



# Otters Newsletter



JULY 2025/ ISSUE 12

## Save the date:

- Friday 5th September -  
6-8pm Otter's Club BBQ  
Come hungry as there will  
be plenty to eat!

Address: King George's  
Field, Fulmer, SL3 6JN

- Friday 17th October -  
7-9.30pm Annual Awards  
Evening

Address: Seer Green  
Jubilee Hall, HP9 2QJ

From all of the team at  
Otters, we wish you a  
great summer!



## Welcome to our Summer Newsletter!

Welcome to the Summer edition of our Newsletter, expertly collated by Rachel Sherfield. With SATS, GCSE's and A levels completed and the swimming season nearly over, Otters have plenty to look back on and as usual the swimmers and coaching team have done us proud.

We had outstanding performances at British Champs from Noah. At Age Group Regionals our younger swimmers Darcey, Leo and Daniel swam incredibly well and not forgetting the Youth Regional Championships with Izzy, Matthew, Noah, Ellie and Freya! All their dedication and hard work has truly paid off with Darcey and Freya qualifying for the upcoming British and English Nationals at the end of July. Let's give them all the support we can, as they prepare to represent us on the National stage. A huge thank you to Paul and Jo for all their hard work, providing the fixtures schedule to support all our swimmers on their competitive journey.

We have just completed our annual Club Championships with 5 evenings of swimming events from the 25 Free up to the 1500 Free. Our amazing team of volunteers, TM's, coaches, officials and tech team all rallied together to make it happen. We couldn't run it without you and are grateful for all the time you give us. It was so lovely to see some of our younger swimmers racing for the first time. A very well done from us.

Our Saturday morning teaching team expertly run by Fiona has gone from strength to strength and is now bigger and better than ever. With over 110 swimmers coming each Saturday morning taught by 10 teachers and 3 young volunteers, Saturday mornings are a hive of excitement with lots of learning and maybe a future National champion in there too, taking their first steps in the pool!



### *Chair update continued....*

We have been incredibly lucky this summer and have managed to secure not one but two lots of extra funding for the club. We entered the Blue Token Scheme "Stronger Starts" at Tesco's and were awarded £1500. We also applied for and successfully secured a grant from the Margaret Noble Trust. The Trust came about as a legacy from the late Margaret Noble, a local resident, who died in 1994. Margaret Noble did not have children but she wanted to be able to help young people in this area and she cared enough for their well being to do this and have the Trust set up. The Trust has supported many various projects in the local area of The Chalfonts, Gerrards Cross, Beaconsfield and Seer Green since 1994.

This additional funding and careful financial stewardship from David has enabled us to buy some cutting edge equipment for the club; heart rate monitors and an underwater swim camera with ipads to go with them. These will both be of huge benefit to the continuing development of our Intermediate and Senior swimmers. We have also been able to buy some smaller bits of equipment like weighted bricks, underwater slalom, sinking hoops and bungees for the younger swimmers to enjoy. A huge thank you to both these donors.



Underwater Slalom

Intermediate Trophies: If you haven't already signed up to sponsor one of our Intermediate Trophies then it's a great way to recognize winning swimmers in the 'Intermediate' (12 – 14) age groups. If you sponsor a trophy you will have your family's surname on the trophy for its lifetime at Otters. Every year a child will be able to hold up your family's trophy when they win at a Club Championship event – a lasting legacy! We still have a range of events with no family sponsor ranging from the 1500 Free to the 200 Butterfly, the cost is £47.67 per trophy. Please email [chair@chalfontotters.org.uk](mailto:chair@chalfontotters.org.uk) for more information.

We would also like to extend a huge thank you to Will Sherfield and his team of Otter helpers representing us at the annual Feast Day. They raised a phenomenal £613 – well done team!

Wishing you all a wonderful summer break and we can't wait to see what the forthcoming season brings for Otters and all its members.

Zoe and Sophie



Weighted Bricks



## UPDATE FROM THE HEAD COACH – ALEX BOWSHER



Alex Bowsher – Head Coach

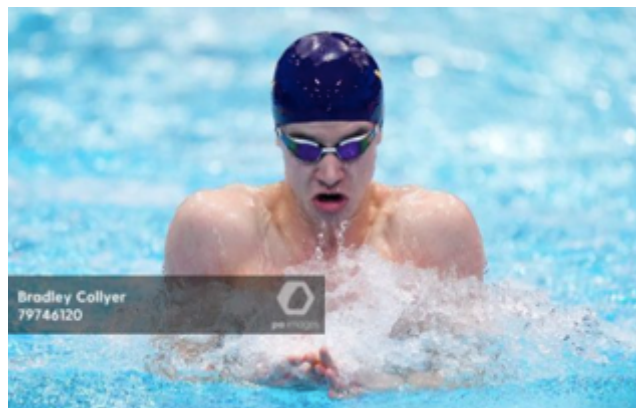
Welcome back everyone!

