

## Boldmere stars compete with the best in the country

For the third consecutive year Boldmere SC represented the West Midlands on Finals day in the National ARENA League Finals at Ponds Forge, Sheffield last Sunday. Competing against the 'big guns' from City of Sheffield, City of Liverpool, City of Derby, City of Salford, City of Peterborough, Team Ipswich, Amersham, Beckenham and Warriors of Warrington, the Boldmere youngsters were sharing the pool with established Olympic and GB stars such as Fran Halsall, Jo Jackson and Ross Davenport. The high quality of the opposition raised the performance of the 29-strong Boldmere team who set 24 Long Course Personal Best times, 5 Individual - and an impressive 10 - Relay Club Records.

Despite losing two key swimmers to last minute illnesses, Boldmere improved on last year's points tally passing the 200 barrier for the first time to reach a total of 229, just 18 points behind 8th placed Beckenham and 33 ahead of Peterborough. In a closely fought gala, another 30 points would have taken 6th place.

Seven highly commendable top 3 finishes were capped by two excellent 1st place finishes. The first win of the day came in the fourth of the 51 events, when Matt Price, Kai Alexander, Joel Cunningham and Ben Campbell all swim PB times to take the Boys 11Yrs/Under Relay by a massive 3 second margin in a Club Record time of 2.03.97.

Ben Stanford followed this up with another 11Yrs/under age group win in the Individual 50m Freestyle, which he won with ease by over a second. Not only did he break his PB by over a second, set a new CR he also won the Top Boy 11Yrs/under ARENA award for the most improved performance based on A.S.A rankings.

Bradley Lynch was also on fire. Taking the anchor leg in the 15Yrs/under boys Freestyle relay he took

over in 7th place from Josh Holsey, Josh Winnicott and Jordan Youngman to storm to a fantastic 3rd in a split time of 24.93 seconds – setting a new relay club record time of 1.44.15. In his individual 100m Freestyle he managed a superb 2nd place with another Club Record Time (55.42) which followed a PB swim in the 100m Fly.

Josh Winnicott moved up an age group from last year, but improved a place by touching the pads in 2nd place in the 15Yrs/under Boys 100m Breaststroke. Luke Davies continued his recent good form by slicing another second off his 100m Breaststroke time to take 3rd place, as did 11 year old Matt Price who also finished 3rd in the 50m Butterfly.

There were many other Personal Best times from Laura Richardson (50m Back & Free), Jordan Youngman (100m Back), Charlotte Smith (100m Back), and Kristie Hackett, Givenchy Sneekes and Jake Dixon (all 100m Fly events), while Jake was close to breaking the 60 second barrier in the 100 Free with a time of 1.00.26. Emily Gordon also produced a best time in her 100m Breaststroke and Phil Hewitt set a new Club Record in his 100m fly in the Open age group.

The 13Yrs/under girls quartet of Charlotte Smith, Beth Grant, Gina Lockett and Sneekes set new Club Records in both the Freestyle and Medley Relays, as did the 15Yrs/under team of Emily Gordon, Kristie Hackett, Emma Smith and Sneekes yet again. The youngest foursome (Josh Winnicott, Phil Hewitt, Adam Kelly and Joey Stanger) combined their talents with great effect to produce a Club Record time of 1.52.43 in the Men's Open Medley Relay.

Having made their debut in the National Finals in 2009, the club are aiming to make this prestigious event a permanent fixture on their calendar.

