

YOUNG TITAN SWIMMER OVERCOMES ASPERGERS SYNDROME

At the recent Shropshire County Swimming Championships Ellesmere College Titan Shannon Davies, aged 9, won the bronze medal in the girls 9/u 200m Breaststroke.

This achievement was all the more remarkable given that Shannon was diagnosed eighteen months ago with Asperger's Syndrome, a neurobiological disorder which affects a person's ability to communicate and socialise and leads to reduced levels of concentration.

Shannon who lives in Shrewsbury and attends St Giles Primary School, has always dreamt of being an Olympic swimmer. In 2009 she took a step towards achieving her goal by joining the Titans Junior Development Swimming Programme for elite young swimmers.

The 2010 Shropshire County Swimming Championships took place at the Market Drayton Swimming Centre over the weekends of the 27th/28th February and the 13th/14th March. Shannon was competing against the best young swimmers in Shropshire from more than 11 Swimming Clubs.

Commenting upon her success Shannon said "It's just fantastic. All my neighbours and friends and teachers at school have been congratulating me. I feel like a real celebrity".

Titan head coach Jon Pardoe commented "I'm truly delighted for Shannon. Life is all about overcoming obstacles and I've no doubt that Shannon can go on to achieve even bigger and better things. She has worked hard on both her technique and fitness over the last few months and is a real credit to the club".

Further details about joining the Ellesmere College Titans can be found on their website www.ellesmerecollegetitans.co.uk or by telephoning Jon Pardoe on 07903 641668. Further details on scholarships and places at Ellesmere College can be obtained from the College Admissions Secretary on 01691 622321 or by email at admissions.secretary@ellesmere.com.

Photo: 1) Shannon Davies displaying her bronze medal.

Notes to Editor

Asperger's Syndrome, often referred to as high-functioning or mild autism, is a heritable disorder that stems from structural abnormalities in several regions of the brain. Interestingly, researchers are now learning that Asperger's Syndrome is not linked to other forms of autism, but rather, is closely related to another genetic illness, [Bipolar Disorder](#). Diagnosed in two of every 10,000 people, Asperger's affects four times as many boys as girls and is most noted for affecting a person's ability to socialize and communicate.

The Ellesmere College Titans Swimming Club was established in 2008, as a meeting of minds, between Ellesmere College – a school with a great sporting heritage and the parents of some of the top young swimmers in Shropshire, united in their desire to create an ambitious, positive and competitive swimming club.

The result: A centre of swimming excellence in the heart of the North Shropshire countryside.

To maintain this standard the Club adopts and implements a selective membership policy, to ensure that all swimmers share the same goal of achieving swimming success at the highest level. The emphasis is on quality not quantity of swimmers, with the Club limiting its total swimming membership to 40 - ranging from children as young as 8 upwards.

In such an environment a great deal of one to one coaching can be given to individual swimmers, and productive use can be made of underwater video analysis and specialist training equipment

Ellesmere College was founded in 1884 and is part of the Woodard Group – the largest grouping of public schools in the UK. Over the years it has been responsible for producing some of the British sporting greats including ex-England Rugby captain Bill Beaumont. It is hoped that it will produce the next generation of British swimming greats.

Issued on behalf of Ellesmere College Titans Swimming Club (The Titans). For further details please contact Jon Pardoe on 07903 641668 or email jonpardoe@hotmail.co.uk. Further details on scholarships and places at Ellesmere College can be obtained from the College Admissions Secretary on 01691 622321 or by email at admissions.secretary@ellesmere.com

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