

So Close At Arena League!

Leamington's blinding victory in the first round of Arena League had their hopes flying high for a second place in round 2 at Redditch.

Gala favourites Derby, had created a substantial lead after the first ten events confirming that the rest of the clubs were vying for second place and a spot in the Arena League Final. At this stage Leamington were in a healthy six point lead over Redditch.

A solid performance from Ellen Stone, 17 and Teigan Parker saw these dependable breaststrokes scoring maximum points in their events. Ellen cruising to victory in the open 100m event whilst thirteen year old Teigan Parker had to fight to the end. Teigan teamed up with Jade Pickett, Sarah Chapman, Megan Stanton and Mollie Dibb to secure two second places in both freestyle and medley relays.

After eighteen events the positions on the leader board hadn't changed. Leamington were still holding their six point advantage.

A fistful of second places from Leamington kept the pressure on. Seventeen year old Hannah Greenshield powered her way to a new personal best in the open 100m freestyle in 1.00.14 whilst a gritty Kieran Curran, 13 recorded a new time of 1.03.00 in his individual. Jessica Nash and Finn Linton both swimming 100m backstroke in the 15/u category worked hard snatching second places. Harry Manship stripped over a second from his best 100m butterfly with 1.04.23 and eleven year old James MacKenzie had a close race in the 50m breaststroke just being squeezed from the top spot.

Ruby O'Brien, Jessica Nash, Amy Pettigrew, Felicity Dempster and Georgia Kidd secured terrific second places in both their relays, so did the ladies open medley relay team, Ellen Stone, Hannah Greenshield, Hannah Pickett and Sarah Brades

However, after 42 events, Redditch were clawing back with the lead dwindling to just two points. The last eight events were crucial for both clubs and every point counted. Redditch started well taking two first places and the lead. The speed of the 13/u boys of Kieran Curran, Aran Shuttlewood, Edward Jolly and Luke Williams in the freestyle relay brought us back in front again.

However, a disqualification in the penultimate race, saw Leamington's chance of making the final dashed. Redditch finished just 1 point ahead securing their place in the final.