

**Independent Schools Swimming Championships:** Success in boys' 4x100m freestyle relay

# College win Aldenham Cup in the London 2012 pool

## SWIMMING

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SWIMMERS from Elizabeth College have returned victorious from the Independent Schools Swimming Championships, winning the Aldenham Cup in the London 2012 Olympic Pool.

Although college teams have often reached the finals, this is the first time since the 1970s that the college has won a trophy and the success is extra sweet because most of the team have at least two years left in their age group.

The team – Jonathan Beck, Henry Cliff, Toby Fitzgerald, Joshua Thornton and Will Russell – all swim with Barracudas and benefit from coaching from the Beau Sejour Swimming Club.

More than 80 schools from across the UK competed in the championships at the London Aquatic Centre in Stratford.

It was the first time that Thornton and Fitzgerald had competed in a 50m, 10-lane pool but the freestylers excelled in the morning heats and reached the final for the Aldenham Cup – a 4x100m freestyle relay.

With a large crowd making quite a din, Beck started the last leg of the final in second place and held his nerve and his pacing to secure a victory by half-a-body length to win the cup.

In the afternoon the team stepped back on the blocks for the Dunhelm Trophy, a 4x50m medley relay.

This is fast and furious event with no margin for error.

Again, a maximum effort from the team secured a place in the final but the efforts of their previous swims took their toll and the team could only manage sixth place, missing out on a podium place by under two seconds.



The scoreboard shows Elizabeth College finishing over a second ahead of their nearest challenger in the Aldenham Cup 4x100m freestyle relay final. Right: The victorious team of (left to right) Henry Cliff, Will Russell, Jonathan Beck and Joshua Thornton. (14085500 and 14085498)



Guernsey Amateur Swimming Association president Brian Allen was quick to send his congratulations, reminding the team that the previous winners from the college included the Lang brothers, who went on to compete for Canada in

the 1976 Olympics.

Elizabeth College's teacher in charge of swimming, Brian Aplin, was delighted with the team's performance.

'I am really proud of how well the team has performed,' he said.

'I expected each of them to be able to dip below 1min. for the 100m, but their 4x100m relay winning time of 3min. 52sec. shows how far they exceeded expectations.'

Richard Morris, the college's wa-

ter polo coach, added: 'This was a particularly poignant victory for me as my former school, Cranleigh, placed fifth having previously won the trophy when I coached them back in 1998.'