Last time we caught up in April, we had a massive list of meets that swimmers were attending. Since then, we have had some fantastic results.

We had a newsletter regular- Noah, travel into London for this year's Aquatics GB Championships. Last year, Noah scraped in with just the 100 Breaststroke, this year he returned to the biggest competition of the calendar year qualifying in the 200IM, 100, 50 Front crawl, 100, 50 Breaststroke and the 100 Fly. It's a long week of staying up in London, but he came away with some big career highlights:

- 100 Breaststroke: Over half a second PB and a 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Junior Final
- 100 Front crawl: Just off of PB, but through a morning of adversity
- 200 IM, over a second PB, and 1<sup>st</sup> reserve for the Junior Final
- 50 Front Crawl, just 0.02 off PB.

Last year this was a novelty competition for Noah, turning up for the experience, this year it was about showing off our work on the big stage, and safe to say he certainly showed what you can do at Otters to the nation.



Noah Wheeler at Aquatics GB Championships

– Photo taken by Bradley Collyer

Next, we headed off to the South East Regionals, that's a total of 8 days of racing over 3 weekends. For a lot of swimmers, this meet holds a lot of pressure. It's full of fast swimmers, national qualification on the line, and some really tricky conditions.

Like every meet, there are ups and downs, but every one of our swimmers made their mark over the 3 weekends.

### Age Group Regionals

- Daniel (first-time qualifier!) kept his cool under pressure, making his first-ever final in the 50 Fly.
- Darcey was unstoppable, hitting 5 finals and slashing 14 seconds off her 400 FS PB from Counties.

### Youth Regionals

- Leo S made his Regional debut (a huge milestone!) and dropped over a second in his 50 Breaststroke.







- Joe smashed PBs in the 50 Back & Fly - events he'd *just* PB'd in before.
- Noah switched focus to "fun" events... and walked away with gold in 50/100 Breaststroke, silver in 100 Fly, and bronze in 50 Fly!
- Freya reignited her backstroke magic from Regionals the year before with massive PBs in the 100 & 200 Back.
- Matthew (first-time qualifier!) fought his way into 3 finals, narrowly missing medals with two 4th-place finishes.
- Isabel bounced back from a rocky start to drop a huge 1.7-second PB in the 100 Fly! With two 5<sup>th</sup> place finishes to go with it!
- Even Coach Ellie jumped in, racing the 50 Back & Fly—leading by example!

The South-East region is certainly competitive, but I am so impressed with the resilience throughout the 3 weeks. It can be hard, whether you have 1 race, and all the pressure sits on 30 seconds, or a whole weekend of racing and you're waiting patiently for your PB to appear. Every one of these swimmers helped each other out, kept their cool and showed such growth within themselves. Chalfont showed up as a team and left leaving an impact on the competition.



Some of the Otters' Regional Team

We then headed off to Reading:

Ellie: At the start of June we saw our swimmers take part in the one day Reading sprint event. We had a variety of swimmers attend this meet, for some it was one of their first open meets and for some it was just another competition.

All swimmers had some amazing swims, walking away with PB's and medals! With a special mention to Daisy who qualified for the SKINS event and did a fantastic job coming 4<sup>th</sup>!



Daisy Tang

Our next stops are over in Rushmore, I'm really excited to see what we can achieve.

Then for this year's summer qualifiers, at British Nationals, Freya will make her first appearance, racing the 100 Backstroke. A massive achievement, a very lofty goal we set at the start of the season achieved. The following week, Freya will return in the 200 and 50 Backstroke and she will then be joined by Darcey, who will be making her first Nationals appearance in the 100 Freestyle. Nationals is always a big achievement, but this appearance will be Chalfont's youngest appearance in some time. Make sure to congratulate both when you see them!







*Head Coach update continued....*

Whilst I have spent a lot of time talking about competitions here, it's important to remember that these performances don't just magic out of thin air. It is the day-to-day efforts we make to progress our swimming, and ourselves.

Over the last couple of weeks, I have seen athletes finish exams, balance life and swimming and are still dedicated to progressing themselves.

Our coaches have noticed a shift to swimmers being receptive, and resilient; really pushing on with the work we must do!

I am feeling positive, both for the rest of this season and to start again in September. I am grateful to be surrounded by swimmers who are on board, coaches who are dedicated and highly skilled.

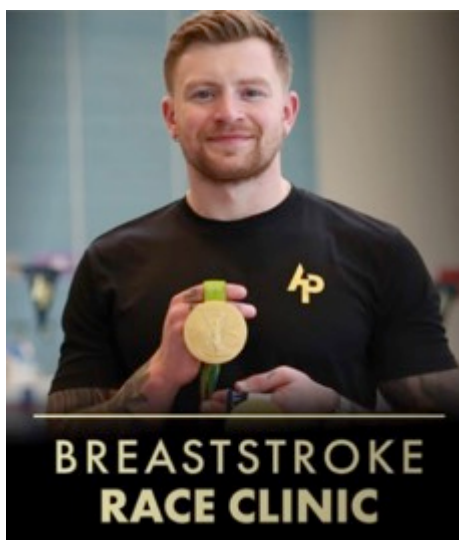
The work for next season has already started, so let's see what we can all achieve together. Remember, it is all the little behaviours that add up to our results. Turn up early, do your best, outwork everyone else and the results will be there when you need them.

