

# NEW LETTER

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February 2010

## Head Coach Welcome

Hi Everyone,

Welcome to your new monthly Club Newsletter. The purpose of the newsletter is to keep everyone informed of what's happening in and around the Club - so we can celebrate endeavour and success, and continue to develop a winning culture.

At the moment we have lots of positive things happening in the Club. The newsletter allows us to highlight these, and where appropriate, recognise extraordinary efforts and results.

The Club membership is growing all the time, and I want to ensure that we have excellent communication links between the swimmers, parents, coaches and the management committee. We already have a fantastic Club website and this newsletter will complement the great work going on there.

2010 will be an exciting year for the Club with lots of new ideas and initiatives being rolled out. More news on this will be available in March.

Have a great month and train extra hard and smart.

**Alastair Johnson**  
Head Coach

## About your new Head Coach

**Welcome to Alastair Johnson. Alastair was recently appointed as your new Head Coach. Here is a brief summary of Alastair's achievements:**

- Competed for Durham City ASC and then the City of Newcastle ASC
- Squad Coach at Newcastle
- Youth Coach at Stockport Metro - coached many swimmers who went on to compete internationally
- Head Coach at the City of Aberdeen Swim Team - set up a new Club which grew to be the best in Scotland
- Scottish National Youth Coach - coaching at the national Swimming Academy and setting up a new Youth Programme which was very successful. A lot of the swimmers graduated to the senior team and made their mark at the Commonwealth Games, World Championships and the Olympic Games
- Head Coach at AquaGym in New Zealand. Developed the Club to become a top 5 Club in New Zealand with swimmers noted for their commitment and great technique. Several swimmers competed at International level including Commonwealth Games, World Short Course and Pan Pacs
- Appointed Sunderland Beacon Head Coach in May 2009. Coaching and managing the regional performance squad and working with coaches, swimmers and clubs

Alastair's contact details are:

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**e** [alastair.johnson@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:alastair.johnson@sunderland.gov.uk)

**Newsletter Deadlines** - the deadline for any submissions is always the 25th of every month with the newsletter hitting your Club website around the 5th of every month.

# QUIZ

No prizes but can you work out all the answers?



1. Who won 8 Olympic gold medals at the 2008 Olympic Games and how many were individual golds?
2. How far are you allowed underwater on the start?
3. Which is faster ... women's short course 100 metres Butterfly world record or the men's short course 100 metres Breaststroke world record?
4. What event took place on 16 January 2010?
5. Tom Daley won which event at the 2009 Fina World Championships?

Answers on page 4

## Farewell to Liam Whiting

A BIG thank you and all the very best to Liam on his new career. Liam has been with us for a long time and has over the years become very popular and well respected member of the team. Liam has done a great job for the Club and has been an inspiration to many of our junior members. Thanks!

Congratulations and well done to Brian Shepherdson who is taking over from Liam. We are very excited about Brian's appointment. I am sure that you will all find Brian to be a great coach with excellent people and communication skills. Please could you all give Brian a really warm welcome.

## Tip from the Top - 1

This month's tip is about taking **responsibility**. The best swimmers take on as much responsibility as possible for their training, preparation and performances. Some things to take responsibility for are packing your own gear bags, being punctual, looking and listening at your coach, keeping a swimming diary, improving your skills etc. Doing it this way means that you put more in to your swimming, learn faster and thus improve your performances. Don't let other people do the basics for you - otherwise when things don't go as well as you wanted, you will be more inclined to blame others.

## Tip from the Top - 2

When doing freestyle – always get your head down on the last 5 metres and speed up and no breathing. This is an absolute must if you are going to become a great trainer and racer.

## 5 Golden Rules

We live by the 5 golden rules:

- 1 Cooperate with your coach at all times
- 2 Be punctual for your workouts and swim meets
- 3 Be positive at all times
- 4 Work as hard as you can
- 5 Work as smart as you can

Make sure you contribute to the 5 golden rules and you will help you and your team to achieve more success.

