

History

In September 2002 I started at Kelly College, a small town in Tavistock, but I had a big ambition. This was as a result of my potential being recognised and a way of developing it which staying at Exmouth could not offer by means of more training and the next level of coaching. With support from the Michael Matthews Foundation (MMF) it meant that I could perfectly balance my educational studies with my sporting commitment. To be honest, to be a part of the Kelly family and swim squad was an honor, and the absolute best years of my life. Thank you to MMF.

After just 2 years at Kelly swimming I qualified for the Athens 2004 Paralympic games and was a proud finalist; an opportunity that would not have been possible to achieve without the supported move to boarding school. Two years later I made the team for 2006 World Championships and really felt happy that my achievements could give something back to the foundation gaining a silver medal as part of the medley relay team. In 2008 and my last year with the Kelly swimming squad I tried out for the Beijing Paralympic trials missing the qualifying time by fractions of a second. With emotions high this set me back heavily and I lost motivation for months after. But, when you stand behind the blocks going to race, you may be on your own and no-one else can race for you, but there is a massive support team behind you who have put in a lot of work for you to be there. It's with friends, coaches and family and with MMF continued support and their belief in me that I now prepare myself for the 2009 European Championships! I thank you all.

September 2009

Well training is going very well. The sessions have just started to get very specific and introduce more rest in order to convert all the fitness that's built up into critical speed. This period is called a Taper and I love it! Its just over two weeks now till I fly to Reykjavik for the European long course Champs. All my team kit has arrived (which I think is the best bit about going away to competitions) and I'm getting very excited as well as all the added nerves! I train with Team Bath now as part of the universities squad. Facilities are the best, which I think is going to give me an advantage over anything I've done before with having 50m-pool training. I'm currently doing 8 x (2hours sessions) in the pool and 3hours in the gym per week.

The last three months I've been doing a very structured routine in the gym. I've had a one-to-one instructor who is fantastic and I'm in the best shape I've ever been. I'm the strongest I've ever been going into a competition; which is a big confidence boost.

Four weeks after my return from Reykjavik will bring about the 2009 World Short Course Championship. This is held in the beautiful Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where I'm really looking forward to going. This competition will be swam over a 25m pool which I love and I'm sure will prove very fast for everyone! At the very least I should come home with a suntan!

Looking ahead beyond these competitions, next year there is the 2010 World Championships (50m) to be held in Eindhoven, The Netherlands, and then we bring on LONDON 2012!

I also try to fit in a bit of work for a charity called Remap. I got involved with them after being a client and having a big interest in what they did. They design and make bespoke pieces or adaptations for disabled people, in order for them to carry out a more comfortable and independent life.

I was put in touch with them when I was looking for help with adaptations for people with one hand with regards to woodwork. So all kitted out, I am now in my fourth week at Bath College undertaking a Carpentry and Joinery Diploma and am thoroughly enjoying it. It's certainly a challenge but I guess I would not be doing it if I knew it was going to be easy!

My short-term goal is to achieve a time that will qualify me back onto the World Class programme to commence January 2010. With assistance from The Foundation that has allowed me to regularly access physiotherapy treatment I hope to achieve this at the coming European Championships. Keep your eyes on the telly!

July 07

This weekend David has been swimming in the Welsh National Short Course Championships which doubled as World Short Course trials. David was in great form and had personal best times in all his races. The most impressive was his 100m Backstroke where he achieved the qualifying time for the World Championships and now we await the announcement of the Team tomorrow to confirm his place. David's personal best time before the event was 1.05.35, the qualifying time was 1.04.29 and the British and European record by James Crisp was 1.03.38.

David had targeted his time for the race at around 1.03.80 so was absolutely delighted to see his time at the end of the race was 1.02.54. Although the British record will stand unfortunately the European record will not as the championship did not fully comply with IPC rules as there was no doping control at the meet.

This is again a great confidence boost to David who is now back in Bath and will start the next training cycle in preparation for the European Championships which will take place in October.

It is a great help that the Michael Matthews Foundation is again helping David and he can assure you that he is working hard to be the best he can for the forthcoming international competitions.