

December 1996

**SWIMMING IN CANADA**

*At the end of last year Lynn Clark returned to Camp Hill after spending a number of years abroad - she left the UK in 1982 to work as a physiotherapist in Canada and New Zealand. Recently she was involved with her local swimming club in Waterloo, Ontario, and has given us some details of how the club was organised. It is interesting to note the different way the sport is approached in Canada. She tells us about the organisation of the club and its training and also about competitions in Canada, and looks at the differences between the two countries. The whole set up is quite different in terms of representing the club and the type of competition that takes place. It is regarded as much more of an honour to represent the club, so everyone that does wears the club uniform proudly. It will be instructive for many of our younger swimmers to see the commitment required to swim with such a competitive club.*

The Club I was a member of until last year is called ROW (Region of Waterloo Swimming Club), based in a city 90 minutes' drive from Toronto.

**Club Mission Statement**

The mission of the Club is to provide opportunities for each of its athletes to attain his or her maximum individual potential in the sport of competitive swimming. To this end the Club:

1. Provides optimum instruction, training and competition for each swimmer, from novice to champion
2. Instils an appreciation of commitment, dedication and discipline in the pursuit of personal goals
3. Encourages a high degree of sportsmanship and team spirit
4. Provides opportunities for positive social interaction and emotional growth.

The club was founded in 1976 and ranks in the top 15 clubs in Canada, with swimmers competing in the Olympic Games, World Championships, Pan American Games and Commonwealth Games.

The club structure is based on a professional head coach and coaching staff. The administration, policy issues and operational activities and the support staff are all planned and executed under a voluntary board of directors.

For training the club is divided into several swim programs:

**Top III**, ages 4 to 8 years, training once a week. Sessions of 9 weeks of 1 hour swimming plus land exercises. **Top II**, ages 6 to 9 years, training twice a week. Sessions of 11 weeks, each two one hour sessions of swimming plus land training. Seven swimmers to a coach.

**Top I**, ages 6 to 10 years, training three times a week. Three one hour sessions of swimming plus land training. Ten swimmers to a coach. Swimmers participate in monthly novice races.

**Age Group III**, ages 8 to 13 years. Four one hour swimming and four ¼ hour land training sessions per week. Swimmers participate in monthly novice races. **Age Group II**, ages 9 to 14 years. Five sessions of 1½ hours swimming plus land training. Fifteen swimmers to a coach. Swimmers participate in swim meets. **Age Group I**, ages 11 to 15 years. Three sessions of 2 hours and three of 1½ hours per week, plus three ½ hour land training sessions. Fifteen swimmers to a coach. Swimmers participate in Regional and Provincial meets.

**Senior National Squad**, 14 years and older. Eight 2 hour sessions a week, plus six ½ hour land sessions and cross training. Twenty swimmers to a coach. Swimmers must have gained Provincial Qualifying Times and be aiming at National Championships. **Senior Development Squad**, 14 years and older. Three one hour swimming sessions plus three ½ hour land sessions per week. This caters for those who have not achieved National Qualifying Times.

**Masters**, 20 years and older. Three early morning sessions of 1½ hours, plus two evenings if possible. 25 swimmers to a coach.

The progression between squads is dependent on a swimmer's times compared to the Ontario and National Qualifying times. Swim training sessions include drills, leg and arm work, dives and turns. Land sessions comprise stretches, cross training (aerobics, soccer, running, basketball), weights and individual exercises.

Younger swimmers and Masters train in a relatively warm hired public 25m pool (mornings and evenings); those aged 12 and over train in the cold university pool, which is 50m in the summer, but 25m with a boom in the winter. This is used for morning, afternoon and evening sessions. Land training takes place in the University gyms and weight and equipment rooms.

It certainly takes a lot of motivation to get up for a 5.30 am session in the winter, when it can be as cold as minus 40 Celsius outside - at least the pool feels warm after scraping ice off your windscreen!

There are four summer camps of 2 weeks, providing four hours' training a day, including land training, aerobics, team sports (basketball, football, baseball), swimming and videotaping. This work is predominantly outdoors due to the fine weather in the summer.

Swimmers represent the club as a squad only once each year, in the Victor Davis Relay Challenge. Otherwise, at all other meets the swimmer participates individually for the club. The reason for this is the vast distances between cities and provinces, which results in hours of travelling and high costs. For example, the 1995 Canadian National Championships were held in Vancouver, which is four days' continuous drive from Waterloo. Imagine spending your parents' whole summer holiday to travel to and take part in the Nationals! It is, of course, possible to fly to save time, but this is expensive for a whole club team. It is almost as expensive to fly from Toronto to Vancouver as it is to fly to England.

Meets often take place on Fridays to Sundays, so that it is necessary for students to take time off school in order to compete. They then have to make arrangements to catch up on the work later.

Any swimmer participating in a meet must wear club uniform, otherwise they are not allowed to take part. The level of uniform required increases with a swimmer's ability. The Senior National Squad uniform comprises black and white caps, black, white and blue bathing suits, club shorts or track pants, t shirt, sweat shirt, bag and towel. They also need club training suits and hats when training.

