# A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGEMENT TEAM

## A SEASON FULL OF PROMISE

What a wonderful start to the season it has been for Guildford City. From our youngest competitors taking their next steps in racing to our Masters delivering outstanding performances, there is so much to celebrate. It has been especially pleasing to see swimmers bringing the skills they practice in training into competition, supported by coaches, volunteers and families. We are looking forward to another exciting season, including the Junior and Senior Arena League Championships and the opportunities they bring to represent Guildford together. Thank you to everyone who has helped create such a positive start. We cannot wait to see what comes next.

## TEAMWORK

Teamwork sits at the heart of Guildford City. Our team competitions are among the most important meets of the season because they bring squads and coaches together around a shared purpose. Swimmers race for one another, cheer beyond their own events and discover that every contribution matters. That spirit should reach far beyond a gala. A strong club grows when swimmers commit to their training, coaches share their knowledge and parents give encouragement, perspective and practical support. None of us builds success alone. The patience offered after a difficult swim can matter as much as the applause after a victory. The example set by an older swimmer can stay with a younger teammate for years. When we listen, respect different roles and put the club's wellbeing alongside our individual ambitions, we create something lasting: a community where people feel they belong and help one another become their best.



From the club archive: the 2026 Nationals team

# FIVE IN A ROW!

## National Junior Arena League champions




Celebrating Guildford City's historic fifth consecutive national title

Five consecutive national titles. What an achievement for Guildford City! Huge congratulations to our National Junior Arena League team on becoming national champions for the fifth year running, an unprecedented run in the competition's history. This success belongs to every swimmer who raced for the team and to the coaches who helped them prepare. Our volunteers and parents deserve an equally big thank you for their time, encouragement and support. Behind the celebrations are countless training sessions and a shared commitment to the team. We are enormously proud of everyone involved. Enjoy this special moment, Guildford: you have earned it!

Our continued success at this level really is testament to the success of our Academy and Transition Squads. Led by Jan Griffiths the programme being delivered really is the best in the country.

As a club we look forward to parents supporting the growth of the academy in future years.

ACADEMY & TRANSITION

# Every swimmer has their own journey

When a young swimmer joins Guildford City Swimming Club, they become part of a highly successful and proven development programme – one that has helped GCSC retain its title as National Junior Arena League Champions for five successive years. Behind that success is a simple philosophy: developing young swimmers is a journey, and we must always take the long-term view.

Children develop physically, emotionally and technically at different rates. There will be periods of rapid progress and others when development appears slower, and where a swimmer sits today is far less important than the swimmer they have the potential to become. Comparing children with teammates, or focusing too heavily on squad placement, times or promotion, can easily lose sight of that bigger picture.

Competition results also need to be understood in context. Some competitions use “age on the date of competition”, which can temporarily divide swimmers who we would normally assess within the same January–December year group. For example, at an October competition, a swimmer with a November or December birthday may compete as a younger age than another child born earlier in the same calendar year. This can be beneficial for that particular competition, but the resulting rankings or comparisons do not necessarily reflect how we assess swimmers for progression through our programme.

It is also important to remember that promotion is not a reward in itself. Moving a swimmer on too quickly is not necessarily moving them forward. There is enormous value in consolidating skills, developing confidence and learning to train well before taking the next step. Progress is rarely a straight line, particularly with young athletes, and the right challenge at the right time is far more important than the name of the squad they currently swim in.

Our coaches therefore consider the whole swimmer: their age, technical development, physical and emotional maturity, training ability, consistency and readiness for the demands of the next stage. Progression is individual and made at the right time for that swimmer.

Most importantly, we want children to retain their enjoyment and love of swimming. We ask parents to enjoy being parents – supporting, encouraging and celebrating the journey – while trusting our coaches to coach and provide the opportunities each swimmer needs. There is plenty of time. Our shared ethos is not simply a faster swimmer today, but a happy, motivated and successful swimmer for the years ahead.

