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RNSC MASTERS

NEWSLETTER 19

JUNE 1996

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## *Spot The Masters!*



this picture was passed anonymously to the Masters Newsletter office

**Can you spot the two current masters swimmers?**

See page 8 for answer and read the story behind the headline

***"GIRLS OF DISTINCTION"***

## ZEE VERLD CHAMPIONSHIPS AT SHEFFIELD .....

by Liz Smart

were GOOD FUN!! But how do I begin to tell you all about it? Do I give a long day by day account of the proceedings? Do I just home in on the outstanding results? Or shall I just leave it to your imagination? Firstly I think I should at least let everyone know exactly who went. Teresa, Lesley C., Karen and myself were there for the week and Tony Fidler made guest appearances on the first weekend and then the Wednesday, bringing with him Lesley B. and Danny. Well actually it was Danny bringing Lesley and Tony and they arrived just in time for the second half of extra time (England v Germany). Poor Tony. After missing the Cup Final because of the Reading gala he then found himself having to follow the Euro 96 quarter finals on his personal stereo at Ponds Forge with flippant females badgering him for the score every five minutes. And *then* had to suffer the first part of the semis with a portable TV on the back seat of Danny's Discovery. Never mind!! He seemed to take the result very well.

Our accommodation at Sheffield had been (extremely well) organised by Lesley C. We were guests of the University and residing in Broad Lane Court "an attractive flats development.....grouped around a paved courtyard....."(!) The doors were a bit squeaky and slammy, the door bell sounded like the fire alarm but the kitchen/dining room was cavernous and we were spoilt by a microwave and fridge/freezer. An initial hiccup over collection of the keys which resulted in Teresa chasing us around Sheffield was soon forgotten as we settled into our daily routine - lie in, breakfast, warm up at the University pool (Karen and Lesley, that is - I played chauffeuse), amble down to Ponds Forge (tram or walk), massage(!), another warm up (this time in the Diving Pool, soon nicknamed 'The Sprats Pool' because, from the stands, the swimmers resembled a lot of fishes jumping for bait), compete (perhaps), chat, make acquaintances (men in the ladies toilet - a regular occurrence!), eat, marvel at the world records etc. etc. It was all very exciting and relaxing at the same time.

The event had attracted 4,500 competitors from 45 countries, involving 1,300 clubs. Impressive stuff. We were certainly impressed by the registration, where we received our free programmes, passes and lots of info, and the Opening Ceremony was fun, especially the City of Sheffield Diving Club display. Lots of twirly stuff which got gasps from the audience. By this time, Lesley had actually finished devouring the programme and Karen had woken up after the ever so slightly boring speeches. Apart from Great Britain, with 1,641 competitors, the countries with the largest number of representatives were Germany (484), Japan (466), USA (319), Brazil (292), Australia (148) and Canada (138). You could easily recognise the Brazilians by their suntans and brief swimsuits - and I mean *brief*!! American males in the 55-75 age range were also conspicuous by a new style of costume - THE ALL-IN-ONE!!! Yes, complete with high-neck, zip etc!! This in fact made it very confusing on more than one occasion when we thought that the ladies heats had already started!! There were a couple of 91 year olds and even competition for the Heston ladies in the 85-90 years age group. The officials were firm but on the whole friendly. In fact, there I was behind the blocks before my 100m breaststroke and up popped Michaela (new girl from Lane 2) who just happened to be helping them out for a couple of days.

Shopping was good too!! We took the trip out to Meadowhall, a large shopping centre on the outskirts of Sheffield, on more than one occasion to help Lesley C. spend her money. Ray-Bans for Lesley, Body Shop unguents for Karen and a battery powered ferret and ball for me!! We had visitors too! I met up with my long lost brother and Tony Robjant appeared from nowhere on the Tuesday evening when he "just happened to be in the area". Gerry was a later arrival on the Wednesday afternoon and our flat soon began to resemble the true student pad it was designed to be!! But life on the floor of my room wasn't all it was cracked out to be for poor Lesley B who soon realised *why* she never goes camping!!

