

Canet Training Camp – South Aberdeenshire Swimming By Craig Thomson

After travelling most of the day we landed in Perpignan in the south-west of France. We went to the fantastic outdoor pool in Canet that night for our first of many training sessions over the next three weeks where we were taking part in a training camp to prepare for the Scottish National Swimming Championships.

Whilst we were in France the weather was perfect for training. The sun shone almost everyday and the temperature rarely dropped below 30°C. This meant we could swim outdoors everyday in the longcourse pool to gain valuable experience as we don't have easy access to one in Aberdeenshire. The sun also meant we could do land/core work and running outside.

The pool itself was great, 8 lanes, 50m longcourse and outdoors. There was also a brand new 8 lane shortcourse (25m) pool that was opened during our training camp. There were also 2 gyms available to use for land work. The facilities in Canet were great and being able to use these facilities continuously for three weeks was a major benefit to our squad. It meant we had more experience of swimming longcourse and we could build more strength.

During our stay in France we were training with clubs from all over Europe such as Limmat Sharks from Switzerland, an Israeli team, Marelle Performance Swim Team and a Belgian squad. Training next to teams from other nations was a good experience as we learned many different things such as new drills and exercises that are used in mainland Europe. It was very interesting to see what people from different countries did differently and how long certain things can help so much.

Whilst we were in Canet we were spectators at the Mare Nostrum Swim Meet, where many of the worlds fastest swimmers have swam over the past few years. This meet is of very high standards and the field was very strong, as well known swimming stars from across the globe were competing. Olympic Champions such as Libby Trickett were swimming at the meet as well as various World Record Holders such as Frederick Bousquet, Eamon Sullivan and Liam Tancock. Watching this meet was again a great experience as we were able to learn so much about swimming by watching these professional athletes. For example we could study their starts and turns and learn from the best in the world.

Overall, our squad really enjoyed the training camp in France and it helped significantly as preparation towards not only the Scottish National Swimming Championships in Glasgow, but towards the main focus meet on the year, the ASA's in Sheffield.