

# RNSC MASTERS

December 1999

Issue no. 31

## From the Editor

Welcome to the Ruislip & Northwood Masters' FIRST newsletter of 1999 and the LAST of the millennium!

Sorry for the delay(!): I never meant it to be so long and when Deryk thrust an article into my hand last week (or was it two weeks ago?) and asked me if I was going to get another newsletter out before Xmas, I thought I'd better get on with it!

I will admit that some of the articles have been sitting in the 'Master Newsletter In Tray' for a few months, but others have only winged themselves my way recently.

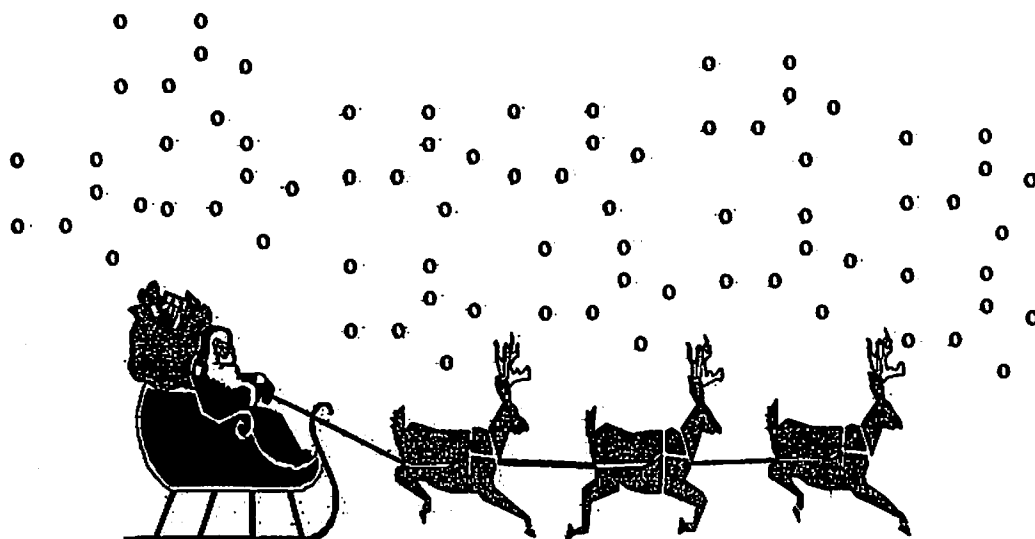
Anyway, I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and not *just* because it has taken so long to come out!

My thanks to all the contributors for either writing or finding stuff for me - especially Karen, Colin, Tony R. and Ron. And if you want more newsletters in the year 2000, just keep giving me articles and the guilt should soon shame me back to my computer!!

Seasons greetings,

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## A word from your Chairman

Deryk

### Where are all the members?

Attendance at training sessions, although no compulsory, is dropping weekly and particularly since the summer holidays.

Remember, as we all get a little older it takes longer to get our bodies in a fit state to parade on the beach in some far off holiday location, so regular training throughout the year is the answer!

Will you recognise each other at the Christmas Dinner?

## Even more words!

Deryk



### BRITISH LONG DISTANCE SWIMMING ASSOCIATION ONE HOUR POSTAL SWIM

Details of the above have been received. The aim is to swim as far as you can, in our own pool, in one hour. Every entrant will receive a cloth badge as a souvenir of the event, with medals for the first three in each age group. There is a team competition as well (teams of 3 swimmers). To enter a team, all swimmers must have already entered the individual event. The cost is £3.50 per individual event and £3.00 per team entry.

The closing date is 1 March 2000. It is hoped that all members will enter this event. It is planned to dedicate one of our training nights to this – probably a Sunday towards the end of January or beginning of February 2000.

Entry forms will be distributed soon.

## A team of ten for Maidenhead

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The team for Maidenhead was a shadow of its former self but as we have won it so many times already, it didn't really matter!

No, only ten of Ruislip's masters made it to the Maidenhead pool on a cold autumnal day in October. Many had already fallen by the wayside for a variety of reasons. The Heaths were holidaying in Florida (poor things!), the Allsopps were due to be holidaying in Minorca, but ended up in York and Keith was "getting over a course" the week before(!).

Then we lost Tony Fidler (to work), Christine (to injury) and Bob & Lesley C. (to illness) and with the George twins still "trekking" around Australia, we were definitely depleted in the ranks.

BUT we had a really good day. Not many outstanding performances but still a good team spirit and a clutch of medals, which we have come to expect at all our forays into competition!

