

Annual Report 2017

Congratulations and thank you to everyone who has supported the Dolphins throughout the year.

Jan - The year started with the **BLDSA Postal Swim** organised internationally by Dolphin Mandy Reid. Caroline Lewis organised it for the Club. Twenty four members took part in this year's event and collectively swam 40 miles. There were some great efforts from the Dowding, Lewis and Trevor families. Adam Farini topped the Dolphins leader board, swimming 3,810m in 1 hour. He was followed by Richard Taylor in 3,700m and Beth Dowding in 3.510m. Many thanks to everyone who entered and to all the lane counters. See full results on the BLDSA Website

Feb - We had our **1500m Championships** indoor event, this was organised by Barbara Harding. We had 43 entries. We had representation from a number of clubs, Manchester Tri Club, Stockport SC, Bramhall, Barrow LDSC, Howe Bridge LDSC and Warrington Dolphins. A good time was had by all with a lovely meal and presentation afterwards at the local Toby Carvery. We thank you for your support. See results on our website.

March – Awards. Several Dolphin members achieved BLDSA awards in recognition of their swimming over the previous year. Junior member Ellie Jane Knight was awarded the 'Tom Butcher' trophy as Junior Swimmer of the year and is also the Junior 'Grand Prix' award winner. Frank Kilgannon achieved 3rd place in the Masters Grand Prix. The Grand Prix is points based on total mileage and swim results. Margaret Smith won the Ladies Annual Dinner Swimmer of the Year and Jo Blackburn was awarded the Swimmer Escort trophy for overall provision of safety. Well done to all four members on their achievements.

April - Bob Keating/Dick Dickinson Club Championships organised by Caroline Lewis. As our sessions times had changed duration earlier in the year, we decided to hold it on a Friday night for a change and reduce the length of the swim to 3km. Our number of swimmers was a bit down on previous years, but we had plenty of counters, so thanks to all who supported the event. It was a handicapped swim, so each entrant gave an estimated completion time and the finisher who swam closest to this won the trophy. Ironically for our club, the water was very warm so it wasn't the easiest 3K swim we've ever done! Results 1st Barbara Harding, 2nd Mike Reason, 3rd Julie Trevor, 4th Caroline Lewis, 5th Karen Hodgkins, 6th Rob Waters.

There were no juniors or under 12 entrants this year so the Dick Dickinson trophy was not awarded. Well done to all the swimmers and thank you to all the counters who made it possible to hold the event. Congratulations to all winners. Again thank you to all the counters who turned up to help. We are hugely grateful for your time and support.

April Four Dolphins entered as a team in the **2Swim4life 24 Hour Challenge** at the Guildford Lido, organised by Lesley Zimmerman. Michaela Richard, Caroline Lewis, Andy Wright and Chris Carter were the team, swimming one hour, every hour, for 24 hours in rotation. We successfully completed our swim in true Dolphin spirit and it was good way to celebrate our 10 year anniversary of our successful 2 way English Channel Relay with Dolphins Jo Blackburn and Mark Blewitt in 2007.

April - Outdoor swimming sessions. This year's Tuesday evening swim sessions at Budworth Sailing Club got off to a cold start with the water temperature at 14C. However, this soon improved and over the following weeks, the temperature saw a steady increase up to 19C. The sessions have been well attended with maximum attendance reaching 19 on 31 May.

May – Budworth Handicap 1mile Club Event.

12 intrepid swimmers turned up at the Dolphins Lakeside Pavilion at Budworth Sailing Club for the 9am briefing, 8 swimming in standard costume and 4 in wetsuits.

