

## Rotherham A/B Grade Gala

22 excited members of the Potential and Performance squads, together with their chaperones, set off for Sheffield (Ponds Forge) on Friday evening for a weekend of, I am told, little sleep but great comradery. However, the lack of sleep did not appear to affect the performances of all the swimmers as they all won at least one medal, this must be a record.

Overall Middlesbrough swimmers won 37 gold, 35 silver and 28 bronze medals.

The meet got off to a great start with Elisha Rhodes, Violet Hearfield, Olivia Pringle, Evie Dilley and Rebecca Keetley winning golds in the various age groups and grades in the 200m IM – WHAT A START!!

In the second event the boys 200m freestyle, whatever the breakfast had comprised, for William Morris it had obviously been extremely beneficial as he was given a “speeding ticket”\* and later in the morning yet another in the 50m butterfly – Well done young man.

In the girls 100m breaststroke Hannah Redshaw (10yrs age group) had a great swim to win gold along with Rebecca Keetley (12yrs age group). Chloe Bashford (12yrs age group) and Effie Sowden (14yrs age group) won golds in the B section. Silver medals were won by Isobel Keetley, Pearl Lightwood, Olivia Pringle and Emma Muirhead winning a bronze.

The boys 50m butterfly saw William’s speeding ticket with Harvey Clark winning gold in the 12yrs age group B section and in the 100m backstroke William won bronze with James Heward a silver in the B section and Jack Atkinson a bronze.

The girls 50m freestyle saw yet another “speeding ticket” issued to Pearl with Isobel and Violet winning golds and Evie a silver.

The boys 200m breaststroke saw further medals for Harvey (silver) and Jack (bronze).

In the girls 100m butterfly Elisha and Pearl won golds with Abigail Blundell-Stephenson and Evie winning silvers and Rebecca a bronze.

William and James were again collecting medals in the 50m backstroke silver and in the B section gold respectively with Jacob Ross a bronze.

Abigail and Pearl won golds with Elisha and Rebecca bronze in the 200m backstroke. In the 14yrs age group Effie won bronze in the B section and in the 15yrs B section Flora Finlay won gold.

The closing event of the first day, the girls 50m breaststroke saw Isobel win bronze, Hannah and Pearl gold and silver respectively with Evie winning gold in the B section. Certainly not a bad day at all.

Day 2 commenced with the 200IM for boys, not the easiest of races to start a day. However, the boys rose to the occasion with Oliver Smith winning bronze in the 9yrs age group, William a gold, with James and Harvey winning silver.

The girls 200m freestyle was next and four cracking races. In the 9yrs age group Isobel started slowly and gave her rival some 3.2 seconds start over the first 100m only to fight back and just get pipped on the line by 0.14secs, Abigail won bronze. In the 10yrs age group again Violet gave her opponent a commanding lead only to claw back the difference to win the gold, Pearl won bronze. In the 11yrs age group this was probably the closest finish of all the races with Evie winning gold by 0.05sec. In the 12yrs age group it would appear that the Keetley sisters have a similar style of racing with Rebecca some 1.75 secs down after 100m only to overcome her rival to win gold. In the 14yr age group Effie won bronze and in the 15yrs Emma Muirhead won bronze and Flora silver in the B section. Great swimming by all the girls.

The boys 100m breaststroke resulted in two silvers in the B section by James and Harvey and in the 50m freestyle William won gold and James bronze.

The girls 50m butterfly saw Pearl and Hannah win gold and silver respectively and Rebecca a silver and in the 100m backstroke Isobel and Abigail won silver and bronze, Evie a gold and Emelia Rhodes a gold in the B section. The 200m breaststroke saw a roles reversal with Hannah and Pearl winning gold and silver respectively, Elisha won a silver Rebecca a gold and in the B section Chloe a silver with golds for Effie and Emma. The girls were doing extremely well.

Not to be outdone, the boys bounced back with Oliver and William winning golds in the 100m butterfly and Harvey a silver in the B section. In the 200m backstroke William picked up bronze and in the B section James a gold, Harvey a bronze and Jack a silver.

It was obvious that the success that the swimmers were having was contagious and with them all encouraging their teammates the success continued. In the girls 100m freestyle Isobel and Abigail won gold and bronze respectively, Pearl and Violet silver and bronze, Evie bronze, Rebecca bronze and in the B section Eva and Flora Finlay silver. In the 50m backstroke Abigail gold, Pearl silver and in the B section Olivia and Emelia silver.

In the boys 50m breaststroke William won bronze and in the B grade Harvey gold and Charles Julian silver. Again, not a bad day.

This meet, as the results confirm, was a great success for the Middlesbrough swimmers, for every member to have won at least one medal was a fine achievement.

I know the swimmers would like me to thank Joe and the chaperones for a thoroughly enjoyable weekend. I also know, Joe was thrilled at your effort, performances and comradery together with your exemplary behaviour. WELL DONE TO ALL.