

Once again, Scarborough Swimming Clubs annual A&B Grade Swimming Gala has been a huge success. Celebrating the 21st Anniversary of their summer event, the Club was in high spirits, with members sporting personalised T-Shirts and welcoming competitive swimmers and their supporters from Barnsley, Darlington, South Axholme, St. Neots, Ryedale, Manchester Tri, Sheffield City, Adwick, Driffield, Bridlington, South Hunsley, Hull, Kingfishers and Whitby for an exciting weekend of competitive swimming at the town's premier meet. The highlight of the weekend is the Cowen "Skins" Races with a top prize of £100 to the winners! Read on for a full report.

The first session commenced on Friday evening with the distance events of 200m and 400m freestyle for boys and girls aged 9 and over. Scarborough Swimming Club was well represented in all events with some excellent performances. The boys opened the weekend with their 200m Free, a strong swim from Adam Dawson, 13, secured him the Gold Medal from his Whitby rival, Owen Robson, with Scarborough's Nathan Munday clinching the Bronze. Finnian Hutchinson and Chris Cook also claimed Bronze Medals in their age group

Not to be outdone, the Scarborough girls brought home seven medals between them in their 200 Free. The talented Amy Corcoran 13, claimed a Gold Medal alongside, Emily Harrison 14, and Atlanta Dowkes 12, Silver went to Chloe Holloway, 10, Phoebe Dawson, 13, and Emma Clapton 16, with a Bronze for Isobel Metcalfe, 14.

In the 400 Free Adam Dawson again swam competitively, claiming the Silver with team mates Nathan Munday and Joe Kelly, 12, earning Bronze Medals with their personal best swims. This laid the foundation for the forthcoming weekend of 50m and 100m sprint events.

Saturday was an early start for the swimmers, with warm up starting at 8:15am for the very popular 200 individual medley for boys and girls. In this event, the fastest six senior competitors from the A Grade and B Grade sections, go on to battle for cash prizes in a knockout event called the SKINS, later in the day, so there is a lot to swim for! Also, this event traditionally produces the most personal best times of the gala. The balcony was full and the atmosphere electric as competitors lined up to race.

Medals from the Scarborough boys included Gold for Nathan Munday, Silver for Joe Kelly and a Bronze for older brother Luke Kelly. A cracking swim from Adam Dawson earned him a Speeding Medal. These were new last year and proved a popular change, awarded to swimmers who surpass the entry time and therefore need to move up to a higher level. This is classed as an achievement and not a penalty. The girls again rose to the challenge with Gold Medals for Phoebe Dawson, Atlanta Dowkes, Emily Harrison, Isobel Metcalfe and Emma Keith. A Silver Medal for Matilda Tomlinson and a Speeding Medal for Rachel Lynn, 10

Following a short break the warm-up for session 3 was underway. Many more competitors arrived and so did their supporters. The balcony was at capacity as parents were eager to witness the swimmers race each other. Many friendships and rivalries are rekindled at this level of competition, bringing out the best from swimmers, in the spirit of a great weekend of competitive swimming.

The Mayor and Mayoress of Scarborough arrived to show their support at the town's exciting event, meeting the swimmers and presenting the medals.

Scarborough boys 13 & over dominated the 100m backstroke event with Golds from Adam Dawson and Luke Kelly, while Girls 13yrs and over 100m breaststroke saw a Gold from Isobel Metcalf and a Silver from Emily Grayson, with 15 year old Megan Ward, who is valued member of our teaching team, inspiring many of our young swimmers with her always cheerful and positive outlook, attempting this challenging race, in her first A&B gala.

Next was the boys 9-12yrs 50m butterfly and girls 9-12yrs 50m Freestyle. For some of the younger competitors this was their first open gala and they rose to the occasion with enthusiasm and determination, showing true class and courage to compete in such a big event. Joshua Coates, George Brown and Matthew Wilson taking Gold and Bronze Medals with Atlanta Dowkes taking Gold and Alex Beeson, 9, in her first A&B gala a Gold Medal with Grace Boyes , 9, Rachel Lynn, 10 , bringing home the Silver and Emma Brown,9, in a close 4th place.

Next older swimmers again and Dak Cappleman, 13, earned Silver in the Boys 50m breaststroke with Golds for Eleanor Woodroffe,16 and Emma Keith,15 and a Silver for Phoebe Dawson in the 50m Back.

