

Competitive Swimming

Beacon Training Program

As part of the ASA's support to enhance the pathway through to World Class programmes England Talent Development have created a regional support programme for ASA West Midlands swimmers.

Following criteria agreed at the Regional Coaches Forum Joe Evans has been selected to be part of a Beacon Programme Training Group at Coventry. This programme is part of the ASA's strategy towards enhancing opportunities for English athletes to achieve success at international level.

Training will be based in three groups; these will be formed around the performance hubs within the region, these are City of Coventry, City of Birmingham and Royal School Wolverhampton. Athletes from programmes outside of these will swim with the local performance hub, meaning Joe with City of Coventry.

The initial sessions will run on Saturday mornings from 13th February to 20th March and will enable Joe to train with other members of the England Talent Programme in the region and have access to other athlete support services such as physio screening.

Joe will still train, compete for and support the club whilst being on the Beacon Program.

Competitions

The next 6 months is packed with competitions, both individual and Leagues.

The Nuneaton Junior League starts on the 17th April, this is the most important team competition for the Junior Swimmer and consequently we expect all swimmers to be available for selection.

The Mercian Summer League also starts in April (24th), this is for all swimmers (9+ over) except those with District Qualifying Times. This is a lower level competition than the National Arena League and more relaxed than both that league and the Junior League, again we expect all swimmers to be available if selected. More details of both Leagues on the [web](#) site.

As far as individual competitions go then there is something for all swimmers, whatever level you are at. First up is the **Warwickshire County Championships** at Coventry in March and then the **Nuneaton & Bedworth Spring Qualifying Meet** on the 27/28th March.

In early April seven Sharks swimmers are off with six from Leamington Swimming Club and sixteen from Nuneaton & Bedworth Swimming Club for a 7 day Swim Camp in Torremolinos in Spain where they will train 4hrs a day in a 50m outdoor pool (hopefully in the sun!) and hope to cover 65,000m in 5 ½ days.

When they get back they will compete at the **City of Leicester Open Meet** at the end of April along with a number of other Sharks.

Entries have closed for all these meets.

In May the last Open Meet for the District Age Group hopefuls is the 8/9th at the **City of Coventry May Open Meet**, this is a Level 1 meet.

On the 2nd/3rd May the **Midland Youth Championships** take place at Coventry and then on the first two weekends of June the **Midland Age Group Championships**.

In May we also have the **Coventry & District Secondary Galas**, these are unlicensed and equivalent to about a Level 4 meet, 'No Faster Than' times are set at just slower than Midland District Qualifying Levels. This is the meet all swimmers should be entering as a first gala and allows everyone to swim any event available for their age group should they wish to as there are no qualifying times, we normally have around 50 swimmers here from first timers to experienced swimmers looking to improve their times. There are normally lots of medals up for grabs and it allows swimmers at a lower level to have some success.

Details published 25th February.

Into July we have the Boldmere Water Carnival on the 3rd/4th which is a Level 3 meet and is our Target Meet for all swimmers in the summer and the last individual competition of the season except for the **National Age Group & Youth Championships** at the end of July / early August.

Mike's Advice

The best piece of advice I can give to all young swimmers is to work on your streamlining until its second nature! It is a fundamental skill of the sport and one common to all world class swimmers from Michael Phelps to the winner of a Midland Champs Age Group Medal.

Training Levels

As the majority of swimmers are aware the more you train the faster you get, it has to be a good consistent quality but 6 hours a week is much better than 2 hours and as you progress you need to increase their commitment

It is no coincidence that the most successful swimmers are those that have made the biggest commitment, both in terms of quality hours in the water but also in terms of competing regularly.

We have very recently studied the Junior Squad training hours lately and almost 50% of Juniors only average 2 hours per week and 70% average less than 2 session per week. This means that this majority of swimmers are limiting their development at an early stage.

If we look at the precedent set by training at this kind of low level then we see that the vast majority of these swimmers stop swimming by the time they are 13 years old. The Club would like to encourage all swimmers (and parents who do the running around) to try and average a minimum of 3 sessions per week to maintain their development..

Training Levels cont..

As a basic guide a swimmers age should determine the maximum hours swum per week, so 8yrs up to 8 hrs, 9yrs up to 9 hrs and ideally they should be swimming at least 50% and preferably 75% and above of the maximum. Swimmers doing this have every chance of swimming at District level and above, as with any sport some ability is great but dedication, commitment and hard work is paramount.

Triathlon

Sharks' Triathletes collect first place award

In December 2009 Stratford Sharks' triathletes collected a first place award at the British Triathlon Federation's (West Midland Region) awards ceremony.

Jodie Stimpson, GB triathlete and double silver medallist, presented the award to the Sharks at the Sports Cafe in Birmingham. The Sharks triathlon section, were competing against triathlon clubs from across the whole of the West Midlands. The West Midlands Region of the British Triathlon Federation runs a league in which it awards points to the team members who finish in first to fifth place in each of the Aquathlon and Duathlon/Triathlon races in a series of twelve. Sharks triathletes claimed top three places in almost all of the races that they entered during the spring and summer this year, which culminated in a well deserved victory in this year's league.

In addition to the team award, the Sharks also collected several individual awards. Young athletes between 8 and 16 years old compete across five age categories and top three places in these categories were awarded to Sophie Edge, Matt Newman, Sian Rainsley, Helen Jubb, Gregor Kelling, Jonathan Furey, Alice Rainsley and Annie Cox.

Andy Smith and Sean Headley, Shark's triathlon coaches, said, "The West Midlands League was introduced this year to encourage local clubs to promote triathlon, Duathlon and Aquathlon to their young members. We are very proud of the junior members who have been very keen to take part in this series of races and their hard work in training has been rewarded. It has been the determination of the whole team, some only eight years old, who have helped the team to victory. The league has introduced a great team spirit this year, we hope this will help us through our winter training".



BIG 2010 Sponsored Swim

We are again helping [The Shakespeare Hospice](#) with the Big 2010 Relay Swim, this year it takes place on the 17th July. Last year we helped raise £7,000.

Sharks 100 Club

Numbers are still available for the 100 Club so get your form in now and give yourself a chance to win. Forms are available on the web site on the Downloads page.

Club Shop

Promotion Orders for February

Thank you to all those who ordered. Some orders are now being dispatched. Unfortunately our supplier was out of stock of net bags so we are still waiting for those to come in. The named hats should be in before the Warwickshire's start on the 5th March.

Promotion for March

We are pleased to offer Stratford Sharks Hoodies at the reduced price of £16 instead of the normal £20. This is just for a Hoody with the Stratford Sharks logo. We can also offer to have the swimmers name printed on the back for an additional £4. These special prices are only available to order until the 11th March, and full payment must be made on order.



Junior Sizes – 9-11, 12-13, 14-15

Adult Sizes – S, M, L, XL

Orders taken at the club desk on Friday evening or email: karenlw@ntlworld.com and cheques via club coaches.

Teaching

Next Test dates:

* Main Pool 6pm classes – March 19th. No lessons on March 26th

* Teaching Pool classes – March 26th

* Main Pool 6.30pm classes – 6pm start on March 26th

See the club notice board in the SLVC foyer for details of to whom certificates and/or badges are awarded to.

Any queries please direct to officials at the club desk on a Friday evening in the foyer of SLVC.

NEWSFLASH – Teaching Gala later in the year. Details to follow.