There are various club awards, which are given out each year at the annual dinner to achieving swimmers.

The club annual membership fee varies according to the swimming level (eg National level £800, Masters £400) and includes the Swim Ontario registration and insurance cover. As well as paying the annual fee, every swimmer's family has to sign up for a certain number of fund-raising events, such as Bingo (held four times a year) and a swimathon, and in addition must be prepared to volunteer for at least two home meets a year.

*This should have given you a flavour of the way swimming is organised in Canada, though obviously there are differences between individual clubs there just as there are in England. If anyone is interested in finding out more, Lynn will be able to give you further information.*

## **COMPETITION**

We are well into the new season as is shown by the following match results. Open Meets proliferating, and, if you want more swims, you should enter them. They consist of Diddy Meets, 9-12 yrs.; Open Meets 11/12, 13/14, 15/16 & 17+. If your times are not fast enough for you to qualify, then you should enter B Grade Meets which are advertised regularly. If you enter a Meet, you have to give your time for the event(s), and if you do not know it, you should ask to be timed. From time to time the details of Meets will be put on the noticeboard - then it is up to you!

### **10.9.96 Inter-Club, Haden Hill (25m)**

Gloucester 159, Haden Hill 149, C/Hill 117, Triple S 80

Despite our being without several regular team members - in fact we covered the 5 age groups, male and female, with 20 swimmers - everyone tried hard, and there were a number of good efforts.

**F/S Nicola Sheasby** 1.02.66 & 1.02.88 P.B.; **Robert Delves** 1.02.85; **Chris Hutton** 1.00.21 - a good finish after a somewhat cautious start, **Pam Schofield** 1.05.26

**FLY Jon Baker** 1.03.35, **Chris** 1.10.24 P.B. **BK Jon Hemming** 1.11.91

**BR Hannah Loftus** 1.28.52 P.B.; **Sophie Mayor** 48.46.

Who was it that, having been told NOT to breathe on the 25m F/S relays, that one 11 yr. boy indulged himself 7 times and one 15 yr. old 3 times - enough for the entire 5 teams!

**Michael Bourne** and **Andrew Vale**, both swimming up a year, did very well and **Ben Darbyshire**, back from Cardiff University, has not swum recently judging by his collapse at the end of the **BK**, but his contribution in the relays was invaluable.



### 26.10.96 Junior Inter-Club Gala - Stechford (25m)

Solihull A 256, C/Hill 216, Perry Beeches 170, Chase 132, Solihull B 124, Fox Hollies 78

This was a most exciting evening, with C/Hill being in close contention with Solihull for much of the gala. Our 9 yr boys gained 29 out of a possible 30 points; **Matthew Parton** won the **BK**, **Andrew Vale** the **BR** and **Tim Sheasby** the **F/S** (he also won the 10 yr **FLY**), and together with **Michael Bourne**, they were 1st & 2nd in the relays.

The 12 yr girls did equally well. **Kate Hindson**, **Sally Jones**, **Rachel McLaughlin** and the rapidly improving **Leanne Sheasby** gained 35 out of 36 points.

It was good to see the Club winning both cannons at the end.

A.L.

### 2nd/3rd Nov. 1996 Midland District Short Course Championships - Leicester (25m)

This was a most satisfying weekend, which produced 4 Club records.

**Georgina Lee**, 400 **I.M.** 5.06.29 2nd Senior, 1st Junior and a NEW CLUB JUNIOR RECORD, 200 **FLY** 2.21.08 2nd Senior, 1st Junior.

**Gemma Hindson**, 200 **FLY** 2.25.72 3rd Junior, 100 **FLY** 1.07.57 2nd Junior; 100 **F/S** 59.76 NEW CLUB JUNIOR RECORD.

Other good swims: **Jo Potter**, 200 **I.M.** 2.33.76 and **Nicola Sheasby**, **F/S** 1.03.23.

Current form encouraged us to look for good relay swims and these were forthcoming.

4x100 **F/S** **Georgina**, **Nicola** and **Gemma** joined **Jo Minion**, 4th in a NEW CLUB RECORD, 4.34.29.

### Meanwhile, at the Coventry Junior Meet (50m.)

Several of our juniors tackled long course swims, but I am told that they were not very 'switched on', with apathy prevalent rather than determination. This was a pity, because you must seize the opportunity when you swim long course for that is REAL swimming.

Our better swims: **Jon Sheasby**, **F/S** 2nd 1.05.58, 50 **F/S** 30.08, **FLY** 2nd 35.03; **Carl Reed**, **F/S** 33.98; **Kate Hindson**, **I.M.** 2nd 2.49.30; **Lucy Lloyd-Roach**, **FLY** 2nd 1.14.08 & 34.01; **James Venables**, **BR** 37.09.

### 9.11.96 West Midland League Round II, Wolverhampton (25m.)

Perry Beeches A 256, Solihull 188, C/Hill 185, Tewkesbury 156, Perry Beeches B 154, Luton 104.