Unlike the glorious sunny day on the Friday they were met with a cloudy overcast sky but calm waters on the Saturday morning. The course had been set and was initially to be 5 laps, however after a water temperature reading of 12.5 the organiser (a Non swimmer - Larry) and after discussion took pity and shortened the course to 4 laps !!, well that will not happen again as a few swimmers went on just to swim a few extra laps for training so next year it will be 5 laps and swimmers told just to get on with it. Ha ha. The times submitted were for 1 mile and were not changed so all results are well below the estimated lap time. The initial Traditional costume winner was Tom Stephens, however after a Stewards enquiry later that day it was discovered that actually Joe Coy was closest to his estimated time also swimming Butterfly. The Wetsuit winner was Billy Dutton. Although not a race as such there was a good time swum by Adam Farini finishing in 18 minutes 52 seconds with an invited guest swimmer Ian Musgrove hot on his heels in a time 18:58 and then Tom Stephens in 19:20.

Also just to say thanks to all the helpers and to Budworth Sailing Club for the use of the facilities and Food. See you in 2018...You have been warned it Will be 5 Laps !!!

June – Budworth Championships. It was a good turnout from Warrington Dolphin members this year, who made up twenty-one, of the seventy-two entries, across the 1, 2 and 3 miles events. Weather conditions were kind with mild temperatures both in and out of the water. Dolphins successes went to Stephne Douglas and Jonathan Gatley who finished in 2nd places, Sue Marsh and Mike Reason in 3rd places in the 3 miles freestyle events. Beth Dowding completed in 2nd place in the Junior 2 miles freestyle and Ellie Knight in 1st place in the Junior 2 miles breaststroke events. Barbara Harding finished 1st, Margaret Smith in 2nd and Frank Kilgannon 3rd in the 2 miles Masters events. Dave Cornwell took 3rd place in the men's 1 mile wetsuit event. Jonathan Gatley was awarded the 'home' trophy as the first Dolphin member to complete the 3 miles event in a time of 1:22:26.

Billy Dutton received the 'Merit of the Mere' award for his continuous contribution to Warrington Dolphin events and for his endurance and endeavour shown to outdoor swimming. All awards were presented by Phillip Yorke, President Elect, BLDSA. Many thanks to all swimmers and everyone who assisted in making the day a success. See Results on the Dolphins Website

August – Albert Dock. Organised by Barbara Harding. Thank you to Liverpool Watersports Centre for allowing the Dolphins once again to use their wonderful facilities and also a big thank you to Liverpool Canoe Club for providing Safety Cover on the day. Thank you to all who helped on the day and supported this event. See Results on Dolphin Website.

Once again Dolphins took to the seas with a **Channel Relay**. Report By Karen Hodgkins
Dolphins Channel Warriors, Relay Team 2017 Report

Our turn had finally arrived, we boarded the Anastasia at 7am on Sunday morning 20th August. A sweet little name for the craft that was to see us through our channel relay 2017. Once on board we were introduced to the crew dressed in matching yellow T-shirts, very much the colour scheme for our trip. The boat had all the essential facilities, upstairs there was an outdoor deck and below, a toilet, kitchen and sleeping area; however, this area was wasted on most of the team who were confined to the deck, to keeping a close eye on the horizon. We were briefed on the safety aspects and swim drill, such as the takeover procedure, no breaststroke, no strapping, no unofficial costumes. We signed the waiver and the official bit was done. Just before we set sail the crew introduced us to the in-boat entertainment and the cute little yellow buckets. Bless them they had put on entertainment to stave off the boredom between swims. The order of swimmers was decided by our, Manager Andy, first in Jonathan Gatley then Faye Hodgkins, Julie Trevor, Barbara Harding, Karen Hodgkins and Mandy Reid. We were ready to go, Jonathan swam to land, gave those on board a wave and he was back in the water with official start time 8.21am. The weather was sunny and the sea a lovely clear blue. For the swimmers on board the 'Yellow bucket game began. This consisted of a party game akin to pass the parcel, statues, snakes and ladders. It must have taken the crew many pain staking sailing hours to come up with such a captivating party game. The game was called 'Head in a yellow bucket' it is played with 6 mugs (although can be played with 4 or 5) The idea being 1 or 2 players close their eyes and shout out the names of the people that will have their head in a yellow bucket when the caller opens their eyes. If they get the names right they can dive or lunge towards the 'bucket head' and try and snatch the bucket off them and tip the contents into the sea. Once empty the 'bucket head' could decide to keep the bucket or pass it on. When we got better at the game the crew added an advanced level, seeing if we could still grab the bucket whilst they provided a roller coaster variation. This game was inclusive and no one was disappointed or left out, if you weren't holding a bucket or a bucket grabber you could still participate if you looked the colour of the crew T-shirts. Extra bonus points could be gained by, not only looking yellow but also trembling, rolling your eyes and in a near collapsed state.