Oh and the swimming?? Good and bad really. Good for them, bad for me!! But once I had sorted out my goggles and realised that 100m in a 50m pool is not a good idea with the amount of training I have done I soon got used to it. Karen did her normal trick of PBing all the time, sometimes clocking faster than her 25m pool times, Teresa excelled in the longer distances and Tony F introduced a new style of warm up which will soon catch on. Having turned down the frequent offers to warm up in the Sprats pool or do some

stretching 'over the back' (he may not get a better offer!) we were just able to discern a slight movement of the hips as he was about to get onto the blocks. This preparation obviously did the trick as he clocked up some very fast times. Lesley C had a BAD DAY on the Sunday when her neck "went" during her morning warm-up. Some emergency physio and treatment from a friendly osteopath did something to put her back on the road to recovery but it wasn't the best preparation for the 100m freestyle. H-o-w-e-v-e-r she soon put her name on the rankings by winning TWO tenth place medals in the 100m fly and 50m free. Well done, that girl. Lesley B joined the proceedings for the 50m free and then remembered how awful it was to swim long course. And Danny entertained us all by videoing the 50m frees and then tortured us by letting us watch them. "Oh my gawd, do I really swim like that?". "Look at my right arm". "That is dreadful!". "I don't think I'll be wearing those trunks again"!

No week away would be complete without a 'night out on the town'. Lesley C and Karen had already quizzed their physiotherapists on the best night spot and after we had suffered spiked drinks at a disco bar and excruciating Kareoke in the Fountain Bar we ended up at The Leadmill where they played 60s and 70s music 'til 2 o'clock in the morning. Further details of this evening are available from those people who were there, but suffice to say that I returned home nursing my first hangover in six years!!

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Keith and Nicki on the birth of their daughter, Chloe, on Monday 24th June. Our best wishes to you!

## CLUB LA SANTA - LANZAROTE

After last newsletter's article on the Masters' training week in the Canary Islands I regret to tell you that the trip (as far as RNSC is concerned) is off. This is due to the hidden costs of the training package which would have pushed the price sky-high. Do not fear. Julia has promised to organise something to replace those disappointed by this news and will have further details shortly!!

## SWIMMING TIMES

*If you are serious about swimming.....then it has to be SWIMMING TIMES. Or so goes the advert!*

*Is there anyone else who might be interested in getting a regular copy of the above publication? They say it is "brighter, fresher, more colourful than ever before!" and if we, as a club, were to order a minimum of 3 copies we would get it at the reduced rate of £14 per year (instead of £20). In fact we could get a free copy with every 12 club copies ordered which would make it even cheaper but I can't be bothered to work out by how much!!*

*Apparently it includes articles on Masters swimming so if you are interested, if only mildly, please tell me and I'll organise it. Thanks.*

## REG

Reg has asked me to thank everyone for their good wishes following his recent operation. We are all glad to see you back, Reg, looking so well and still able to think up such hard training sessions!!

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

|            |  |  |
|------------|--|--|
| SEPT 14    | <i>Barnet Cophall Sprint Meet</i>        | (Closing Date: 2 Sept)                                     |
| SEPT 28-29 | <i>Southern Counties Short Course</i>    | (Venue: <i>Barnet Cophall</i> )                            |
| OCT 25-27  | <i>Masters Sprint Champs</i>             | (Venue: <i>Barnet Cophall</i> )                            |
| NOV 2      | <i>Berks &amp; S. Bucks Masters Meet</i> | (Venue: <b>MAIDENHEAD</b> )<br>(Senior Amateurs welcome!!) |
| MAR 21-23  | <i>Guernsey</i>                          |  |

Karen has now got forms for a lot of the above galas and is looking for willing participants!! The Masters Sprint Champs in October offer an ideal opportunity to compete in a national championship on your doorstep. It is normally held in Sheffield but the venue was changed because of the World Champs. Do not be put off by the title - it is the same old swimmers that you compete against in the local galas with a few others to pad the races out! You will not be 'out of your depth' nor 'not good enough'. It would also be great to show off the RNSC T shirts.

If we can't persuade you to do that competition then please, please make yourself available for the MAIDENHEAD gala in November. We have won the Top Club Trophy for the past two years, but we still need to field a strong team to ensure success this year. If you haven't competed at Maidenhead before do come along. It is a modern pool with good seating and great club atmosphere.

GUERNSEY forms are now available from Karen. The £166.00 cost includes air fare from Heathrow, three nights B&B and free car hire (4 persons). A deposit of £40.00 will be required by November. This is a great weekend - ask anyone who has already been on the trip!!

Finally, as mentioned in last month's newsletter, please help Karen by getting your entry forms back to her as soon as possible. It is an absolute nightmare for her and Ron to sort out all the relays so they need to know who will be available before the closing date.

## **NEW FACES**

Paul Kannemeyer    Diane Williamson    Margaret McLeod    James Laver    Roger Brown  
Jason Gould    Silvie Zurmuehle    Ian Emmett    David Bridger

A timely welcome to the newer members. May you all enjoy the jovial atmosphere and exciting training that RNSC Masters offers. If anyone is even remotely interested or intrigued in competing at any of the extremely enjoyable galas coming up please do not hesitate in making yourself known to Karen, our Competition Secretary. Although I dare say her Hit Squad will get to you sooner or later!!