Ridings League team mates Joe Kelly and Owen Hobkinson produced some good PB's in 100m Free with Chloe Holloway, 10 claiming the Silver in 100m Fly. A great finish to the morning session and for the host club who certainly set the standard for more action after the break

The Senior Mixed Relay SKINS took place immediately after lunch. Last year's format proving successful, with the change of time producing an electric atmosphere and huge crowd support. In this event, the swimmers compete in boy/girl teams against each other, with one elimination after every race. All strokes are used and the last swimmers in the event are the winners. This is always very exciting as the tension mounts after every round. With supporting parents getting involved and a cash prize incentive, the pressure to win is immense.

Representing Scarborough this year were Adam Dawson and Emma Keith in the B Grades and Luke Kelly, Emily Harrison and Phoebe Dawson in the A grades. Twins Adam and Phoebe Dawson, only just entering into the senior level and the youngest of the age group, were showing their talent. Some excellent swims saw Phoebe's team take it to the last swim and only just missing out on the win.

Session 4 then got underway with the very competitive boys 9-12years 50m Breaststroke, a B grade Gold for Rhys Doubtfire,10, and a Silver for Cameron McDonald, a Bronze for Joe Kelly and George Brown, while a super swim from 10 year old Jack Naylor in his first A&B saw him earn a big personal best time in the A grades. This set the afternoon off in style and was closely followed by the girls 9-12yrs 50 back, Emma Brown in her first A&B swam strongly to take the Gold with twins Emily and Megan Kelly, 9, in their first A&B took home a Silver and Bronze with Alex Beeson claiming the Bronze and Grace Boyes in a close 5th place. Matilda

Tomlinson and Holly Millard claimed a Silver Medal, Rachel Lynn and Atlanta Dowkes on flying form earning Speeding Medals.

The older boys once again stood up to the mark. In the 13yrs and over 100m butterfly, Luke Kelly and Nathan Munday both taking Gold Medals.

The 13yrs and over girls 100m freestyle event is always one of the most popular in the gala. With plenty of support from the balcony, Scarborough swimmers did not disappoint, Amy Corcoran and Emily Harrison earning Golds, Phoebe Dawson and Isobel Metcalfe taking Silvers and Emily Grayson taking the Bronze in personal best swims.

Event 265 was next, the boys 10-12yrs 100m backstroke with Finian Hutchinson taking home the Silver Medal.

The next event was the girls 10-12yrs 100m breaststroke with Matilda Tomlinson bringing home the Silver, while boys 50m Freestyle, which is sometimes known as the 'splash 'n' dash'. Was dominated by Chris Cook with a Gold Medal and Dak Cappleman with a Bronze.

In the girls 13yrs and over 50m butterfly, Golds for Amy Corcoran and Emily Harrison, Silver for Phoebe Dawson and Bronze for Emma Keith rounding off the end of a successful day for the Scarborough swimmers.

Sunday Morning was bright and sunny with warm up again commencing for session 5, the 100m Individual Medleys at 8am. This is the event which produces the finalists for the Cowen Junior SKINS later in the day. With the temperature at poolside and on the balcony rising sharply on the longest day of the year, the swimmers needed to be completely focused for their race. Scarborough swimmers were energetic and excited, singing and dancing on the poolside during warm up. After some great battles, with many personal best times achieved, including Golds for Rhys Doubtfire, Atlanta Dowkes, Emily Grayson and Luke Kelly, Silver for Adam Dawson and Emily Kelly, 9, and Bronze for Chris Cook and Matilda Tomlinson, the fastest six from each category were rewarded with their place in the SKINS later in the day including Scarborough's George Brown, Joseph Grayson, Joe Kelly and Atlanta Dowkes.

A short break was taken and Session 6 started at 11am with the boys 10-12yrs 100m butterfly. Only 7 competitors in total took on this challenging sprint race with the Scarborough entry Joe Kelly earning himself a Speeding Medal and Yorkshire Time.

Event 304 , Girls 10-12yrs 100m freestyle, produced some excellent swims from the junior competitors, with medals and best times for the Scarborough swimmers Rachel Lynn, Gold, Atlanta Dowkes, Silver and Holly Millard, Bronze with a Speeding Medal for Chloe Holloway and Georgina Calvert.

The next event was the boys 13yrs and over 50m backstroke, with the on form Adam Dawson and Luke Kelly bringing home Golds, and Thomas McDonald with Silver and Chris Cook with Bronze.

