

North District Swimming Convenor Annual Report December 2006

National Overview

January 2006 saw the arrival of Ally White as Director of Performance and at the time of writing this report he is still in post!

There were many changes to the Scottish programme of meets during 2006, most of which had been planned for during 2005. These have been mostly well received and in an effort to create some stability, changes to meets in 2007 are expected to be very minor. Dates are on the Scottish Swimming website.

The Scottish Swimming Performance Plan 2005 – 2014 is in its second year of operation and the times and criteria for selection for various squads underwent some minor revisions this year. As the result, squad selections, whilst not trouble free, were a lot smoother than last year and a truly National process was achieved. North District is well represented at all levels on both National and Regional Programmes and management of squad selections for 2007/8 is expected to be smoother still.

North District swimmers on the National Senior Squad are Kerry Buchan (Upper Deeside/SAS), David Carry (COAST/LUT), Chris Chasser (Westhill/SAS), Randal Falconer (Aberdeen Dolphins/COAST), Hannah Miley (Garioch) and Robbie Renwick (Cults Otters/COAST). There are a further 4 North District swimmers on the Youth Squad, 8 on the Youth Development Squad and an impressive 136 swimmers met the criteria for the North District Regional Programme.

The National Squads at all levels have had their first performance days, and those on the District Regional Programme have taken up their places – more about that later in the report.

During the year, North District Swimmers competed in the Commonwealth Games, European Championships and the European Junior Championships. All of these events saw the best ever performances by British teams and the Commonwealth Games was not only the best Games for British Swimmers overall but a staggering success for Scotland.

We are very proud of all our swimmers who achieved selection for National teams. North District Swimmers representing Scotland or Great Britain in the above competitions are Kerry Buchan (Upper Deeside/SAS), David Carry (COAST/LUT), Chris Chasser (Westhill/SAS), Hannah Miley (Garioch) and Robbie Renwick (Cults Otters/COAST).

We are also very proud of our coaches; Eileen Adams and Gary Paterson were the two team coaches for the Commonwealth Games; Eileen and Gary were joined by Patrick Miley as coaches in Budapest for the European Championships and Eileen was also in Palma de Mallorca as coach for the European Junior Championships.

There were successes for North District swimmers down at the ASA National Age Groups and at the Youth and National Championships but the most notable performances came probably from Sam George (Banchory Beavers/SAS) in winning the 12 year old boys 100m and 200m breaststroke events smashing the relevant Scottish Age group records in the process.

Around the District

District Meets

District Meets have all been run on Hy-Tek Meet Manager this year. This has resulted in a big learning curve for the willing volunteer meet entry secretaries and they have done a fantastic job setting up the meets, taking in the entries, preparing the programmes and managing the meet itself. Many North District clubs have made the transition to Hy-Tek Team Manager and are now able to determine eligibility, select and submit entries and directly import results for all District meets. The North District website has been a vital part of making this process so easy to adopt and we are all appreciative of Tom's efforts and the constant improvements that he brings in. Several Club Meets have also been run on Hy-Tek and the number will surely rise in the year ahead and the benefits of using the system will become even greater as more Clubs adopt it.

All District Meets were well attended and well received. We are grateful to the organising Clubs – Garioch (Senior Development Meet), Inverness (Age Group Meet, Age Group Championships, Sprints), Westhill (Open) and Ythan (Junior Development Meet).

We were required by Scottish Swimming to move the North District Open to June in 2006; entries were down but not significantly. The movement necessitated some rearrangement of other meets but these changes were kept to a minimum and the formats were largely unaltered with the exception of the District Sprint Championships. This was increased in duration to a 2 day 5 session meet with the addition of non-championship events of 400m and above. The success of this format has yet to be formally reviewed and there are some concerns but all written feedback has been extremely positive. On that note, feedback for all District Meets, both positive and negative, is always very welcome. At every meet this year Clubs have been issued with a feedback form; few have been completed and returned. It is extremely helpful to have views of coaches and other Club officials, we can only get better if we know what you need and how you feel about what is being provided.

Almost all meets in the District continue to be well over-subscribed and yet still more clubs are travelling outside the District seeking fresh competition in other Scottish Districts, England and further afield so it is satisfying to see new meets popping up where gaps in the programme have become apparent; the Aberdeen DNV Medley Challenge and Cults Otters Bibby Offshore Meet both fitted in well and we look forward to the first Dyce Mini Meet in January 2007.

