



London Region Team – Flanders Cup, Antwerp 20 & 21 January 2018

Full results here: http://www.zwemfed.be/flanders/sites/default/files/resultaten_Flanders_2018.pdf

The meet was held in the Olympic pool in Antwerp – the complex included a 6-lane 50m warm-up pool as well as a smaller 25m pool. The hotel was right across the road from the pool where breakfast & evening meal was taken. Travel from St. Pancras was by Eurostar to Brussels and then local train to Antwerp, the meet organisers then arranged coach transport to the hotel. We were able to train on Friday afternoon.

Heats were a 7am warm-up for 8.30am start, with the finals on Saturday starting at 1600 and Sunday slightly earlier at 1530. There were A & B finals for most events (8 events across the weekend which had less than 32 entrants only had an A-Final). Everything was swum as open with no age group categories. The field featured many Olympic, World & European medallists and this was a truly star filled entry field. Our swimmers competed well – this long course meet was, for most swimmers, the 3rd or 4th LCM meet that they had swum (unlike the previous few years when the meet was often the first long course meet that swimmers had swum since the summer) . Most of our team got better on the second day and we managed 32 re-swims which meant that 17 different swimmers made an A or B final.

Hi-lights from A-Finals

Loulou Vos won the 800FS & 2nd in the 400 FS & 6th in the 200 FS

John Britton - 2nd in the 400 IM, 5th 200 BR

Fleur Lewis - 3rd in the 800 FS, 8th 200 Fly

Katy Avramova - 4th in 50 & 100 Bk

Lewis Clifford-Stephenson - 4th 50 BR, 6th 100 BR

Phyllida Britton – 5th 800FS, 5th 400FS

Yaron Gerber – 5th 100 BR, 8th 200 BR

Lucy Thornton – 6th 200 Fly, 8th 100 Fly

Alex Werner – 6th 200 BR

Matthew Rogers – 7th 400 IM

Tiegan Child – 8th 800 FS

The finals on Sunday were broadcast live on Belgium TV with the “sports show” being presented from the pool. This led to some delay whilst interviews were being conducted. On both days we were fortunate to have some swimmers make the podium and these presentations were very presented with VIP’s photos etc. Another added “experience” was the arrival of drug testing teams on both days from the Belgium Sports Federation – 3 of our swimmers were chosen from the A-finals to provide urine samples. Loraine ensured that the correct procedures were followed, and she has copies of the paperwork which will be forwarded to British Swimming in line with their doping policies.

All results are now up on the British Swimming Rankings.

This meet was one of our most successful in terms of the team goals, processes and performances, we held a team meeting each evening where we reviewed the day and set aims for the next day and confirmed arrangements for meals/resting/warming up etc. This allowed the swimmers to take responsibility for their preparation & performance at this level of competition. We stressed to all the swimmers that this meet presented a superb opportunity to see some of the world’s best swimmers in action, including their pre-pool preparation/race strategy/warm-down/recovery. All the teams taking part in the meet stayed in the same hotel along with the meet officials. Breakfast & evening meals were excellent with plenty of choice and lots of food provided. I was provided with the London Region Twitter access and was able to provide a useful reports & photos throughout the meet, this is something that I think worked well and certainly the feedback from swimmers, parents & coaches that I have spoken to since returning has been very positive.

As always, these meets give swimmers in the region the opportunity to learn, develop and experience racing in a different environment. I’m always grateful that our region continues to support these trips which gives recognition to the best swimmers currently racing in our area. Many other regions have now adopted our format and I am often asked to provide details of how we operate & organise our trips, London Region have always been the leader amongst English regions for which we should be very proud.

As always these trips rely on lots of work behind the scenes by many people. Big thanks to the team manager, Loraine Cousins, for making all the arrangements and sorting out any problems whilst we were away. Thanks also to the coaches Tony Beckley, Bram Montgomery & Wayne Lock, who came along as our “development Coach” and who, I hope learnt a lot and found the CPD opportunity useful. All the coaches contacted home coaches before we left so they had some background for each swimmer. Also, thanks to Kay Grimshaw & Suzanne Philpot for their continuing support and promotion of these trips and convincing London Region to provide the funds. Also, thanks to Kelly Stannard who provided some very useful help with arrangements & payments before we left.

Here is a link to the broadcast of the Sunday Finals on Belgium TV:

<http://sporza.be/cm/sporza/videozone/sporten/andernieuws/1.3130185>

Allan Thornton

Head Coach London Region – Flanders Cup 2018

24th January 2018