As always, thanks for your continued support.

Alex Bowsher

Head Coach – Chalfont Otters

## ADAM PEATY SUMMER HOLIDAY RACE CLINICS



Adam and his AP Race Clinics team are traveling the length of the country this summer for their fifth tour of the UK. If your children fancied a day out, being inspired by an Olympian and his professional team of practitioners, international medalists and coaches, then an AP Race Clinic may be just the ticket!

Children must be 8-17 years old to attend.

For more information or to book a course please use the following weblink;

<https://aprace.club/pages/swim-clinics>

### AP Race Clinic Tour Dates

**Day 1 August 5, 2025 @ 7:15 AM**

📍 Aberdeen

**Day 2 August 6, 2025 @ 7:15 AM**

📍 Grangemouth

**Day 3 August 7, 2025 @ 7:15 AM**

📍 Dumfries

**Day 4 August 19, 2025 @ 7:15 AM**

📍 Worcestershire

**Day 5 August 20, 2025 @ 7:15 AM**

📍 Oxfordshire

**Day 6 August 21, 2025 @ 7:15 AM**

📍 North London

**Day 7 August 22, 2025 @ 7:15 AM**

📍 Bedfordshire

**Day 8 August 23, 2025 @ 7:15 AM**

📍 West Midlands

**Day 9 August 24, 2025 @ 7:15 AM**

📍 South Yorkshire



### HYDRATION – ALEX BOWSHER

Given it's been so hot outside, it feels like an apt time to talk about hydration.

Hydration is so important to our wellbeing as swimmers. Dehydration leads to fatigue, cramps, irritability, and even a 2% decrease in our hydration levels can lead to an 8% decrease in power output. Plus, it makes us feel unwell; it can even make training unsafe to take part in.

Every year we have a few swimmers who enter training after a day in the sun feeling unwell and must sit out. Usually, it's the seniors who have been out sunbathing on their study leave!

However, it's usually the younger swimmers who turn up without a water bottle.



Sending swimmers without a full bottle of cold water is a recipe for them to struggle whilst training. Whilst tempting, it isn't smart to drink the pool water!

Swimming often feels like you aren't sweating, but you'd be surprised how quickly the humid environment, alongside the intense exercise can leave you drained.

How much water a swimmer needs is dependent on them and their size, but our general tips are:

- Try to start hydrating throughout the day but focus 2 hours out. It may be too late to do so mid-session.

- Try to drink something before entering poolside, the car ride is a great time for parents to make sure swimmers are drinking something before they enter training.
- Have a bottle that is easy to drink from, you only might have 5 seconds to drink and go.
- Cold thermos bottles can help keep the water cold throughout the whole session.
- For 2+h sessions, 2 bottles might be needed
- We often see swimmers using some electrolyte tablets, and whilst I'm sure taste nice, these aren't going to make up for prolonged dehydration.

***Remember: If you are feeling thirsty, you are already dehydrated!***



Examples of Thermos Bottles Keep Water Cold



## OTTERS SWIMMER SPOTLIGHT – FREYA TANG



Freya Tang with Ethan Richards-Knight  
at Summer Camp 2024

I began swimming at Otters in 2018, when I was 11 and joined after doing swim lessons, making it my first and only competitive club! As I began training multiple times a week and learnt to dedicate myself to the sport, I quickly found a passion for competing and qualified for my first counties in 2019 with two events, 50 back and 50 free. I was over the moon and knew this was the beginning of my swimming journey. Since then, I have qualified for Counties, Regionals, both English and British Nationals and achieved some of my biggest goals, which as a Junior I would've thought to be unimaginable.

Throughout my time at the club I have faced multiple challenges, which every swimmer will go through and have learnt to deal with them to make me the swimmer I am today. Firstly, GCSE's and A Levels provided a huge challenge, as creating a good balance between training and school work in exam seasons is very important. I was able to do this both summer term of 2023 for GCSE's and this summer term, for A Levels, with the help of Our Head Coach Alex and other support, to

ensure that I remained committed to both revision and training. A good balance of hard work in and out of the pool comes with every school year, not just exam years so good time management becomes essential!

My biggest challenge I have faced during my swimming journey has been dealing with my nerves whilst competing. This was a particularly difficult issue for me, as I have had to learn how to control my nerves and manage myself behind the blocks to give myself the best shot in my races. My nerves affected almost all of my races and I found myself missing PB's or qualifying times for Regionals and Nationals because I had little control over my stress levels. In 2023 I missed out on Summer Nationals in the 100 backstroke by 2 places! This provided a harsh setback, as qualifying for Nationals was one of my biggest goals for the season. However, with more ambition than ever I went into the 2023/24 season with a new coach, determined to control my nerves and ended up at Winter Nationals 2023 having qualified for the 50 backstroke!