Surprise number one was that Colin was the first to arrive! Surprise number two was to see Tony Robjant in

the water so much as he swam relay, after relay, after relay – even willingly at times!

The girls were secretly pleased in the end that there were only three of them as it meant that their seven relays were somewhat curtailed. And those 50m relays *do* hurt!

Nevertheless, coach Ron was able to cobble together quite a few respectable teams with the bones of what was left and we came away with a few medals.

And, of course no gala would be the same without the celebratory pizza at the end of the day.

FOOTNOTE: Some advice to anyone who has a computer. Make sure you always back up your work. In his hurry to pack away, gala organiser John Jeffrey unplugged the computer only to find that none of the information had been saved! Hence no results and no confirmation of my medal in the breaststroke!! (Fortunately I have been able to use Ron's results for the newsletter, but many of the positions are unknown).

## Obituary: The demise of Mr 26

Tony R

I am pleased to report the untimely demise of Mr '26' as at 9:15 am Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> May.

Yes folks, Reg strikes again!

After an extremely pleasant session Leslie C, Keith, and myself, were outrageously conned into a 'take it as slowly as you like' butterfly swim and 'go for distance.....'.

'Think of it as an extended warm-down!', was mentioned somewhere along the line.

Lesley C raced off and blew 200m away fairly easily .....I followed, slowly (as instructed) and completed 200m (recovering various internal organs from differing parts of the pool afterwards!).

BUT.....

Mr 26 continued.....

and at Leslyish pace for the early bits.....

and continued.....and continued.....

When the youngsters from Deryk and Lyn's Champions school arrived for their lesson, he stopped.....

### SO NOW THE GRAND ANNOUNCEMENT:

Mr 26 IS DEAD.....LONG LIVE Mr 32.



## NEWS NEWS NEWS

Congratulations go to Jennifer & Pete who became engaged in October. We wish them all the best for their wedding in September 2000 and for their future life together.

Welcome to some new members who have joined since the last newsletter: Eileen O'Connor, and Anne & Tony Heath and Karen Luckham, who all joined after I had told them what a lovely bunch of people you were!

Welcome back to some old faces – well, not that old! It's good to see Alan, Nicola, Janie, Ann Ramondo, Annie Murray, Ray and Janice back swimming with us.

Dates for your diaries:

Kensington	22nd January
Amersham	6th February
Bracknell	4th March
Guernsey*	31st Mar – 2nd April
Cork*	24th – 25th Sept
Barcelona*	Aug 2000

\* See page 6 for more details

Our membership secretary, Jill, asks that everyone who hasn't paid their subs yet please do so NOW!

Rumour has it that Sandra's New Year resolution is to come back swimming again. Not only that – she promises to bring her daughter, Kay, with her!

New members are always welcome. Why not tell your friends and family about the excellent set up we have at Ruislip & Northwood Masters?

Former members. If you used to swim with us, why not come back! We are still as lovely as we ever were! And what better way to start a new millennium?

## A Corking time in Ireland

by Tony R.

'Johnny Herbert!!!.....don't bet on it matey.'

HELLO-DARE TOO-BEE-SHORE  
N'ALL-N'ALL-N'ALL

WOULD IT BE THE NEWS OF THE  
CRAIK IN CORK YOU'D BE AFTER?

Just getting in the mood dear reader! It's said of course that if you kiss the Blarney Stone (Cork castle), you'll be empowered with '.....a surfeit of true wit and eloquence, most of which being of no consequence whatsoever.....'

I decided that any more surfeit for me and I'd probably lose what few friends I've got left (you lot!) so decided not to kiss the famous 'brick'.

We all agreed this would be for the best, unfortunately only deciding this after having driven Deryk and Colin all the way to Cork Castle, found the ruddy stone, queued up for a while, etc.

It had nothing to do with the fact that the stone was right at the top of the battlements (very high) or that you had to basically hang upside down over the edge and kiss the thing 'upside down' as it were. We all went back down and I had an ice-cream instead!

We met an amazing number of American tourists all presumably visiting Cork in search of ancestry.

THURSDAY: Unfortunately Chris Smith couldn't come in the end due to work pressures, and although some expressed early interest, notably Keith, Lesley and Roger, and Ann (Smiler!), at the end Colin, Deryk and yours truly were left to hold RNSC's end up!

Bloody shame, because at 204 years in total we would have slaughtered the 200years+ relay teams!