District plans for 2007 are well underway and dates are already booked for the remainder of the 2006/7 Calendar.

5 November 2006

North District Swimming Convenor Annual Report December 2006

District Squads

At the time of writing this report, 3 out of the 4 North District Regional Squads have held their first day; reports so far have been favourable and turnout has been excellent. We have been able to welcome Chris Jones as a lead coach for one of our Aberdeen squads and it was good to see Ally White and Gordon Glasgow back in North District to lead the other two. Patrick Miley will lead the Highland Squad when it gets underway.

Swimming Pools

Again, at the time of writing this report, Bon-Accord Baths is still closed; it has been closed now for more than 6 months and the repeated delays in opening led to the movement of a planned District meet, the late movement of two Club meets and the cancellation of this year's Mitchell Trophy.

Bon-Accord Baths is not the only pool to have been closed and it is not only the Clubs that use this particular facility that have suffered. Peterhead and Fraserburgh Pools have suffered from lengthy closures due to problems with the facilities and others have undergone shorter closures. Yet more Clubs have lost pool time or had to undergo changes to their programming because of staffing or cost issues.

Overwhelmingly, the need for a fit for purpose competition pool for swimming and diving in the North has never been greater; the recognition of the need for long course training facilities in the North has never been greater; the support for a long course competition pool has never been more obvious and yet still there is no firm proposal. In September we learned that Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen University have pledged money for a feasibility study into a suitable facility. In October 5 million pounds was reported as being ring-fenced by Aberdeen City Council specifically for such a pool in addition to the 8 million pounds that they have pledged to the building of the planned for Regional Sports Facility. Whilst progress is slow on this front, it is progress; Clubs and individuals should continue to lobby locally. It simply cannot come soon enough.

Records

Congratulations to all North District swimmers who are record breakers and well done to their Clubs and coaches.

Since the last AGM, Long Course and Short Course Scottish records have been broken by Hannah Miley (Garioch) and David Carry (COAST/LUT). Scottish Age Group records have been recorded by the following North District swimmers – Chris Chasser (Westhill/SAS), Randal Falconer (Aberdeen Dolphins/COAST), Sam George (Banchory Beavers/SAS), Sara Hamilton (Stonehaven/SAS), Lizzie Hughes (Aberdeen Dolphin/COAST), Ellie Johnson (Aberdeen), Hannah Miley (Garioch), Robbie Renwick (Cults Otters/COAST), Tom Primavesi (Cults Otters/COAST) and Jenny Sangster (Westhill/SAS).

22 out of 70 of North District Open records have been bettered and claimed since the 2005 AGM and there are 57 new age group marks. These have been achieved by a wide range of swimmers from all around the District. North District records can be found on the swimming page of the North District website and Tom has included a new section for Meet records.

Awards

The Swimming Committee has the pleasure of being able to select and make three awards each year. For 2006, the awards have been agreed as follows –

WG Todd Trophy - David Carry – Awarded to the North District swimmer who is deemed to have shown outstanding achievement in National and International events.

Solingen Award – Sam George (Banchory Beavers/SAS) - For the best performance by an Age Group competitor in a National Age Group Championship.

Strachan Plaque – Brian Hendry (Stonehaven) - awarded to a swimmer or official who is a member of a North District Club or an Individual member of the SASA residing in the District who has rendered outstanding services to swimming.

Finally

I am grateful to all the members of the North District Swimming Committee this year and indeed to everyone who has helped to make the Championships, meets, training and even the decision making so easy to manage. There is lot of work and planning goes on in the background and without the help of all the willing and able volunteers in North District we would not be able to offer the swimmers and Clubs the support that is currently available. We are all sorry to see Lynne Walster leave the Swimming Committee but I understand that Alan Thomson, Ian Benzie, Gail Connell, Kenny Shuttleworth, Maggie Fowler and Kevin Paterson are all willing to serve again and I am delighted that they are!

I am willing and would like to stay on as Swimming Convenor for North District for another year.

Lynn Alderton
North District Swimming Convenor
lynnalderton@f2s.com
019755 62519/07732 718086

5 November 2006