Freya Just Before A Race





### *Freya Tang, Otters Swimmer Spotlight continued....*

Although I still face nerves before a race often, I have learnt to control them much better through my set Pre-race routine. A Pre-race routine is essential for any swimmer especially particularly nervous ones like me! I begin with usual land warm-up and pool warm-up and change into my race suit for my race. During the time in whipping is where I listen to my Pre-Race playlist, at full volume, which has fast tempo songs to prepare me for my race. I keep my Airpods in until the last second, to ensure my focus is maintained. Then behind the blocks I'll do an arm swing and some deep breaths and I know I'm ready to give the race my absolute all.

This summer I will be going to my 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Nationals, my first year qualifying for both English and British Summer Championships. I am competing in the 50, 100 and 200 backstroke across the competitions. This has been a major aspiration for me for the longest time and I really hope to do both the club and myself proud to finish off a great season.

My swimming journey definitely won't be over after this season, and I hope to continue at University, to further my passion and achievements, but still come back to train and compete with Otters during the holidays.

After 7 years of swimming at Otters I can proudly say I love both the club and the sport and hope that as a Senior Swimmer, Coach/Teacher and the Club Captain I can inspire many more to do the same.



Freya with Liam Tancock, British Olympian  
50m Backstoker

## FUN FACTS ABOUT SWIMMING

1. An Olympic pool can hold up to 850,000 gallons of water.
2. Gertrude Ederle was the first woman to swim the English Channel, in 1926.
3. The largest swimming pool ever built is the San Alfonso del Mar pool in Algarrobo, Chile (with a surface area of 20 acres – the pool is filled with 66 million gallons of seawater).
4. A Malaysian resort called the 'Lexis Hibiscus Port Dickson' has 643 different swimming pools.
5. The first swimming goggles were made from tortoise shells.
6. Swimming was first introduced at the Olympics in 1896.
7. The first known record of people swimming dates back to Egyptian drawings from 2500 BC.
8. Benjamin Franklin invented swim fins to help move through the water more efficiently.
9. Breaststroke is the oldest known form of swimming stroke.
10. The first swimming races were held in Japan in 36 BC.

Full article found; <https://www.swimjim.com/blog/40-fun-facts-about-swimming>



## OTTERS SWIMMER SPOTLIGHT – NOAH WHEELER



Noah at Swim England

### *1. How did you first get into swimming?*

I first got into swimming when I was 4 years old, learning to swim as anyone would at that age. I started to really enjoy being in the water and always looked forward to my next swimming lesson. After a few years of moving up the learning groups, my swimming teacher at the time, suggested I join a proper swimming club, so me and my parents started looking around and found Otters just up the road fortunately.

### *2. Who or what inspired you to take swimming more seriously as a sport?*

The reason I was inspired to start taking swimming more seriously was because as I got older I could see potential within myself to be quite good at the sport and so could my coaches. I didn't want to think I had wasted an opportunity to achieve great things and reach my dreams (which had set since my early days of swimming – to get a National medal). So I decided to dedicate myself to training every day and see what could happen and not too long after, I reached those aspirations, just from a decision to work harder.

### *3. What does a typical training week look like for you now?*

A typical training week for me consists of 7 training sessions and 1 land training session swimming, for a total of 13 hours per week. I have to admit, I choose to swim in the evenings rather than get up early for a morning session!

### *4. Be honest – how do you motivate yourself on days when you really don't feel like swimming?*

On the days I don't feel like training I still turn up and train. I think in the last couple years at least, training consistently has become natural, rather than a choice, so I never found myself having to force myself to train as it was engraved into my day to day life. But in the beginning, before the everyday training, I was lucky to be surrounded by some of the best friends I have made in my whole life and knowing that I would see them if I turned up and trained, was enough for me to get up off the sofa and go, and in doing that it, I built a habit of training everyday.



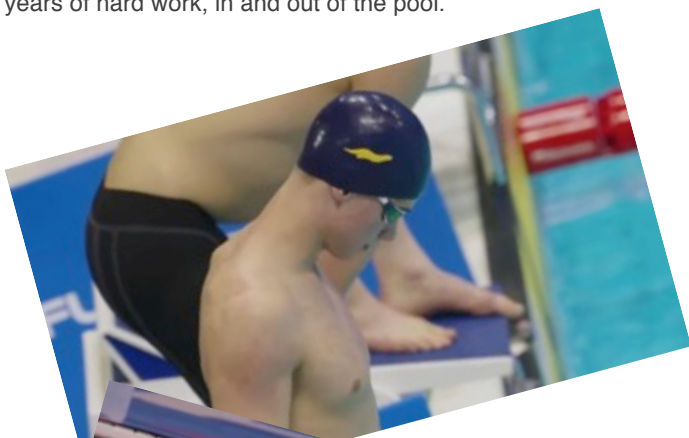
Noah at the British Championships

### *5. What's been your most memorable meet or race so far, and why?*

The most memorable race I have ever done has to be the Junior final at my first ever British Championships. Alex and I went into the meet with no expectations, as this was my first time racing at this level. We just went to have fun and experience something new, as well as see a few Olympians bring the heat!



