

It's been a busy end of season fortnight for WSSC swimmers and coaches. Ponds Forge International Sports Centre was once again the venue of the Aquatics GB Summer Long Course Championships and the Swim England National Summer Meet.

Matthew Baker (18) was our sole competitor in this summer's British Championships (20-26 July), which brought together performance athletes across the home nations an opportunity. For this summer's championships, 18 year olds were grouped in the open category (rather than having their own dedicated finals) and this certainly raised the bar for those in Matthew's age group. Although he didn't make any finals, he nevertheless did himself proud over his three events; the 200m and 400m freestyle and 200m IM. Finishing 0.32 seconds off his entry time in the 200m freestyle, Matthew finished 17th overall in the 18 years and over age group, the fourth fastest 18 year old. Next came the 200m IM, where he took the seventh place amongst 18 year olds, with a 19th place finish overall. In his final event, the 400m freestyle, Matthew finished a very creditable 17th overall and an impressive second place amongst the 18 year olds. Many of the swimmers in this open age category have benefitted from years of participation in performance swim programmes at top swimming universities so Matthew's top twenty results at just 18 years old (and hot on the heels of A-levels) are remarkable.



Newly crowned East Region (and Suffolk County) champion Myles Turner headed to Rother Valley Country Park near Sheffield on 28 July to participate in the 3km event of the National Masters Open Water Championships. With more favourable conditions than in Norfolk, Myles took over two minutes off his fortnight-old regional time to add National Masters Champion (3km) to his accolades.



National Championships debutante Elizabeth Wright headed to Sheffield for the Swim England National Summer Meet (29 July to 3 August) with qualifying times for all three breaststroke events; the 50m, 100m and 200m. Her campaign started brilliantly, with a nearly two second pb in the 100m heat to enable her to qualify in 8th place in the 17 years age group final. Going out particularly strongly in the first 50m of the final, she faded in the second 50m to finish in tenth place, outside her entry time. Day two saw the 200m heats, with Elizabeth qualifying in ninth position, a place she held in the 17 year old final, both times off her best. The end of the week brought the 50m event, which saw Elizabeth post a 1.39 second pb in the heat, but was unfortunately just outside the time needed to make the final. Congratulations to her on her impressive new times.

Meanwhile, at The Games...

Angharad Evans thrilled her fans by progressing to the Olympic final of the 100m breaststroke in Paris. Drawn in Heat 3 of five, Angharad took to the pool at La Défence to produce a solid swim, finishing in fourth place in a time that saw her progress to the semis as one of the fastest sixteen swimmers. She again took fourth place in her semi-final, in just under 66 seconds, to claim her spot as the sixth fastest qualifier in the Olympic final.

Monday evening's final saw Angharad line up against the best of the best in Lilly King (USA) (the current world record holder as well as Rio 2016 gold and Tokyo 2020 bronze medallist), 2024 World Championships gold medallist Tang Qianting (China) and Tatjana Smith (South Africa) who set the current Olympic record at Tokyo 2020. In a thrilling first half, Harri turned in third place behind the World Champion and Irish record holder Mona McSharry but she couldn't quite hold ground. A storming second 50m from 2020 Olympic champion Smith saw her take the gold, with Tang Qianting the silver and Mona McSharry the bronze, with Harri finishing sixth behind King and Italian record holder Pilato (joint fourth). A brilliant Olympic debut – bring on LA 2028!