Brilliant! We had the hang of this game. As you can tell it was a riveting game and once playing people didn't want to give up their yellow bucket status. Like, Monopoly the game lasted for ages and kept us going all trip; in fact, we only just finished as we docked. Where, do the snakes and ladders come in, I hear you say. Well there were ladders down to the galley; an out of bounds area for the bucket heads. If you were lucky enough and could make your way down the stairs without being sick you were able to make a brew, go to the loo. However, if you changed your mind and needed a bucket you had to make your way back up the ladders to retrieve your yellow bucket. We felt very proud to have, one player expert enough to grapple up the stairs on all fours before snatching a bucket and placing her head in it on the top rung. Extra bonus points for the team. Wonderful! As if, this wasn't enough entertainment once in the water the game changed, this entailed seeing how many mouthfuls of sea water you could consume in one hour whilst swimming in a massive washing machine and dodging the yellow bucket contents being thrown at you from above. This was almost as challenging as the bucket head game. Once back on the boat after a swim, people seemed keener to join in the bucket head game and were getting more proficient being able to play standing up, sitting down or sprawled on the floor whilst trying to get dressed. We really were becoming most proficient at this boat/swim challenge. Our expertise were shining through again, one player who was yellow and virtually, comatosed, still managed to get into a costume whilst clutching a yellow bucket. Wow! – professional statuses.

Whilst all this on-board rivalry was going on Faye took over from Jonathan and swam for her hour. Then Julie, the wind and waves seemed to be increasing their tempo with each successive swimmer, by the time the later swimmers got in, the elements were having a field day, being slapped in the face with a wave from either side and taking in copious amounts of water was all part and parcel of the trip. As the weather was predicted to get worse the swim was aborted by the pilot after 2pm. We were gutted in more ways than one, all that training and build up and not to manage to get to France. We did our best and we were no yellow belly's it was just the wrong time on the wrong day and if Hurricane Gert, had been kinder, who knows what we could have achieved.

Taking on the positive we had a proper channel experience and we felt proud to have completed a 1/3rd of the channel on what, for most us was our first attempt. With the swim over we made the very choppy journey back to Dover. However, the entertainment didn't stop there, as we travelled back, we had people chatting and laughing one minute and then the next they were prolapsed on the floor (David Jason, fools and horses style) One swimmer risked eating egg mayo sandwiches next to a bucket head very risky business, if you don't want a clout. The overall ambidextrous skills of most of the team holding buckets, aiming fluids into the bucket from many orifices, whilst gripping the boat with the other, was hilarious.

For anyone contemplating a channel relay our advice would be to train in a wave pool, coastal sea training is just no match and don't forget to master the art of the 'bucket head' game, whilst performing some type of balancing act. If you get this sussed, the Channel will be a doddle.

We would like to thank our fellow team members for giving it their best shot and for the wonderful, synergy and camaraderie over the weekend. Thank you to Andy Wright, for managing the "Dolphins Channel Warriors", and especially for giving up his family time with new Granddaughter Isla born on the same weekend - Congratulations. Thank you to Rob Waterhouse you prepared and supported us all the way and for all those who played a part in getting us to the start line. We are sorry we just didn't make it this time.

Dolphins have shown their support for other events around the country this year - Champion of Champions Ellerton Lake, Wykeham, Bala, Lynn Regis, Ivan Pervical, Salford Quays, Dee Mile and many, many more. Overall Dolphin members swam approx. 200 miles in 2017.

Results can be found on our Website: www.warrington-dolphins.co.uk

Congratulations to all.

Michaela Richard
WDLDS President