As a fine bonus to add to that list, I came away with dropping 2 seconds from my previous pb, which was 2 months prior, finishing 3rd in a stacked field of 100 breaststrokers, all under the floodlights of the London Aquatics Center! It was one of the best moments of my life looking at the big score board and seeing the time and position, next to my name, after years and years of hard work, in and out of the pool.



Noah at the British Championships

*6. How do you deal with pressure – especially at big Meets like Nationals or Internationals?*

I know that everyone deals with pressure differently and it's personal as to how it affects you and how you overcome it. I would be lying if I said I never got nervous, however my way of dealing with the nerves of a big race or moment at a competition, is to turn my nervous energy into excitement. For me it's a mindset swap, the natural reaction everyone initially has when they get nervous, is to shrink down, as your brain is trying to stop you from failing. That is what nerves are in a nutshell, it's your brain's way to stop you feeling the pain and the discomfort of failing. But for me, I shift my mindset to thinking as much as this is an opportunity for me to fail, there is an equal or even bigger chance something big and exciting could happen. So then my nerves begin to fuel my excitement towards the race and I can step up to the

occasion and stand behind the blocks focused and full of excitement rather than anxiety.

*7. What do you think is more important: natural talent or hard work? (Or something else)?*

I like to base this question on a quote that has always stuck with me and it is; 'hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard'. To me, it means that talent alone isn't enough to succeed. If you give consistent effort and determination, you can outperform talent, if a person with natural born talent isn't backing themselves with hard work. It emphasises the value of persistence and dedication, even when others may seem more gifted. So if you're doubting yourself thinking I'm not talented, saying things like; 'I will never achieve what other talented people can'. Hard work wins almost every time.

*8. What's something you wish younger swimmers knew about what it really takes to succeed?*

First of all, success is different for everyone. One swimmer might define success as completing their first IM race without a DQ. This took me a while! Whereas, another swimmer might not feel they've succeeded unless they retire with more gold medals than Michael Phelps! But, for either of these people my advice would be the same. Work out what you need to do to give that shot at success its best chance; and do what you set out to do, but most importantly you have to... trust the process. Your time will come.

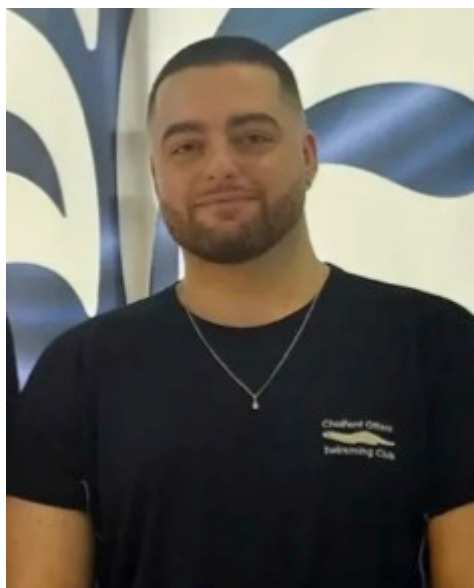


London Aquatics Centre





## COACH SPOTLIGHT- ALEX BOWSHER



### *1. What is your career history?*

Well, I started swimming at 2 years old, my first memory of swimming was being told off for continuously jumping into the pool, so I went off on my own and continued jumping in for the rest of the lesson... Sorry Sally!

My brother swam for the local club- Tilehurst, so I followed in his footsteps, and ended up swimming there until I retired from competitive swimming.



Alex with his County Silver Relay Team

At 14 I picked up volunteer coaching, and by 16 I was on poolside 5+ times a week coaching and teaching. Following a lower back injury sustained by excessive fly training, I stopped swimming all together at 17 and fully focused on coaching.

After my time at University, I was appointed as the Assistant Head Coach of Farnham Swimming Club. Those 4 years were so enjoyable and we did some damn quick swimming too! I'm really proud of the work the team and I did there, we managed to get it from an underperforming, struggling club to one with National Champions and a real buzz about it.

Then I've ended up here, and I think you know the rest!

### *2. What is your favourite stroke?*

To swim? I love Butterfly. I think it's about the only stroke I actually enjoy. I used to love a 200 fly! Somewhere about the age of 13 I decided I was going to get good at Butterfly, and didn't ever really look back.

