

Cheshire County 3rd Open Water Championship – 8th July 2006

The morning started early to erect the Gazebo, blow up the giant yellow buoys and generally set up. All this was done to a clear blue sky and completely flat calm water !!!! The water temperature was warm measured at 63F by the jetty, thank goodness for a few weeks of fine weather prior to the event. With the break in fine weather specially arranged for the Championship the wind varied between fairly strong to very strong. This year entries were significantly up on last year.

The briefing for the 3km race was held and the course was explained, but the buoys weren't out. Daniel the driver of the safety rib was sat in the boat in the middle of the lake with the buoys trying to workout why the GPS coordinates given to him by the swim secretary weren't anywhere near the agreed position. It was finally concluded that they were wrong so Daniel took charge and the course was set. Due to this delay the race started 10 minutes late. On the return leg of the first lap the wind freshened and as a result the swimmers had a good battle down the lake on the second lap and 'wind surfed' back. The increased wind also had the effect of blowing the turning buoy at the jetty onto the shore and the other was similarly on the move. However, there was only one retirement. The senior ladies & gents were won by **Helen Tongue** (Stalybridge SC) and **Graham Platt** (Stalybridge SC) respectively. There were many fine swims particularly by those who completed their first swims under what were difficult conditions, well done.

The Championship was held within the BLDSA (British Long Distance Swimming Association) Championships and I would like to thank the BLDSA for allowing Cheshire to "piggy back" our race with theirs and using all their safety cover. Run at the same time was an open 1km race which is an ideal taster for swimmers over the age of 12 years to experience open water swimming, which of course is an Olympic discipline. Other more serious BLDSA races held over the weekend were a two-way race 6miles and a one-way race 3miles. A most amazing sight was to witness Julie Bradshaw MBE complete the 6 mile swim on Fly. How many coaches have heard youngsters say I can't do 100m Fly!

Now concluding this year's report, it's time to thank all those who helped. As usual I have to thank my long suffering wife, Sandra who continually puts up with my obsession, swimming (as she describes it), checks things are done, points out when I've cocked up and much, much more. Next I must thank our President, Elaine Ludgate who came to present Cheshire Swimmers their certificates and medals and stayed all day and time kept in the rain. Thanks go to the following BLDSA members for officiating and performing safety duties, Graham Smith, Carl Walker and Daniel Thomas, Rob Acton and finally the Mayor of Bala who started the race.

In actual fact all of the above did everything, I just turned up for the enjoyment.

A final note, the provisional date for next year's swim will be the 14th July 2007.

Andy Wright
Open Water Co-ordinator
July 2006

**Cheshire County Open Water 3km
Championship**

Senior Gents			
39	Graham Platt	1	39.38
24	Andrew Wright	2	42.47
42	Billy Dutton	3	52.36
43	Chris Carter	4	59.10
41	Steven Farebrother	RET	
Senior Ladies			
40	Helen Tongue	1	42.24
37	Claire Dickinson	2	51.18