

F.I.R.S.T.

Falkirk Integrated Regional Swim Team

Scottish National Age Group Championship Coach Report:

The 2010 Scottish National Age Group Championships ended yesterday evening with the F.I.R.S.T squad finishing in a very impressive 3rd best team overall from a total of 83!

1	Warrender Baths Club	964.50 points
2	Carnegie	885 points
3	FIRST	696 points
4	City of Aberdeen Swim Team	550 points
5	East Lothian Swim Team	534 points

This is by no means an achievement to be taken for granted. It is a culmination of all the hard work, time and commitment that has gone in to making F.I.R.S.T a success in the four years it has been established.

It proves that the level of performance swimming in the Falkirk area has risen emphatically and that we have created an environment that those athletes with the ability, appetite and determination to succeed at the highest level can!

Day 1-

The first day of the meet saw Rebecca Murray pick up bronze in the 10-12yrs 400Free in a new West District record time of 4'45.42.

This was swiftly followed by a silver medal in the boys 14yrs 1500Free by Craig Knight in a time of 17'30.01 in the afternoons distance session. Duncan Scott finished 6th in the 10-12yrs, with Scott Campbell and Stuart Knight finishing 8th and 11th respectively in also in the 14yrs.

The first nights finals saw 11 F.I.R.S.T swimmers competing in 19 separate finals, plus 2 very strong boys relay squads...

F.I.R.S.T. Junior swimmer Kayley Davidson got the team off to a great start with a silver in the girls 10-12yrs 100Breast with a 1'22.01 best time. Alex Waterson also competed in the girls 13yrs 100Breast final finishing 9th in 1'26.44, just outside her heat time.

F.I.R.S.T had 7 boys in the 200Fly finals with Duncan Scott picking up silver in the 10-12yrs with a 2'33.52. He was also awarded gold as Scottish National Champion! The 13yrs saw Dale McAnish and Ian Elrick take silver and bronze respectively 2'21.56 and 2'24.16. Criag Knight

continued his good form along with Scott Campbell in the boys 14yrs finishing 8th and 9th, with Ramsay Elfendi posting a best time of 2'18.02 to finish 7th in the 15yrs. Ross Muir now Stirling Performance Squad but still F.I.R.S.T representative displayed what being a F.I.R.S.T swimmer as a youngster can lead to as he picked up bronze in the 16-18yrs.

The girls 200IM finals saw Rebecca Murray, Alex Waterson, Charlotte McKenzie and Lauren Forsyth in action. Rebecca swam slightly slower than her heat to finish 6th in the 10-12yrs, with Charlotte McKenzie grabbing silver 2'28.13 and Alex Waterson in her second final of the evening 10th 2'40.44 in the 13yrs. Lauren Forsyth displayed her mental strength as she continues to battle through a tough year of exams and illness with a best time of 2'33.07 to finish 6th in the girls 14yrs.

Boys 100Free saw Duncan Scott back in the water to finish 9th in the 10-12yrs, where as Dale McAnish and Ian Elrick swapped positions on the podium with silver to Ian 59.65 and bronze to Dale 59.83 in the 13yrs.

Charlotte McKenzie and Lauren Forsyth were up in the girls 100Back where Charlotte took a hard fought gold, despite being some 2seconds off her best time with Lauren finishing 4th in the girls 14yrs just off her best.

The final event of the night was the boys 4x200Free relay. The 11-14 team comprised of Dale McAnish, Scott Campbell, Duncan Scott and Ian Elrick who displayed their collective strength by finishing a clear 2nd behind a very strong Carnegie team to take the silver medal. In the 15-18yrs went Greig MacKenzie, Ryan Davidson, Gregor Birrell and Ross Muir who despite being out in lane 1 moved from 9th on the entry to finish a very commendable 4th!

Day 2-

It didn't take long for the medals to start coming in on the second day with Duncan Scott 10-12yrs and Dale McAnish 13yrs both claiming silver and Ian Elrick 13yrs bronze in the 400IM. The 14yrs saw Craig Knight finish 6th and Scott Campbell 8th, both in best times. Ross Muir showed why he is on the verge of senior Scottish ranks as he won gold in the boys 16-18yrs a few seconds short of the time that helped him to 7th at the British Championships the week before.

The girls 800Free saw Rebecca Murray back on the podium with a bronze in the 10-12yrs.

Day two finals saw 11 F.I.R.S.T swimmers again competing in 12 finals plus a full compliment of 4 relay squads take to the pool...

First off was Rebecca Murray 10-12yrs in the 200Free claiming 4th in a new West District record time of 2'16.72. Charlotte McKenzie 13yrs followed finishing 8th in a new best time.