Then it's Heathrow, through security, struggle to find the right gate with not a lot of time to spare on the published flight time. Can't see any signs for the Cork plane, no announcements etc so we have to ask a nice

looking lady in green and back comes the magnificent reply 'Oh I tink it'll be that gate there.....but you'll have to wait until the plane comes in before you can take off!

We start getting used to Ireland!

Then we're in Cork and in the hire car (Opel Astra). We find the hotel, superb old manor house.....and get unpacked.

We set off to find the pool....about 20 mins away.

Its sort of sunk into the ground but is a fairly new (2 yr old?) great place with poolside steam room (good news) and full gym (bad news).

Back to the Lotamore Guest House and I interrogate the old lady owner .....(that's the elderly female hotel owner folks, not somebody who owns a bunch of old ladies, just thought I'd better make

that clear as it is Ireland!)....., to find out where all the good restaurants are, pubs, live music etc and off we go to the first one.

Nice bright Art-Deco looking place called Jacques. We all fall deeply in lust with the waitresses. Strangely, each of us with different waitresses. That never seemed to happen when I was a lad! Must be the Guinness.

Actually Cork is the Irish centre for Beamish, and Dublin for Guinness. So Deryk and I plumb for the Beamish for the rest of the time.....Colin remains loyal and steadfast to his Guinness.

Cork is a working port, which makes a change for us, and Downtown Cork is a really nice place. Unlike Dublin, Cork doesn't seem to have any dodgy bits!

We discover two good pubs 'The Hairly Lemon' and right outside the Beamish brewery....and The Sailpin Grinnock' ....or something! Outside, these places look a bit rough, (see photos), but inside they're great.

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It had nothing to do with the fact that you had to basically hang upside down to kiss the thing 'upside down' as it were!

# TIPS TO TIGHTER, TERRIFIC TUMBLE TURNS

(or how a kick in the backside can really make a difference)

I unashamedly admit to lifting this article from the magazine AQUAZONE! It is intended for kids but I thought it would be equally useful for the likes of us - especially those who are still trying to master the art of turning!

*Starts, dives, turns and finishes are the difference between good and great swimmers. Developing excellence in 'wall-work' is fundamental to swimming success. In freestyle and backstroke, a few simple tips can help you get the most out of every turn:*

- \* Approach your turn at maximum speed. Turns are a place to increase speed not slow down. Be aggressive - think of things like 'attacking the wall', 'driving hard to the wall' etc.
- \* Don't breathe inside the flags. Use the flags as a signal to accelerate - to speed up. Breathing inside the flags slows you down. Above all, avoid breathing on the last stroke and those little 'peck-a-boo' breaths just before you commence turning.
- \* As you commence your turn, put your chin on your chest. This initiates the turn and starts your body tumbling
- \* Place one arm by your side as you commence your turn, stretching out the other arm towards the wall. Use this lead arm to pull your body through the turn, by quickly whipping it under your body (like an underwater freestyle stroke) to accelerate your turning speed. A common mistake is to put both arms by your side a metre or so off the wall, relying on momentum to get you through the turn. Be careful in backstroke - you can't take another stroke once you have commenced the turning action.
- \* Kick fast and hard right up until you start turning.

The big secret to fast freestyle and backstroke turns - **KICK YOURSELF IN THE BACKSIDE!** By kicking yourself in the bottom (i.e. bringing your heels up to your backside) you make your body small and in effect like a little ball which can tumble fast and easily

Place both feet firmly on the wall shoulder width apart. This allows you to drive hard and kick out with maximum force. It will also minimise the chances of slipping on the wall. Avoid twisting while your feet are on the wall. Push off the wall hard and streamline tightly. This is particularly important if you push off the wall on your back and then kick yourself over onto your front to start freestyle. Place your chin on your chest, keep your body long and tall, hold one hand on top of the other with fingers stretching to the other end of pool, biceps squeezing your ears, toes pointing to the wall you just pushed off. Kick fast and hard as soon as your feet leave the wall.

Your bottom hand, (the hand closest to the bottom of the pool) begins stroking first. This allows you to maintain a long body shape and streamline more effectively. In freestyle, take a minimum of three strokes before breathing to maintain the speed you gained from your turn. Begin stroking at race speed (i.e. before you start losing the speed you gained off the wall). In backstroke, keep a tight streamline with short, fast butterfly kicks for as long as you can maintain a speed faster than that you could hold swimming to the legal maximum of 15 metres.

In training, remember that every turn is a race turn. Use every training turn to develop and refine skills that can help you meet the demands of every racing situation.