To coach? I'm not sure, I would say I have a best or worst stroke, but I think I enjoy coaching Breaststroke the most. Every swimmer's Breaststroke is different, and figuring out what will work for them is a fun puzzle. It's probably no surprise that we have lots of top Breaststroke swimmers in our senior groups.

### *3. What swimmers do you find inspiring?*

Katinka 'The Iron Lady' Hosszu is a favourite of mine. She debuted in the Athens Olympic at 15. She spent years swimming both fast and slow, and it was 12 years later in Rio she claimed her first Olympic medals, 3 golds and 1 silver, doing 400s, 200s and 100s. 12 years of working hard, not seeing the results she was 'supposed to have', unable to put it together on the big stage, and with the pressure of being 'Hungary's medal hope' must have been unbelievably difficult.





## Alex Bowsher Coach Spotlight continued....

More recently, I always pay attention to Freya Anderson. It's easy to assume that these Olympians have it all figured out, and they're living the perfect life.

She's been really open about her issues with OCD, and swimming, post glandular fever, struggling to hit times she was doing 4+ years ago. Yet every time I see her, she's engaging in all of the performance behaviours you'd expect. She's last in the warm down pool, first to get stretching. Now she is running clinics for female swimmers only, and anything that can help young female athletes understand their body is a win for me.

2 Mega resilient swimmers!



Katinka Hosszu



Freya Anderson

## 4. Can you tell us about your time at University?

Well, I did my undergraduate degree in Sports Coaching at Cardiff Met. I almost swapped to Law after my A-Level results! When I joined the university, I was absolutely burnt out with swimming, so I made the decision to not walk on poolside for 2 years. Instead, I spent every hour working and reading about swimming, and all its components.

It was really a great course, waking up every day and being able to talk sport, and learn with international coaches across so many different sports was really a dream.



Alex at his first day of University

In my final year I got back into the swimming world, coaching, teaching and writing my dissertation on the 'ecological pressures upon the swimming coach'.



Alex at his University Awards Night

Whilst at Farnham, I had a real urge to keep learning, so I headed off to Surrey University for a Master's degree in Social Psychology. By this point I had been swimming obsessed for basically my whole life, so I decided I would do something different.

For the next 2 years I focused my efforts and projects on all things dating and relationship psychology. I even made a homemade Tinder dating app for my dissertation; I suppose that's helpful in some way when working with teenagers!

I had an offer to go off and do my PhD, but there was a little swimming club in Buckinghamshire that convinced me otherwise!



## UPDATE FROM TEACHING GROUPS - FIONA WILLIAMS



Fiona Williams – Teaching Lead

At Chalfont Otters Swimming Club, our Teaching Groups are the entry point for the majority of our swimmers. Designed for our youngest and newest swimmers, these groups are where the journey begins—nurturing a love for swimming, building essential skills, and instilling confidence in the water.

Our teaching programme follows a progressive structure consisting of 6 levels, Bronze 1 & 2, Silver 1 & 2 and finally Gold 1 & 2. We are able to accommodate swimmers of all abilities, from complete beginners through to those preparing to move into the competitive squads. Each class is led by an experienced and qualified teacher, passionate about swimming. Most of our teaching and coaching team have swum competitively themselves and fully understand the need for establishing the foundations at an early stage. With small group sizes and attentive instruction, swimmers receive the guidance they need to thrive at their own pace.

But it's more than just swimming. While learning strokes and techniques is a key focus, our teaching groups are

about developing a love of aquatics more generally and also having fun along the way!

Our goal is to help each swimmer reach their full potential. As skills improve, swimmers have the opportunity to move up through the various levels and are awarded with a medal of achievement as they progress. As swimmers move beyond the teaching groups to the Development Squads they are able to decide if they would like to swim competitively or simply for fitness and to meet up with their friends!



Some of our Teaching Group in Action!





If you're new to Chalfont Otters or have a child interested in swimming, our Teaching Groups are the perfect place to start. We offer regular assessments and trial sessions to help find the right fit for every swimmer.



- Currently in our Swim School/Teaching Groups (Inc. those signed up for a Sept start) we have 131 children. In just over 2 years that's up from around 80, approximately a 65% increase.
- Our total membership in Sept is likely to be around 293 children; with our Teaching Groups make up 45% of the total.
- Although swimmers progress at different rates, we generally say that children spend 6-9 months in each of the 6 Teaching Group levels.

And finally a huge thanks to our wonderful teaching team who make it all possible....Ayla, Charlie, Daisy, Darcey, David, Georgina, Freya, Izzy, Lily F, Lily PP and Sona.

We are always looking for new teachers. So don't be shy! If you fancy being a swim teacher or have completed the Swim England Qualification levels 1 or 2 and need some refresher training we'd love to hear from you. For more information contact me at [teachinggroupslead@chalfontotters.org.uk](mailto:teachinggroupslead@chalfontotters.org.uk)



### PROFESSIONAL SWIMMER SPOTLIGHT – FREYA COLBERT



Freya Colbert – Olympic Swimmer

Freya Constance Colbert (born 8/3/04) is an English international swimmer.