With Jan Griffiths, Head of Academy and Transition Squads

# GROWING WITH GUILDFORD

**FROM THE TEACHING POOL**

## A confident start to the season

There's been plenty of energy, enthusiasm, and progress in the teaching pool as we kick off the new season. It's been great to see everyone working hard, enjoying their sessions, and making a real effort to improve their strokes and skills.

During our recent Achievements Week, we saw some great efforts, racing starts and fast swims. Many swimmers achieved new times, with our Frogs and Tadpoles swimming one length and our Otters/PCB completing two lengths.

Our teaching pool programme is an essential stepping stone towards the competitive swimming pathway. Alongside building confidence and improving performance, we focus on developing the technical foundations swimmers need to progress.

Working over shorter distances allows swimmers to concentrate on performing skills correctly and developing effective stroke mechanics. This helps minimise negative skill transfer, where poor habits can carry over into more advanced swimming.

Our approach is to introduce, develop and master each component of a stroke progressively. By giving swimmers time to develop each element before moving on to the next, we help establish good technique and strong foundations for future success.

A huge well done to all our swimmers for their hard work and commitment. It's been a brilliant start to the new season, and we look forward to seeing everyone continue to progress!

# COMPETITION RESULTS



ARENA LEAGUE

## A flying start for both teams

Guildford City have made a brilliant start to the Arena League, with two great opening results from our A and B teams. Our A team currently lead the South East Region rankings, while our B team sit an impressive seventh. Together, those positions give the whole club plenty to celebrate and show the strength of our racing teams. Congratulations to everyone who represented Guildford and helped create such a positive start. Next comes round two on 14 November. We are looking forward to more fast swimming, wholehearted team support and plenty of loud cheering. Bring your Guildford voices and get behind both teams!

MASTERS SUCCESS

## Five medals and two records

Congratulations to Sean North and Paul Smoothy on their performances at the South East Regional Masters Short Course Championships. The pair brought home five medals between them, with Sean also setting two South East Regional records. It is a fantastic return and a result the whole club can celebrate. Their achievements put our Masters swimmers firmly in the spotlight alongside the successes of our younger teams. Racing, improving and enjoying the challenge continue throughout a swimming career, and these performances give us plenty to cheer about. Well done, Sean and Paul, on a superb championships and a proud moment for Guildford City.

# COUNTY TEAM SUCCESS

**SURREY COUNTY RELAY CHAMPIONSHIPS**

## 18 of 20 gold medals

Guildford City enjoyed another outstanding Surrey County Relay Championships, winning 18 of the 20 gold medals on offer. It is a result that gives the whole club a huge reason to celebrate. Relay racing asks swimmers to combine their individual strengths and take responsibility for the team, making these championships a particularly fitting expression of our club spirit. Congratulations to every swimmer who represented Guildford, and thank you to the coaches and supporters behind them. These performances show what can happen when swimmers race together with a shared purpose. Well done to everyone involved in another memorable county relay campaign.

**INTER-COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS · SHEFFIELD**

## Surrey's best-ever finish

Huge congratulations to Surrey ASA on a historic second place at the Inter-county Championships in Sheffield, the county's highest finish in the competition. Guildford City are thrilled to have contributed 14 of the 24 swimmers in the Surrey team. It is a proud moment for our club and an achievement to celebrate across the county. Representing Surrey gives swimmers the chance to race alongside teammates from other clubs and work towards a shared result. Well done to the entire Surrey team and everyone supporting them. Our congratulations go to all the swimmers and coaches behind this exceptional second-place finish.

**14 of Surrey's 24 swimmers came from Guildford City**

# DEVELOPMENT SQUAD SELECTIONS

## Congratulations to every swimmer selected

A huge well done to our swimmers selected for development opportunities this autumn. We celebrate ten Surrey selections alongside places in national programmes and teams representing Wales and Scotland. These opportunities recognise the progress swimmers are making and offer fresh challenges beyond their everyday training. Congratulations to everyone selected, and thank you to the coaches and families supporting them. Several swimmers appear in more than one programme, so the list below celebrates selections rather than a total of individual swimmers. We are excited to see what everyone learns and how they bring that experience back to their Guildford training groups.

