

Stratford Sharks Girls Only Gala 30/06/07

The Team

9's: Aimee Sanders, Grace Fellows, Beth Small, Amelia Faulkner

10's: Natalie Dingley, Katie Jones, Emma Pay, Beth Henderson

11's: Lauren Sanders, Emily Tiano, Ellee Madigan

12/13's: Sophie Page, Fran Pinchin, Hayley Davis Moore, Becky Spoor, Kate Fletcher

14/15's: Lisa Henderson, Sarah Pearson, Becky Evans, Becky Cole

Open: Anna Hodt, Laura Cambell, Charlotte Simkins, Charlotte Rowbotham

This really is my favourite gala of the year, our hosts Stratford Sharks are simply fantastic and we should all take a feather out of their cap. Elaine 'The Pied Piper' is a joy if you weren't lucky enough to be there then I will try to tell the tale. There were a couple of girls who were unable to attend Beth and Zoë (Honda Girl) Hunter. they had both prior engagements and were not pleased.

Last year we were invited to take part in this gala and we all had a lot of fun, especially after we had won the overall event, we were invited to a photo shoot on the car park by the sponsors Stratford Honda, this is where Zoë got her name, it was a scream but we never got the pictures!! This year I was armed with my Son who doubles as a camera man.

Stratford Sharks have put together a fantastic Girls programme they have a very strong Breaststroke and Butterfly team and accordingly have a couple of interesting events within this gala to accommodate them, a 6x1 Breaststroke relay, a 6x1 Butterfly Relay and a very interesting 6x1 Medley Relay which is extremely difficult to pick the correct team in the correct order, as it can be swam in any age order.

Last year we were lucky enough to win the Butterfly relay and the overall trophy, which is probably the best trophy in the cabinets, so I really wanted to retain the title.

There are 4 trophies on offer and I really thought we could win 2 however the night was unbelievable, here we go!

After the first ten events things looked real good win 9 wins out of 10 and one second place **UNBELIEVABLE**. We were in 1st with 59 points with Stratford in 2nd with 47 points.

The next section would include the first trophy. The one that both I and Charlotte R really wanted the Breaststroke relay, I was not to be disappointed, the girls were fantastic, Beth Small (debut), Katie Jones, Emily Tiano, Kate Fletcher, Lisa Henderson, Charlotte Rowbotham, an awesome performance by all and the first trophy in the bag.



This section also included the medley relay trophy. An event in which team selection was very difficult as I could have swam it many ways. I wrote down 6 versions and could have written more but the first was the best and would see us win a beautiful trophy which weighs a ton. Well Done to Becky Cole, Charlotte Rowbotham, Emily Tiano, Becky Spoor, Nat Dingley and Beth Small.



Again this section included the third trophy and one which I really wanted to retain, I was not to be disappointed, the girls were fabulous. Well Done to Aimee Sanders, Nat Dingley, Ellee Madigan, Becky Spoor, Becky Evans, Laura Cambell (who had made a rush trip back from Sheffield just to swim for us. Thank You Laura)



The last trophy is actually a prize, which we did not realise, the entire team would each receive a £5 NEXT voucher, again the girls were on form and would not disappoint. I'm sure that Merry Hill will be receiving a lot of vouchers.

In the last section we were to win 8 out of 10 events, which is really pleasing. The Pied Piper had handed out prizes to every person and team that had won all night, it must simply cost Stratford Sharks a fortune to host, even a member of Stourbridge in the audience would win a fabulous 2002 Commonwealth Games shark skin body suit.

We really must invite our hosts Stratford to one of our galas but I am sure we will struggle to compete with their hospitality, they are absolutely wonderful, well done to them all. We look forward to competing against them next year, if we are invited.

Here's the big one, the overall trophy, it will be on display at Dudley for 12 months and really is a wonderful trophy. Well Done to all the girls that swam and lets see if we can retain all of these beautiful trophies next year.

Thanks to all the coaches and especially to Jack and Alex who kept the girls in order all night. Thanks also must go to my timekeepers and judge. Please see result sheet for all individual results, and also the photos.



Finally swimmer of the night has to be Nat Dingley, see swam magnificently in her own age and above, WELL DONE

Team of the night Breaststroke Relay which included Beth Small, Katie Jones, Emily Tiano, Kate Fletcher, Lisa Henderson, Charlotte Rowbotham.
I have to say that Charlotte sacrificed an individual win in her Breaststroke event to win the Breaststroke and Medley Relay.