## Tracking

The coaches are now tracking every swimmer in the Club. This means that we are recording your attendance, swim meet results and test results. (Tests sets will start later in 2010). We are also tracking how many swimmers qualify for the various championship swim meets including N&Ds, NERs and Nationals. Our goal is obviously to ensure that our membership numbers go up and that the number of swimmers competing at all levels goes up too.

## EducationNights

We are currently putting together a series of Club Education nights to help all our members achieve success. Topics for consideration include nutrition, injury prevention, performance lifestyle, athletic development etc. Further details will be in your next newsletter. If there is a particularly topic you would like to see, then please email Alastair Johnson at [alastair.johnson@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:alastair.johnson@sunderland.gov.uk)

## Skill Development

I am **Craig Robertson**, the Skill Development coach. Before coaching at this club, I originally swam here. So this helped me gain the knowledge of the effort that is needed to achieve. The general aims of my squad are to improve the technique of all four strokes. To do this a great deal of hard work, however it will be taught in mainly game based activities for enjoyment.

## Competitive Development

I would just like to thank everyone for the support I have been shown during my time with the club especially the committee for supporting me financially in order to complete my swimming coach qualifications. Also, many thanks to all of the coaches that I have worked with for helping me along the way and teaching me new things. I have enjoyed every minute that I have spent at the club and I will always have fond memories from way back when I joined as a swimmer at the age of 8!

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of the swimmers and parents from my group for the cards and presents, thank you it is really appreciated. Keep working hard! **Liam Whiting**

## Olympic Hopefuls

Hi I am **Val Wilson** and I am the coach of the Olympic Hopefuls Squad. I have been coaching at Sunderland for many years. My two children Ian (now the Club President) and Lynne were both members of Sunderland Swimming Club and both competed at the Olympic Games.

Val's current intake of swimmers are very motivated, with many committing to attending as many sessions available throughout the week, including early morning sessions (just as Lynne and Ian had done many, many years ago!!). They train hard and have an incredible self-belief, which all goes to produce some great performances at training, time trials and swim meets. Val has a good rapport with all of her swimmers and she is proud and impressed by the dedication showed by the Group

## Club Squad

Hi - my name is **Georgina Henry** and I have been a part City of Sunderland Swimming Club since 1994, first as a swimmer then as a pool side helper and now as coach of the Club Squad. The Club squad is available to any one over the age of 12, we train five and half hours per week with morning training also available. The Club squad is made up of a variety of swimmers and each session is designed for your level of ability. Members of club squad can still swim competitively as much or a little as the swimmer wants to. If you are interested in joining club squad please see me or another member of the coaching team.

## Junior Olympic 1

I have been coaching JO1 since March 2008 when the club first moved into the Aquatic Centre. Before coaching with Sunderland I was a coach at Newburn ASC for two years.

Before I became a coach I was a swimmer, I trained at Gateshead and Wickham, City of Newcastle and Newburn swimming clubs. The highlights of my swimming career was becoming National Champion in 200 Butterfly, making the final at Senior Nationals in 200 Backstroke, and representing the County and Region abroad in Luxemburg, Jersey, Switzerland and Germany.

JO1 had a fantastic year in 2009 with some great results at N&D's, NER's and Nationals. The aim for 2010 is to build on the results we achieved last year. The squad is learning to train properly and is improving all the time. We are going to be concentrating on building the training up towards the main competitions in the season, while also focusing on technique, turns, starts, and approach to competitions.

Here's to a good 2010!!! **Paul Woodley**

## Our Wonderful Athletes

Do you know of anyone that deserves a mention? Perhaps they have passed their driving test, got straight A's at school, or did something amazing for charity. Drop us a line at: [alastair.johnson@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:alastair.johnson@sunderland.gov.uk)

## Junior Olympic 2

Welcome back swimmers and Happy New Year for 2010!

