



ALBATROSS SWOOP



Edition 3

July/August, 2010

Hello divers, coaches and parents. Following England's abrupt exit from the World Cup, our third edition of the Albatross Swoop goes to print with stories of our rather longer-lasting sporting success!

Most recently we hosted our 21st Interclub diving competition. This was a very well-attended event with 120 divers competing from clubs as far north as North Bedford and as far south as Southampton for our attractive, marble plaques. The expectant spectators who crowded the balcony from 1pm to 7pm were not disappointed. The event ran extremely smoothly – thanks in part to slick new PA and electronic scoring systems!

Albatross divers performed outstandingly well to gain no fewer than 5 first places during the day. Our amazing results meant that, even with a slightly reduced number of divers than in recent years, the club was able to “get gold” again overall. Thank you to all those who gave time, food and drinks and raffle prizes to contribute towards the smooth-running of this event and congratulations to all the divers who took part. The annual Interclub provides an important boost to club funds.

“Golden” Interclub performances;

-  Erin Watts – Girls F – Under 8 years
-  Emily Glanville – Girls D – 10/11 years
-  Danielle Hale – Girls A – 16/18 years
-  Edward Beal – Boys E – 8/9 years
-  Riley Kudirka – Boys D – 10/11 years

Success home and away!

Our great performances this year so far across the length and breadth of the country are too many to mention them all. A few highlights though have been;

Armada Cup, Plymouth, February

Albatross was proud to be represented at this big competition attended by the UK's top competitors including Tom Daley. Competition was truly tough but our divers did us proud with Seb Masterton achieving highest placings at 2nd on 3m and 4th on 1m.



Plymouth Diving Club Pool

Success home and away! cont...

G Star, Leeds, March

Celie Mullen was 3rd on Platform and 4th on 1m and 3m. Sebastian Masterton was 4th on Platform. Charlie Minns and Hal Watts also put in great performances at this competition.

Leeds was the venue again for the **Elite** diving competition in June where Seb gained another 4th on 1m and Celie held her own in a group of older divers.

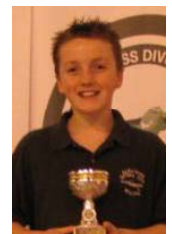


Emily Glanville, Gemma Bryant and Riley Kudirka put in great performances at their first ever national skills final in Stevenage in April while Freddie Minns achieved a startling 2nd in the boys B+ group.

May saw six of our divers at a skills level competition in St Albans – though those competing against Erin Watts in the Girls Group E Novice section struggled to see her very well at all - so small was she in comparison to her older rivals. Our youngest Albatross diver was more easily visible however when lifted on to the top of the podium for her gold medal presentation. What a weekend for Erin – she went home to get ready for 7th birthday celebrations the next day. The medals continued to come as Gemma Bryant took gold in the Girls Group D Age Group section. Emily Glanville was unlucky to miss out on bronze by a fraction of a point in the same section. Darcey Tyrrell claimed another well-deserved gold in the Girls Group C Age Group section and yet two more medals followed. Katharine Scott achieved bronze in Girls Group B – Novice and Matthew Pipe took home a bronze medal for 3rd place in the Boys Group A – Age Group competition.

Seb presents awards with Peter Gardner

Not unaccustomed to being on the receiving end of awards, Sebastian Masterton – one of our Elite divers - was invited by the School Sport Partnership along with other elite athletes from Berkshire to present awards for Excellence, Friendship, Respect, Courage, Determination, Inspiration and Equality in sport to local sporting heroes.



Sebastian



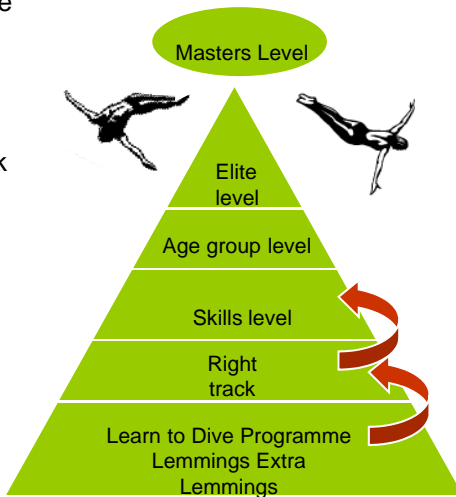
Peter Gardner

Nine local schools are involved in the “Bulmershe School Sport Partnership with Wokingham” programme. Peter Gardner (Olympic and World Rower and CEO of the British Athletes Commission) addressed successful candidates from these schools on the presentation evening, sharing his experiences of competing at the very top of his sport.

Pyramid Progress

Congratulations to the following divers who have recently been promoted from Lemmings into Mark Robson's Right Track section;

**Oliver Breach
Hayley Brown
Finlay Cook
Nicole McKay
Sophia McKay
Erin Tyszkiewicz
Charlotte West
Thomas Wilkinson**



Bernie Bicknell's Lemmings group remains virtually full to capacity and we hope to see more young divers progressing to the squads soon.

