



An 'unforgettable' day was had by all from Boldmere Swimming Club who met Olympian and world record holder, Liam Tancock last weekend.



Masterclass... Liam Tancock puts youngsters from Boldmere Swimming Club through their paces.

# Swim star's visit is pure gold

By Nick Horner  
News Reporter

AN Olympic star and world record holder enthralled up and coming swimmers at a Sutton club with a special talk and time in the pool.

Liam Tancock who has represented Great Britain at both the Beijing and London Olympics and is the current 50m backstroke world record holder took time out from his training schedule to meet swimmers from Boldmere Swimming Club at a special session at Castle Pool in Castle Vale.

The 28-year-old former 50m World Champion, who won gold in Rome in 2009, and Commonwealth gold medallist in Delhi in 2010, gave an hour-long talk about his experiences before taking two pool sessions with the junior and senior Midlands squads offering tips and tricks to improve.

Liam said his best moment was stepping out for the final of the 100m backstroke in the London games last year, where the atmosphere was incredible, helping him to a fifth-placed finish. He spoke about how he started off at an early age and said his inspiration, far from being a sport-



Showing how it's done... Liam Tancock shows the backstroke technique that has secured him gold medals and world records.

ing star, was his older brother Ryan.

Liam started swimming when he was around five years old and was very competitive, wanting to more than he could as he was always very 'eager'. As a 12-year-old he was only doing three sessions a week but his career took off when he made the decision to go to Loughborough University - known for its sporting excellence - to study for a sports science degree over six years to accommodate

his swimming career.

Now, having finished fifth in the 100m backstroke and fourth in the 4x100 medley at London 2012, his motivation is to bring home an Olympic medal from Rio in 2016.

Steve Harlow from Boldmere Swimming Club, who arranged the event following a chance meeting at Loughborough University's pool when he was there with Boldmere's senior squad in April, said the day was 'fantastic'.

"Liam said as a child his mum and dad used to buy him and his brother the Guinness Book of World Records and as he said one day I am going to be in that - which he did in

2009 [and remains the record holder to this day]," Steve said. "He broke the record twice - first in the semi-final and then in the final to win the gold. We gave Liam free rein with the pool sessions. Our chair, Shirley Wigley and head coach, Ashley Cox were there and Ashley said Liam was the most inspirational person he has listened to in a long time.

"He was a true professional and very natural. He was fantastic in the pool - when he got in with the kids he was able to tailor everything to the different age groups. He went through different drills and how to better their technique.

"I can't really praise the guy enough - a tip top bloke to deal with, his manner and the way he addressed the guys and talked to coaches, as well as signing everything!

"I think for some of the younger ones, it will be a day they never forget."

The session with Liam came at an ideal time at the start of Boldmere Swimming Club's season when coaches are focusing on technique. The seniors will be hoping to retain their Division One Arena National League Midlands Champions title and the juniors will be hoping to go one better in the Nuneaton and District Junior League final, after finishing second last year.



Sign him up... Liam Tancock signs autographs for youngsters at Boldmere Swimming Club.



Left: Learning from the master... Boldmere Swimming Club's senior squad watch attentively, as Olympian Liam Tancock shows them tips to improve.

Below: Hands up who likes swimming... Olympian Liam with youngsters from the club.



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