

History of Tyldesley Swimming and Water Polo Club



1972-1976

Alan Parry, Lesley Stones and Duncan Cleworth



Lesley Stones and Alan Parry with Bolton & District SWPA 14yrs Age Group Shield

From 1972 to 1976 the scene was completely dominated by three swimmers: Alan Parry, Lesley Stones and Duncan Cleworth. Apart from the numerous Lancashire County and Northern County trophies they won between them, they gained many national honours.

Alan Parry was the first member of the Tyldesley Swimming Club to win a gold medal at National Age Group level. He did so in 1972, when he won the twelve to thirteen year olds 200 metres Individual Medley. The following year he was England Schoolboy Champion in the same event.

He set a new English Schools record for the 200 metres Individual Medley in 1974, when repeating his championship success of the previous season.

Alan and Lesley Stones were members of the National Youth Squad for two seasons. They toured Switzerland, Luxembourg and Germany in 1974 and took in those three countries plus France in 1975. They were also chosen for the Eight-Nations Championship in Rouen, France in 1975. During that period Alan won four gold, four silver and four bronze medals, whilst Lesley took silver medals in both Ladies and Junior 200 metres backstroke events.

In 1973 Duncan Cleworth was selected to represent England at Junior International level in Sweden where he won a bronze medal in the 400 metres freestyle.

He was also the holder of the Daily Mirror International Handicap Trophy, which he won in 1974.

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Duncan Cleworth at the 1976 Montreal Games
(Wigan Archives Service, WLCT)

Duncan was the Senior National Short Course Individual Medley Champion in 1975, the year in which he created an all-time record, by winning sixteen Northern Counties Long Course Championships. He was also the English Schools Senior Individual Medley Champion in the same year. He held two gold, five silver and four bronze medals, from various other championship meetings.

In 1976 he won the National Short Course Individual Medley Championship once again and was chosen to captain the England Team in the Schools International at Wigan.

He was a member of the Senior Great Britain Team which went to Sweden, France and Russia and represented Great Britain in the Coca-Cola International, when he achieved the Olympic Qualifying Time resulting in his selection for the Great Britain Team in the 400 metres Individual Medley event at the Olympic Games in Montreal.

Duncan returned from competing in the 1976 Olympic Games on 2nd August, exactly 100 years after the formation of Tyldesley Swimming Club. As Tyldesley Swimming Club prepared to celebrate its Centenary Peter Gallagher represented Great Britain against France, Canada and Germany in Bonn. He came second in the 1500 metres freestyle.

Life Members

Life membership of the Club was granted to John Cleworth, Jim Topping and Mrs Hopkinson.

Club Captains

Dennis Topping and Miss K. Townsend were elected Club Captains in 1976 and 1977.

Centenary Dinner



Tyldesley Swimming Club organised along with other celebrations, a Centenary Dinner to be held at the Formby Hall, Atherton on the 30th October, 1976. However, due to a fire at Formby Hall the dinner took place at Aspull Civic Hall. Some of the guests travelled up to 200 miles to attend.

The Club President Mr. Ernest Chadwick and his wife Jennie headed the table of notables in the swimming world including Mr. Fred Moorhouse, President of NCASA; Mr Harry Booth, Lancashire County ASA; Mr. Reg Way, Bolton and District SWPA; Mr. L Torres, Manchester and District SWPA; Mr. John Cleworth, life member of Tyldesley Swimming Club; Mrs. A Eckersley, councillor and Mrs. Len Sumner, Wigan's Mayor Elect who presented to the club the Len Sumner Centenary Cup.

J. Booth & Son Ltd., of Westhoughton catered for 246 people and Waterfields Bakery of Leigh made a large cake decorated to represent a swimming pool, complete with lane ropes and goal posts! Each guest received a centenary medallion and a small gift. After the meal the evening continued with dancing and a raffle, the prizes having been donated by local shops, businesses and clubs. A grand time was had by all!

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1977

English Record

In 1977 Duncan Cleworth gained the English Record in the 4 x 100 IM in Sweden in a time of 4 min 35 secs

Jim Topping

Jim Topping was elected President of the Club for 1977-1978.