Next up were the boys in the 200Back, Gregor Birrell and Ramsay Elfendi 15yrs both posted best times with Gregor 4th 2'18.23 and Ramsay 9th 2'23.46. In the 16-18yrs Ryan Davidson improved upon his heat time to finish 5th despite being at the bottom end of his age group.

F.I.R.S.T Junior member Kayley Davidson who picked up silver in the 10-12yrs 100Breast on day 1 did the same in the 200 event with a massive best time of 2'56.94. Also in the same event Kirsty Park 15yrs had a terrific heat swim to qualify for her first ever age group final where she set a best time of 2'58.71 to finish 8th.

The boys 100Fly saw plenty excitement with Duncan Scott putting in a tremendous 2nd 50 to claim 3rd and Scottish National champion with a best time of 1'08.91. In the following 13yrs final both Dale McAnish and Ian Elrick took part with Dale 2nd and Ian 4th both just outside their PB's. Scott Campbell then took to the blocks for the boys 14yrs, and after a very fast heat swim of 1'06.59 he finished 10th just outside his morning heat time. 15yr old Ramsay Elfendi in his second final of the night broke the 64 second barrier for the first time with a very quick 1'03.46 to finish in 9th.

Charlotte McKenzie, Kayley Davidson, Lauren Yorston and Rebecca Murray made up the girls 11-13yrs 4x100Medley relay, they went in heat 1 where they had to post as quick a time as possible for the team in the following heat to beat. Their time of 4'52.40 proved too good and they claimed F.I.R.S.T's first ever relay gold at National level as the remaining teams failed to match their time, with Grangemouth a distant 4 seconds behind in second. The girls 14-17yrs team comprising of Lauren Forsyth, Kirsty Park, Alex Waterson and Alex Scott finished in 16th place, up on their entry position.

In the boys 4x100Free relay the boys 11-14yrs (Ian Elrick, Dale McAnish, Scott Campbell, Duncan Scott) buoyed by their silver from the night before again finished in the medals claiming a hard fought 3rd place despite all four boys having competed in individual finals that session. The 15-18yrs boys consisting this time of Greig MacKenzie, Ryan Davidson, Ross Muir and Ramsay Elfendi finished 4th again with a very quick time of 3'43.11...

Day 3-

Notoriously difficult as a tough day to get through due to tiredness and fatigue, F.I.R.S.T swimmers displayed the type of character and strength they show day in day out in training to have possibly their best day of the meet.

After again navigating a long morning heats session the afternoons distance session saw the boys compete in the 400Free, and the girls compete in the 1500Free. Duncan Scott finished 5th in the 10-12yrs, with Ian Elrick 2nd and Dale McAnish 6th in the 13yrs. Craig Knight 14yrs finished 10th in the 14yrs with Scott Campbell quickly getting over his DQ in his morning IM heat to set a best time of 4'34.71!

The girls 1500Free saw Rebecca Murray continue to display the progress she has made over the past year to finish 2nd in the 10-12yrs. Alex Scott in her only individual swim of the championships made the most of the opportunity to set a lifetime best time of 19'13.32 to finish a valuable 8th in the 15yrs.

Day 2 finals again saw 11 F.I.R.S.T swimmers in the finals along with the 2 girls relay squads...

Ian Elrick and Dale McAnish got the team off to the best possible start when they went head to head in the boys 13yrs 100Breast. Neck and neck at the half way point, nothing separated them going into the final 5 meters. It was however Ian who emerged victorious in a new West District record time of 1'14.08, with Dale 1'14.22 just behind!! A 1-2 at a National Championships was yet another F.I.R.S.T first!!

That result seemed to spark life into the remaining finalists. Charlotte McKenzie firstly stepped up to claim 3rd in the girls 13yrs 200Fly in a best time of 2'30.07.

Then came the boys 200IM's where F.I.R.S.T had at least 1 one swimmer in every one of the 5 age group finals. Duncan Scott 10-12yrs came strong on the breaststroke leg then pulled away on the free to claim gold in 2'33.18. Dale McAnish and Ian Elrick were back in action with Dale 2nd 2'23.41, Ian 3rd 2'26.01 in the 13yrs. Criag Knight was 7th in the 14yrs in a best time of 2'23.08, Ramsay Elfendi 15yrs 10th 2'21.43 and Ross Muir 16-18yrs claimed 3rd in a West District record of 2'07.59.

100Free for girls was next where Rebecca Murray claimed 5th in the 10-12yrs and Lauren Forsyth 14yrs took 10th.