A second place in this gala would have qualified us for the 'top gala' in the final round, but it was not to be. Solihull edged ahead of us at event 19, and they had a 9 point lead after event 46. Three relay wins put us level going into the last race, the men's 6x50 F/S, but our below strength team was unable to pull it off. Perry Beeches won 22 races, Camp Hill 15 and Solihull only 5, but they fared much better than us in the lower placings. This was, as in the first round, an excellent team effort with many good swims.

F/S, Jon Sheasby 29.98; Gemma Hindson 1.00.64; Darren Dyke 55.54.

BR, Kate Hindson 1.24.84; Louise Venables 46.46; Nicola Sheasby 1.20.64.

BK, Ewan Martin 39.32; Lucy Lloyd-Roach 1.16.53; Chris Gregory 1.19.37.

FLY, Jon Baker 1.02.39; Lucy 1.13.58; Warren Jones 1.13.11 (despite his start).

I.M., Georgina Lee 1.08.84; Jon Baker 1.04.84 - one of 3 gutsy swims.

### Leamington (25m.)

Solihull B 210, Oldbury 205, Treonte Long Eaton 174, Leamington 161, Chase 152, C/Hill B 135

Our very sparse team did its best, but could make little headway. Going into the final round, with relegation threatening, we can only hope for good attendance.

Good swims: Rachel McLaughlin, BK 1.21.13, F/S 1.10.87; Daniel Webster, BR 1.28.24; Hannah Loftus, BK 1.19.39; Ian Johnstone, FLY 1.21.73

### 15/17th November '96 Leicester Grand Prix (25m.)

Gemma Hindson, swimming in the age group events, had a most successful weekend: FLY 1st 1.06.37, F/S 2nd 59.88 (heat 59.84), 200 I.M. 2nd 2.25.79 CLUB JUNIOR RECORD.

Georgina Lee was placed 3rd in the B final of the Open 200 FLY, 2.22.04 and swam 59.99 & 59.96 in the age group F/S to join our select 'sub 60 club'.

### 23.11.96 Inter-Club Cheslyn Hay (25m.)

Bilston A 282, C/Hill 253, Broadway 251, Chase 222, Bilston B 182, Darlaston 97.

This was a fast moving (thanks to our referee Norman Stephens) and most enjoyable match, with races over 25m. and 50m. plus mixed relays.

Our 9 yr group, **Emily** and **Sarah Paterson**, **Tim Sheasby** and **Matthew Parton** won all their individual races, and we had many good performances.

**Chris Gregory** had the reward for his extra training with **FLY** 36.15 and **BK** 37.00, and **Mark Fisher** swam an impressive **BR** 43.75. **James Venables**, **BR** 37.50 and **F/S** 32.38, is now at the stage where regular positive work can bring a big improvement, if he can improve his powers of concentration. **Ian Potter**, looking stronger, **FLY** 32.60; **Nicola Sheasby**, **BR** 37.68.

There is always room for improvement: one boy left Mrs Lee almost speechless by breathing all the way up the pool on his one length **FLY** thereby throwing away the first place - if you want to watch a race do it from the bathside NOT when you are in the race. Likewise, one girl who knows better, unbelievably breathed several times in a one length **F/S** - twice in the last 5 metres. It was noticeable that, in a number of races, we were too slow into the stroke. Such mistakes are understandable for 9 yr swimmers, but are inexcusable for older ones.

### 30th Nov./1st Dec. Stockport Metro Meet (25m.)

Our small group of 5 swimmers kept the Club's name to the fore at this very competitive age group Meet, which was attended by swimmers from 65 clubs.

**Jon Sheasby**, won the **F/S**, 1.03.79 and **FLY**, 1.13.20, was 2nd in the **I.M.**, 2.42.17 and 400 **F/S**, 4.58.23 and 5th in the **BR**, 1.27.02 with his efforts gaining him the overall award for his group.

Sister **Nicola**, somewhat selective in her workload, swam 200 **BR**, 2.49.95 P.B. and had another P.B. of 1.01.63 in a swim-off for the **F/S** final, also placing 5th in the 50 **F/S** 28.56.

**Gemma Hindson** tackled a heavy load of events in the 15/16 girls, she was 2nd in the **I.M.**, 2.26.89 and 3rd in the **F/S**, 1.00.10, 3rd in the 200, 2.09.55, 3rd in the 400 **I.M.**, a P.B. of 5.08.58.

Sister **Kate** swam P.B. times in **F/S** 1.07.29, 2.21.63 and 400 **I.M.**, 5.37.48.

**Lucy Lloyd-Roach** swam **FLY** 1.12.27 P.B. and 2.41.48 P.B. and a good **BK**, 1.16.61.

It was an exhausting, but worthwhile weekend.

### Stratford (33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> m.)

Meanwhile, a hastily put-together team had a surprising success.

C/Hill 230, Braunstone 180, Avon Neptune 180, Avon Neptune B 155, Bedworth 135, Leamington 120.

Our times were generally standard, but we had a number of good **FLY** swims: **Ian Potter** - a considerable P.B. 1.11.57; **Carl Reed** 22.41 and **Jon Baker** 1.02.61. **Chris Hutton** swam 1.00.72 **F/S** - reasonable, but continuing to over-protect himself on the first part of the race.