First Club Trip

On the 6th August, 1977 Tyldesley Swimming Club arranged a special holiday/training trip for the fastest forty five club members, aged seven to fourteen years, to visit Birchfield Lodge and Heathersage Swimming Club in Derbyshire's Peak District. For the next twenty years this became an annual event and the club took as many as seventy two swimmers on visits to such places as Cleethorps YMCA (three visits); Colomendy Camp, North Wales (five visits); Lancaster University (one visit); Dolfrigi Hall North Wales (three visits); Wydale Hall, Scarborough (three visits); Centre Parcs, Nottingham (two visits) and Pontins, Prestatyn (one visit). Activities included barbecues, interesting visits and the famous Mavis "Bent" rounders match.

Public Address System

To keep abreast of the times a new public address system was purchased.

Northern Counties Festival of Swimming

Joanne Toone was the Ladies Captain of the Bolton and District SWPA at the Northern Counties Festival of Swimming at Blackpool and finished in 3rd place in the Lancashire Age Groups in the breaststroke.

1978

Commonwealth Games

Probably the most successful swimmer the club has ever had must be Duncan Cleworth and in 1978 saw Duncan selected to represent England at the XI Commonwealth Games in Canada achieving 5th place in the 200m IM in a time of 2.10.68 and 7th place in the 400 m IM in a time of 4.38.10.

Also in 1978 Duncan gained the English short course 400 m IM record in a time of 4.32.4

Northern Counties Festival of Swimming

Five swimmers represented Bolton & District at the Northern Counties Festival of Swimming, three of which made finals and Stephen Davidson achieved a National Qualifying Time in the 100 m breaststroke.

Joanne Toone made both the 100 m and 200 m breaststroke finals and Colin Bent made the 100 m backstroke final.

Michelle Giles represented B&D in the 200 m freestyle, 200 m IM, 100 m butterfly, 100 m backstroke, 100 m breaststroke and was reserve for the 100 m breaststroke and 100 m freestyle but did not make the finals.

Anne Marie Burke went to Blackpool as reserve,

Water Polo Honours

Four water polo players were selected to play for Manchester & District, 2 players were selected for Bolton and District and Andrew Rowland was selected to play for Lancashire County.

Club President

For 1978-1979 John Cleworth was elected Club President for his second term of office.

Refurbishment of Changing Rooms

In 1978 a refurbishment took place at the pools' changing rooms which disrupted club sessions, but true to spirit the club carried on regardless.

1979

Northern Counties Festival of Swimming

Five swimmers represented Bolton and District at the Northern Counties Festival of Swimming.

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Water Polo Honours

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Affiliation to Central Lancashire Swimming and Water Polo Association

Tyldesley swimming Club became affiliated to the Central Lancashire SWPA and the girls finished second in the Warburton Trophy.

Bolton and District Mini Gala

In the preliminary rounds of the Bolton and District mini-gala league the younger swimmers (8-11 year olds) gained far more points than any other club. In the final gala of the preliminary rounds they won 26 out of a possible 30 events and carried on to win the Grand Final.

Club President

Earnest Chadwick was elected Club President.

Club Captains

Joanne Toone and Gary Twist were elected Club Captains.

Starting Blocks

Modern starting blocks were purchased.

1980

GB Catholic Schools

Anne-Marie Giles and Julie Rigby represented Great Britain in the 1980 Catholic School Olympics, held in Milan.

National Biathlon Championships

The Biathlon team of Gill Blear, Tracy Toone and Linda Toone won the National U/12s Championship.

Regional and Association Water Polo Honours

Five players were selected to represent Manchester and District and for the 2nd year Alan Knowles was selected for the Northern Counties.

County Swimming Honours

Mark Chew and Alan Griffiths were selected for Lancashire County.

Northern Counties Festival of Swimming

Several swimmers represented Bolton & District in the Northern Counties Festival of Swimming and Alan Knowles was the District captain.

Association Swimming & Water Polo Competitions

The club were runners up in the Bolton and District Age Group Competition and were outright winners in the 9 and 13 years age groups.

The club won the Bolton and District mini-gala league for the second year running.

In the Central Lancashire Junior Swim League the club won 5 golds and two silvers out of a possible 9 team events.

The U/16s Water Polo team won the Central Lancashire U/16 KO.

Club Oversubscribed

A notice was placed in the local press advising that the club was over-subscribed. A good sign for the future?