

Aquasprint swimmers face fierce competition with Ards.

No rest for our young swimmers as they took to the blocks again last Saturday night facing a very powerful Newtownards team. Not to be perturbed, the group A swimmers launched themselves into the pool for the first relay race, the medley relay. They achieved a 2nd place as did the group B and C swimmers. Group D swimmers however pulled off a wonderful sprint and came in 1st. These incredible swimmers included Ellie Purdy, Eunan Quinn, Olivia Knox and Alex Donnelly.

The individual backstroke events took off with the Group A girls Julia Knox, Ruby McNiff and Aidin Quinn bringing in 3rd, 4th and 5th places. The Group A boys followed in pursuit of fast times but just managed 4th, 5th and 6th position. Dawson Patterson, Dane McCullough and Sam Johnston showed grim determination in their faces and the whole team knew how difficult a gala this was going to be.

Group B girls made a huge splash and Lauren Armstrong, Caitlin Kearney and Rebecca Pinkerton were very powerful in bringing in 1st, 3rd and 4th place. Group B boys fought fiercely and Patrick Doyle, James Whan and Declan McKeown achieved 3rd, 4th and 6th.

Group C girls, consisting of Lauren Lyttle, Hannah Hubert and Charlotte Farson were placed 3rd, 4th and 6th place. Group C boys Harry Farson, Harry Dougan and Rory McNiff swam their best and produced a 3rd, 4th 5th position. Group D girls did a fine job of notching up points with 1st, 3rd and 6th places from Olivia Knox, Ellie Purdy and Charlotte Farson. Group D boys did well gaining 2nd, 3rd and 5th positions. Ryan Porter swam superbly and Alex Donnelly and Aaron Brown also swam well.

Breaststroke events were underway next with the Group A girls, Julia Knox, Aidin Quinn and Zoe Kilpatrick swimming well and producing 2nd, 4th and 5th positions. Group A boys, Dawson Patterson, Sam Johnston and Dane McCullough also swam well and produced 2nd, 4th and 6th.

Group B girls, Jessica Robinson, Rebecca Pinkerton and Caitlin Kearney produced a wonderful hat trick bringing in 1st, 2nd and 3rd places. Group B boys, Patrick Doyle, James Whan and Luke Milligan swam very successfully with 3rd, 4th and 6th places.

Group C girls, Sophie Mount, Eimear McMullan and Charlotte Farson who make a strong team did well with a 3rd, 4th and 5th. Group C boys included William Pinkerton who swam an excellent 1st place and Daniel Kilpatrick and Harry Dougan, who brought in 4th and 5th.

This time it was the Group D girls, Olivia Knox, Ellie Purdy and Emma McElderry, who produced a hat trick of 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the breaststroke. It was a fine performance from the three girls, well done!

Group D boys, did not disappoint, with super swims from Ryan Porter, Eunan Quinn and Alex Donnelly, again notching up the points to include another 2nd, 3rd and 4th place.

Next up was the butterfly, a difficult stroke for many but Banbridge have trained up many superb fliers. Group A girls, Julia Knox, Zoe Kilpatrick and Aidin Quinn, all at 8 years of age, swam in great

strength to add 1st, 4th and 6th to the tally. Group A boys, Dawson Patterson, Niall McKeown and Sam Johnston again swam with fierce determination and produced 4th, 5th and 6th.

Group B girls, Rebecca Pinkerton and Caitlin Kearney and Anna Long did their utmost and succeeded in achieving 3rd, 4th and 6th. Group B boys, Patrick Doyle, James Whan and Declan McKeown kept striving with 4th, 5th and 6th.

Group C girls, Sophie Mount, Hannah Hubert and Eimear McMullan, added to the points with another 3rd, 5th and 6th. Group C boys, Harry Farson, Harry Dougan and William Pinkerton, as always swam their best to achieve a 2nd, 4th and 5th. Group D boys, Alex Donnelly, Matthew Brown and Eunan Quinn did well with a 2nd, 4th and 5th position to add to the points.

The final individual event of the evening, the frontcrawl, was lead by an excellent swimmer, Julia Knox who claimed 1st place and following her were her team mates, Ruby McNiff and Aidin Quinn who succeeded in achieving 4th and 6th places. Group A boys, Dawson Patterson, James Mc Kee and Sam Johnston were once again vital in their roles of adding points to the team. They achieved 3rd, 5th and 6th place this time.

Group B girls, lead by a very strong swimmer, Lauren Armstrong, achieved 1st, 3rd and 5th place. Lauren's team mates included Rebecca Pinkerton and Caitlin Kearney. Group B boys, Patrick Doyle, James Whan and Luke Milligan, made very fast times with a 4th, 5th and 6th position.

Group C girls, Lauren Lyttle, Hannah Hubert and Eimear McMullan, swam their best with a 3rd, 5th and 6th. Group C boys, Harry Farson, Daniel Kilpatrick and William Pinkerton increased a little with a 3rd, 4th and a 5th.

Group D girls, Olivia Knox, Ellie Purdy and Kate Allenby were fighting hard against a strong Ards team. They secured 1st, 3rd and 5th. Group D boys, Alex Donnelly, Eunan Quinn and Harry Long also did their utmost to outswim Ards. They achieved 2nd, 4th and 5th positions.

Finally, in a last attempt, Banbridge strived to swim their best. The relay events bring in vital points and so these tired but not defeated swimmers took to the water for a final splash. Unfortunately none of the home team secured 1st place. The following swimmers however, brought in 2nd places. For the A group the swimmers included, Aidin Quinn, Dawson Patterson, James McKee and last but not least, Julia Knox. Group B freestyle relay swimmers included, Rebecca Pinkerton, Lauren Armstrong, James Whan and Patrick Doyle. Group C swimmers included Daniel Kilpatrick, Lauren Lyttle, Hannah Hubert and Harry Farson. Group D swimmers included the fine foursome of Alex Donnelly, Ellie Purdy, Eunan Quinn and Olivia Knox. These relays produced some wonderful excitement from the crowd and the gala finished in a competitive but positive spirit.

Sadly, Banbridge lost to Ards with a final score of: Banbridge 163 vs Ards 237

The gala was extremely well organised, as always, so a special thanks to all the coaches for their hard work, to all the timekeepers, the ladies on the desk, recording and last but certainly not least, the tea ladies. What a wonderful spread! Of course without our superb Aquasprint team itself, we wouldn't be able to stay in the First Division.

A special mention goes to Olivia Knox who came first in all her individual races, to her little sister Julia, who came first in two of her races and to Lauren Armstrong (who certainly lives up to her name) who also achieved two first places.

The next Aquasprint gala is away to Bangor on Sat 3rd March.

For further information on Banbridge Amateur Swimming Club, visit our website on

www.banbridgeasc.co.uk