

UK SPORTS ASSOCIATION

For People with Learning Disability

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PRESS RELEASE

GB Swimming Team Crowned World Champions!

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Picture: Craig Moate (left) , Chris Pugh (centre), David Vaughan (right)
- the British 1, 2, 3 in the Mens 200m butterfly
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Crowned 2005 World Champions, the Great Britain Swimming Squad return to the UK with an array of medals.

With 10 Gold, 6 Silver and 9 Bronze medals, this event was one of the most successful for this squad of swimmers with learning disability.

Top of the Medal Table, ahead of Hungary and Chinese Taipei, the Great Britain Team earned a staggering 25 medals during the week long competition.

Veteran and debut performers alike scooped medals at this world class event, demonstrating GB's ability to take the swimming world by storm!

One of the gutsiest performances of the Team came from David Vaughan (Swansea) with his attack on Australia's Troy Puttergill in the men's 200m butterfly. Almost 7 metres behind at the last turn, David kicked into turbo, launching an unrelenting attack on Puttergill. Carried along by the screaming crowds and fuelled by pure guts and determination, David confidently passed Australia's best to take bronze in a time of 2:43.90, behind Gold medallist Chris Pugh (Leigh) (2:20.50) and silver medallist, Craig Moate (Barking) (2:34.68) making a striking British 1, 2, 3!

"What can I say" says Carol Halpin, Team Manager, "this really was a staggering performance from the whole Team. We had great Team Captains who were willing to support and encourage the rest of the Squad, a great staff team who worked together and we had swimmers with pure talent, grit and determination. I am just so proud to have managed this group of World Champions"

Equally impressive performances in the Ladies events saw the medal counter rising. A fantastic performance by Chloe Williams, Rebecca Lee, Ainsley Blease and Louisa Eames gave GB gold in the 4 x 100 Medley in 5:53.01. Eames, Blease and Lee went onto to take a second gold with newcomer Stephanie Bird in the 4 x 50 freestyle relay in 2:11.56 ahead of rivals Hong Kong.

"We knew we had a strong, well prepared Team going out to this event", says Tracey McCillen, National Director, UK Sports Association, "Congratulations to the entire Squad – this was a world class performance. A huge thanks to the staff, escorts and parents who also made this possible – I'm sure they all agree, tremendously hard work, but worth it as GB is where it should be – at the top!"

This impressive line up was led by Team Captains Chris Pugh (Leigh) & Francis Dart (Reading), Ainsley Blease (Maghull) and Louisa Eames (Worthing), followed by Andrew Hart (Bracknell), Aidan Montgomery (Grantham), Leah Halpin (Nottingham), Rebecca Lee (Fife), Bryan Wibberley (Reading), Nick Boylan (Ashford), Craig Moate (Barking), David Vaughan (Swansea), Zoe Clayton (Doncaster), Stephanie Bird (Lowestoft), Chloe Williams (Benfleet), Daniel Pepper (Cheshire), Matthew Bell (Co. Down), Adrian Dyer (Reading) and Ben Procter (Oldham). Competitors were supported by GB staff Carol Halpin (Team Manager), Chris Lineker (Head Coach), Diane Dart, Gerwyn Owen, Geoff Smedley, and Neal Clayton.

The International Sports Federation for Persons with Intellectual Disability (INAS-FID) and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) continue to work together to include athletes with learning disability in the next Paralympic Games in Beijing in 2008.

The decision to include athletes with learning disability in the IPC programme of events was taken at its General Assembly in November 2004. INAS-FID athletes still await the outcome of INAS-FID and IPC discussions, to see what will be the first event at which they are welcomed back by the IPC.

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NOTES TO EDITOR

1. Full results available by calling UKSA on 0870 770 2464. Teams
2. The UK Sports Association for People with Learning Disability is the national body that co-ordinates sport for people with learning disability in the UK and is the organisation responsible for the selection and management of Team GB to international events. It is also the officially recognised GB representative on INAS-FID.
3. The event is being hosted by the Czech Sports Association for the Mentally Handicapped, under the auspices of INAS-FID, the Intellectual Sports Federation for Persons with Intellectual Disability. INAS-FID, founded in 1986, is a member of the International Paralympic Committee. See further information at www.inas-fid.org
4. Interviews, comments, photographs and profiles of individual team members are available by contacting Tracey McCillen on the above numbers.