

Saturday the 6th and 7th October was the time for Swim England Hertfordshire to try their luck in Sheffield again for the National Intercounty Championships.



The day started off meeting up in Hitchin to find the pool overlooked the booking, and we had 33 very tall teenagers filling out the lobby. Great improvisation using 2 lanes with no blocks was a great excuse to practice their take overs, starts and turns especially as they had all been training hard all week.

After the session it was bags packed and on the coach to Sheffield we go. Lots of singing on the way up and a few heads taking their opportunity to sleep through the noise. A quick drop bag meant dinner which was every swimmer's dream. Eyes were lighting up seeing burgers, steaks, ribs and more Oreo Sundays in one place than I've seen. Was a great way to settle and wind down before bed and a busy day Sunday!

Early rise before fuelling up and ready to go on the bus.

The competition: As we walked through the Pond Forge doors we could hear the excitement and crowd for the day. Various teams were filling up the lobby waiting for entry to the pool. Once in and after a quick warm up the face paint came out, and if it wasn't plastered all over swimmer's faces it was leaving racing streaks in the water.

For the opening ceremony we had Dan Chada and Josie Pretious-White as flag bearers which helped lead the team right from the off.



SE Hertfordshire came 7th on the day with 408 points. 3 spaces out of promotion which needed a minimum of 430 for the top 4 finish. We had some great swimmers performing well so early on in the season. Started off with our first win from Sara Kalawska on her 100 fly which then followed by a sub minute 100 back for Jude Liddiard, a massive pb for Sam Pyefinch for his 100 free and pbs from Erin O'Meara and Ben Green on the 100 Breast.

We had some great relays splits too with Jess Woodward clocking a 26.44 and Reece Housden coming home in a 23.56 in the 6x50 relay. Medley relays saw Zachary Patel dropping a low 26 on his 50 fly, Michael Ripper a low 24 in 50 free and Emily Lush getting a 27.43 in the 50 free. The 14/15yrs girls stormed their medley relay to win from the start with Lily Merrett and Erin O'Meara swimming great pbs.

With all done for the day and swimmers and staff tired from all their hard work, we made a detour (thanks Ralph for service station information!) for some 'healthy' food, thanked our bus driver who was brilliant all weekend, and I would like to thank swimmers for their dedication and hard work over the weekend, and being good ambassadors for SE Hertfordshire. I would like to give a huge thank you to Anna Baker & Sam Housden for without them the weekend wouldn't have gone so smoothly, a big thankyou to Janet, Clare and Helena for offering their services to help officiate and represent SEH. Also a big thankyou to all the parents for their support with some coming to watch for themselves. Without these people working hard behind the scenes, it wouldn't have been so successful.

Many thanks

Jack