### SURREY DEVELOPMENT CAMPS

## Surrey Development Selections · 10

Ava R, Deshler S-C, Ella H, Ethan T, Jocelyn C, Finley K, Hamish W, Veida E, Sebastian F and Margot S-C

### NATIONAL PROGRAMMES

**National Youth Squad · 5**
Charlie C, Emily C, Gisella S, Heidi C, Ellie M

**National Age Group · 4**
Razvan L, Daniel L, Maggie B, Rory M

**DiSE · 4**
Charlie C, Emily C, Gisella S, Lucas I

**National Open Water · 1**
Ellie M

**Swim Wales Youth Performance Squad · 2**
Amy H and Jack K

**Scottish Teams · 3**
Poppy M, Maddie M and Emmaline E

# CAMPS AND CLINICS

## EDUCATION, EDUCATION, EDUCATION

Our Camps and Clinics continue to go from strength to strength, attracting growing numbers of ambitious young swimmers eager to benefit from the expertise, knowledge and experience of our outstanding High Performance coaching team.

Sam Tierney has been part of Guildford City Swimming Club since the age of eight, progressing through the ranks to become an accomplished national-level swimmer, regularly competing against the very best in the country.

Sam has since transformed that experience into exceptional coaching success, leading one of the country's most successful swimming squads. Her commitment to developing young athletes, combined with her ability to inspire, educate and nurture talent, has helped deliver an extraordinary **five consecutive National Junior Arena League titles** — an unprecedented achievement in the competition's history. Beyond these remarkable team successes, Sam has consistently guided aspiring swimmers towards their first British National Championships, providing the expertise, confidence and preparation needed to progress into our Age Group National and Junior Performance Squads, laying the foundations for long-term success.

Sam now brings this wealth of experience and proven success to our increasingly popular stroke clinics, offering young swimmers the invaluable opportunity to learn from one of the country's leading coaches. Each clinic provides focused technical development, personalised feedback and expert guidance, helping swimmers refine their skills, build confidence and unlock their potential. Sam's ability to identify and communicate meaningful technical improvements has become a defining strength of the programme.

Responding to increasing demand, Sam has developed an innovative feedback programme that ensures the benefits extend well beyond each session. Swimmers leave with clear technical priorities to practise, while parents receive valuable explanations of the improvements being introduced. This collaborative approach ensures learning continues long after swimmers leave the pool, maximising the lasting impact of every clinic.

Guildford City Swimming Club is immensely proud to offer these exceptional opportunities to both club members and swimmers from across the wider swimming community. The talented coaching team Sam has assembled is setting an outstanding standard for technical education and athlete development. With an expanding group of experienced coaches delivering specialist sessions, supported by the exceptional organisation and dedication of our administrator, Catherine Houston, our Camps and Clinics provide a professional, accessible and genuinely swimmer-focused experience that continues to inspire the next generation of swimming talent.

