

**Berkhamsted Swimming Club**  
**National Championships 2017**

Berkhamsted Swimming Club had 3 swimmers competing at the National Championships in Ponds Forge, Sheffield over the last 2 weeks.

Abbie Hurst, Zac Patel & James Chennells had all finished in the top 45 swimmers in Britain over the qualifying period of events during the Spring.

Hurst & Patel both made the British Championships with Chennells competing at the English Championships in week 2.

Hurst began the first week of competition with the 16 years 50m Breaststroke. A strong heat swim saw her enter the evening's final as 3<sup>rd</sup> fastest qualifier, posting 33.66 from the outside lane in her heat.

In the final, later in the afternoon she started well but the first & second placed swimmers were well clear from half way. A battling swim saw Abbie clock her 2<sup>nd</sup> fastest ever swim in the event clocking 33.34 and gamely holding on to claim her first ever medal at a British Championships, pinching the bronze which was also the first time a swimmer from the club has been on the podium at a British Champs.

Abbie followed this with 2:49.22 in the 200m Breast on Day 2, understandably some way off her best but bounced back on the final day of the meet in the 100m Breaststroke. Her time of 1:16.25 was only 0.1 seconds shy of her best this year to place 11<sup>th</sup> and just one place out of the final.

Zac Patel had surprised everybody by making his first ever appearance at Nationals in the British Champs and showed he is not to be cowed by the occasion. He missed his pb by just 0.1 seconds and was bitterly disappointed to have not spotted his finish, having to glide in at the end of the race and posting 26.97. However, he should be delighted with his placing of 12<sup>th</sup> overall (second reserve for the final) in his first effort at this highest level in Age Group Swimming in Britain.

Both swimmers made it plain that their intention is to return to this top table in 2018 and, hopefully, pull others from the club to the same heights as they emulate the pace setters.

Geoff Wood  
Head Coach  
Berkhamsted Swimming Club  
5<sup>th</sup> August 2017