

Banbridge swimmers triumph in first Aquasprint gala.

Banbridge Amateur Swimming Club began their first Junior Swimming League of the season on Saturday 17th September. It was a home gala in Banbridge Leisure Centre and for many young swimmers, their first experience of team competition. They were ready with superb new swimmers to the team with fervent hopes of remaining in the First Division.

The A group of girls was lead by the experienced Julia Knox and strongly supported by her team mates Aidin Quinn, Ruby McNiff and Zoe Kilpatrick. The new line up of Group A boys included the mighty Dawson Patterson, Sam Johnston, Dane McCullough, Niall Mc Keown and James Mc Kee. Group A girls and boys took to the water with an excellent beginning to the gala with a 1st place performance in the medley relay. Group B girls and boys swam an excellent race with a strong time in first place in their medley relay. Group C girls and boys followed the next medley relay with a fabulous win once again. Group D girls and boys brought in second place for their medley relay. At this stage of the competition, Banbridge were ahead with 3 wins out of 4. The competitive individual events were to follow.

Group A girls backstroke began with 1st, 3rd and 6th place going to Julia Knox, Ruby McNiff and Aidin Quinn. It was an excellent start to the home gala. Group A boys Dawson Patterson, Dane McCullough and Sam Johnston kept up a superb pace with 1st, 2nd and 5th place. Group B girls Lauren Armstrong, Rebecca Pinkerton and Caitlin Kearney swam excellent times bringing in 1st, 3rd and 4th place. Group B boys showed their strength by producing a fine performance from James Whan, Patrick Doyle and Luke Milligan swimming in 1st, 2nd and 4th position. Group C girls Hannah Hubert, Eimear Mc Mullan and Charlotte Farson swam well with 3rd, 4th and 5th place. Group C boys Harry Farson, Rory Mc Niff and William Pinkerton produced more excellent positions of 2nd, 3rd and 4th. Group D girls Olivia Knox (co-captain of the team), Charlotte Campbell and Kate Allenby had to face a strong Larne group but successfully produced a 2nd, 4th and 6th place. Group D boys likewise faced strong opposition but finished off the backstroke with a 2nd, 3rd and 5th from Alex Donnelly (co-captain of the team), Aaron Brown and Ryan Porter. At this stage it was anybody's guess as to who was in the lead. Everyone could feel the excitement and anticipation for the final result.

Breaststroke events were underway with the Group A girls and wonderful performances came from Julia Knox, Aidin Quinn and Zoe Kilpatrick who took 1st, 2nd and 5th place. Their team-mates Group A boys matched them exactly with 1st, 2nd and 5th from Dawson Patterson, Sam Johnston and Dane Mc Cullough. Group B girls won excellent 1st, 3rd and 4th place from

Jessica Robinson, Caitlin Kearney and Rebecca Pinkerton. Patrick Doyle, James Whan and Declan Mc Keown scored a superb hat trick for Group B boys. Group C girls brought in three good positions (2nd, 3rd and 4th) from Sophie Mount, Eimear Mc Mullan and Charlotte Farson. Group C boys, William Pinkerton, Daniel Kilpatrick and Harry Dougan produced a superb 1st, 2nd and 3rd place to help secure the team. Group D girls saw Olivia Knox, Charlotte Campbell and Emma Mc Elderry swim in 3rd, 4th and 5th position. Group D boys collected 2nd, 3rd and 4th place from a strong trio of breaststroke swimmers, Eunan Quinn, Alex Donnelly and Ryan Porter.

The butterfly events began with Group A girl, Julia Knox swimming at an incredible pace to take first place, followed closely by her team mate, Aidin Quinn taking third place and Zoe Kilpatrick fifth place. Dawson Patterson was in tremendous form with a superb time in 1st place for the Group A boys followed by his team mates Niall McKeown (the youngest boy on the Aquasprint team) and Sam Johnston who completed an excellent hat trick! Group B girls, Anna Long (what a great butterfly stroke from this swimmer), Rebecca Pinkerton and Caitlin Kearney secured 2nd, 3rd and 4th position. The group B boys, James Whan, Patrick Doyle and Declan McKeown made another excellent clean sweep of 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. Group C girls Katie Baird, Hannah Hubert and Charlotte Farson achieved 2nd, 4th, and 5th places with the Group C boys, Harry Farson, William Pinkerton and Harry Dougan bringing in 2nd, 3rd and 4th place. To finish off this event, Olivia Knox, Charlotte Campbell and Kate Allenby came in 2nd, 4th and 6th place for their team. Group D boys, Alex Donnelly, Matthew Brown and Joshua Mc Adam achieved 2nd, 4th and 5th position.

The frontcrawl events began, with Group A girl, Julia Knox achieving 1st place and hot on her heels was Aidin Quinn with an excellent 2nd place and Ruby Mc Niff who also very fast. Well done to these girls who are still only 8 years of age and a special mention to Aidin Quinn, the youngest girl on the Aquasprint team! Group A boys also saw fantastic performances from Dawson Patterson, James McKee and Dane McCullough achieving wonderful 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. Group B girls, swam again with excellent performances from Lauren Armstrong, Caitlin Kearney and Rebecca Pinkerton in 2nd, 3rd and 4th place. Group B boys Patrick Doyle, James Whan and Luke Milligan brought in a fine 1st, 2nd and 4th place. Group C girls, Eimear Mc Mullan, Sophie Mount and Charlotte Farson produced 3rd, 4th and 5th place in the frontcrawl event. Group C boy, Harry Farson, swam a super first place followed closely by Daniel Kilpatrick in 3rd place and Harry Dougan in 5th place. To complete the frontcrawl events the Group D girls and boys had to work hard against a tough Larne side. Olivia Knox, Charlotte Campbell and Kate Allenby, succeeded in achieving a 3rd, 4th and 6th place for Banbridge. The

Group D boys tried even harder and Alex Donnelly secured 2nd place while Eunan Quinn swam well in 3rd and also Matthew Brown in 4th position.

The freestyle relays were underway with much excitement, anticipation and at this stage exhaustion. The Group A team made a huge splash to bring in 1st place. This excellent foursome included James Mc Kee, Dawson Patterson, Aidin Quinn and Julia Knox. The Group B team also pulled off a wonderful performance and came in 1st position. These swimmers included Caitlin Kearney, Lauren Armstrong, James Whan and Patrick Doyle. The Group C team were up against a strong Larne team but still achieved an admirable 2nd place. This team consisted of Sophie Mount, Eimear McMullan, Daniel Kilpatrick and Harry Farson. The final swim of the night was from the Group D team relay. These fine swimmers were Charlotte Campbell, Olivia Knox, Eunan Quinn and Alex Donnelly. They also achieved a commendable 2nd position.

At this stage of the competition it was a close call as to who had won, but to our great relief the final score was:

Banbridge 216

Larne 184

It was an excellent gala with a lot of extremely close races. Well done to our other swimmers who contributed in relays on the night: Ellie Wright, Harry Long, Christopher Morrow, Thomas Nixon, James Smith and Conor Woods.

The next Aquasprint gala will take place in Banbridge on Saturday 14th January 2012 against Ards Swimming Club.

For further information on Banbridge Amateur Swimming Club, visit our website on www.banbridgeasc.co.uk