The final individual event of the night was the boys 100Back. Duncan Scott 10-12yrs was 7th in his final new best time of 1'13.68. Gregor Birrell and Ramsay Elfendi went in the 15yrs with both boys posting best times. Gregor claimed his first National Age Group medal in a 1'03.62, with Ramsay 6th 1'05.90. The boys 16-18yrs saw Ryan Davidson improve hugely from the morning heat finishing 6th with a very quick 1'01.62.

The evenings relays saw the girls in the 4x200Free with the 11-13yrs (Charlotte McKenzie, Rebecca Murray, Kayley Davidson, Lauren Yorston) finishing 7th and the girls 14-17yrs (Lauren Forsyth, Alex Scott, Alex Waterson, Kirsty Park) finishing 13th.

Day 4-

The final day of the meet saw F.I.R.S.T some 100points clear of City of Aberdeen in fourth and brought about some more great racing and results.

The afternoons session had the girls go in the 400IM whereas the boys competed in the 800Free.

Rebecca Murray claimed 3rd in the 10-12yrs with Kayley Davidson 9th. Charlotte McKenzie finished 4th in the 13yrs.

The 800Free saw F.I.R.S.T swimmers pick up three consecutive bronze medals. Duncan Scott 10-12yrs 9'40.92, Ian Elrick 13yrs 9'33.97, and Craig Knight 14yrs 9'09.07. Craig continues to demonstrate his strength in the distance events.

The last finals session got under way with 10 F.I.R.S.T swimmers in 11 finals, along with another 7 relay swimmers...

The 200Free for boys saw Duncan Scott 10-12yrs come back strongly to claim equal 3rd in a best time of 2'13.96. In the 13yrs Ian Elrick swam a committed race to pick up 2nd in a best time of 2'07.75 with Dale McAnish 3rd 2'10.75. Gregor Birrell swam in the boys 15yrs and finished 9th, slightly down on his heat time.

Charlotte McKenzie was the sole F.I.R.S.T representative in the girls 200Back where she finished 2nd in a very close race 2'24.12.

The boys 200Breast had F.I.R.S.T Junior swimmer Calum Lawrie 10-12yrs in his first National Age Group final where he demonstrated great nerve to finish 10th breaking the West District 11yrs record at the half way mark. The 13yrs saw Dale McAnish compete in what was his last individual event. Having collected a fistful of 2nd and 3rd spots Dale was determined to take gold. He won convincingly in the end with a best time and new West District record of 2'41.00! Scott Campbell stepped up next in the 14yrs, and despite being unwell during the afternoon session swam inside his heat time to finish 8th in 2'44.55. Ryan Davidson competed in the 16-18yrs setting a best time of 2'32.08 to finish 10th.

The final individual event of the championships was the girls 100Fly. Rebecca Murray demonstrated her versatility finishing 9th in the 10-12yrs in a best time of 1'13.73. Charlotte McKenzie rounded off a very busy few months of competition for her finishing 4th in the 13yrs 1'08.65.

It then came to the final relay races of the meet. With a silver and bronze already in the bag, the boys 11-14yrs (Ian Elrick, Scott Campbell, Dale McAnish, Duncan Scott) found themselves on the podium again with yet another 3rd place finish in the 4x100Medley. The boys 15-18yrs consisting of Ryan Davidson, Ross Muir, Greig MacKenzie and Ramsay Elfendi were unfortunate to find themselves 4th for the 3rd time but did demonstrate the progress made over the past year to do so!!

Gold medal winners from day 2, the girls 11-13yrs team of Charlotte McKenzie, Lauren Yorston, Kayley Davidson and Rebecca Murray finished 9th, with the 14-17yrs (Lauren Forsyth, Yasmin Khera, Alex Waterson, Kirsty Park) were 4'18.04.

Conclusion-

In all, the 22 athletes who participated amassed 7 Gold, 20 Silver and 12 Bronze medals in the individual events. Along with 1 Gold, 1 Silver and 2 Bronze in the relay events. There were also a total of 55 individual finals along with 25 top 10 finishes in the afternoon distance events. Of the 12 relay events F.I.R.S.T finished in the top 10 in all but 3 and the top 5 in 7!!

To finish 3rd top team in Scotland with the number of athletes we had competing compared to some of the other teams is testament to the swimmers ability, willingness and desire to race at this level again and again over the course of four days.

Next year our target should be to have an even larger squad of swimmers, win more medals make more finals, and hopefully close the gap on the two teams ahead of us...

Hopefully the results this year will inspire all swimmers in both Bo'ness and Falkirk of the possibilities the future can hold for them, if they show the commitment, attitude and hard work it requires!!

Regards,
Steve