

## First round of the Kent Junior League 2008

Last Saturday, Dover Lifeguards' youngsters hosted the first round of the Kent Junior League at Dover Leisure Centre. The competition was tough with Dover playing host to the renowned clubs of North Kent- Black Lion, Bromley, Orpington, Erith and Dartford. However, the youngsters were determined to make every point count to help their team to victory especially as they were missing 5 members of their first choice team due to injury and holiday.

The gala started well with the guards' youngest team members showing everyone what they could do in the 9yr olds relays with respectable third places for both the boys and girls teams of: Rebecca Mercer, Mollie Allen, Sophie Waller, Leah Meadows, Conor Miller, Kyle Kent Robin Craft and Chris Clark.

The first set of individual races gave the teams stars a chance to shine. Ben Evans, also known as the "Pocket Rocket" gave a demonstration of how swimming should be done in the 11/u 50m freestyle recording a PB of 31.03 to win his race by a large margin.

The gala continued with more relays and consistent performances from each team member. The 13/u relays saw Megan Basford, Milly Furneaux, Edith Cooke, Megan Curtis, Sam Gibbs, Sacha Wild, Ben Evans and Callum Basford take fourth and second places respectively. This was to be followed by the 12/u relays with both the boys and girls teams gaining second places, thanks to the determined swims of: Edith Cooke, Milly Furneaux, Ebony Wright, Megan Curtis, Tom Latham, Sacha Wild, Ben Evans and Callum Haywood.

The next set of individual races brought yet more PBs and first places for the team. There were first places for: Mollie Allen (10/u fs), Robin Craft (10/u fs), Ben Evans (11/u fly), Megan Basford (13/u back), Ben Evans (12/u fly). There were second places for Milly Furneaux (12/u breast), Sacha Wild (12/u breast) and Callum Basford (13/u back).

The next block of relays gave the team a large haul of points with all of the `guards teams finishing in the top three places. The girls 11/u medley team finished second with a determined effort from: Amelia Beardsmore, Sophie Waller, Grace Beer and Mollie Allen. The boys went one better to finish first thanks to Conor Miller, Kieron Menniss, Ben Evans and Robin Craft. The boys and girls 12/u freestyle teams swam well to finish second and third places respectively.

The gala continued with more individual swims and relays from the youngsters to give the guards' yet more points. There were first places for: Ben Evans (12/u back), Mollie Allen (10/u breast), and second places for: Dominic Wild (10/u breast), Callum Basford (13/u fly). Drawing into the last set of relays the team really pulled together to put in some solid performances in the 11/u and 13/u freestyle and medley relays pulling in more valuable points for the team.

The squadron relay was possibly the most exciting race of the night with the balcony on their feet to support their teams. The team of Mollie Allen, Robin Craft, Sophie Waller, Ben Evans, Megan Curtis, Callum Haywood, Megan Basford and Callum Basford put everything they had left into the water to leave the race a dead heat with Dover unfortunately being judged as finishing in second place after a long deliberation by the officials.

When the points totals were announced, it revealed that Dover had in fact finished in second place thanks to the dedication and commitment of the young swimmers.

Coach Tim Hyde said "this team was in awesome form tonight, those first choice swimmers who were absent will have a tough fight on their hands to regain their places in the team. We were up against some of the strongest teams in north kent and we were only narrowly beaten into 2<sup>nd</sup> place. I believe that with this team in this form we can go one better in the next round and finish on top"

Anyone interested in joining Dover Lifeguards should contact Tim Hyde on 01304 206881.