

Centurions Post

Regular Updates for Swimmers, Lifesavers and Parents

Last Chance Saloon

Centurions Impress at Wirral Christmas Meet

Birkenhead's Europa Pool played host to the final competitive gala of the year, presenting swimmers with their last opportunity to either gain 2018 County qualifying times or to improve upon the times they already held.

Once again, Centurions did not fail to impress with more than 75% of all swims resulting in PBs. Three swimmers, Taryn, Beth and Lucy achieved their very first County times, with a further sixteen new County times being posted by Tahlia, Laila, Bella, April, Madeline, Georgia W, Dan S and Poppy. A special mention must be extended to Poppy who becomes the first Centurions' swimmer to attain all 17 Cheshire qualifying times.

Times aside, Centurions hauled in more than 35 medals across the weekend. Well done to Ethan B, Chloe B, Tahlia, Beth, Miles, Ben F, Ewan, Evie H, Laila, Bella, Ed J, Poppy, Madeline, Chloe S, Sam and Georgia W.

As always, all swimmers who competed and represented the club excelled, whether they medalled or not.



Warming up at Wirral

Regional Times Confirmed

Northwest Regional consideration times were published towards the end of December and we are pleased to report that the Centurions will have a strong representation this coming Summer. Congratulations are extended to Dan S, Chloe B, Laila J, Poppy M, Ella R and Madeline P.

There is still time for more of our swimmers to qualify so expect this list to grow as we move through Spring.

Christmas Training

For some, training continued over the Christmas period. With the County Champs fast approaching this was a necessity to keep up fitness levels and refine technique. Well done to all of you for your commitment and for dragging yourselves away from the chocolates and sweets! Thanks are also extended to the coaching team and the parents for their dedication to the cause.

DATES

13 Jan - Peaks and Plains League

20, 21 Jan - Cheshire County Champs

27, 28 Jan - Cheshire County Champs

3,4 Feb - Cheshire County Champs

24 March - Peak & Plains League

24, 25 March - Wirral Spring Meet

8 Apr - Swim Camp, Moreton Hall



LIFESAVER'S LOG

View from The Poolside

Hello – I am Dave. I am the Head Coach at Northwich Lifesaving Club. I spend most of my life around water! I am a Master Scuba Diver; I work as a lifeguard and a swimming teacher at Crewe and Nantwich. I am an Aquatics Trainer and run lifeguard (NPLQ) courses, training people to be lifeguards. I am also a senior coach at Crewe Neptune LSC. and run Lifesaving Instructor and Assistant Instructor Courses for Northwich, Crewe and Nantwich.

I am supported at Northwich Lifesaving Club by 6 Lifesaving Instructors and 6 Assistant Instructors. Together we teach our 58 members both swimming and Lifesaving skills. Our lifesavers range from the youngest rookies (aged 7) to Dan, Jacob & Will who, at ages 17 & 18 are training for their RLSS Distinction award. This is the highest level award available – and will require an exceptional amount of strength, speed, stamina and skill to complete.

As with competitive swimming, we are limited in what we are able to offer by the amount of pool time available. Our Monday night session is busy and great fun – why not come down and watch what we do!



HEAD COACH HUB

Commitment and Motivation

Why do we swim?

I am sure that if I ask the swimmers why they swim, then I will get a lot of different answers ranging from “Mum makes me do it” through to “I want to be an Olympic champion”. As the swimmers get older their reasons will change but the key thing for the older swimmers is that they would not do it if they did not enjoy it. Enjoyment comes from several directions.

There is also an important but sometimes overlooked benefit to any activity (not just swimming). The activity gives a well needed break from the other stresses in their lives, whether that is problems with friends, problems with school or a break from revision.

The coach's role in all this is to give the swimmers the skills and training they need to reach their goals. The coach is not the prime motivator.

So please take an interest in your swimmers, ask how the session went, encourage them in competition but please do not place your hopes and expectations on them, because then it becomes a chore and motivation levels drop.

High Spy With My Little Eye

To all swimmers.....

When the Centurions compete, one of the consistent, stand-out differences between us and the competition is good technique. This doesn't happen by chance. Yes, it's down to your hard work in training, of course. But please remember, your coaches also seek every opportunity and avenue available to observe and feedback, to refine and improve your stroke.

Someone is always watching you, taking notes, sometimes from the most unlikely of places, ready to help you improve.