## A TURNING POEM

Approach the wall at maximum speed,  
this will give you the speed you need,  
To avoid increasing the amount of drag  
never breathe inside the flag,  
Pull your body through the turn  
this will give you speed to burn,

To make sure your turn is the best,  
put your chin right onto your chest  
Kick yourself hard in the bum  
to make your turns number one,  
Streamline tight and stretch out  
and you'll be singing the winners' song!

## A dip in the sea for the 'Ridgip Three'

Greg George

### BOURNEMOUTH PIER TO PIER SUNDAY, 18 JULY 1999

Despite some keen promotion by Keith prior to this year's event, the annual Bournemouth Pier to Pier swim came round with the usual three takers (me, Colin and Keith).

I suppose we were the only ones mad enough to spend over half an hour in the sea swimming from one Pier to the other.

It turned out to be an amazing day: very hot, flat surf conditions and no wind. A day on the beach at Bournemouth on that Sunday was just like being on the French Riviera - well almost!

This time the event was held in the opposite direction, the reason being a change in the tides. We arrived at the usual pier only to be told to go to the opposite Pier a mile and a half away!

Never mind having to swim the distance, walking/jogging to the other end was more of a nuisance.

We were given the option of a free ride in the Noddy Train to the other end, but I managed to persuade Colin that it wouldn't be good for the image!

A great swim by all of us. A guy with a build that would have made Deryk look small finished way ahead of everyone! It is a non-competitive event, but for the record there were about 250 swimmers.

I came in 10th in around 36 minutes, followed closely by Keith in 14th. Colin emerged not long afterwards looking a lot less chilled than last year!

It looks like this may become an annual event with RNSC. The number of participants can only grow.

## Irish Mayhem continues

(Continued from page 3)

**FRIDAY:** Up far too early!

Superb full Irish brekky.

We look on the map and discover the place that Joe (Mr Medals) O'Dea was trying to tell us about and whose name we'd all forgotten.....Kinsale.

Down to the pool to meet some old friends, John Eyre from Guernsey amongst them, and of course to suss out the competition. Bad news for me .... Not too bad for Deryk and Colin.

Colin is the first off the blocks for us lot.....And wins!!

At exactly ten past seven and forty two seconds, (please understand, I'd been watching for some time!) I left the blocks for my first 100m Butterfly race!

The first 50m is taken nice and easy and I don't feel a thing (not can't .... don't!), setting down the third length I pick it up.....big mistake!.....I swallow half a gallon of Cork's best.

chlorinated.....splutter and choke.....lose all rhythm....and struggle to the end.....oh shit!.....turning round I come storming down the last 25m.....overtake everybody.....and end up feeling really good.....and extremely pleased with myself!

Five minutes later Deryk tells me I've missed getting a bronze by 0.002 secs to some bloody Welsh bastard! (i.e. a fellow noble swimmer from the extreme westerly side of our island).

Deryk and Colin continue to collect titles and prizes. The first prize isn't a medal, it's a lovely champagne glass. Irish crystal, with an engraved plaque on the front with the championship details. Very nice.

After the swimming we get changed back at the hotel and set off for the night!

This time we end up, after a few Bs and Gs, in an Italian restaurant where all the staff (including the chef) are Spanish!

Don't ask!

**SATURDAY:** Up even earlier to a full Irish!

Various swims in the morning and we find out that, as a club, we're actually mid table on 25 points. Not bad for three of us.....well, two really at this stage!

We visit a local shopping centre lunchtime and all do the Irish lottery.....we're all a bit surprised to hear that what you do is select six or seven numbers in each of five separate rows, optionally putting in a key number which can be used in any of the rows. Once selected you immediately put the slip into your pocket without showing it to anybody, pay the girl, leave, and if your numbers come up, you would have won!.....or something.

Swimming in the afternoon.....more medals for the boys AND ONE FOR ME!!!!!!!!!!!!

I have to admit mine has to go down to Deryk. 100m Freestyle, me in lane 1 with the guy I need to beat for a bronze in lane 6.....starting down the third 25 I'm really feeling

(Continued on page 6)

## Jane's walk in the mountains

We are all really pleased to see Jane Shekdar back in the pool and getting fit after *all this time!*

But did you know that one of the reasons that Jane wasn't around in May this year was because she spent six days trekking in the Himalayas?

The trip had been organised to raise money for the MacMillan Nurses and in the end £70,000 was raised by the 35-strong group, with our Jane raising £3,500 alone through sponsorship!

