

# Boldmere's best ever finish at the 44th National ARENA Final

On the podium receiving 9th place award



After being crowned with the National Arena League West Midlands Division 1 title back in December, Boldmere SC confirmed their top ten club status in England when they earned the right to travel down to Cardiff - where the 44th Cup Final was being held for the first time.

Competing against the nine other regional league winners, which included the powerful big 'City' and performance based clubs of Plymouth Leander, Millfield, City of Liverpool, Sheffield and Hatfield, this was swimming's equivalent of the FA Cup and as swimming finals go they do not come much bigger!

Undaunted by the prospect of swimming against GB team stars and non other than Ruta Meilutyte, the Lithuanian wunderkind who memorably took gold in the 100m Breaststroke at the London 2012 Olympics, Boldmere out in the outside lane, broke their previous personal best by finishing 9th with 190 points some 33 ahead of Amersham.

Every point was hard earned and in the 50 races that comprised the final such was the level of competition that there were only three top three finishes despite 23 personal best times set with three new club records.

Boldmere only won two races but they were two super wins. The first came in the boys 15/under 100m Fly which went to form with Jake Dixon, ranked fastest in the country for this age group, hitting the timing pads first to stop the clock at 59.05 seconds, but only just - by 0.08 seconds!

Ben Stanford also took top honors and another maximum 10 points in the 13/under 100m Freestyle in a time of 57.86 seconds. Fresh from his exploits at the British Gas International Meet Luke Davies was up against the country's best but gained an invaluable 2nd place and 9 points in the 15/under boys 100m Breaststroke in a new best time of 1:08.91.



The boys 13/under relay quartet not only secured a 3rd place finish but set two club records in the process. Matt Price got the ball rolling in the first leg with a 50m freestyle individual club record of 27.07 seconds followed by 28.64 from Kai Alexander, 28.97 from Tom Bloor and the mighty Ben Stanford brought home the squad in 26.13 for a collective time of 1:50.81 beating the previous club relay record by 2 seconds. They followed this up with super fight back from 10th on the 2nd leg of the medley to finish 5th.

The youngest boys relay team (11/under) of Roan Griffiths, Leighton Palmer-Whyte, Leo Karski and Teleb Givans only just missed out on 3rd spot by a finger nail 0.13 seconds in the Medley to take 4th.

Holly Lynch made a valuable return to the Boldmere line up with a super 5th place in the 100m ladies open Backstroke with a 1:06.25, a most impressive result as commitments have dictated that she has missed a lot of training of late yet still preformed at a superb level when needed. Steve Wilson also claimed 5th place finish in the U15 Free style in 56.76.

The under 15 boys foursome of Dixon, Davies, Stanford and Wilson also stepped up to the mark with yet another 5th place in their Freestyle relay in 1:43.31 a feat made more impressive when the third swimmer was the same Stanford who had only just left the pool from his exploits in the 13yr relay race!

Jake Dixon



Setting new individual PB's on the day were Hannah Turnbull (11/u) with two in the 50m Back and Fly, Roan Griffiths (11/u) in the 50m Backstroke with a 36.57, Leighton Palmer-Whyte (11/u) knocking over 1.5 seconds off his 50m Breaststroke, Aristeia Knight (11/u) 50m Breaststroke, Kate Davies (13/u) 100m Breaststroke, Matt Price (13/u) with 2 second pb in 100m Backstroke and finally Alice Dearing (15/u) with 1.07.27 in the 100m Fly.

In the Open age group Medley relays, despite finishing 7th and 8th respectively, the women's foursome (Lynch, captain Emily Gordon, Emma Smith and Givenchy Sneekes) and men's (Jordan Youngman, Josh Winnicott, Bradley Lynch and Joey Stanger) set new club records with the girls going 2:04.10 and the lads in 1:52.30.

Finally, although ever loud Adam Hall bowed out of his competitive swimming career at this pinnacle event with a tenth place in the men's open 100m Backstroke, his presence will still be heard as Adam will joining Head Coach, Ash Cox's coaching team poolside.

The event was won by Ruta's very own Plymouth Leander 363 points with Guildford 2nd, 338 and Taunton Deane 3rd with 332 points.