

London Region Swimming Development Days –
09th July – 01st October – 3rd December 2017
Trinity School, Croydon, CR9 7AT

Head Coach Report

- 36 swimmers were selected for these camps
- 6 lane 25m pool, starting blocks one end
- Poolside was used for post & pre pool work
- Land work was done in Squash Court (camp 1 & 2) and in Common Room (camp 3)
- Classroom with AV/projector facilities
- Group skills coaches: Matt Molloy, Daniel Andrawos, Caroline Collis, Rick Hall (dropped out after camp1 and replaced by Paul Hurley), Ken Sayers, Martin Jurco
- Mike Parker – Swim England London Development Lead (Camp 3)
- Damien Bryan – Head coach
- Marie Jane Leberl – Team manager
- Emma Higson Physio/S&C for camp 1, Dominic McGinty S&C for camp 2 & 3
- Karen Howells – Sport Psychologist for camp 2
- Keely Sunderland – Nutritionist for camp 3

Attendance camp 1 – 34 swimmers, Camp 2 – 34 swimmers, camp 3 – 32 swimmers.

This year's camp saw us move from 1 weekend to 3 single days spread out over June, October and December. I felt that this gave the coaches an opportunity to develop a relationship with the swimmers they were working with and gain a far better insight into them as athletes.

Having the skills coaches be in direct contact with the swimmers home coaches prior to and post each camps also allowed for a much better understanding of each athlete to be ascertained and also allowed for a good buy in from the home programmes who felt that their athletes were being looked after. The key message to swimmers was to share everything with their home coach, which our skills coaches were also doing – this way clear concise messages were being delivered to the athletes about their continued progression and development.

Across the 3 days I saw not just the growth in the swimmers – in terms of their learning and development – but also a growth in the coaches as their relationship with their group strengthened, as did their relationship with each other, and their confidence levels grew in their delivery of sessions both in the pool and out.

Each pool session (of which there were 6) had a core theme, and a workout was devised that was used by all coaches – with room for some own input on drills used – so that all athletes felt they were receiving the same amount of work. Each coach was challenged to create a pool

workout that would be used by the team, with the other coaches provided an opportunity to discuss and critique so that an opportunity was given for the coaches to have some peer led development.

As with the pool sessions, the land training sessions introduced some new/different ideas and there was a big emphasis on swimmers being self-proficient and managing their own pre-pool, stretching & core land work. It was great to have Emma Higson (EIS) down on camp 1 for the physio element of the camps, and to have her work with and advise the swimmers. Dominic McGinty took on the S&C role for camps 2 & 3 and this provided both the swimmers and coaches with an insight into a new way of working – with swimmers challenged to improve their athleticism and all exercises being referred back to the improvements this brings to particular strokes. Across the last two camps Dominic also got to know the athletes well, observed poolside and got involved with the coaches to work with athletes that were struggling with any key fundamental movements in the water. I felt this added an extra dimension to the camps we have not had previously.

Despite the classroom space being a little small, the lectures were all well received. We did not have handouts in place – something we will remedy in future – but all handout slides were pdf'd and emailed across to swimmers post camp. Both Keely and Karen delivered very well and both sought a lot of interaction with the athletes. Parents were invited to sit in on the afternoon lectures and were also made to feel involved by our speakers.

I believe that the camps were all well received – with quite a number of parents coming up in person with positive comments on the experience their child had. All the staff that were involved – TM, skills coaches, S&C and guest speakers - all worked hard to deliver what was asked for each session, and the success of the camps owes a lot to them all.

It was great for me as Head coach to get to work with all these swimmers and staff, and I thoroughly look forward to finding ways on how we can further raise the bar next year.

Damien Bryan

11th December 2017