It was really refreshing to hear so many of you keen to get back into the pool chasing those goals that we set at the beginning of the season. With over 1/3 of the season gone already it is even more important that you maximise every opportunity when chasing those goals.

Exceptional results are the reward for excellent training remember with the 3 A's Attitude Attendance and Application you can achieve anything you put your mind to.

Swimmers are now focusing their training on the N&D Youth Championships in February. **Danny Thompson**

## Junior Olympic 3 & A Squad

The swimmers are all working well and are getting used to the new training. The important thing is always to come to the workout thoroughly prepared and to do your absolute best. Some of the skills that we have identified to improve are:

- bulletproof - have a positive mindset at all times
- training and race skills - do the simple things perfect
- being professional – going on the right time, getting your heart rate, no breathing on the last 5 minutes
- technique - perfect at slow speeds
- kick speed – goal is sub 60 seconds for 75 metres kick
- strength, range of movement and kinetic chain - more efficient and powerful technique
- commitment - have courage in what you do and attend your workouts

Remember to attack your weaknesses – this is an easy way to improve. Quote for the month -

winning is not everything,  
but wanting to win is.

**Alastair Johnson**

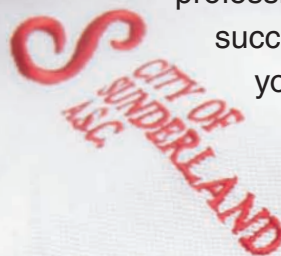
## Club Uniform at Swim Meets

Please ensure that you are all kitted out in the Club uniform at swim meets.

This includes:

- Club swim hats (any dome hats must be worn underneath the Club hat)
- Club tracksuit pants or plain black or navy blue (no multi coloured shorts or similar are allowed)
- Club tracksuit
- Club polo or t-shirt
- Always wear training shoes and socks – keeping your feet dry and warm is essential for fast racing.

Looking good as a **TEAM** is important as we want to be recognised as a professional unit dedicated to success. Make sure that you do your bit to help the **TEAM**.



## QUIZ Answers: How did you get on?

**Answers are:** 1. Michael Phelps and 5 individual gold medals (200 & 400 Medley, 100 & 200 Butterfly and 200 Freestyle – all in world records except the 100 Butterfly which was 'only' an Olympic record) 2. 15 metres 3. The women's 100 Butterfly time of 55.05 is faster than the men's 100 Breaststroke time of 55.61 4. Northumberland and Durham 800 metres Freestyle Championships 5. Men's 10 metre platform diving

# Breaststroke Clinics

A BIG well done to all the young swimmers who came along to the two breaststroke clinics in December. We had a great turnout

for both sessions with the swimmers and coaches having a great time. A few tips to keep developing your breaststroke are:



## Body Posture

- Horizontal body at the surface – keep it long and thin
- Keep your hips close to the surface
- Maintain your body tone – pull belly button in and keep your core switched on

## Head Position

- Keep head still between the arms during the glide
- Eyes looking down on the glide
- Keep your face relaxed

## Swim technique

- Pull -> Kick -> Glide
- Kick to follow the pull immediately

## BACKSTROKE CLINIC

We are running two Backstroke Clinics on Monday 15 February (OH3 and Competitive Development Squads) and Friday 19 February (Skill Development Squad) from 6.30 – 8.00 pm.

The goal is to develop our backstroke skills and knowledge as we want lots of swimmers achieving more success on this stroke (and thus the medley too). We will cover the following:

- posture
- basic stroke technique and timing
- common mistakes and how to correct them

I will be leading the clinic – hope to see you all there  
**Alastair Johnson, Head Coach**

## New members

Congratulations and welcome to all our new members. We hope that you will be with us for a long time and really enjoy your swimming at Sunderland:

### Daniel Heeley: A Squad

“ Never frown because you never know who might be falling in love with your smile ”

**Justine Milton**

## Competition entries

Due to new ASA rules, the Club can not accept any wild card entries or entries with no times.

**This rule is from immediate effect.**