Website: https://www.gcsc.co.uk/clinics-front-page-new/

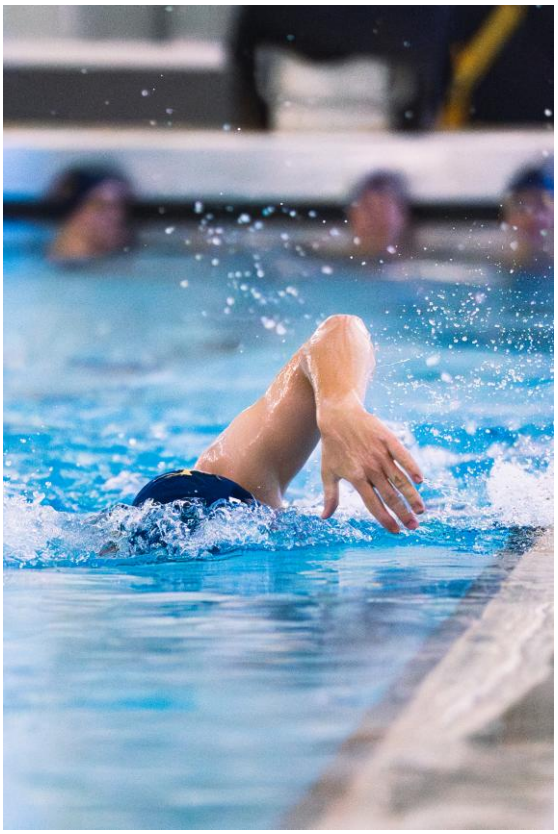
# SURREY UNIVERSITY ON THE BIG STAGE

**UNIVERSITY SWIMMING**

## Fourth in strong company

A big cheer for Surrey's university swimmers after a creditable fourth place at a trial event ahead of the returning ISL competition. Competing against Loughborough, Stirling and Birmingham Universities and therefore some of the country's best swimmers and programmes in the country gave the team a demanding challenge and a valuable opportunity to race in strong company. Fourth place is a result to celebrate and a proud moment for the Surrey swimming community. The returning ISL competition is planned for the London Aquatics Centre in December. Congratulations to all the Surrey swimmers who took part. We look forward to seeing them build on this experience as the university season continues.





University of Surrey training images from the 2025 photo archive

# Surrey Sports Park & Spectrum Leisure Centre

## SURREY SPORTS PARK

### New timing. New scoreboard.

Exciting improvements are on the way at Surrey Sports Park: brand new timing equipment and a new scoreboard. The latest supplied update from SSP reports that all screen components have reached Swiss Timing, with the project aiming to be ready ahead of our 21–22 November gala. Installation planning, staff training and a dry run form part of the preparations. The proposed 10–11 November screen installation remains tentative, rather than a confirmed completion date. This investment is a welcome sign of the continuing partnership between Guildford City Swimming Club, Surrey Sports Park and the University of Surrey. We cannot wait to see the new equipment in action!

**Guildford City Swimming Club + Surrey Sports Park + University of Surrey**

## GUILDFORD SPECTRUM

### Skills and speed at our Level 3 meet

Well done to everyone who raced at our Level 3 meet at Guildford Spectrum. The club was delighted with how smoothly the meet ran and with the fast swimming on display. Just as encouraging was the continuing improvement in swimmers' skills, showing the value of the work happening in training. Thank you to the officials and volunteers who helped keep the competition moving, and to the families and coaches supporting swimmers throughout the meet. Every opportunity to race helps swimmers put their skills into practice. It was a pleasure to see so much progress and such a positive atmosphere across the competition.

# AT SURREY SPORTS PARK

## OUR NOVEMBER & DECEMBER MEETS

### Winter National and County qualifiers

There is more club racing to look forward to at Surrey Sports Park. Our November Level 2 Winter National Qualifier takes place on 21–22 November, followed by the December Level 3 Last Chance County Qualifier, also at SSP. We look forward to seeing everyone compete and put their training into practice. These meets bring swimmers together for the next challenges of the season, with opportunities to develop race skills and work towards qualifying goals. Thank you in advance to everyone helping to make them happen. Keep an eye on the club's meet information for the December date, session details and arrangements.

## FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER

### Arena suit fitting

Our Arena suit fitting event takes place at Surrey Sports Park on Friday 20 November. It is a timely opportunity to get suits ready for competitions at the end of the training cycle, and a useful date for anyone thinking about a swimming present for Christmas. Finding the right fit is worth giving time to, so please put the event in your diary and look out for the club's arrangements. With busy weeks of racing ahead, this is a welcome chance to plan your kit. We look forward to seeing members there as preparations continue for the next competitions of the season.