## **SUMMER FUN**

Following the success of last year's Fun Relays and Bar-B-Que a repeat performance has now been arranged for **SUNDAY 11TH AUGUST** at **LUNCHTIME**. Please mark this date **NOW** in your diaries - further details are available at the end of this newsletter. As before, bring your own stuff to bar-b-que and some liquid refreshment and we shall provide some salads and bread etc. Family and friends are more than welcome. All we ask is for £2.00 per head (£1.00 for children) to cover the costs of the food and pool hire.

## "INSIDE-OUT" SWIMMING

*(Surfing the Net' again, our Graham has found another article from the States that might be of interest)*

Most swimmers focus on working more or harder in order to swim better. But even those few swimmers who recognise that swimming is 70% form and 30% fitness, usually attack technique from the wrong direction. They focus first and almost exclusively on what their arms and legs are doing. And why not? It seems pretty clear, doesn't it, that since your hands are what pulls you through the water, then that's where your attention belongs. If something's wrong with your technique, then it must be your pull that needs fixing. Certainly coaches reinforce that idea. Nearly every swim coach or instructor teaches swimming the same way, by telling you how your arms need to pull and legs need to kick in order to move your body down the pool. But the armstroke - where the hands go, how deep they pull, which direction the palm is facing, etc. - actually has only a minimal impact on how fast you swim.

If a swimmer with a totally incorrect pulling pattern learned a nearly perfect pull, they might see a 5 to 10% improvement in their time. But because water is 1,000 times denser than air and can throw huge drag forces against a swimmer who doesn't know the tricks of becoming slippery, learning how to minimise drag has a far greater impact than maximising propulsion. A swimmer who learned to significantly improve their body position or alignment might see an immediate 20-30% improvement in their speed or stroke efficiency, a phenomenon I see occur over and over at my swim camps. Improving drag reduction starts with what I call "Inside-Out" thinking. Get the head and trunk centred and balanced first. Don't worry about perfecting the armstroke until much later in the process. If your body isn't balanced, streamlined and stabilised, even the most powerful and effective pull will go to waste trying to overcome drag forces that could be easily eliminated with simple adjustments in body position. Moreover, you can't maximise the power in your armstroke unless the body is balanced and stabilised first. So the keystone to the whole enterprise is getting the body in balance. Nothing else you can do in the pool will make as much of a difference for your efficiency and speed. Getting balanced in the water is a matter of overcoming a physical fact of life.

The human body is adapted for balance and mobility on land - long legs and lots of mass below the waist, mostly volume above it -- the lungs, after all, are just bellows. (Fish have the opposite problem - designed ideally for balance in the water, but consider what would happen if you tried to stand one up on its tail). In the water, we're pretty buoyant between the armpits, rock-like below the waist. Naturally everyone's longer, heavier end wants to fall, not just yours. And it has less to do with body fat than you think. I hear from a lot of triathletes and cross-training runners that they think they'll probably never learn to swim well because they have so little body fat. "I'm a sinker, I'll never have good body position," they say. But Olympic swimmers are just as lean as runners and triathletes and they have perfect body position. They'll ride higher in the water than most of you because they swim faster, but any swimmer can learn to be just as well balanced, and swim much faster with much less effort as a result.

Most novice swimmers try to compensate by kicking harder. Wasteful. Especially if you're swimming the first leg of a triathlon. The last muscles you want to tire while swimming are the ones you'll use to pedal or run. But what if you could balance the body just as you do a see-saw, by lengthening and adding weight to the front end to effortlessly lift the back end? That's "Pressing the T". Follow instructions and your butt will soon be gliding effortlessly along the surface, not dragging you down.

### 1. USE YOUR HEAD

Connecting your head to your spine and hips adds about 12 inches and 14-16lbs. to your front end. So first, imagine that a straight iron bar joins the top of your skull, spine, and hips. Lift your head even a little bit off that line (as many novices do to breathe), and your hips will sink. Don't do it.

## 2. PRESS THE T

If you draw a vertical line from your chin to your sternum and a horizontal line from one shoulder to the other, they intersect at your "T". Add valuable weight to your front end while swimming by leaning on it (like someone's pressing on your shoulder blades as you swim). Keep the T-pressure steady even as you roll and breathe.

