

Dear Millfield Swimming Community,

It has been a little while since I last communicated with the community..so much has happened but I will try to summate! Through the second half of the autumn term, we have had representation at the Swim England South West Championships, FINA World Cup (Tokyo), Team Bath Open Meet, ESSA Relays Championships, Millfield & Taunton Level 3 Meet, National Winter Championships (Scottish, Welsh, English), Arena League Rounds 2 & 3, Ontario International Meet and the World Short Course Championships; some excellent results were achieved both as a team and individually along the way. It is important from time to time to sit back and reflect on all of those that have competed at so many different levels, all in the pursuit of personal progression. You will note that all meet reports from the above have been uploaded onto the Millfield swimming website under the 'News' section. I would like to say well done to three of our cohort, Rachel Anderson, William Mitchell and Jess Podger, who have all just returned from a Swim England Phase 3 International Competition in Nice, having learnt a huge amount from the experience. This means that we have had representation on both the male and female side throughout the entirety of the Swim England Talent Pathway: Phase 1,2,3 and the newly formed Performance Squad. This is an impressive feat that we have never achieved before and one that highlights the strength and depth of our programme.

As mentioned in my last letter, I outlined some slight staffing changes; I am happy to report that everyone is settled and that Coach Puddy is enjoying being back in full time coaching. Coach Puddy leads on the blue squad but at some point during each week supports across all the squad groupings. To quote Coach Puddy, "I wish to thank each member of staff and the students for warmly welcoming me into the Millfield community. I have thoroughly enjoyed being back on pool deck with this awesome team since my return to coaching. Each day at the school offers new challenges, allows me to work with disciplined students/great human beings and assists me in progressing my coaching ability. I look forward to a long and enjoyable career at the school." Coaching, much like swimming training, can be relentless and it is great to have such an honest and hardworking group of coaches supporting one another. We have each taken positive steps towards improving our general wellbeing through fitness; both Coach Clarke & Coach Waddingham have taken this to the extreme by signing up to an Ironman (3.8K Swim 180K Bike 42.2K Run) in August - we wish them all the best and I am sure they will be asking for donations in due course.

The County Championships came to a close on the weekend of the 9 & 10th of February; thanks to all the efforts from the students and staff, we managed to score more team points than ever before, again highlighting the depth across both genders and all age groups. The County Championships provided 5 more qualifiers for the British Swimming Championships, taking the current total to 32 swimmers. The swimming season is always on the go and we look forward to further excitement down the line at the Arena League Final (3rd March), Millfield TYR Meet (22nd – 24th March), then onto the British Swimming Championships (16th – 21st April) at the end of the Easter break. Throughout all of these meets, the emphasis is simple: follow due process, rationally reflect, and set the next target. The national window this season has been shorted from the 22nd of March to the 27th of May, this will be tightened even further in 2020 (13th March to 10th May). The Millfield TYR Meet will sit on the opening weekend of the national window (22ND-24TH of March 2019). In relation to the national window, I can confirm that we will be running our annual preparation camp in Majorca from Tuesday 2nd July to Friday 12th July. This camp will be for students who have qualified for the British Summer Championships -I will attach the details around logistics and qualification criteria to this email. I will also attach some information from British Swimming, which will give you a guide on what it will take to qualify for the British Summer Championships.

With the artist brilliance of both Coach Clarke and Coach Puddy, we have made a concerted effort to increase our presence on social media, mainly through Twitter and Instagram. I would highly recommend following these

platforms to get a frequent insight into the life and soul of Millfield swimming. I am happy to report that we have had a good level of interest on our recent assessment days at both the senior and prep school, which forms the initial stages in the application process. I will be sure to keep you updated on this as the academic year progresses and I will aim to get the squad structure for next season out at the start of the summer term. We are also looking at making our internal competition calendar a little more sustainable over the next 4-year period, bringing top quality consistent competition to the region. As always, if you do have any questions please feel free to ring into the swimming office (best hours 8am - 1pm week days) or touch base with the appropriate group coach via email.

In personal news, Harold is really starting to progress. Although he had a little set-back with the chickenpox, he is fully recovered and on the move with fanatic speed. With Zoe heading back to work in March, we have been weaning Harold onto solid foods since the new year. It is safe to say that I was not expecting this process to come with such a toxic by-product! All joking aside, we are really enjoying the journey and looking forward to Harold saying his first words and taking his first steps. I hope that you all get to spend some time with your families over the half-term break. Thank you for all your support and proactivity through this first half of the school year.

Yours sincerely,



Coach Dale

Director of Swimming

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