

Herne Bay Open brings more successes for Lifeguards

Dover Lifeguards took part their last open gala of the season when they travelled to the Kingsmead pool in Canterbury for the annual Herne Bay Open.

The first event of the day was the 9/10 yr girls 50 fly, Dover's Connie Willett, Mollie Allen and Sophie Waller all produced personal best times with Mollie and Sophie progressing to the final. Sophie finished 1st in 36.33 with Mollie 3rd in 40.35. in the boys event Ben Crossland also produced a pb with a time of 51.90.

In the girls 100 back there were pb's for India Ribbans (1.28.68), Alice Latham (1.28.41), Grace Beer (1.26.51), Ebony Wright (1.21.96), Pam Flisher (1.19.16) and Katie Latham (1.11.41). Katie went through to the final and finished 1st against a strong field. The boys were not to be outdone and Kieron Menniss (1.53.51), Robin Craft (1.34.), Ben Fidock (1.29.68) and Evan Waters (1.15.74) all bettered their entry times. Evan went on to finish 1st place in the final. The boys in the 13/14 breaststroke all swam faster than ever before with Callum Haywood producing a 5 second pb in a time of 1.31.33, Lewis Young finished in 1.31.45 with Callum Basford reaching the final with a time of 1.17.07 and just being touched out into 2nd place.

Connie Willett followed up her great fly swim with a strong performance in the 100 freestyle. She won her heat comfortably in a time of 1.28.91-another personal best.. Mollie Allen and Sophie Waller both progressed to the final recording times of 1.14.89 and 1.10.42 respectively, Sophie added another 1st place trophy to her growing collection.

The 9/10 yr boys all improved on their entry times in the 100 freestyle. Luca De-Felice (1.26.25), Ben Crossland (1.35.91), Kyle Kent (1.19.77) and Cameron Cook in 1.17.44. Cameron had done enough to make the final and then went on to produce another pb of 1.15.15

In the 11/12 girls 100 breaststroke India Ribbans (1.39.73), Ebony Wright (1.41.52), Grace Beer(1.37.15) and Katie Latham (1.22.94) all swam well and Katie produced another final winning performance. In the same event for the boys Robin Craft knocked a full 10 seconds from his previous best in 2.06.64. Ben Fidock sliced 7 seconds off to record a time of 1.52.36 and Evan Waters finished 2nd in the final with a time of 1.25.99. In the 13/14 yrs 100 backstroke twins Megan and Callum Basford both reached the final and both grabbed first place with a superb display of the stroke. Yet more pb's arrived from Lewis Young and Callum Haywood in the backstroke and Mathew Farran in the 100 butterfly (1.08.73).

Following a break for lunch the 'guards picked up from where they had ended the morning. Connie Willett produced another Pb in the 9/10 yrs 100 back in 1.35.99 and Sophie Waller(1.23.73) and Mollie Allen(1.26.88) produced a fine 1st and 2nd in the final with personal bests from them both. The boys in this age group were on good form too with all recording new best times. Luca De-Felice (1.41.43), Kyle Kent (1.31.87) and Cameron Cook reaching the final with a time of 1.25.06.

The 11/12yr girls butterfly produced another clean sweep of personal bests. Alice Latham (1.25.62), India Ribbans (1.34.11), Grace Beer (1.31.61), Ebony Wright (1.28.38), Pam Flisher 1.24.55) and Katie Latham (1.16.69). Katie then pushed this time even faster in the final to finish 1st in a time of 1.16.48.

The Dover team were now firing on all cylinders and continued to rack up the personal best in almost every swim.

The 11/12 yr boys butterfly had Robin Craft (1.58.29) and Ben Fidock (1.48.25) and also produced one of the closest finals of the day when Evan Waters finished 1st in 1.14.13 in

a very tight race. Megan Basford inched a little faster in the 13/14 freestyle in a time of 1.06.37. Lewis Young recorded 1.04.99 in the boys 100 freestyle.

Sophie Waller and Mollie Allen continued their domination of the 9/10 yr age group with a 1st and 2nd in the final with Sophie recording 1.31.35 and Mollie 1.35.33.

Ben Crossland (1.56.21), Kyle Kent (1.50.85) and Cameron Cook (1.51.80) all pb'd in the 100 breaststroke. The girls 100 freestyle saw India Ribbans rack up a massive 8 second improvement in 1.15.42, Grace Beer with a 5 second improvement in 1.13.18, Ebony Wright a 1 sec pb of 1.11.77, there was also a pb from Pam Flisher (1.09.06). Katie Latham wrapped up a great days work with a first place finish in the freestyle to make that 4 out of 4 first places.

The 11/12 yr boys also did well with new best times for Ashley Baldwin (1.26.59), Robin Craft (1.19.14) and Ben Fiddock (1.18.86). Evan Waters then produced the same result as Katie Latham when he stormed to his 4th first place finish of the day.

The girls 13/14 butterfly had Dover's Tasha Hyde 4th in the final, and in the boys event Lewis young wrapped up a good day's work to record another personal best time of 1.14.96 meaning that he had pb'd every time he had entered the water.

The most exciting and closest race of the day had been left to the end. Callum Basford reached the final of the 100 butterfly against a strong field. The race looked all over as the top ranked swimmer left all of the field for dead over the first 50m leading by over 2m which is a big lead on a 100m race. However 3 swimmers produced a great tail end of the race and by the 75m stage 4 swimmers turned in unison. On the last length they were swimming stroke for stroke with the real test being mental strength. As they pushed into the last 10 m there was no clear leader. As all 4 touched attention was on the electronic timing display. Callum had touched first by the narrowest of margins, he had shown a great determination and mind set and had won the closest race of the day. It was also a 2 second personal best time of 1.06.85.

There were awards for top boy and girl in each age group and the Dover team had done well. 9/10 yrs Sophie Waller best girl, 11/12 yrs Katie Latham best girl and Evan Waters Best Boy.

"To finish the open gala season on a high like this is superb and I hope that the swimmers will enjoy their time off over the next few weekends ready for the challenges of the new season starting in September."