The group trekked for about 15 miles each day in the rarefied air of the foothills on Mount Everest.

Although they had practised before they left, with a long hike in the Queen Elizabeth Country Park in Petersfield, they were not prepared for the problems of living at altitude.

Jane says that the thing that surprised her the most was how breathless she was all the time.

"I had thought that I was quite fit, but it was jolly hard work! Not a doddle at all!"

The weather was generally misty during their expedition but one day Jane woke to a crystal clear sky and the view of the white peak of Mount Everest in front of her - a once in a lifetime sight which will always stay in her memory.



Although exhausted by her hike, Jane plans to make a similar trip to Nepal in the future.

And in the meantime she can keep fit by training in the 'rarefied' atmosphere of Merchant Taylors' pool!

## ***Irish Mayhem continues***

*(Continued from page 5)*

it..... but then spot an animated Deryk right along the poolside ..... flailing his arms about and yelling like he's just tasted warm Guinness, I don't dare to take the pace off so turn round and storm down the 4<sup>th</sup> 25m just in case he's still after me! I end up in second place, beating the other guy, and another one two heats away from me.....in a good time (for me) of 1min 16. Thanks Deryk!

We're all treated to three ex olympic swimmers, two male, one female, this afternoon.

The lady, (40-45 group) storms down the last leg of a final 100m free heat and very nearly passes out. Great time, 65secs I think, but it's strangely reassuring to see that somebody of her calibre can sometimes struggle like the rest of us.

The two guys are next door to each other, in the 100m Free. One is 47, one 49, and apparently have been friendly rivals for decades! Stunningly they come in in 57 and 59 secs respectively! WOW!

Stroke of luck .....we hear that the place recommended by CORK Masters club for Sunday lunch is in Kinsale, so that sorts that one out.

While we're outside the temporary gala swim shop, a woman is hummin' and arrin' about with this sequiny green shimmering number - 'is it really her or not?'. The sales lady offers to put it on and show it off better, disappears and comes back modelling the cossie! ..... Stunning! I express similar interest in a new gents style little blue number and ask her if she'll model it for me but she disappointingly refuses!!!

No swimming left now so we'll just have to make do with fun instead!

As usual (for E group swimmers and upwards), this starts with a small snooze back at the hotel! And once loads of z's have been had we set off into town.

Unfortunately we've failed to find a traditional Irish restaurant so far..... certainly nothing as good as 'Simply Ireland' in Guernsey (do you remember folks?). Tonight however our luck will change I'm sure. And it does.....we slip easily into a

Mongolian restaurant and stuff ourselves!!

A quicky in the Hairy Lemon..... decisions about tomorrow made..... and its off to bed.

**SUNDAY:** Yet another full Irish!

We scrap last night's plans and head off to Cork castle to kiss the Blarney! (see above)

We then spend a small fortune in the traditional Irish Wool Shop. (Yes, you're getting the hang of this aren't you dear reader.....of course it doesn't .....well perhaps a couple of jumpers, the remaining 50,000 sq ft of space has every Irish souvenir you could ever think of).

So we buy some!

Down to Kinsale for lunch and what a great place.....really nice. We get chatting to one of the Cork club members, who's really nice bloke, and have three average Beamish.

This gets extended into several large Beamish when the Grand Prix comes on the tele at the bar so we have to stay!

*(Continued on page 7)*

## ***Get on board!***

Forms are already available for the annual trip to **Guernsey** (31st March - 2nd April), which is always good fun.

Please see Karen if you would like to go, or even if you would like to know more about it. Deposits will be required quite soon.

Why not mark a date in your diary for the Irish Open International at **Cork** (24th - 25th September)?

Tony Robjant has all the information and it sounds like we should send a few more along next time to keep an eye on them!

See Tony also for details on

1<sup>st</sup> European Masters Games, which are due to be held in **Barcelona** in August 2000.

I can just see myself diving off the top board with the mountains in the background..... Well, perhaps not!!

A circus owner walked into a bar to see everyone crowded around a table watching a little show. On the table was an upside down pot and a duck tap dancing on it. The circus owner was so impressed that he offered to buy the duck from its owner.

After some wheelin' and dealin' they settled for £2000 for the duck and the pot.

Three days later the circus owner runs back to the bar in anger, "Your duck is a rip-off! I put him on the pot before a whole audience and he didn't dance a single step!"

"Hmmm....." thought the duck's former owner. "Did you remember to light the candle under the pot?"

† This is Graham's contribution to the newsletter!

## ***Masters' AGM - remember that?***

Sometime in the summer we had an AGM.

