

"MASTERS SWIMMING AND HOW TO SURVIVE IT!"

St Paul's Barnes Swimming Club Senior and Masters  
Tri Squad

British Gas ASA National Masters Short Course  
Championships at Sheffield last week-end

From the deck .....from Coach Tony Pearce.

There are certain things that can't be rushed .....

There were many swims from our club at the British Gas ASA National Masters Short Course Championships last week-end that, as coach, I was really pleased with. But there were two particular swims, strangely one after the other, and ironically, from the same swimmer - Pip Bennett.

Pip first swam the 100 Free achieving a personal best time of 59.99 secs - going under the minute for the first time. Then, literally in the very next event he swam the 400 IM, and achieved a time of 5.20.80 secs breaking his personal best by some 16 seconds! It is at this point that I give due comment below:

The 400 IM is a real trade craft event. The easiest part of the 400 IM is the dive. With this event you just don't walk into the locker room and "shazzam" - all of a sudden you come out as a meat-eating superstar swimming assassin. You see, believe it or not, swimming isn't about winning or losing as such, but rather it's about training! There aren't many ways to describe a swimmer in training. Physically, it's basically the same thing and over. But mentally is where it really is all at. In other words, it is all about who you have been - and who you think you might be. It is here that, believe it or not, swimming is mostly psychological.

"Training" for the 400 IM, is where we go about refining all the different skill sets required for all the four strokes. This allows you the trigger time necessary for you not to panic with the changing race positions in such a difficult race. You have to roll with it. Adapt. Darwin. I Ching. You must train to be the 'complete swimmer'. Pip

turned one of the top swimmers in his age group inside out - who was swimming beside him in the next lane - just by being very aware his own split times in swim practice. Practice, the results of which are known, make perfect.

It is here that one realizes that planning the training for such an event as the 400 IM is not just a Santa Clause Christmas wish list, nor is the stopwatch just a thumbnail sketch. Yes, nothing is learnt until it is taught. There are certain things that can't be rushed .....

On top of Pip's achievements let's not forget also those of Andy Pryke, Jessica Rathke, Cameron Finlay and our national record breaker Duncan McCreddie who swam the 800 Free in a time of 10:36.94. And, finally, congratulations also to our 4x50 Men's Medley Relay Team on their 4<sup>th</sup> place in the 200-239 age category. The team was; Cameron Finlay (Back), Duncan McCreddie (Breast), Andy Pryke (Fly), Tony Pearce (Free).

In total the SPBSC team brought home 5 gold and 4 bronze medals.

Well Done!