

Gerry Ryan Invitation

23/01/2016 to 24/01/2016

Last weekend 21 athletes represented Nenagh Neptune Swimming Club at the Gerry Ryan Invitation Gala 2016 in Limerick.

The Gerry Ryan Gala is a big milestone in every athletes diary. Firstly because the swimmers have to achieve age specific qualifying times in order to compete. Secondly because it is swum over 50m long-course, which means over the full length of the University of Limerick pool (compared to the usual 25m short-course, eg in Nenagh). Therefore a lot of hard work went into the preparation for this event, coaches and athletes alike.

On **Saturday** 12 athletes competed in 7 different events.

Emily Ryan was our first swimmer to compete, in the longest race of the weekend: 400m Free. Emily gave a very strong performance as she paced herself really well from the beginning to the very end. Further great swims were delivered by Mark Ryan over the 100m Back and Ellen Lane over the 50m Fly. Even though both swimmers had been out sick for the last week they were nevertheless able to repeat their previous pb's.

The first two athletes to reach the top ten were Ethan Geoghegan who came 6th and Sinead Dwyer who came 8th both over the 50m Fly, both achieving new personal best times.

The average pb of 1 second in the 50m Back (crawl) race (well done to all!) was topped by Christine Ryan and Kate Phelan, both with a 3 sec pb, and furthermore by Lily O'Brien and Shane McAteer, who knocked amazing 6 seconds off their previous time.

On **Sunday** 18 athletes competed in further 6 events.

Blathnaid Ryan was the first swimmer of the day and set the pace of the day with a 7 sec pb. All other swimmers seemed to follow her example and outshone themselves in their swims .

Over the 50m Free we saw a succession of swims with new pb's, like Marianna Gheorgita, Conor Brennan, Brendan Quinn who each swam a 2 sec pb, like Alex Steward who swam a 3 sec pb, like Sarah Seymour and Lily O'Brien who each swam a 4 sec pb, like SORCHA Nagle and Sinead McAteer who each swam a 5 sec pb, like Kelvin Knight, Sam West and Mark Brennan who each swam a 6 sec pb, like Ethan Geoghegan who pb'ed is now only 0.6 sec away from his Division 1 time.

This success continued over the 100m Free where Mark Brennan swam a 8.5 sec pb, followed by Sean

Hogan's 11 seconds! Mark Ryan pb'ed also and is now only 1.2 sec away from his Division 1 time.

Congratulations to all participating athletes on their achievements in this high standard gala.

All 21 athletes swam to their best ability. With a total of 49 entries, they achieved 37 personal best swimming times with no disqualifications.

A special word of thanks needs to be expressed to the parents who accompanied the swimmers, who helped out on deck and who stepped in as team managers. Without you these events wouldn't be possible!