Nothing startling or major, but there was a brief overview of the year(s) that had passed before we got on to the more serious activities of eating, drinking and playing games. Things we are particularly good at at RNSC masters!

Our belated thanks go to Pad, Chris' husband, who organised an excellent music quiz to test our memories. And to Graham, who worked out some interesting pictures to draw in the 'Drawing Game'.

It was a shame he couldn't be there to see some of the picture's Joe's team produced!

## Ruilsip Masters go to the Dogs!!

Liz

Way back when, someone suggested a night out at the dogs. The deal looked good – entrance fee, meal, two drinks and your first £1 bet – all for £10!

Fourteen of Ruilsip & Northwood's intrepid swimmers & mates took up the offer and set off for Wimbledon for a 'Saturday Night Out'!

First problem was getting there! Roy and Gill took no chances and came by train, Keith & family breezed round on the M25 and Liz & Graham sat for an hour and twenty minutes in (very) slow moving traffic!

Travel problems were soon put to one side once the band had arrived and met up at the track. Resembling a large airport lounge, but far smokier, Wimbledon Dog Track had state of the art technology and was buzzing from the outset.

Although Anne Heath had given the intrepid band instructions on how to place a bet & impressed them with all sorts of technical terms such as 'reverse forecasts', it took brave wives, Sheila & Nicky to make the first move to the betting desks.

Acting on the advice of her grandson, Sheila put her money on his favourite numbers – 385 with a 'reverse forecast' (!), only to watch them come in first and second.

After this there was no stopping the others. In a bid to emulate Sheila's success, they rushed to place their bets and found their way outside to watch the action in the fresh air.

There was a real sense of excitement

*Acting on the advice of her grandson, Sheila put her money on his favourite numbers – only to watch them come first and second!!!*

ment trackside. Before each race the dogs were paraded in front of the stands (and cameras!), which gave the team a chance to judge for themselves (although none of them actually knew what to look for!).

Tony Robjant found it difficult to go for anything that was wearing a Newcastle United vest, but then Tony found it difficult to go for anything that was going to win!!

It wasn't long before the money was being raked in by certain members, namely Joe, very dapper in his trackside sports jacket and Duncan who found his luck towards the end of the evening.

Karen also entered loudly into the proceedings, screaming "GO ON, GO ON, GO ON, GO ON, GO ON, GO ON" in Liz's ear throughout the 8.45 pm race!

Unfortunately others weren't so lucky and many spent betting tickets littered the floor beneath Chris & Pad's and Jill & Jez's feet.

The food was surprisingly good and the atmosphere really exciting – once you'd got the hang of it! And fortunately the journey home, much easier!



## Irish Mayhem continues

(Continued from page 6)

Bar snacks only then, and Deryk discovers that a seafood platter in Kin-sale means half the piscine population of the Irish sea on a plate! Bloody marvellous!!!

The Grand Prix has various spins and crashes and retirements and we eventually leave .....but not before I jokingly turn round to the Cork guy and tell him its obvious that Johnny Herbert (currently seventh) will win..... trust me I'm an Irish lottery winner!

We quickly run Deryk to the airport, and I do mean quickly as we've left it a bit tight. Still what's a few double S bends and country lanes to an Opel Astra, permanently working over 5000rpm, and ME!!!! (That was fun wasn't it guys?)

In the evening Colin and I discover this great restaurant underneath a waterfall, very romantic! We pretend

we're with our loved ones and not each other, and a spinach and salmon stuffed guinea fowl and chocolate pudding later, its time to be off. But wait.....what's this? Stunningly we discover it's the only place, in four days of trying, that sells Irish coffee!

We quickly have one! This turns out to be more darkly coloured Irish whisky, rather than anything else; and the z'd requirement instantly arrives!!

MONDAY: I'm getting a bit sick of full Irish breakfasts so resist hard and order another full Irish breakfast!

An extra half day for me and Colin and we both choose to go back to Kin-sale.

Great place..I treat myself to an antique pocket watch (I've wanted one for ages!) and we hit the pub for one last Beamish!

Unfortunately in the middle of some brilliant pub fish and chips, I stop gazing lovingly at my new pocket watch

and read the bloody time of day with it! We're an hour late for the plane! Nothing to worry about Colin we'll just have to do it 20 mins quicker than with Deryk yesterday. Actually maybe's you should worry Colin!!

I bought a new digital camera and took some really good photos in Cork. Hopefully they'll enthuse more to go next year.....have a look folks.....it is different and great fun.