That's usually all it takes to get the body in balance, using no extra energy and eliminating annoying lead-butt. Use the following partner drills for learning how to press the T before getting into the water. Stand facing each other on deck, arms at your sides, your partner's inside wrist against your chin and the inside of your partner's elbow against your sternum. Lean forward trying to distribute pressure equally between chin and sternum, your partner telling you how well you're doing. Keep straightening up and re balancing until you get it right. Remember how it feels on deck because you want the same feeling in the water. Leaning on your chin while you swim sounds like a demonstrably silly thing to do, but steady pressure there, just as you practised it on land, is the key to in-water balance. Now, use it to release your hips and legs to the surface where they belong, with just the skin of your suit at the buttocks at the surface. Your partner watching to help you adjust position, kick lightly on your stomach, arms at sides, head in line with spine and hips, leaning on chin and sternum. It's an alien feeling at first, so you'll probably need to press harder than you think you should. Just don't bury your head.

Now you're ready for balanced kicking for short distances (25m or less) on your stomach, holding steady T-pressure. Every time you lift your chin to breathe you'll lose T-pressure and balance, and get the chance to practice re-balancing. Practice this for a least 10 minutes before experimenting with it in your stroke. Finally, once you're a T-pressure ace, alternate kick and swim lengths with it, thinking of nothing else but getting the force right. Short distances (25m) only. Your hips should now feel light and your legs relaxed. The main sensation you should get when swimming with "T-pressure" is that of swimming downhill. (One triathlete described it as similar to the feeling of leaning into the wind while running into a strong wind). Keep the pressure steady as you swim, as if someone was pressing down on your back between your shoulder blades while you swim freestyle. And if you're swimming on your back, then you lean on the back of your head and shoulder blades, but without putting your head back - keep your chin slightly tucked while swimming on your back. It's not a big project. Most Total Immersion campers master T-pressure in about an hour. Happy laps!

**SUMMER TRAINING REMINDER** - There will be no WEEKEND training during the month of August (i.e. NO Fridays, Saturdays nor Sundays). Therefore the last weekend session will be Sun 28 July and the first back will be Sunday 1st September. BUT remember the *FUNDAY* on Sunday 11th August.

## MASTER PROFILE

**JOE O'DEA**  
(AKA "MR GOLD")

Can you remember how old you were when you learnt to swim? Who taught you?

*I was about 12 years old when I learnt to swim. I taught myself with a little help from friends who could swim. I don't have many early memories about swimming. I suppose the one that stands out most in my mind is when, just after learning to scramble through about a half a dozen strokes, I was encouraged by a couple of so-called mates to jump into the deep end of Hornsey Lido and when my feet would not touch the bottom of the pool I immediately started to panic. I was thrashing around trying to get back to the side of the pool but I was just not moving (much the same as when I do front crawl leg kick only at training sessions!). As my short past life started flashing before me I was dragged from the pool by my pals and left on the side like a half drowned rat. It was some considerable time before I ventured into deep water again.*

**Did you swim competitively as a youngster?**

*No, but I have always swum fairly regularly for the exercise and recreation.*

**How did you first hear about the RNSC Masters Section?**

*Before the Masters swimming section existed, I used to attend the RNSC Family Bathing session on a Saturday morning at Highgrove Pool, where three lanes were set aside for members who wanted to generally improve their swimming with coaching from Ron and Reg. The Masters section was a progression from Family Bathing and I have been swimming with them since it started.*

**What do you enjoy most about the club?**

*It's difficult to say what I enjoy most about the club as there are many enjoyable aspects. There is always a nice atmosphere at the training sessions. and when Ron introduces backstroke or breaststroke into the work to hear Julia K's (Lane 3) verbal appreciation is music to the ears!! The training is varied and with three coaches each devising sessions with which to make you suffer there is something to suit everyone.*

**Have you ever competed for the Masters section? If so, which was the most enjoyable competition/gala?**

*I compete whenever possible and through the hard work put in at training, not to mention the lack of entries sometimes in my age group, I have accumulated quite a few medals.*

*The most enjoyable competition for me is the annual gala at Guernsey spread over three days. The event is extremely well organised in a very friendly atmosphere. Competitors come from far and wide giving it a little bit of an international flavour so it's a bit special to win a medal of any description there.*

**What is your greatest achievement in the swimming pool - the one you feel happiest about?!**

*I consider my greatest achievement as being able to put Alan Taylor under pressure by touching his feet when he is using a pulling float and I am doing full stroke. Magic. Other than this, recently swimming under 38 secs for 50 metres front crawl is my most satisfying achievement.*

