

NATIONAL ARENA SWIMMING LEAGUE

8 OCTOBER 2011 – ROUND 1

The team:

Alice	Issie	Adam	Kieran S
Amelia	Jess	Ed	Michael
Becky	Kelsey	Jake	Nick
Bethan	Megan	James	Sam K
Charis	Niamh	Jamie	Sam M
Ellodie	Phoebe	Jarred	Sam R
Emily	Rochelle	Josh	Taylor
Emma		Kai	Tom A
		Kieran F	Tom P

Ding, Ding, round 1 and we are coming out fighting!

The 200 IMs off first and Megan and Sam R did us proud with 7 points on the board – a great start to the gala! The next 8 events were relays with our 13s medley girls (Ellodie, Niamh, Bethan and Rochelle) putting the first win on the board for us with a 3 second clear margin. Great team work girls. The next win was from our 15s boys free relay (Sam K, Kai, Kieran F and Adam) who again had a clear 3 second victory over the 2nd place team. Step up the Mens Open Medley Relay (Tom A, Sam R, Josh and Nick) who kept the pressure on all the way through to take a well deserved victory. So 10 races gone and we're in 2nd place behind Linslade by just one point. Great first section of races Team!

Keeping the pressure on Phoebe took a fantastic win in the 11s backstroke. Sam K annihilated the opposition winning with a 5 second margin! Incredible swim Sam, well done. So 18 races complete and we had just slipped into 3rd position.

Races 19 to 26 we needed to lift our game if we were going to stay in the running. Event 21 Ellodie took the victory in the 13s back with a finger tip finish – great race to watch! Event 23 Emma getting back to form took the girls 15s fly with 6.5 seconds of clear water behind her and the 2nd place swimmer. In event 24 Nick repeated the victory for the boys on the 15s fly, this time with a 4.5 second clear margin. Event 25 and Emily continued the winning theme in the ladies open backstroke – fantastic win here with a 3 second clear margin. Last race of the section was event 26 and Tom A never looked in any doubt as he stormed to our 5th win of this section. We could hardly catch our breath!! So 26 races gone and now we are in pole position with a 3 point margin over Linslade.

Races 27 to 34 saw 4 more victories to mount up the points on the board. This time they came from Charis in the 11s breaststroke, Bethan in the 13s fly, and Becky and Adam in the 15s free. We couldn't wait to hear the points to see if we'd maintained our lead. But we hadn't maintained it – we'd extended it. We were now 11 points clear of the 2nd place team Leighton Buzzard.

So everything to play for as we went into the final events. Looking good Emma took her second victory of the night, this time on the breaststroke. Our 15s medley boys (Kieran F, Sam M, Adam and Kai) swam incredibly well to take a very well deserved victory. The last race of the evening and our Men took to the water for the 6 x 50 freestyle relay. The noise was deafening as the beep sounded to start the race. Kieran F, Tom A, Nick, Sam K, Sam R and Josh took the final victory of the night with 2 seconds to spare. And so we waited for the final scores but there was a nagging doubt in our minds about some of the judging decisions that had taken vital points off us through disqualifications. And so the final scores were:

Linslade	174 points
Stourbridge B	173 points
Leighton Buzzard	172 points
Perry Beeches	155 points
Camphill B	50 points

Team – you couldn't have done any more. You swam your hearts out for us and were beaten on the night by some dubious decisions.

We had several swimmers who stepped up and swam above their age group tonight and they did a fantastic job. Stroke of the night went to our backstrokers who put in 5 wins from their individual swims – quite an achievement! Age group of the night was our Open swimmers putting an incredible 50 points on the board from their combined efforts. The Girls had the victory again over the boys!! Well done girls!

Swimmer of the night was a very tough call. Adam, Kai, Kieran F, Nick, Sam K and Tom A did not drop a single point all night from their individual and relay swims. This is fantastic from these swimmers – we are totally impressed with the outstanding effort from you all night. After a lot of deliberation and discussion however, the honours go to **Emma Pay**. What can we say! Two individual wins and a second place. It was fantastic to see you back to form and looking good. Well done Emma.

Thanks as always goes to our helpers and officials on poolside without whom our job would be so much more difficult.

Bring on Round 2!

Julie and Sam