



REPORT FROM GUAM

13th January 2009

We are now in Seoul staying at a day hotel to allow everyone to grab some much needed sleep after a mostly sleepless last night in Guam. The team had a fantastic day on the lagoon beach in Guam where the 10k was held. Besides supporting Kane throughout, swimmers were able to don swimsuits (bikinis)/sunscreen, and enjoyed the day mixing with swimmers from all countries. Generally relaxing after working very hard during the meet - it was a great day!

We held our team meeting, but had to wait a little for Esther to return from the Guam hospital with Ellen, who had had her foot run over by a kayak and had a suspected broken foot. Always a bit of drama! This meeting allowed us to summarise our results, honour our meet MVPS - (Gareth and Daniel), thank the staff and gather our team thoughts. The National Head Coach had some words of wisdom for our youth bests.

We then headed off to the JPP team dinner where each country was honoured and received a memento from Guam (a flightless bird, does that remind you of anything??) Ours is being shipped back to pride of place at SNZ headquarters, along with Daniels beautiful carved boat as he won the male high point award for the meet. Well done Daniel! Donna was acknowledged as his coach, and also received a gift from Guam.

Our results highlights were:

Highest medal winner - Daniel Bell with Gold in Back/Fly and the relay as well as bronze in frees. Daniel gained NZ age group records and was the highest International point scorer.

Gareth Kean was a double gold medalist in both back/relay and swam our only NZ open record (200 back).

NZ age group records by Elizabeth Brown, Mitchell Donaldson, Samantha Lee, Chloe Francis, Samantha Lucie Smith, Daniel Bell, Ellen Quirke, Gareth Kean and the relay were fantastic.

We had a great number of PB's and the team members rose to the occasion, and believe learned a lot from this experience. Many of these swimmers are bound for our senior teams, and all have their eyes on the big picture - being the Olympics either 2012 or 2016.

One point which is obvious, and which we can learn from as coaches is that we cannot select our teams from short course events for long course competitions. The two are too far apart, although some did overcome this issue. In order to note real improvements we changed our entries to long course times to be able to assess real progress.



The men's Medley Relay (Gareth Kean, Starn Simpson, Daniel Bell and Cameron Burrows) were our heroes on the last night, and astounded the other nations with their gritty approach. This team with their win, follows in the footsteps of the senior team (also with Bell as a member) which is the world short course champions and 5th at the Olympics. In the team event scoring, we beat the Canadians in the men, but not in the women so we finished 5th overall. Our goal is to be 4th in the teams event. With a small country though, individuals can win and the relay showed that we can always produce one of each stroke, so perhaps we can take heart at this and concentrate on our individual performances which in turn will help us as a team.

Belief is the critical factor along with confidence. Our teams need to be able to have moved along the pathways and gained success at each level if possible. If not success then learning. The indicators are that we are on the right track in many areas with skills still a factor we can do better. Each individual can improve their skills. Only Bell, who is a senior international already, displayed great skills with Gareth next best. This is one of the critical lessons for us to take forward. Each swimmer must be self responsible for their swimming and in particular their skills. Practice daily what you want to be in international competition.

It's been a pleasure leading this team and I have enjoyed the charisma and enthusiasm of our best youth swimmers. This is our best ever result and we will get even better.

Thank you to the coaches who put swimmers onto the team, and who coach and support them daily. To the parents and supporters who enabled these swimmers to gain this experience - thank you. To SNZ and Sparc a big thank you also, for facilitating this great opportunity. We are proud kiwis!

Jan Cameron
Head Coach