

NATIONAL LEAGUE FINAL 2010 SHEFFIELD

Exeter win 5th place in the final and 13th overall Nationally.



Exeter City travelled to Sheffield to contest the Arena National League team championship on April 26th having qualified by right for the first time in their history an extraordinary achievement for the club.

Representing the Western league at the National finals Exeter was seeded 5th in the B final and was racing against the countries top open and age group talent. World champion and record holder Liam Tancock returned from Loughborough with Becky Jenkins and Alex Wooldridge to bolster the team, and was joined by a strong age group section that included international George Fearnley and national silver medalist Jess Twose.

An early win in the 200m individual medley by Liam Tancock was followed by a string of outstanding relay performances. The first 16 relay swims were all Pb's as the Exeter team showed the quality and determination of the team, and were second to none with the timing of their takeovers. Superb 2nd place finishes by the 15/u girl's freestyle relay and by the open men's medley relay were backed up with 3rd place finishes by the 11/u girl's freestyle and the boy's 15/u freestyle relays. A win in the first individual event after the relays by Tina Song-Ashdown in the 11/u girls 50m backstroke propelled Exeter into the overall lead.

That was the only time that Exeter led the final and despite wins further wins from Liam Tancock in the open backstroke and George Fearnley in the 13/u butterfly, 2nd places by Jess Twose in the 15/u backstroke, Fearnley in the 13/u freestyle, Simon Cooper in the 15/u breaststroke and by Tancock in the open freestyle, plus a 3rd by Elliott Randall in the 13/u breaststroke Exeter slowly slipped back through the

team placings finding it difficult against the national quality swimmers in every event.

The sign of a quality team is judged by the strength of their relays and with the last block of relays approaching to end the gala Exeter were flirting with 7th & 8th place overall. Despite picking up only two 3rds in the 13/u boy's freestyle and the 15/u girls medley relays Exeter posted results in every relay that slowly moved them back up the team points table into 5th place at the end. In the relay challenge that runs alongside the team Exeter were 4th overall being just 1 second behind team winner Cardiff after over 34 minutes of racing.

Exeter coach Jon Randall was thrilled with the result 'we brought a relatively inexperienced team into the top team event in the country and every swimmer handled the pressure of being on the big stage superbly. The sign of a true competitive swimmer is if they can perform under pressure and our swimmers relished every minute. I'm proud of every one of them. We had fun the whole time and were cheered on all the way by our supporters section who were awarded Best Supporters for our final.'

Exeter Swimming would like to thank all the generous donations from the public and sponsorship from the councils and business. The cost of sending the squad to Sheffield was nearly £4,000. The generosity and good will shown ensured that this was an experience the children, will never forget!

