

UEA Sportspark Pool Open Day.

On Sunday 27th August, after what seemed like a few solid days of email communication; I headed down to UEA Sportspark to participate in their pool open day. We were lucky enough to be invited to promote our club and what we have to offer for all ranges of swimmers. We had been given four hours of pool time to demonstrate how we, as a club, “Develop Winners.” I was joined on poolside by Alex Spinner for the first session. As one of the master’s coaches, it was really important for me to encourage older swimmers to join the club and show everyone that you are never too old.

During our first session which ran from 10.00am-12.00pm, we were lucky enough to have the following swimmers in the pool; Rob Hammond (Masters), Alys Rowley (Masters), Ollie Pike (JD1), George Pike (JD3), Abigail Line (CA), Valentina Davies-Haywood (JD2), Maximilian Davies-Haywood (RA), Rosa Hammond (JD1) and Louisa Hibbin (City Link). Myself and Alex were initially slightly concerned that some of the younger swimmers may not manage a whole two hours in the pool, but in the excitement of it all they managed incredibly, with energy still to burn!

The idea of the session was to spend roughly an hour and a half working on technique, and the remaining half an hour on some fun; we worked on race skills, relays and of course we had to have an adult vs children race. Rob Hammond proved that he is still incredibly competitive, although Rosa gave him a tough match, just not quite making it to the wall ahead of him.

Everyone worked so hard, and there was lots of interest from other swimmers watching the fun and games we were having. This session showed how we, as a club, develop our swimmers through the pathway and then encourage lifelong participation with the Masters. It also showed how everyone supports each other, encourages one another and most of all have fun whilst doing something they love.

It was then on to a short break, where I managed to speak to a few members of the public who were at the pool making the most of the free swim that was available to them. We had a desk set up in the foyer, with lots of promotional material that was provided by Rob Hammond along with our new banners that Caroline Peters kindly delivered to me the day before. During the first swim session, Jo Pike was kind enough to assist and help promote the club at the desk.

The second swim session ran from 14.00pm-16.00pm and this session had a slight twist to it – I was joined by two of our coaches, who spend lots of time on poolside, yet I have never seen them swim! This was all about to change when Lewis Smith and Beth Coombs joined in for the fun and games. The other swimmers in this session were; Libby Gunton (RA), Grace Gunton (NA), Alice Nelson (RY) and Szilveszter Szalai (JD2). I also managed to gain a swimmer for a master’s trial – Szilveszter’s dad; Zoltan. This session was lots of fun, with Lewis and Beth showing that despite being out of the pool for a while; correct training and

technique never goes away. What also definitely doesn't go away is the competitiveness either – both were determined not to let any of the swimmers they coach beat them. I am hoping that with some more persuasion we can get them to train and race again! I was assisted on the desk by another dedicated parent; Jacqui Gunton.

What was clear from the day is that as a club there is an incredibly high standard of teaching, coaching and developing our swimmers; not only into winners but young people that show an immense level of sportsmanship, competitiveness, determination, dedication and most of all are learning an important life skill in a fun, family based environment. I was really lucky to be able to see this on Sunday, and to be able to promote a sport that I am passionate about.

Special thanks go to, as always Tracey Spinner; who never stops – even on holiday. Alex Pinniger for giving me the task of organising the day. Karen Robinson, Rob Hammond, Helen and all of the squad reps for sending out emails. Alex Spinner, Lewis Smith and Beth Coombs for all of their help promoting and coaching. Another mention really must go to all of the parent's that spent time over the bank holiday weekend supporting and encouraging their children to participate in the demonstrations.

Thank you, I hope you enjoy the pictures below!
Sophie Fairhurst, Masters Coach



