

SWIMMERS CORNER

ELLE COGAN & GRACIE HUDSON



INTERVIEWED BY EMMA WHINCUP, SAM DREW & ELIZA HUDSON

Elle and Gracie represented Maxwell Swimming Club in the British Summer Championships 2018. Swimmers are only invited based on the national rankings following a qualifying period. The Championships provide swimmers with the opportunity to compete against other top ranked athletes across the country. The events take place at Ponds Forge in Sheffield. We spoke with Elle and Gracie to find out how they got on.

Q. Elle and Gracie, many congratulations on your achievements during this year's Summer Championships. Can you tell us which events you qualified for?

Gracie tells us she qualified for 200m Breaststroke at British Nationals and 100m Breaststroke & 200m IM at English Nationals. Elle qualified for 50m Breaststroke at English Nationals.

Q. What was the pool like?

It was very big which could be a little intimidating. It was deep in the middle. Elle found it slow in warm-up whereas Gracie thought the water was freezing!



Q. Were you nervous? Did the live cameras bother you?

We were very nervous but the cameras did not bother us as we couldn't see them. The cameras and live feed was useful as Gracie's uncle in Australia was able to watch her race.

Q. How did you manage your nerves?

Elle focused on her breathing before the event. Gracie struggled with her nerves. Swimming at this high standard has enabled us to develop new strategies to overcome the nerves. Nerves are a good thing providing they do not take over!

Q. What guidance did Marc give you to help prepare for your National experience?

Marc was great. He told us not to worry about placing and to enjoy the experience.



Both the girls preparing for their races at Summer Nationals.

We asked the girls whether they could hear their parents amongst the 1000 spectators.

Gracie could hear her mum and little sister, Eliza. Elle couldn't hear her mum.

Both Elle and Gracie have been swimming for Maxwell Swim Club for nearly 4 years so we asked them to expand on their experiences.

Q. What age did you start swimming?

(Gracie) I started at 10 weeks old.

(Elle) I started having lessons when I was 1 year old. I also swam in India where you trained for 6 weeks and then did a competition. This process was then repeated at the end of the year.

Q. What are your favourite strokes/events?

Elle's favourite was 50m Breaststroke. Gracie enjoys swimming Breaststroke and IM events.

Q. What would you like to achieve in the future for swimming?

(Gracie) I would like to qualify for the Europeans.

(Elle) I would like to swim 50m Breaststroke at British Nationals which is one step up from where I swam this summer.

Q. Is there anyone who inspires you and why is that?

(Elle) Freya Anderson is a swimmer I admire because she has managed to achieve so much at a young age.



Freya Anderson is only 17 years old and has already achieved a European junior record in 100m Free, going 53.61 in the 2018 Euro Finals. Freya also achieved a gold medal with team mate Adam Peaty swimming in the 100m mixed medley relay. Their time of 3:40:18 secured them both along with Georgia Davies and James Guy a new European record. Freya is also 6ft 3inches tall with her main stroke being Freestyle. Freya became the 5th fastest performer in British swimming history at 16 years. This was previously held by Adam Peaty's coach, Mel Marshall.



(Gracie) Adam Peaty inspires me because he swims the same stroke as me.

Adam Peaty is probably the most successful Breaststroke swimmer that has walked this planet! If you don't know who he is then here's a photo of him after breaking another world record during the Europeans 2018. Adam Peaty is 6ft 3in and wears size 12 flippers. Surprisingly, Adam was actually scared of water when he was little.



Q. How do you overcome that feeling of tiredness that we feel towards the end of a meet but there are still 2 races to swim?

Elle tries to stay active to prevent tiredness and think about the positive outcomes. Elle also eats plenty of protein. Gracie's mum makes sure she eats bananas!

Q. Do you have a favourite song to listen to? If not, how do you get into that zone?

Elle doesn't have a favourite song but enjoys listening to music before her races. Gracie prefers to listen to either Whistle by Flo Rida or Heroes by Alesso.



Q. How do you cope with pressure and disappointment?

(Gracie) I move on quickly and keep my results to myself.

(Elle) I use any disappointment as a learning curve.



Q. Gracie, what subjects do you like at school and how do you manage homework and swimming?

I enjoy Art, Drama, Science, Food Tech and LUNCH TIME! My school day finishes at 3.10pm so on Monday I have to improvise therefore on Tuesday I catch up at school.

Q. Elle, what subjects are you studying at GCSE level and how do you manage to fit in homework and revision?

*I am studying Triple Science, Maths, Further Maths, English, French, History, Geography and Food Tech. **WOW!!!!** I try to complete homework on the nights I do not have training.*



Q. Elle, how is your volunteer coaching going? Is coaching something you would like to do?

I am really enjoying my volunteering and when I turn 16 years old I definitely want to do my level 1 teaching course.



Q. Gracie, do you have any other hobbies?

Cross Country, cooking, Netball (although her sister Eliza disagrees with Netball)



Q. Gracie, who shouts the loudest when you swim?

Well, that would have to be my Mum! I hear Eliza though poolside just before the race starts.

Elle, injuries can happen to all of us and you have experienced the challenges that come from them. Can you offer any advice that helps with the mental, emotional and physical challenges?

If you have been given any exercises then stick with the programme because it will help to strengthen you. Also, do not use your injury as an excuse.



Q. Do you have a funny memory during your time at Maxwell?

(Gracie) Yes, it involves open water, Sophie Holmes and FISH! Sounds ominous please explain... It was during my first attempt at open water swimming at Box End. I started swimming fine but then I noticed some fish. Thinking the fish would nibble at my feet I decided to swim onto Sophie Holmes' back. Poor

Sophie needed to swim half way around the lake with me on her back before she could drop me off at the side. It is safe to say my open water swimming career came to an abrupt end after that!



Gracie, we would suggest not watching this then...



Q. Elle, do you have a funny memory during your time at Maxwell?

Yes I do. It would have to be the time when Josh MacNab wore a sports bra. Sports Bra?? Josh was a finalist in lane 8 during our Maxwell meet. When they announced his name he took off his hoodie and was wearing a sports bra.



Moving swiftly on, we asked Elle who her funniest team mate is and why?

Emma Whincup always makes me laugh. It is probably because we have a similar sense of humour.

Gracie's closest team mate is Charlotte Downing. Gracie also misses Sophie Govan who has now left Maxwell.



Swimmers Corner
wouldn't be
complete with the
infamous
'PPP'

(Proud Parent Photo)



Finally, here comes the Swimmers Corner version of Mastermind.
The two questions all interviewees will be asked.



Q. If you were stranded on a desert island what 3 things could you not live without?

(Gracie) My phone, chocolate and my sister....no sorry can I change the final one to my CAT!!!

(Elle) My phone, my dog and SUNCREAM!!!

Q. What are you looking forward to with Noel joining as Head Coach?

(Gracie) To push me mentally through hard sets

(Elle) Being pushed and challenged



Many thanks to Sam Drew, Eliza Hudson and Emma Whincup for interviewing our National Stars.... Gracie and Elle.

