

Sorry for the confusion about updates from the chaperones but it seems that the PC's in Italy were not getting the info back to Alistair for the web site. All problems are now sorted so here are the first 2 instalments:

Italy Trip update from chaperones - part 2

Well its Wednesday morning and all the swimmers are back in the pool for another 2 hour session. Most of them have found it harder than they thought it would be and it did take them a couple of days to get into the routine. It is very much a case of up, breakfast, swim, lunch, gym, swim, dinner and then bed. The most time they get to themselves is about one and a half hours, this coming between the mentioned training and meals.

A few of the squad have not been eating as well as we had hoped and are starting to struggle a bit in the pool, DT had said that it would be hard and this was to be expected. The thing is that while some of the swimmers are not fuelling up and running out of energy during the session, some of the swimmers are doing very well both in the restaurant and pool. Our youngest swimmer is eating well and completing every session (sometimes stronger than some of the older swimmers). James eats like there will be no food left later in the day and always comes back to the table with 2 starters, 2 main courses and puddings - one night he went up 3 times, the washing up ladies love him.

Due to the fact they are now either training or eating they do not get a massive amount of time to just kick back and relax. Two groups have walked to the local supermarket (with myself and another chaperone) to stock up on a few sweets, snacks and energy drinks and after 3 days we finally found a vending machine that all the kids can get to. On the first trip we took the older six swimmers and Lizzie, I can tell you that Lizzie is defiantly entertainment value. She talked all the way there, the whole time we were in the supermarket, the whole way back and even had myself and Val skipping one section of the route. One of the best parts of a trip like this is really getting to know the swimmers. Its always best to ask Chloe something once she has eaten, Jess - Caitlin - Hannah will always be the last room to be ready, wherever you find India you will always find Izzy, Nikki is no good at table football and the list goes on.

Colin had a room inspection yesterday that went down really well. The girls said it wasn't fair that their rooms were inspected and not the adults, so began the frantic cleaning by everyone. Somehow our beds were marked down because one bed had 2 pillows while Sherry & Tims room had rubbish piled in a wardrobe, litter on the floor and toothpaste over the bathroom mirror - needless to say their marks were not very high (sabotage we suspect). Colin then stated that this was the first inspection and the second part would be a surprise inspection, when there rooms are looking bad we will strike - revenge will be ours.

The squad spend most of their free time there time either in each others rooms or in the social area downstairs, yesterday they delivered a football table, there has been some keen matches taking place (and don't believe it when Jess and Lizzy say they beat me). We also found another relaxation area that we have allowed the older five swimmers to hang around in as well as a room with two table tennis tables in.

Today the swimmers are only doing one session and then getting the rest of the day off. They all got the opportunity to go shopping in a nearby town or go to the beach and hang around the complex. All the girls (except Nikki) are going shopping and all the boys (plus Nikki) are going to the beach - hopefully we can find an open ice cream parlor. Tonight we have a Quiz with the Girls against the Boys against the Women against the Men (thanks to Joe Low who kindly did the quiz), can you imagine the uproar if the kids beat us - lets pray that does not happen.

Overall they are finding the training tough but sticking it out, we keep reminding them why they are here and what the end goal is (Counties). The spirits are good and as a team they are all bonding with each other, each meal time they have been told they are not to sit in the same seat and next to the same people (this has worked well and encourages the squad to mix).

I will write a bit more on Thursday and then it will be back home on Saturday. Before I forget I would like to say a big thank you to Alistair for waiting around and putting the updates on the web site.

Until Thursday - Mark.