



Ruth Bridgman

LN: Hi, it's me again, you may have read the previous article about Harry Maishman but this time I'm joined by my partner in crime Jess Trueman, with Sam Drew helping us ask the questions.

JT: That's right, Louise and I recently interviewed Ruth Bridgman, a Performance Squad swimmer, County Champion and Regional standard athlete. Ruth started swimming when she was young; developing her love for swimming from her beginner lessons to Maxwell Swimming Club.

LN: Many of you know Ruth for her amazing underwater work at competitions. She always pushes the boundaries of the 15m off of every turn. Some of you may know that Ruth entered counties recently and she won medals in 8 races. We asked Ruth what the key was to her success and she explained that her underwater work and breakouts were key. The way to improve these is relentless training on turns trying to improve your breathing and technique.

JT: Ruth works so hard at her under waters that in races she has to be careful not to go past the 15 meter mark. This, she told us, helps a lot in her races and leads to better times. In fact, it led Ruth to become County Champion in the 100m IM, 400m IM, and the 50m and 100m Backstroke. Ruth said 'being County Champion is amazing' and she considers that her biggest achievement but she told us that this wasn't really her main goal and instead aimed to swim as well as possible because she may have ended up disappointed if she didn't achieve the accolade of County Champion.

LN: One thing you are probably wondering is how Ruth prepares herself for races. We all do it slightly differently. She found nutrition was the



key as well as hydrating. Ruth eats more protein the day before a competition and ensures she drinks lots of water. Stretching and warming up properly were also so important because the last thing Ruth wanted to do was injure herself in the process of a race.



JT: Ruth, like most swimmers, has a pre-race preparation in which she tries to relax and sometimes listens to music. She said that she tries not to think about the races to avoid getting worried and tense. It's important to relax during a race as tight muscles can hinder you. Inevitably, sometimes you do swim and don't get exactly what you hoped for. Ruth said not to be disheartened when

you do badly as its part of a swimmers life. If you keep trying and working hard in training you will do better.

LN: For Ruth, preparing for her races properly was even more important, as she entered every single event at Counties (17 different swims, not including relays and finals!). Luckily counties were spread over 6 days so she only had about 4 races a day (although finals and relays were additional to this). Ruth said it was important to not forget to focus on the race ahead and not dwell on the previous race.

JT: Ruth trains really hard each week and sometimes is faced with hard sets, not only did she say that you should come in with a positive attitude but also if you are faced with one of these hard sets then she said that she just gets stuck in and sometimes sings songs in her head whilst swimming to forget how hard the set is!

Ruth told us she preferred morning sessions as they are a lot quieter and often evenings are busy with school work. Ruth is in sixth form which means she gets some free slots in her day so she uses this time to get some of her homework done. She says coping with swimming, homework and other hobbies' is difficult. She said to try and do homework as soon as you can (when you have time) otherwise it just piles up and becomes increasingly difficult to get done.



LN: We asked Ruth for a Tip of The Month for everyone to work on, and not surprisingly it was work on your underwater skills to improve your races!!

JT: To conclude the interview I asked Ruth to sum up swimming in one word, she said 'emotional.'

LN: Thanks very much for reading, we will be back soon with another instalment.