

Cheshire County 5th Open Water Championship – 12th July 2008

Eureka, well I hope. What a turn round from last year. There were 7 swimmers entered for this years Championship.

For a second year the water temperature was unseasonably low, with poor weather the week before the swim. On race day only 1 swimmer did not start. From our entry we had both junior and senior swimmers in both male and female categories. The race started a couple of minutes late due to the unexpectedly large number of 'on the day' entries for the 1km race being run at the same time. All swimmers were counted into the water and the race was quickly away. With little wind, the swim to the first buoy was used by most to acclimatise and settle into their pace. The second buoy then quickly followed and the return leg of the first 1km was soon completed. Each swimmer called their number out before starting on their second 1km circuit. And as the 3rd 1km circuit was completed the sense of achievement grows. This is shortly followed by the sight of parent's with considerable pride written across their faces as their beloved walks calmly from the water. And pride should be attributed to each swimmer as they have competed and swim where many will not. However, once swum outside its never forgotten and for many it becomes a much loved discipline of swimming. Unfortunately, we had 2 retirements during the race. But that wasn't a problem as the nature of the swim gives the opportunity to retire at the end of each lap or via the numerous canoes and ribs on safety patrol.

With the race completed the results showed we had some excellent swimming with Connor & Courtney Dean (Warrington Dolphins) taking the junior titles, Gillian Bentley (Chester SC) senior ladies and Andy Wright (Warrington Dolphins) the senior gents title.

The Bala swim is now proving to be one of the major national open water events, which the Cheshire Championships are currently a small part. On the Saturday morning there were 33 swimmers taking part in a 1km race which can be entered on the day. Over all the weekend's swims at Bala there were 105 swimmers taking part. The Saturday race is ideal for an introduction to open water swimming and I would encourage county swimmers who are not confident to enter a 3km race, to enter the 1km race as a 'stepping stone'. The atmosphere at the swim is friendly and relaxed with quite a few parents taking part making the whole event a socialable and family oriented.

Clubs with swimmers taking part in all swims at Llyn Tegid were Wigan Best, Everton SA, Warrington Dolphins, Chester, Halton, Crewe Flyers, City of Liverpool, Halifax, Atherton, Scarborough, Howe Bridge, Kingfishers, City of Bradford, Aquabears, Newtonhall, Barrow, Mold Masters, Kilmarnock and Serpentine. Clearly there are four clubs from the county now involved and hopefully next year we will be able to double it.

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 and quietly helps in the background. Secondly, I'd like to thank all those helpers from the BLDSA who provided timekeepers and safety cover.

A final note, the provisional date for next year's swim will be the 11th July 2009.

Andy Wright
Open Water Co-ordinator
July 2008

5th Cheshire County WP & S Association - Open Water 3km Championship**Junior Gents**

1	Conor Dean	Warrington Dolphins	48.49
	Toby Molyneux	Crewe Flyers	RET

Junior Ladies

1	Courtney Dean	Warrington Dolphins	58.04
	Joanne Pilkington		RET
	Hannah Hancock		DNS

Senior Gents

1	Andrew Wright	Warrington Dolphins	50.21
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Senior Ladies

1	Gillian Bentley	Chester ASC	46.33
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