In the girls 13yrs and over 50m breaststroke event Amy Corcoran continued the wins with a Gold, Silver for Isobel Metcalfe and a Speeding Medal for Phoebe Dawson. Back came the boys in the 9-12yrs 50m freestyle and a 1,2,3 for 10 year olds Cameron McDonald, Matthew Wilson and Rhys Doubtfire and William Butterworth with a Speeding Medal for George Brown and Harry Butterworth.

The following event, the 9-12yrs girls 50m butterfly, saw a Gold for Rachel Lynn and Silver for Chloe Holloway with a Bronze for Atlanta Dowkes, a Speeding Medal for Alex Beeson and a good personal best swim from Grace Boyes brought her in 4th.

The Boys 13yrs and over 100m breaststroke brought Silvers from Dak Cappleman and Rory Hobkinson, with the last event of the session, the girls 13yrs and over 100m Backstroke seeing a Silver for Emily Harrison and a Speeding Medal for Emily Grayson. A fantastic end to the morning.

The Cowen Junior Mixed Relay SKINS were next, again staying with the earlier time and making for another electric atmosphere. The finalists were swimmers who had qualified from the earlier 100m Individual Medley. Representing Scarborough Swimming Club were George Brown, Joseph Grayson Joe Kelly and Atlanta Dowkes.

Swimmers were randomly selected into boy/girl pairs and swam their heats as a relay. The atmosphere was intense, with all swimmers focused on the job in hand. Huge cheering from the crowd and the poolside urged the swimmers faster , swimming up to five 50m races with only a couple of minutes rest between. Great swims from all followed, with the final two pairs of swimmers Scarborough's Atlanta Dowkes and Joe Kelly, storming home to take the win and the £100 cash prize at their home club! An exciting start to the afternoon!

Racing got underway again, with boys 13yrs and over 50m butterfly and a win for Luke Kelly, Silver for Chris Cook and Bronze for Nathan Munday and a Speeding Medal for Adam Dawson.. Event 354 was the girls 13yrs and over 50m freestyle, another splash and dash, with the talented Amy Corcoran taking Gold, closely followed by team mate Phoebe Dawson taking the Silver for her age, alongside Emily Grayson and Isobel Metcalfe, with Eleanor Woodroffe bringing home a Bronze.

The next race, the boys 10-12yrs 100m breaststroke saw Joe Kelly, fresh from the Skins, take a Silver Medal A grade with Harry Butterworth taking B grade Bronze.

In the girls 10-12yrs 100m backstroke event, the girls continued boosting the medal table for Scarborough with another Gold for Atlanta Dowkes. Another highlight of the gala was the boys 13yrs and over 100m freestyle event, with Silvers for Luke Kelly, and Nathan Munday and a Bronze for Adam Dawson. Scarborough's Jacob Mensah produced an outstanding swim at the end of a long weekend, in the multi-disability section with a superb Personal Best swim to add to his collection, another star of the future!

Event 366 was the girls 13yrs and over 100m butterfly, a challenging event after the long weekend, with superb performance from Amy Corcoran (Speeding Medal) Gold for Phoebe Dawson and Emily Harrison, and Silver for Emma Keith.

The penultimate event, the boys 9-12 years Backstroke, saw a final 1,2,3 from 10 year old Matthew Wilson, Joshua Coates and Cameron McDonald with a Speeding Medal from Owen Hobkinson and Harry Butterworth and a strong swim from Joseph Grayson saw him earn a 4th place in the A grades.

The final event of the weekend was the girls 50m 9-12yrs Breaststroke and once more the younger swimmers showed they were stars of the future, with a Gold from Emily Kelly, 9, and Holly Millard, a Bronze from Rachel Lynn and Speeding Medals going to Alex Beeson, Georgina Calvert and Khyarna Foster. A thrilling end to the long weekend of swimming.

Scarborough Swimming Club would like to thank all the participating clubs who attended the Gala; all the swimmers for providing the highest standard of competition possible; the organisers and committee members for their relentless work in bringing the gala together; coaches, team managers, officials, judges and timekeepers for their commitment and time; the caterers and fundraisers for the endless work; and all the gala volunteers who gave their time to make the weekend run smoothly. A final thank you goes to the supporters on the balcony, who once again helped create an unrivalled atmosphere and make the 21st Scarborough A/B Gala 2015 an outstanding success.

See you all next year!