CLUB CAPTAIN'S CORNER

New year, New targets

It can often be quite hard to sustain focus on training when you don't know what you want to achieve. If you haven't already set yourself a target at the start of the season, it might be a good idea to start thinking about what you would like to achieve as this will help keep you motivated, which is even more important when the Cheshire Champs are coming up.

A personal goal can be anything, as it is totally unique to you. It could range from qualifying in a new event at a gala, coming in the top x-number of people, or even winning a medal. It is important that you challenge yourself but also that your targets are realistic.

The targets that you set can be for the short-term season or you can look ahead to the future and set a long-term goal for yourself.

By having a clear idea of what you want to achieve, in your mind, you will be ensuring that you push yourself to achieve these goals which will mean you will have a better season.

Josh

MEET THE COACH

We'll kick the new year off by learning a little about the Top Dog, the Head Honcho, the Big Cheese, Numero Uno, the Boss Man, our Head Coach, **Phil Balcombe**, who joined us in 2014.

Sitting down to converse with Phil is quite a humbling experience given the esteemed company in which he has previously dallied. I knew this included David Wilke (at a charity event), Liam Tancock, Patrick Moore (at an astronomy, NOT astrology, lecture), Craig Charles, a certain Australian digeridoo player who shall remain nameless, and the Queen!



I waited nervously as our commander-in-chief snapped his fingers to gain the attention of the waitress. "I'll have the usual please", he instructed. The blank look he received allowed him to expound, "You know, what I had when Sir Christopher Lee joined me for dinner. He of Dracula, Count Dooku and Saruman fame". "Never mind, never mind! Just bring me your choice of Starters on 3 minutes 10, Mains on 4 minutes 30, and Desserts on 1 minute 50, max effort on the desserts." I didn't have the heart to explain, once more, that we were in a library.

What's your swimming background? "Unlike my fellow coaches I have no background with big clubs at national finals or swimming at nationals or even representing GB. I went to a small club whose aim was to teach efficient swimming. I was club open champion from the age of 10 until I left just after my 18th birthday. I was fast but not attracted to the idea of moving to a big club and training several times a week. I trained just 90 minutes a week and spent the rest of Wednesday evening watching my brothers and sister swim"

How did you get into coaching? "I used to sit on the balcony or go to the gym while my boys were swimming. Then one day the head coach asked if there were any parents who would like to help out. I was hooked."

Tell us a bit about you yourself. "I come from South London. I have 2 brothers and a sister. I am left handed. I still hold 5 school swimming records (my school was closed in 2004). I went to Lancaster University and studied accountancy. I lived and worked in New York for 3 years. I am interested in Astronomy (NOT Astrology). I like listening to just about every type of music."

What's your most embarrassing moment? "I was rushing to get the bus home one evening in New York. A rather burly gentleman tried to stop me as I went past a theatre (it turned out he was a bodyguard). I side stepped him and literally bumped into Lisa Kudrow (Phoebe in Friends) knocking her to the floor. I stopped and helped her up. She was very apologetic (as if it was her fault) and said she loved my accent."

Quick fire time: Top 3 dinner party guests: "Prof Brian Cox, Bill Bryson and JK Rowling". *Hidden talent:* "Building treehouses". *Fave food:* "Anything Italian". *Fave Film:* "The Fifth Element". *Fave Book:* "Lord of the Rings". *Celebrity crush:* "Karen Gillan, Victoria Coren, Juliette Binoche"

What do you get out of being involved with the Centurions? "A headache! ... and an immense feeling of pride in what you all achieve."

I could tell my time with Phil, known to his school chums as 'Ballcock', was drawing to an end as he cast his eyes round the room and once more summoned the librarian. "Where is my food?", he demanded. "It should have been here by now. I've had a microwave oven since 1965; my dad sold the first one in the country. It obviously wasn't to you! Now, give me five zombie squats and don't forget to stretch when you finish your shift."

I thanked Phil for his time and enquired about his evening's planned activities. "I'm off to indulge in a bit of astronomy with my new telescope", he said. "Excellent", said I. "Any chance you can let me know what the future holds in store for an Aquarian?"

You can find the Centurions on Facebook and Twitter by clicking the buttons below or by searching Twitter for @NorthwichASC and Facebook for Northwich Centurions Swimming Club.



2018 is your year

"I wouldn't say anything is impossible. I think that everything is possible as long as you put your mind to it and put the work and time into it" - *Michael Phelps*

What will you achieve?