For anybody thinking of coming to Ireland next year, (hopefully!), my advice would be to try and forget everything you've ever learnt about anything - drink lots of the local medicine - relax totally - smile constantly - and be aware that the language used is similar to your own, but that's about it.

Actually reading through that last bit.....I think I've described what makes the place fun.

PS: JOHNNY HERBERT WON THE BLOODY GRAND PRIX.....



I think I was about 6 years old when I finally managed to leave my arm-bands behind and swim (well splash frantically about in the pool), concerned whether I was going to drown or not and whether dad was going to save me. Dad used to take my sister and me swimming regularly to Highgrove.

My earliest swimming memory is getting up at some ridiculous hour to go morning training when I was part of RNSC Juniors (more of a nightmare really!!).

I actually joined Ruislip & Northwood Swimming Club when I was about 13 (quite old really to become a swimmer). My sister Michelle was first to join the club. I wasn't particularly interested at the time, having just entered my teens but I went to Highgrove one evening with Dad to watch Michelle swim and to see what went on during a training session and after some persuasion from Dad, found myself joining up too.

My greatest achievement was completing (just about) a 200m fly swim (6 lengths) at Highgrove Pool - NEVER, EVER, EVER AGAIN!!!!

As far as other sports are concerned, I played netball at school and the occasional game of hockey. I sometimes wish I'd got more involved with netball but if I had, I may not have had the time for swimming!! There weren't many great achievements there as unfortunately it wasn't taken seriously enough by other team members.

When I became too old to swim for RNSC Juniors, I'm afraid to say that I became a traitor and went over to Hillingdon Borough, who had started a Masters section, as I don't recall there being a Masters section at RNSC at the time, just Family Bathing.

I stayed there for a couple of years before I went travelling and during various conversations with Dad whilst I was away, he told me that RNSC had started up a Masters section derived from Family Bathing, which he regularly attended on Saturday mornings. He couldn't stop raving about it, so when I came home I joined up straight away. I think it must be about seven years now, with the odd break for a bit more travelling!!

The thing I enjoy most about the club is being Competition Secretary!!!! Only joking! I actually enjoy everything about the club - people, pool (preferably without poo in it), even the sessions. It's a really nice club to belong to and I'd recommend it to anyone. I might warn them about Tony's session on a Friday though!

I think the most enjoyable gala I have been to has to be Guernsey. The whole weekend is such a laugh. I'm afraid to say that the swimming takes a little bit of a

## MASTER PROFILE

**KAREN O'DEA**

back seat (sorry Ron!!) Which reminds me, if anyone is interested in Guernsey next year, please let me know.

I think my greatest achievement in the pool was for winning a 400m freestyle race (12 lengths

of Highgrove pool) when I was about 15. It was a club championship day where you would swim against your team mates and the day usually ended in tears because you'd beat someone who you thought was much faster than you or you'd lose against someone who you thought was much slower than you.

I'd never swum 400m freestyle before and was in the final heat which was spearheaded. I was in lane 2 (third fastest). I knew the girl in lane 3 was pretty confident and as for me, well my nerves were running to a high, the adrenalin was pumping and I visited the loo it seemed a hundred times (even now nothing has changed when it comes to a gala!!!).

It was a "psyche each other out" sort of swim really as we were together the whole way and every other length we would be breathing and looking at each other. I was pretty amazed that I was keeping up with her and it was only on the final length that we both just went for it and I got the touch.

I was absolutely thrilled at winning and our coach then jokingly commented that he had deliberately put me in lane 2 because he knew the breathing pattern for

both of us and therefore, I would be able to judge the race and see what sort of position I was in. I put it down to good timing and a well paced race (and knowing that my Dad was timekeeping the other end!!!).

I don't really have a favourite stroke as I do like swimming individual medleys, but backstroke is my least favourite because it's my weakest.

As far as others in my family being interested in swimming ....well, as you all know, my Dad swims in lane 3. My sister Michelle and brother Mark used to swim in the junior section of RNSC. My brother made a brief appearance a little while ago because he was on a fitness regime but it only lasted 5 minutes as we suspected. In the last year or so I've also introduced my boyfriend Duncan who swims in lane 3. It took a lot of persuasion to start with but I'm pretty sure he's enjoying it.

And as for free time. What's free time? - If only .....

I like to go to the gym and have a good workout which enables me to chill out. I like sleeping, doing crosswords, scanning holiday brochures and any other time I have is usually spent being Competition Secretary, sorting out galas and organising relays for them!!!!