Congratulations also to the following divers who have recently been promoted from Right Track to Skills level
Edward Beal, Riley Kudirka, Erin Watts.

Coaches out – Coaches in

You could say coaches are like buses at Albatross. You just see one go, then two more arrive. No seriously, goodbye, thank you and good luck to Amy Cook as she heads down to Plymouth to continue her studies. Well done on choosing a great diving city to study in, Amy. Trust we can rely on your support next time we're down there for the Armada Cup!

We're fortunate to have a couple of newly-qualified coaches in our midst who will now pick up coaching duties. Congratulations and welcome to the coaching team Matthew Pipe and Dani Hale who passed a coaching course in June.

Committee Considerations

Julie Godfrey, our Secretary, has stepped down from the committee after many years of service. Julie kindly continued to serve even after her daughter, Emma retired from diving. Thanks for all your hard work, Julie. Thanks also to Sarah Minns who has maintained our Swim 21 accreditation for 2 years. Swim 21 is the ASA's 'quality mark.' It recognises clubs that are committed to providing safe, effective and quality services. Accreditation is rewarded with training guidance and can mean assistance with funding. Jennifer Glanville has kindly offered to take on responsibility for Swim 21. Thanks in advance, Jenny.

Thank you in advance also to Stef Kudirka who has stepped up to the position of Membership Secretary. This leaves the post of Secretary (needs to attend most committee meetings to take down minutes and do a little letter-writing) still vacant. If anyone would like more details on this role, please contact Anne Pipe on anne1pipe@btinternet.com.

Fun and Fundraising

We've enjoyed two great events already this year that have provided family entertainment while boosting club funds. The first was the Awards & Race Night held in Calcot in February. The horses may only have been wooden ones "tethered" on a piece of string but many of the "jockeys" (parents particularly) attacked the races with all the seriousness of Frankie Dettori and Kieran Fallon at Ascot. It's rumoured certain of them were starving themselves for weeks before to reduce their weight and there were sore hands at the end of the evening as a result of over-zealous winding actions! Coaches in particular were heard to be demanding form reports on the jockeys and horses before placing bets. Other less competitive parents stayed behind the bar and served drinks to the thirsty jockeys and punters to wash down the delicious snacks that were provided. A great evening was had by all. Thanks to all who organised and attended.



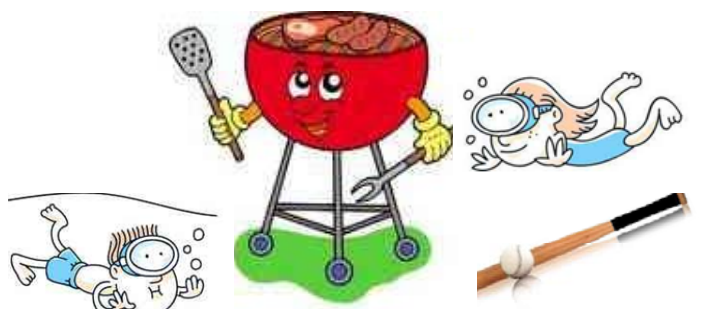
Tipster-Commentator
Parent



Over-enthusiastic Jockey
Parent

Our annual barbeque was a well-attended event also. It took place at Reading Blue Coat school in Sonning on Sunday 11th July – a day so hot that we were almost seared along with the meats. Thankfully the pool provided a perfect cooling off area and the sun had gone down a little by the time we got to the ritual rounders match afterwards.

Everyone enjoyed a great day out and the club netted a profit of around £150 from the event. Thanks again to those who negotiated on the price of the lovely meats, those who sweated over a hot grill to cook them, those who sold tickets, those who made lovely dishes – and to everyone for coming along and joining in the fun!



A page from the past!

In the same way that famous newspapers sometimes reprint "classic" news in old style, this edition takes a look back at the club as it was – courtesy of some old photos that Anne Jessel has kindly put together for us. Hopefully this will cause some of us to reminisce and others to laugh out loud as we spot some of the coaching staff and parents as never seen before! – No you *won't* kill your mother, Malcolm. It's just a bit of fun – and the fringe kind of suits you! See 3rd photo down.



Our very first committee



Divers from one of Anne's early teams



Donna Mundy – proud, very first recipient of the President's Cup – presented by Ben Neville (first president).



Subsequent committee – Five suits and one dress! I "propose" the current committee makes a bit more of an effort when next meeting!



Early coaching team



And finally...