**And your favourite stroke is .....?            Breaststroke**

**And your least favourite stroke is .....?            Backstroke**

**Do any other members of your family enjoy swimming?**

*I have two daughters and a son who have all swam competitively. Karen (26) currently swimming with the Masters, Michelle (24) and Mark (16)*

**What are your other interests?**

*I don't have that much free time for other interests. I enjoy watching most sports with football and athletics being my favourites.*

**RESULTS VI WORLD MASTERS CHAMPS - SHEFFIELD JUNE 1996**

LESLEY C (A)

|           |         |  |      |           |         |   |      |
|-----------|---------|--|------|-----------|---------|---|------|
| 50m Fly   | 31.48   |  | 13th | 100m Fly  | 1.09.58 | ☺ | 10th |
| 50m Free  | 28.94   |  | 10th | 100m Free | 1.03.73 |   | 13th |
| 200m Free | 2.22.04 |  | 13th |           |         |   |      |

KAREN (A)

|             |         |   |      |            |       |   |      |
|-------------|---------|---|------|------------|-------|---|------|
| 50m Fly     | 34.53   | ☺ | 42nd | 50m Breast | 39.73 | ☺ | 24th |
| 100m Breast | 1.26.83 | ☺ | 16th | 50m Free   | 30.52 | ☺ | 21st |
| 100m Free   | 1.07.55 | ☺ | 38th |            |       |   |      |

TERESA (A)

|           |         |  |      |           |         |  |      |
|-----------|---------|--|------|-----------|---------|--|------|
| 50m Fly   | 35.10   |  | 45th | 50m Free  | 31.58   |  | 29th |
| 100m Free | 1.08.83 |  | 48th | 200m Free | 2.31.31 |  | 25th |
| 800m Free |         |  |      |           |         |  |      |

LESLEY B (B)

|          |       |   |      |  |  |  |  |
|----------|-------|---|------|--|--|--|--|
| 50m Free | 33.89 | ☺ | 36th |  |  |  |  |
|----------|-------|---|------|--|--|--|--|

LIZ (C)

|            |         |   |      |           |         |  |      |
|------------|---------|---|------|-----------|---------|--|------|
| 50m Breast | 41.64   |   | 15th | 100m Brst | 1.33.22 |  | 20th |
| 50m Free   | 33.75   | ☺ | 20th | 100 Free  | 1.18.88 |  | 29th |
| 200m Free  | 3.01.43 | ☺ | 36th |           |         |  |      |

TONY F (D)

|           |         |   |  |          |  |   |  |
|-----------|---------|---|--|----------|--|---|--|
| 50m Fly   |         | ☺ |  | 50m Free |  | ☺ |  |
| 100m Free | 1.04.33 | ☺ |  |          |  |   |  |

|                      |       |       |          |        |         |
|----------------------|-------|-------|----------|--------|---------|
| <u>120yrs Medley</u> | Karen | Liz   | Lesley C | Teresa | 2.23.33 |
| <u>LADIES</u>        | 39.86 | 41.77 | 31.14    | 30.56  | 11th ☺  |

**ANSWER TO QUESTION ON PAGE ONE - Extract from local newspaper, but how many years ago??**

"Life-saving is just a hobby for these four girls but perhaps one day they will need their skills to rescue someone from drowning. They are fully trained in life-saving and last month gained a distinction - the result of two years' hard work.

The girls Diane Burchett (16), Christine Grey (18), Susan Nettleton (16) and Lindsay Reynor (16), all trained at Highgrove baths under Mr. Ron Gilder's instruction. "A distinction is the highest award for life-saving you can get," said Mr. Gilder "The next step is ateaching diploma."

The girls had to learn three different ways of towing, how to assess situations and how to break the hold of a panic-stricken swimmer. They also had to study some physiology including breathing and how the heart works."



**R N S C M A S T E R S**  
**F U N D A Y & B A R - B - Q U E**

**WHERE?** *MERCHANT TAYLORS*

**WHEN?** *SUNDAY 11th AUGUST*

*12.00 pm onwards*

**HOW MUCH?** *£2.00 per adult (£1.00 per child)*

*(family & friends welcome)*

**WHAT DO I  
BRING?**

*Costume & towel  
Food to be bar-b-que'd  
Some drink to share*

*"Masters Catering" will provide the usual  
accompaniments*

.....✂.....

**YES!! I/WE SHALL BE DELIGHTED TO COME**

**NO. OF ADULTS** ..... @ £2.00 per head

**NO. OF CHILDREN** ..... @ £1.00 per head

**FROM**.....

*(Please hand form and money to any of the following:- Liz, Enid or Lesley B. ASAP)*