# That was the year that was!



## ***Amersham in February***

What do I remember about Amersham? Relays! Lots and lots of them!! Twenty four in fact with everyone getting mixed up about which end they should be, what team they were in and which stroke they should be swimming.

I remember Karen diving in on the first leg in one race, getting out and then swimming the last leg in the SAME RACE!!

I seem to remember Andrew being there (remember Andrew?). And I remember that we didn't win, but we

## ***Bracknell in March***

Amersham had obviously worn everyone out because the team was somewhat depleted for Bracknell, although we had Margaret making her debut and Sarah and Gilly back in the swing of things.

It was cold in the water (always is), but there were some nice 'views' for the girls and a reasonable swim shop. No Tony Robjant stripping off in the girls changing rooms, but once in a lifetime is probably enough to cope with!

Grateful thanks go to Coach Ron who donned his trunks at the end of the day so that the team could take part in the 8-strong squadron.



## ***The Middlesexes in July***

The good thing about the Middx's is that they have now moved to Copthall and, although this is further to get to than Ealing, at least there is no fickle boom and relays are definitely only 4 x 25METRES!!

There were the same combinations of relays as ever: Men, Women, Mixed, Young, Old, Even Older ....and it was nice to see Roger back in the pool, helping the club out in those relays.

## ***Reading in May***

Gala debuts for the Heaths - Tony & Annel It was after this gala that Tony took over responsibility for filling out his OWN entry form!!

Now the twins weren't there, so they must have been off on some travels somewhere, but Lesley B. was (remember Lesley B.?).

We didn't win this one, but we should have and pizza was very late but very nice in Reading's own ASK restaurant!

We finished fifth overall. Not bad considering that there were only eleven of us!

(And I got a PB in the 50m Breaststroke, after five years of trying!!)

## ***Guernsey at Easter - or just before!***

Someone promised me an article on the trip to Guernsey.....

So in the absence of such article I can only go with what I heard. There didn't seem to be much feedback about swimming performances, but a lot about winning and dining on low sofas at two o'clock in the morning.

I know that a trip to Jersey was made, that medals were won in abundance and that they are all planning to make the return trip next year.

Did someone make that brave dip in the sea on the Sunday morning? I think they did.

See Karen for more details and find out from the horse's mouth what really went on in Guernsey in 1999!!

# S. BUCKS & BERKS CHAMPIONSHIPS (MAIDENHEAD)

	200m	100m	50m	50m Fly	50m	50m
Chris Smith	3.09.12	1.28.71	42.49	41.32	42.56	35.71
Tony Robjant	2.58.50			37.88		34.56
Joe O'Dea				41.49	42.17	38.07
Mike Goddard	3.27.65		54.19		58.80	
Duncan Spicer					45.26	34.61
Colin Giddings				38.04	40.49	35.47
Roy Wilson	3.31.95		No time available			41.29
Karen O'Dea	2.32.33	1.18.16	40.72	34.85	40.58	31.42
Liz Smart					41.75	34.80
Ann Raimondo	3.02.53	1.30.32		42.02		35.30

## RELAYS

	1st (Back)	2nd (Breast)	3rd (Fly)	4th (F/C)	
MENS 200 yrs + FREE	Tony R. 33.22	Colin G. 34.49	Joe 39.13	Chris 34.30	2.21.24 Bronze
MENS 200 yrs + MEDLEY	Chris 41.24	Joe 42.45	Colin 37.33	Tony R. 33.32	2.34.49 Silver
MIXED 100 yrs FREE	Liz 34.99	Duncan 34.41	Karen 30.63	Tony R. 33.60	2.13.64
MENS 160 yrs + FREE	Tony R. 33.76	Roy 42.16	Duncan 33.87	Colin 35.22	2.26.21
MENS 160 yrs + MEDLEY	Chris 41.10	Colin 40.45	Tony R. 38.19	Duncan 33.30	2.33.14
MIXED 180 yrs + FREE	Liz 35.70	Joe 38.94	Ann 34.90	Colin 34.43	2.24.06 Bronze



On behalf of all the  
Masters, we would like to  
wish all our coaches,  
Ron, Reg & Tony  
a very Happy Christmas  
and a Prosperous New  
Year!

Thanks for all the time  
and effort you put in to  
train us!

Thanks for all the  
patience you have when  
you are explaining the  
sessions!

Thanks for all the advice  
and tips you give us to  
make us better  
swimmers!

(Think up nice things for  
the New Year, eh?)

