

World Class Performance

15.4.08

The captain of the Lane Cove Swimming Club, **Phil Butcher** (17), led the team to its most successful ever performance at the National Age Championships, in Brisbane last week.

Butcher, who has been balancing training with studying for his HSC, was completely focused on the task at hand last week, which was to swim fast.

He set a new NSW record in his pet event, the 100 Fly, of 54.7, defeating all the other 17 year olds. The time also makes Butcher the second fastest 17 year old butterflyer in the world at the moment!

However, because the age group combines 17 and 18 year olds, he came home with the silver medal.

Not to be outdone, Butcher teamed up with the state's fastest freestyler, breaststroker and backstroker in his age group for the 4x50 Medley State Relay. The team walked away with gold and another new state record.

Young and aspiring swimmer, 14 year old **Sally Gilbert**, was also on the pace qualifying for the finals of the 100 and 200 Breaststroke in her first national campaign. She finished an impressive 9th in each event.

Seven swimmers represented Lane Cove at the championships – up from two last year:

Jack Barkl
Phil Butcher
Sally Gilbert
Sam Gilbert
John O'Neill
Josh Talvi
Jack Van Der Vegt

Overall, the club finished in 89th position out of the 181 clubs that scored points at the meet and recorded about 60% personal best times.

According to Lane Cove's Head Coach, these championships have been a turning point for not only the swimmers but for the club.

"The swimmers are starting to see themselves as winners and believe that they really can compete against the best in the country and come out on top" he said.

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