

Team Luton 2018 Review

As a club 2018 has been a very good year. At the beginning of the year Rikki joined us as our new Head Coach, his vast knowledge of swimming has helped both coaches and swimmers.

He has introduced some new squads, one of which is the new Academy Squad. This has allowed us to bring in swimmers who aren't quite ready to join one of our competitive squads, and by working on their skills and confidence in the water is giving them a better all-round start in the swimming world. Our membership has grown over the past 12 months, and with the new coaches in place swimmers are being given better opportunities to move through the squads.

The first big competition of the year was the Bedfordshire County and Age Group Championships. Team Luton had a very successful championship, winning 14 senior and 11 junior titles. We finished in 2nd place but an analysis of the results revealed we were the most successful club in terms of the medal table. We had 350 swims, won 160 medals with 84% of swimmers getting a personal best time. In May, 16 swimmers went on to compete at the Swim England East Region Championships, where between them they won 15 medals, 1 Gold, 4 Silver and 10 Bronze.

In July and August, 10 swimmers took part in the Summer Nationals at Sheffield, Swansea and Dublin. We had 6 finalists, 4 medal winners including one English Champion. In early July, 6 Swimmers went to the East Region Open Water championships in Norwich. We won 3 Regional and 6 County Medals and one swimmer qualified to swim at the National Open Water Championships.

The club competed in the London National Arena League Division One, and made it to the promotion final, which saw us finish in 7th place. Our junior swimmers competed in the M11 League where they finished in 5th place which kept them in Division Two.

Our club Compendium Challenges saw over 70 swimmers taking part. At our Summer Social they were all rewarded with medals and trophies for their success. Dates for next year are still to be finalised but the challenges are a must for the younger swimmers to start gaining times.

Our own open meets have been hugely successful over the past year, all five galas being oversubscribed and having to turn away large numbers of swimmers. Luckily this year the snow kept away in December. The control room has been taken over by a new team of helpers, and thanks must go to all of them for all their hard work. We can't thank all our volunteers enough for giving up their time to help, because without you all we couldn't run the club as efficiently as we do.

We mustn't forget the Masters Swimmers who have competed throughout the year at regional and national competitions. As a team they compete to earn points to go towards rankings in the GB Masters Team Decathlon. This year they finished in their highest ever position, with the Male team finishing in 9th and the Female Team in 92nd. The Male team were the highest in the East Region and Bedfordshire.

Because of the success of the swimmers at the major competitions they are being rewarded for all their hard work by being invited to Talent camps both County and Regional level and one of our performance swimmers has been selected to take part in the Swim England DICE programme. Over

the past year over 66 club records have been broken. We have broken 6 Junior and Senior County Records and 8 Masters County Records.

As a club we are growing and so more than ever need your help. There are multiple ways of supporting the club which not only benefits the swimmers but can be personally fulfilling too. Perhaps you are willing to become a timekeeper to help at our compendium events, and maybe go on to become a qualified official to support the running of our open meets. Could you spare a couple of hours each week as a poolside helper, moving on to become a coach in the future should you wish. More generally we would like to encourage more of you to come forward as volunteers to help run the club, organise social events and for just £5 become non-swimming members, so that you can vote on important decisions for the club.

There are numerous people to thank throughout the year but we would just like to thank a few. Huge thanks must go to Phil Pelling our Officials Co-ordinate who this year gained his referee accreditation, and was also elected as President of the Beds ASA. Geraldine and Simon long standing committee members stepped down this year, so we must thank them for all their time given to the club. And we can't go without remembering Mike Woodbridge, who is greatly missed for all his coaching and help given to the swimmers, and for the hours he spent officiating at our open meets.

Unfortunately our Chair, Glenda Mayes is standing down due to personal circumstances, and so we must thank her for all her support over the years. As a result we are looking to appoint a new Chairperson so if you feel you could fill this position and would like further information please come and speak to one of the committee.

Our end of year financial predicament is looking more positive than at the end of last year, and this is mainly due to better advertising of our galas and so our meets were profitable. We have been able to keep our Annual Membership and Monthly Fees the same for the past two years, despite the pool costs increasing.

We are always working towards improving communication and hopefully by late January we will be introducing a Facebook page. We will still have our twitter page, and are looking to improve our website. Your ideas are always welcome.

We must thank all swimmers for making the club the success it is and also parents and family for the time spent making sure they get to training. Rikki and his coaching team are doing a fantastic job and their efforts are rewarded with the improvements all swimmers are making.

We would like to wish you all a Happy New Year and a successful 2019

The Committee

