

Halfway through the Suffolk County Swimming Championships 2025 and West Suffolk is sitting in fifth place in the table of eleven participating clubs, with one County Champion title, seven other age group gold medals, eight silver and eight bronze medals.

The Championships got underway at UEA Norwich over the weekend of 11-12 January where the long-distance events took place in conjunction with Swim England Norfolk. Mia Copping, Poppy Moore, Andrew De Konig and sisters Erin and Ella Stewart represented WSSC in Saturday's 800m race, with all finishing in the top ten swimmers in their respective age groups. Poppy Moore (14) won a wonderful silver medal and Andrew De Koning (16) a convincing bronze behind two speedy Team Ipswich swimmers.

Poppy Moore returned to take a second silver medal on the Sunday in the 1500m event, with Jason Dalope (14) also competing and placing a very creditable sixth.



Poppy Moore and Jason Dalope

Weekend 2 (18-19 January) saw the swimmers return to Suffolk and head to Crown Pools in Ipswich for a selection of 50m, 100m and 200m events. Saturday saw heats for the open 100m free and 50m butterfly and female 50m free events to decide the eight swimmers in the finals. The placings for the female 100m IM and 200m butterfly and the open 200m breaststroke were decided by the times achieved in the heats. The female 100m IM had two strong WSSC contenders and India Clement (13) gave an impressive performance to take the gold medal in her age group. Elizabeth Wright (17 years and over) finished agonisingly close to a medal, just 0.14 seconds off the third-placed swimmer.

The boys took two medals from two swims in the 200m breaststroke, with Jason Dalope taking gold in his age group and George Everett (16) taking a brilliant bronze in his. Rounding off the heat-decided races was Ella Stewart (16), who also claimed a fantastic gold medal.

Jason Dalope was in action again in the 100m freestyle final, holding the sixth place he achieved in the heat. In the 16 years age class Samuel Chamberlain took over a second off his PB to claim the gold medal, with Edison Lorejo dropping 1.31 seconds from his fifth-place heat time to move to fourth place in the final. Jake Thomas-Mansfield (17 years and over) was pipped out of the medals and into fourth place. Samuel Chamberlain won his second age group gold medal of the day in the 50m butterfly final, with teammate Edison Lorejo taking the bronze medal and George Everett finishing in fifth place. Felix Brown (12) cut his heat time by nearly a second and a half to move up one position in the final, finishing in fifth place, with Jason Dalope finishing in fourth in his age class. In the 17 years and over category the top five swimmers were separated by just 0.74 seconds in the 50m butterfly final, with last year's silver medallist Jake Thomas-Mansfield again just out of the medals this year.



Samuel Chamberlain, gold medal winner in the 16 years open 100m freestyle and 50m butterfly

Three girls qualified for the 50m freestyle finals but alas yielded no medals with India Clement finishing in sixth place, Poppy Moore in fifth place and Elizabeth Wright in eighth position.

Sunday saw another busy day of racing with sessions in the morning and afternoon. The morning session saw heat-decided placing in the 400m IM (open) and the 200m IM (female), with heats and finals in the 100m butterfly, 50m breaststroke and 50m backstroke. The IM races produced a gold and two silver medals for the Club, with India Clement claiming first place in her age group and

Elizabeth Wright taking silver in the 17 years and over group in the 200m IM and George Everett claiming an awesome silver in his age group in the gruelling 400m IM. Jason Dalope and Poppy Moore were just out of medal contention in strong fields and finished in fourth place. Poppy clocked another fourth position in the 50m backstroke final, with India also taking fourth place in her age group final, with both girls achieving greater success in the 100m butterfly final; India Clement took the gold medal in the 13 years category whilst Poppy Moore took bronze in the age group above. Mia Copping also qualified for the final and matched her seventh-place finish from the heat swim. Kiera Broad (17 years and over) also claimed bronze in the 100m butterfly.

Team WSSC won three medals from five finals in the open 50m breaststroke race, with silvers to Jason Dalope and Richard Levell (15) and a bronze for George Everett (16). Jude Brown and Eoin Bourke (15) both produced strong performances to finish in fifth and sixth place respectively in their classes, with Jude taking eighth place in the afternoon's 200m freestyle and twin Felix just behind in eleventh position.

Jason Dalope took sixth position in this event in his age class, with Myles Turner winning a magnificent silver medal in the age 17 years and over open class. Ella Stewart was out of the medals in the 200m backstroke, taking fourth place, with Edison Lorejo matching his 2024 result with a silver medal in the 100m backstroke, Jason Dalope taking bronze and the 2024 title holder Myles Turner being squeezed into fourth place in a very tight race in the open age group.

There were three WSSC finalists in the 100m breaststroke in the age 10 and 11 age class, positioned third, fifth and seventh respectively after the heats. Fifth placed Thea Rees cut her time in the final by nearly three seconds to claim the bronze medal with Thea Pendleton improving her position from seventh in the heats to fifth in the final. Ella Plumb was unfortunately disqualified for an infraction, having entered the final as the third fastest qualifier. Elizabeth Wright improved on her silver medal from the morning's 200m IM to take gold and the County Championship title in a stunning 100m breaststroke final which saw her finish well ahead of the competition.



Ella Plumb, Elizabeth Wright, Thea Rees and Thea Pendleton, 100m breaststroke finalists.

Congratulations to the other WSSC competitors who gained invaluable racing experience and set some super new times.