

## National Arena League – Round 1

What a great night! Well done to everyone who swam in the first round of the National Speedo League held at Newbold Comyn on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October. Leamington had a tough night ahead with strong opposition from Derby, Redditch, Coventry, Worcester and Calverton & Bing. However, this didn't seem to deter them and Leamington finished in a fantastic second place, just in front of Redditch by only 2 points.

Leamington had a good a start and after 10 events were lying in second place, thanks to strong races from the 11/u girl's freestyle relay and the ladies open medley relay both finishing second. The 13/u boy's medley relay went one better and finished first gaining maximum points.

Most of the individual events were next and we secured four firsts from Justine Clark in the 100 fly (1.07.54), Kieran Curran in the 11/u 50 Fly (36.06) and 50 Free (31.54), and Max Clark in the 13/u 100 Backstroke (1.09.34). However, after 34 events we had slipped to fourth place with 115 points lying some 17 points behind Redditch. Events 35 to 42 saw Leamington claw back 11 points by achieving third place or higher, in 7 of the 8 events. Brilliant, some great results including Maddie Spalding securing first in the 15/u 100 breast in 1.17.39 but we were still six points behind with only eight races to go.

The coaches were hopeful going in to the final batch of events as Leamington are at their strongest in the relays. The tension mounted as we steadily gained points on each race. The penultimate event of the evening, the ladies open freestyle relay came second and levelled the points to 179. It was all resting on the last event, we only had to finish ahead of Redditch to secure second place overall. Luckily, this challenge fell to the most experienced (and some of the oldest) members of LSASC, the men's open freestyle relay. It was a nail biting final race with spectators whipped into a frenzy. The final leg fell to Rob Robson who fought hard and brought the team home in second place. Brilliant, Redditch could only manage fourth.

Final results were Derby 255, Leamington 184, Redditch 182, Worcester 172, Calverton & Bing 147 and Coventry finishing last with 105.

Fantastic result! Let's take the same team spirit and determination to round 2 on November 12th. Bring it on!

The team sheet is available on the website; please tick your name ASAP.