She won three medals at the 2022 British Swimming Championships, including a gold medal in the 400 metres individual medley. She consequently represented Great Britain at the 2022 World Aquatics Championships.

In 2022, Colbert was selected for the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, where she competed in the following events; the women's 200 metres freestyle (finishing in 13<sup>th</sup> place), the women's 400 metres freestyle, the 400 metres individual medley (where she finished just outside of the medal places in 4<sup>th</sup>) and the 4 x 200 metres freestyle relay (where she won a bronze medal).

In 2023, Colbert won three gold medals at the 2023 British Swimming Championships, in the 400 metres freestyle, the 800 metres freestyle and the 400 metres medley. It was the second time that she had won the medley title.

After winning the 200 metres freestyle and the 400 metres medley at the 2024 Aquatics GB Swimming Championships, Colbert sealed her place at the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics.

At the Olympics, Colbert just missed out on a medal after finishing fourth in the women's 400 metre individual medley final and fifth in the 200 metres freestyle relay final.

“When I got the kit, with the Olympic rings and Lion on my chest, that’s when it really sunk in and I was like wow, I’m really part of an Olympic team,” she said.

In 2025, Colbert successfully defended her 200 metres freestyle title at the 2025 Aquatics GB Swimming Championships, which sealed a qualification place for the 2025 World Aquatics Championships in Singapore, which will take place from 11<sup>th</sup> July – 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2025. Make sure you cheer Freya on!



Freya originally came from Grantham, in Lincolnshire and went to Kesteven and Grantham Girls School. She began her swimming journey along with her two sisters; Molly and Iona, who all later competed at multiple age group Nationals.

‘Our school had a swim team and the coaches recommended that my older sister Molly join a club, so I was taken along too. I think our parents just wanted us out of the house!’ joked Freya.



### *Freya Colbert Professional Swimmer Spotlight continued....*

'There's three-year gap between us, so I think I was about six when I joined the club and probably the youngest one there. We were going two to three times a week, but I really enjoyed it. I was always under the water, not paying attention and just having fun,' said Freya.

Freya joined the Nottinghamshire County Council run swim squad called Nova Centurion at the age of 9 – a club that has cultivated multiple Olympic talents, including her idol Rebecca Adlington.

'Things gradually built up from there. I'd always been smaller than the other girls, but then we moved to Grantham, and with the change of location I came to realise I was good at swimming and the training just increased from there.' Colbert adds.

When the Covid-19 pandemic hit, most teenagers were worrying about their GCSEs, A-Levels, and social life but Colbert also had training to contend with.

Colbert struggled to maintain her aerobic capacity during the 2020/21 lockdowns and spent the best part of two years unable to race due to Covid pandemic restrictions.

'I had three or four months out of the water due to the pandemic, which was probably the longest period I'd had out since I was six,' said Freya.

After the pandemic, Freya went on to study Bioengineering at Loughborough University between 2022 and 2024, which is where she continued her swimming training.

"The [2022] summer really changed my confidence levels and my outlook on swimming. Before that, I didn't know whether I'd make it in the sport. The jump up from junior can be so difficult," she said.

Facts about Freya Colbert:

- She is 5ft 11.26 inches tall.
- Freya originally came from Surrey.
- Swimming wasn't the only sport Freya enjoyed, She played netball, rounders and competed in cross country and athletics too.
- At 18, Freya was selected to represent Great Britain in the World Championships. Missing out on half of her A-level exams and prom to make her mark on the international stage.
- When studying at Loughborough University Freya would sandwich in 10 swim sessions a week in the pool with taper and speed-based sessions at the gym, on the University Campus.



Freya Colbert, with Otters very own Darcy Perez and Abbie Wood! Photo taken at the AP International Race Meet, May 2025.

Full articles found:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freya\\_Colbert](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freya_Colbert)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c0vvzdgxz3jo>

<https://www.lincolnshirelive.co.uk/sport/other-sport/freya-colbert-know-grantham-girl-9277101>

<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2024/july/powerbase-sessions-swimmer-freya-colbert>

<https://www.lincolnshirelife.co.uk/heritage/taking-the-plunge/>





### FEAST DAY – WILL SHERFIELD



Some of the Otters' 'Feast Team'

On Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June, Otters ran a stand at the annual 'Feast Day' in Chalfont St Peter to raise money and awareness of the club, and what a success it was!

The day didn't have the best of starts when I accidentally left my phone (which was on silent) in the Otters lockup at Iver Heath! Given that my phone was the one set up for payments on the day, leaving it there was a monumental mistake 😊! I only realised it was missing when I was about to leave home to set up the stand! Thankfully when I arrived at the lockup my wife Rachel, had the sense to ring my phone and there it was lit up like a beacon!

It was a super hot day and tough to stay focused, but the Otters' helpers rose to the challenge and seemed to take on the stand like they would a swimming set! They just ploughed through it.

