Christmas training camp, HBEST competed short course at the Cambridge Meet where 175 best times were collected and three swimmers, Francesca Marr, Sophie Wilson and Karley Mann all gained National Qualifying Times.

The Middlesex Championship was HBEST first major targeted meet of 2009. From the 650 entries I set the swimmers a target of achieving 400 personal best times. Each time a swimmer claimed a personal best they received a sticker to add to our huge tally chart. The first weekend resulted in 164 best times, the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend resulted in 340 and the final weekend finished with a huge 523. This was an outstanding achievement from the whole club. In total 186 medals were gained (70 gold, 56 silver and 60 bronze) and there were also BAGCAT stroke awards for a lot of swimmers. Sarah Proctor and Sophie Wilson finished the Middlesex Championships as the two swimmers within the county who gained most individual points from their events entered. Sarah Proctor claimed the Wilkinson Sword with Sophie Wilson following her very closely to 2<sup>nd</sup> place.

Currently, Hillingdon Swimming Club can boast six swimmers that have qualified for this year's National Championships. These swimmers are Francesca Marr, Sophie Wilson, Karley Mann, George Prunty, Luke Spain and Adam Wood. It should be noted that the club has more swimmers close to gaining times and the relays also stand a good chance. A key development within the club is that more Youth National Qualifiers are being produced. In previous years the club has only had two swimmers qualify for the Youth Nationals; this year the club already has four with a very good chance of more.

Karley Mann and Francesca Marr qualified for British Championships 2009 at Sheffield. Karley's results were as follows: 200m back 30<sup>th</sup> (12<sup>th</sup> 14/15 years) and 400 IM 29<sup>th</sup> (13<sup>th</sup> 14/15 years). Francescas results were 100m Brst 18<sup>th</sup> (5<sup>th</sup> 14 / 15yrs) and 11<sup>th</sup> 200m Brst (2<sup>nd</sup> 14/15 yrs). Francesca's 200m Breaststroke performance qualified her for the European Junior Championships in Prague (July) for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row and continued Hillingdon Swimming Club's history of being able to place home-grown swimmers on International teams.

Callum Mitchell continued his progress of qualifying for the Scottish Nationals in 2008 by doing again so in 2009. This time around, Callum's improvement was so good he snatched victory in the 100m Back to be Hillingdon Swimming Club's 1<sup>st</sup> ever Scottish National Champion.

## Club Development

In January 2009 I was made full time by Hillingdon Swimming Club in a move that allowed me to spend more time working closely with the elite level swimmers and developing the club as a whole. The list below are the primary areas where I believe my full time position has allowed me to progress the club.

- Expand the training programme which has offered our top competitive more hours to train – this has paid dividends in recent performances
- I have delivered teaching and coaching CPD sessions that have focused on different aspects which I hope will improve standards of practice in the future
- I have organised and delivered (with much help from Lesley Westendorp, Gary Mohamed and Other dedicated club coaches) two Junior Swimmer development sessions which have included 40 swimmers. These swimmers are predominately not in HBEST and I believe this is beginning to make a significant difference
- Since September I have created a weekly newsletter which has improved communication and also offered many articles that are aiding swimmer, parent and coach education
- The HBEST coaching team along with the involvement of Lesley Westendorp and Ann Heath have initiated a new training group named the Elite Development Squad which consists of 8 members. I have been able to work with Ricky James who has been given the responsibility of heading this new group. The feedback back is he is doing extremely well his new lead coach role.

David Hemmings  
Head Coach Hillingdon BEST