

Award nominations

Swimmer of the Year

I am pleased to nominate Hugo Jones of Frome Swimming Club and Team Bath AS for Somerset ASA Swimmer of the Year 2026. Over the past 12 months, Hugo has demonstrated exceptional progression, record-breaking performances, international experience, and a level of dedication that sets him apart as both an athlete and a role model within the sport.

Hugo started his competitive swimming at Frome Swimming Club in 2016 and began training with Team Bath AS in September 2021 where he has rapidly developed into an outstanding distance freestyle swimmer. In January 2025 Hugo received an invitation to train with the Swedish National team, and this amazing journey started with his first trip to Stockholm in March 2025 and his first abroad competition one year ago. His performances from April 2025–2026 highlight not only consistent improvement but also excellence at regional, national, and international levels.

A standout moment came at the Bergen Swim Festival in Bergen (April 2026), where Hugo delivered an exceptional series of swims competing for Södertörns swimming club. He broke a long-standing Team Bath AS club record in the 200m freestyle, swimming 1:53.71 in the B Final (3rd place), surpassing a club record that had stood since 2016. He also posted impressive times of 4:04.17 in the 400m freestyle and 8:33.31 in the 800m freestyle, demonstrating both speed and endurance. Notably, he swam a 51.88 split in the 4x100m medley relay, underlining his versatility and value in team events.

These races followed on from the momentum of the Malmsten Open just a week before, where he broke another club record in the 400m freestyle (4:04.14), a record that had stood since 2011. Across multiple events, including the 200m and 800m freestyle, he consistently delivered high-level performances. Competing in elite international environments, Hugo now races alongside world-class athletes, showing confidence, composure, and the ability to perform under pressure.

His achievements extend across the season. In August 2025, Hugo set a long course 800m freestyle club record (8:31.99), and he has since established multiple short course club records, including:

- 400m freestyle – 3:54.94 at the Swedish National Short Course Championships
- 800m freestyle – 8:05.36 at the same championships

At the Swim England National Summer Meet 2025, Hugo secured 2nd place in the Men's 18+ 800m freestyle, and he achieved 3rd place in the 800m freestyle at the Swim England Southwest Winter Regionals (Nov 2025). At the 2026 Somerset ASA County Championships, he delivered an extraordinary 1500m freestyle (16:31.60), breaking the club record by over a minute and winning Gold to become the 1500 metre freestyle senior champion—an exceptional margin that highlights his continued progression.

Beyond performance, Hugo exemplifies outstanding sportsmanship and character. He consistently shows respect towards coaches, teammates, and competitors, and approaches both success and setbacks with maturity and humility. Whether achieving personal bests or facing challenging races, his attitude remains focused and positive. Hugo leads by example,

demonstrating integrity, professionalism, and a strong work ethic that influences those around him.

His contribution to the team environment is equally significant. Hugo plays an active role in supporting teammates, both in training and competition, and is reliable and committed. He encourages younger athletes within the club, as a role model, and contributes to a positive, motivated team culture that benefits the wider swimming community.

Hugo's journey over the past year is also one of growth and resilience. Transitioning into higher levels of competition, including international meets and training camps, he has adapted quickly and continued to improve. His willingness to step outside his comfort zone—training abroad, competing against elite swimmers, and embracing new challenges—demonstrates both mental strength and determination. His steady progression, combined with his ability to deliver strong performances under pressure, marks him out as an athlete of exceptional promise.

Next steps reflect his commitment with invitations to international training camps in Sweden and Málaga with the Swedish national team then competing at the Sweden Summer Cup and Swedish Championships. These opportunities are a testament to both his ability and dedication to continuous improvement.

Hugo's achievements have also gained wider recognition, including media coverage on BBC Sounds and in local press, highlighting his journey from club swimmer to international competitor and inspiring others within the sport.

In summary, Hugo Jones has delivered an exceptional year of swimming, defined by record-breaking performances, national success, and international progression. His sportsmanship, leadership, resilience, and positive impact on others make him a truly deserving candidate for Somerset ASA Swimmer of the Year 2026. (Karen Bowen)

John Cooper

Paul Chillingworth

I'd like to nominate Paul Chillingworth for this year's John Cooper award. Over a number of years he has contributed ever more to officiating in Somerset and beyond. For example, he has taken a leading role with county swimming events, and with training the next generation of starters and referees. (Chris Metcalfe)

Wyvern Shield

Kay Wilcox -For as long as I can remember Kay has been part of the County Committee and SESW committee and there has been an increase in para and disability swimmers within the county and region both in clubs, competitions at all levels for county development to British Champs with Nancy even achieving a British record and continuing to compete at a high level.

With the focus on diversity and inclusivity many parents and swimmers are able to see para swimmers at venues, competitions and training and Somerset ASA have been key to introducing ideas and approaches through everything they do and this is a great testament to the county committee and Kay. (Karen Bowen)

Young Volunteer of the Year

Maya Atkin – Team Bath AS

Maya starting her volunteering as part of her Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award last year. As she enjoyed helping poolside so much she has continued to volunteer ever since. She regularly volunteers poolside for one to two hours per week assisting with coaching the younger swimmers. She also helped to run our Christmas swim gala and supports the younger swimmers at meets.

She engages well with the younger swimmers, giving them lots of encouragement and support as well as being able to give positive and constructive feedback to them to help them develop their skills and stroke technique.

Maya has gone on to complete her Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award and she has also enrolled on the Swim England Young Volunteer programme, completing training on welfare and safeguarding and attending a regional workshop.

Maya is a great role model for all the swimmers and a valued member of the club. Since starting her volunteering her confidence has grown and also her passion for swimming and helping others to improve and achieve their goals. (Kay Wilcox)

County Awards

Pat Leaman (Isabel Blight)

Life Membership

Karen Bowen (Isabel Blight)