I bet most of you assumed that Reading Albatross was so called just because the albatross is a bird that swoops gracefully down towards water and so could be thought to be diving... Not the whole story! Reading Albatross became so known because the above group of divers (then simply known as Reading Swimming Club Diving Section) performed a never-done-before diving display to the music of Albatross in 1977. Fleetwood Mac have a lot to be proud of!

Get to Know your Coaches – An interview with and tribute to Marianne Mullen as she steps down from her coaching position at the club.

Marianne enjoyed a successful diving career herself, having been coached by her mum (Anne Green-Jessel from the age of six) and has subsequently invested many years of dedicated coaching service back into the club. She gave a humorous interview on her time at the club to which she has dedicated so many hours of her time to date – not to mention her first front teeth! - Good luck, Marianne, as you head off for Teacher Training to transition into your new career! We hope to still see you around fairly regularly.

Q: Tell me about your home and family life.

A: I live in Whitley, Reading with Julian, my hubby of 15 years and our girls Leilani & Celie. We have had ginger tom cats up until recently, but sadly they are all now buried under our cherry tree. Nonetheless an abundance of wildlife remains in our garden which keeps us either occupied or awake including fox cubs, muntjac deer, many bird species and noisy blackbirds shouting down our chimney in the morning!

Q: Did you grow up in Berkshire or elsewhere?

A: I was born in Wokingham in 1967 but grew up in Caversham Heights during the 70s and 80s where I enjoyed cycling down the country lanes with my older brother Malcolm and younger sister Juliet. The roads were quieter in those days.

Q: What do you do for a “day job”?

A: After 17 years of Beauty & Leisure industry management, I took on a Teacher Assistant Job to fit in with my family. It's been such a great experience.

Q: How many years did you spend diving yourself and why did you first begin?

I used to tag onto my mum's adult diving lessons from 6 years old. I managed to knock my first front teeth out on the poolside, ending up with 6 stitches in my lip! I started proper training at 10 with Mum (Anne Green-Jessel) as my coach. The whole family were involved in diving but I gave it up at 18 ½ years old during my international diving career. In those days funding did not exist for the National Squad members, so most international divers survived on benefits in order to train full time. This did not appeal to me at all!

Q: What was your greatest diving moment?

I have a lots of great, if some painful, memories: my last senior international - the 'Golden Cup' held in Strasbourg, I came second in the Women's 3m springboard and won the platform title over the Dutch Olympian, whose diving I'd always admired; splatting out on a back 2 ½ somersaults piked from 10 metres (forgot to come out on the very first one); being presented the Girls Sport in the South award alongside Olympian Stephen Redgrave in 1984; setting a new FINA world record to take the World Master Highboard title in 1996 and being carted off in an ambulance after clipping the board on a reverse 2 ½ somersaults whilst diving in Germany. My dad remembers the huge bill that arrived home afterwards!

Which (other) sports did you or do you enjoy?

Gymnastics, badminton & swimming were my favourites. I chose diving over gymnastics because the entry on the water was a bit more 'forgiving' than a hard floor when things went wrong! I always tried to avoid school hockey teams! I hated getting bruised shins!

Diving, diving and more diving is the only 'real' sport in my book though and the fact that it is China's national sport says a lot regarding it's popularity.

How long have you been an Albatross coach?

I taught other children whilst I was a diver in Albatross during my teenage years, then I took council courses for a few years after qualifying in 1987. I started coaching again more recently after my children were born. I've probably been teaching 6 years this time around I think. I realised I had got too old for diving and it had become too painful. This was the next best thing!

What has been your greatest or funniest coaching moment?

It's funny now – I took some of my divers to look from a 10 m board in 2006 having not been up there for many years. I felt sick with fear, but had to play 'cool' about it! Seriously though - I am proud of all my divers for all their effort, and for their love of diving. They have all achieved so much on different levels. I am pleased that I managed to produce 4 GB Junior Elite divers over these last 4 years with 24 national medals between them. I know that I am leaving them in my brother's competent hands and hope to be able to continue to support on a smaller scale when I can.

Who is your favourite sporting hero?

Greg Louganis inspired many divers of the eighties and was my biggest influence after my own mum and 'coach'. Mum spent many hours at the pool training me each week and taking me across the country for camps and competitions. My dad even installed a dry board in our garden. It was probably the first one in England. We survived the many ups and downs of training and competing...just about! I will always be grateful for the opportunities I was given and my two very patient siblings who also had to endure many long competition events, even if they weren't competing themselves!

What is your favourite food?

Chicken Bhuna with pilau rice, onion bajjis, garlic naan and 'downed' with a pint of cold Boddingtons!

Do you have a lucky number?

I can't be superstitious. Julian was born Friday 13th!

What are your plans going forward?

To complete my teacher training at Oxford Brookes University over the next 4 years whilst supporting my children through their school days and their own interests. It will be busy!

Can you leave us with a relevant quotation for diving?

Success comes in 'cans'. Failure comes in 'can'ts'!