This event will now provide the opportunity for swimmers to try and by the following Arena racing suites: ST Next, Impulso, Carbon Air 2, Carbon Glide, Primo, Veloce and importantly the all new Air Carbon 3.

## SWIMMER WELLBEING

### Sharing concerns about training conditions

We know that training conditions at Surrey Sports Park can occasionally feel challenging, and we appreciate swimmers and families sharing their experiences. If a swimmer experiences any adverse effects they believe relate to the conditions during training, please contact SSP immediately through its feedback and complaints page. Let the coach know too, so they are aware of what has happened. Clear details about the session and the swimmer's experience will help SSP understand the concern. We value our partnership with the venue and want members to feel comfortable raising issues promptly. Thank you for helping keep swimmer wellbeing at the centre of club life.

surreysportspark.co.uk/feedback-complaints-policy

# READY TO TRAIN

**LAND TRAINING · RHIANNON BOWEN**

## Pre-pool preparation matters

Good preparation starts before swimmers enter the water. Rhiannon Bowen's pre-pool guidance explains how a familiar routine helps swimmers become physically and mentally ready for training. Swim England's approach follows four stages: Raise, Mobilise, Activate and Prime. Together, these gradually warm the body, move the joints and prepare muscles for the session ahead. Arriving early gives swimmers time to complete their preparation without rushing. Rhiannon suggests allowing five to ten minutes, following a routine suited to each swimmer's needs and abilities. Please support swimmers in arriving on time and following their coach's guidance, so they begin each session ready to learn and train.

**Read more:** swimming.org/sport/land-warm-up-swimmers/



From the club archive: swimmers preparing and training together

# WELCOME TO THE TEAM

## HIGH PERFORMANCE







### Yassin Selmani

Joining from Barnet Copthall

### Matt Hammann

Joining from the University of Bath

Please give a warm Guildford welcome to Yassin Selmani and Matt Hammann, who have joined our High Performance staff. Yassin joins us from Barnet Copthall, while Matt joins from the University of Bath. We are delighted to welcome them both and look forward to the contribution they will make to our swimmers' development. Starting somewhere new is easier when there are friendly faces around, so please say hello when you see Yassin and Matt at training. Help them get to know our swimmers and families, and make them feel part of the Guildford family from the outset.

## Say hello at training

Help Yassin and Matt feel part of the Guildford family

# THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE CLUB

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU




### Liz Simmons

Guildford City Swimming Club
Management Team Member

Our first Getting to Know You feature celebrates Liz Simmons, one of the people whose work helps keep Guildford City running behind the scenes. Liz manages our club memberships with Swim England and supports financial control within the club. As a Guildford City Swimming Club Management Team Member, she helps support the organisation and its families. Much of this work happens away from the poolside, but it matters to the whole organisation. Thank you, Liz, for your continued contribution and for helping the club support its swimmers.

Thank you everyone for supporting the club during our migration to paying by monthly direct debit last year. I believe this has been a positive move for members but please do contact me if you have any concerns. I am also first point of contact for the Swim Manager membership system, issues with Swim England membership, SSP parking permits and the website which I update regularly. If any members are interested in helping out please do contact me




### Lise Duetoft

Guildford City Swimming Club
Welfare Officer

I have been involved in competitive swimming for more than 12 years, both as a parent and as a qualified official. Three of my children have trained and competed for Guildford City, so I have experienced club life from many different perspectives, from training and competitions to the commitment that goes on behind the scenes.

As GCSC Welfare Officer, I am here for any swimmer, parent, coach or volunteer who would like to raise a welfare or safeguarding concern. My role is to listen, offer guidance and help ensure that concerns are handled sensitively, confidentially and in accordance with Swim England's safeguarding procedures. An important part of my role is also helping to maintain a club environment where everyone is treated with respect, and where the safety, wellbeing and enjoyment of our swimmers remain at the heart of everything we do.