I have run events for many years and I have to say I was super impressed with the positive, can-do attitude and confidence of all the swimmers that worked on the stand. They all did themselves proud. I was especially taken aback by Bethan Slater's sales ability, who I think could sell 'ice to eskimos' if asked!

Our helpers were, Leo Sherfield, Olivia Arrowsmith, Isabella Doughty, Zach Lewis, Isabelle Arrowsmith, Ollie Shave, Bethan Slater, Noah Wheeler, Gabby Stylianides, Amy Costa-D'Sa, Leo Lewis, Daisy Tang, Harry Parker, Arianna Moorthy, Rory Wheeler, Jaya Bass, Jonty Lee, Darcey Perez, Zac Holligan, Sarah Walsh, Matthew Costa D'sa, Emily Robinson, Yvonne Shave, Jo Holligan, Zoe Wheeler, Katie Arrowsmith, Catharine Doughty, Hazel Robinson and of course myself 😊.

We raised over £600 from the Tombola on the day, but more importantly increased awareness of the club and the brilliant work it does for the community. The money raised will go towards extra kit so our swimmers will all benefit in the long run.

Thank you so much to all the Otters' families who gave such super generous donations, as without them we could not have made the event such a success.





# CHALFONT OTTERS MEETS 2025 WINTER

## OCTOBER

WINCHESTER L2	3/4/5 <sup>th</sup> October	SP + Select IP/SC
ARENA LEAGUE R1	11 <sup>th</sup> October	Team selected by head coach ~ most competitive team to be selected
LUTON L3	18/19 <sup>th</sup> October	SC/IP+IC/JC1+2+3/AC1+2 (SP to compete in distance and extra events)

## NOVEMBER

ARENA LEAGUE R2	8 <sup>th</sup> November	Team selected by head coach ~ most competitive team to be selected
CHALFONT OTTERS MINI MEET	TBC	Gold 1+2/DV1+2/Selected AC1+2
CHALFONT OTTERS OPEN MEET	15/16 <sup>th</sup> November	IP+SC/JC1+2+3/AC1+2/ Selected DV2 SP upon Request
GUILDFORD L2	22/23 <sup>rd</sup> November	SP + Select IP/SC

## DECEMBER

ARENA LEAGUE R3	6 <sup>th</sup> December	Team selected by head coach ~ most competitive team to be selected
WINTER NATIONALS	11-16 <sup>th</sup> December	Qualified Swimmers
AMERSHAM L3	13/14 <sup>th</sup> December	SP+SC/IP+IC/JC1+2+3/AC1+2/DV2

## JANUARY

BASBA COUNTIES WEEKEND 1	10/11 <sup>th</sup> January	Qualified Swimmers + Selected Relay Swimmers
BASBA COUNTIES WEEKEND 2	24/25 <sup>th</sup> January	Qualified Swimmers + Selected Relay Swimmers

Reminder: Swimmers in competitive squads are expected to attend their designated meets. Unless agreed with their respective coach.

Your respective coach will be in touch to discuss your competition calendar.



## EVERYONE ACTIVE SPORTING CHAMPIONS!

Congratulations to Zac Holligan and Freya Tang for becoming Everyone Active Sporting Champions for 2025! Zac and Freya were both awarded an Everyone Active gym membership for the year!

Applications to apply for the 2026 award open around March/April time and the winners will be announced in May.

For more information about entry criteria and how to apply, please use the following weblink:



<https://ea-champions.com/sporting-champions/criteria/>

## USEFUL CONTACTS

NAME	POSITION	EMAIL
Alex Bowsher	Head Coach	headcoach@chalfontotters.org.uk For Senior Performance and Senior Competitive
Ellie King	Assistant Head Coach	assistantheadcoach@chalfontotters.org.uk For Intermediate Performance and Intermediate Competitive
Ellie King	Junior Development Lead	juniorleadcoach@chalfontotters.org.uk For Academy 1 & 2, Junior Competitive 1/2/3
Georgina Vane + Fiona Williams	Joint Head of Teaching	teachinggroupslead@chalfontotters.org.uk For teaching groups – Bronze, Silver and Gold
David Phillips	Teaching Lead	Developmentcoach@chalfontotters.org.uk For teaching groups – Development 1 & 2
Catharine Doughty	Welfare Officer	welfare@chalfontotters.org.uk
Paul Bass and Jo Holligan	Fixtures Team	fixtures@chalfontotters.org.uk
Zoë Wheeler and Sophie Tang	Co-chairs	chair@chalfontotters.org.uk
David Cormie	Treasurer	treasurer@chalfontotters.org.uk
Deena Goult	Club Secretary	clubsecretary@chalfontotters.org.uk
Rachel Sherfield and Sophie Tang	Membership	membership@chalfontotters.org.uk
Sonia Moorthy	Club Shop	shop@chalfontotters.org.uk