**NATIONAL ARENA LEAGUE ROUND 3**

**AT BECKENHAM SPA 9/12/17**

Kent Weald swim squad made the trip to Beckenham spa on a cold December Saturday evening, there was an air of expectation in the air or was it the flu virus going round which always seems to hit at this time of year and had affected several KWSS swimmers unexpectedly in the last week leading up to the last round of the National Arena league round 3 top gala. However, those team members suffering from the malaise feeling pretty rough, sick and some even on anti-biotics stepped up to the plate and swam. All knowing that this was a moment to be savoured by both TSC and BSS, on the verge of promotion to Division 1 for the first time in their respective histories as Kent Weald Swim Squad.

After a short team building speech, the warm up got underway and before you could say Jack Frost we were off with the Ladies 200 IM and one of the team’s flu causalities, Caitlin Ebbage, got the team off to a great start taking a 3rd from a predicted 4th place, Brandon was up next absolutely crushing the Men’s 200IM taking the full 7 points from a predicted 5th place. The first tranche of relays followed, beginning with the girls 9/11 fs team consisting of Daisy, Phoebe, Kayla and Alice Brown (making her debut), racing to their expected 3rd place. The boys team took a strong lead from Josh Prendergast and this was improved upon by Evan and Ruben, with Charlie B anchoring the team home in first place. The girls 13/u 4x50 medley team were next up with Caitlin leading off on the Backstroke leg, Mia Devey (making her debut) on breaststroke, Erin took the fly leg by the scruff of the neck, with Maddie bringing the girls home in second place. The boys relay was an exciting race which went right down to the wire, William Fitzpatrick led off, Ollie Isaacs scorched the breaststroke, Dan Brice had a storming fly leg and made the fly look deceptively easy with his long stroke and Toby Henbest fighting all the way and getting his hand on the wall before the Hailsham team to take the max points. Event 7 we saw the girls 15/u fs team take a hard fought 2 nd place so well done to Noemie , Tilda, Amelie, and Lois. Brandon, Charlie Curtis, Isaac and Ollie (swimming up an age group) took 4th in the boys 15 fs relay. The last of the first tranche of relays was the Ladies in the 4x50 medley team taking 4th, Sarah led off well on the backstroke followed by Ellis on the breaststroke, Tilda on fly and Tierney on freestyle picked up the predicted 4th place. Last up were the Men’s medley team of Dave, Stew, Rob and Ed who took 4th .

We then moved on to the individual events. Cicily started by taking third in the girls 10/11 yrs 50 backstroke, despite the slippery wall. We then had a series of 3 wins from Josh in the boys 50 backstroke, Erin swimming up a year in the girls 13 yrs easily took the 100 breaststroke, followed by Ollie in the boys 13 yrs 100 breaststroke. Lois took to the water swimming up a year in the girls 15 yrs 100 backstroke and took a hard fought 2nd place which was then replicated in the next event by Brandon in the boys 15 yrs 100 backstroke. A great swim by 13 year old Leonie Hopper swimming up 2 age groups in the ladies 100 fly taking home a nice pb followed by Rob Winch who outperformed his predicted 3rd place to collect a 2nd place.

KWSS then had another set of 4 consecutive premier positions starting with Kayla in the girls 50 fly, Evan in the boys fly, Caitlin in the 13 yrs 100 backstroke and Dan again delivering the goods in the boys 13 yrs 100 backstroke.

Elle swam well picking up an expected 4th place in the girls 15 yrs 100 fly, despite being ill, Sam Dickinson again fronted up in a hard 15 yrs 100 fly, Lois was back in the water for the Ladies 100 backstroke and backed up her 2nd place in the 15 yrs age with a 3rd in the ladies with Dave Carr taking the expected 4th place in the mens event.

KWSS then had a string of 3 second places in a row by Daisy in the girls 10/11 yrs 50 breaststroke, Josh in the boys event and Erin Nisbet in the girls 13/u 100 fly. Dan Brice looked very classy and took top honours in the boys 13 yrs 100 fly. Next up was Tilda Durrant who took an extra point than was predicted in the girls 15 /u 100 free picking up 4th with Isaac putting in a strong performance in the boys event. Noemie Thomson outperformed her predicted 6th place to take 4th in the Ladies open 100 breaststroke, which left Stew Grant to take second in the mens 100 brst adding an unexpected extra 3 points to the teams tally.

Daisy took 3rd in the girls 10/11 yrs 50 free and Ruben Antelo-Cowley fought hard for his 2nd place. Caitlin cruised to an easy victory in the girls 13 yrs 100 free whilst Ollie Isaacs just got piped in the boys version. Ellis Kottas brought 3 points to the team in the girls 15 yrs 100 breaststroke with Brandon then taking an expected 1st in the boys 15 yrs 100 breaststroke. The last two individuals events of the night were Sarah Brown and Ollie Durrant, who was suffering from a virus, in the Ladies and Mens 100 free. Both took 4th place with Sarah battling hard to take an extra point from her predicted position.

The final events were the last tranche of relays. Cicily led off in the girls 9/11 years medley relay with Daisy on the breaststroke, Kayla on fly and Phoebe Kirkby anchoring the team to finish 2nd . The boys 9/11 medley team maintained their 100% win rate by taking first again, so very well done to Charlie Brice , Josh Prendergast, Evan Norris and Ruben. The girls 13/u fs relay team consisting of Caitlin, Erin, Maddie (31.82)and Lilly Durnford (30.69) with a very fast splits, narrowly missed out on first place to Hailsham. The boys 13 /u fs relay took top honours with great splits from Dan, Ollie, Toby Henbest and Sam Dickinson. Lois, Noemie, Elle and Tilda brought home second place and 6 points to the tally. The boys repeated the same, the team of Dan, Ollie, Brandon and Issac. By this time Dan Brice and Ollie Isaacs had amassed 11 swims between them. Well done boys for such great team spirit. The final two relays of the night were the Ladies and Mens 6x50 squadron free relays. Both teams took the expected 5 points and 3rd place. The Ladies team were Sarah Brown, Tilda Durrant, Ladies team Captain Tierney Sharp, Amelie Thomas –Green, Lois Duchesne and Caitlin Ebbage (who, along with Ollie had swum 6 races). The Mens team led off by Team Captain Ben Fitzsimons , Ed Dickinson, Ollie Durrant, Rob Winch, Dave Carr and anchored by Stew Grant.

A great performance from all team members who took part across the 3 rounds including Tom Allen, Holly Geake, Jodie, Leigha and Kara Mitchell .

The final night’s scores were:

1st Hailsham 297

2nd KWSS 274

3rd Herne Bay 181

4th Beckenham B 178

5th Beacon 164

6th Edenbridge 154

7th Redhill & Reigate 151

After gaining promotion to Division 1 for the first time in both clubs history ,KWSS will return in 2018.

**Pete Withey**

**Head Coach Kent Weald Swim Squad, (combined team from Tonbridge and Beachfield s/c)**