

National swimming and diving competitions at the Commie



This weekend and next there will be lots of swimming and diving action for you at the Royal Commonwealth Pool.

Olympic, World and European medallists will line up alongside over 30 of Team Scotland's aquatic heroes from the summer at the Scottish Gas National Short Course Championships next weekend, but from tomorrow till Monday the Scottish Gas National & Open Diving Championships and The Thistle Trophy will be competed for.

The event is unique in that a novice Championships (Thistle Trophy) runs alongside a National Championships with the Thistle Trophy being awarded to the team that accumulates the most points over the meet.

Scotland's Golden trio of Hannah Miley, Ross Murdoch and Dan Wallace are all in action next weekend along with our other medallists including Michael Jamieson, Corrie Scott, Robbie Renwick and Stephen Milne. Erraid Davies, who at 13 years of age became Scotland's youngest ever Games medallist and in doing so captured the hearts and imagination of the Commonwealth, will also be competing.

The event, considered the premier short course meet in the UK, has also attracted the likes of Christopher Walker-Hebborn, who has enjoyed a fantastic 2014 becoming European and Commonwealth Champion over 100m back.

Siobhan-Marie O'Connor secured six medals on her Team England debut this summer including gold in the 200m IM. She has since carried that success into the short course season with medals at the FINA World Cup Series in Tokyo and Singapore. With

Aimee Wilmott also confirmed, the IM events will surely feature among the highlights of the 3-day event.

Alongside Miley and Murdoch, both Walker-Hebborn and O'Connor are on the British Gas GBR team for the FINA World Championships in Doha (25m) which take place this weekend too.

Liam Tancock, Lizzie Simmonds, Andrew Willis and Roberto Pavoni all return to the event; the calibre of athletes does not stop there, as international competitors from the Belgium National Team also confirmed. Amongst those are Kimberley Buys, who at the start of November won six titles at the Belgium Short Course Championships. She will also arrive in Edinburgh with World Championships race practice under her belt.

Tickets for the event start at as little as £3 for the heats and £4 for the finals, making it affordable for everyone to enjoy the swimming this Christmas. A limited number of day tickets are available to enjoy a full day of swimming at only £7 for concessions and £11 for full price tickets. All tickets can be purchased online at Eventbrite without any additional fees.

Curtain's up with the morning heats at 08:45, afternoon heats at 13:15 and finals at 17:30. All information about the event can be found online at www.scottishswimming.com/shortcourse.

Edinburgh's Festivals and Events Champion, Councillor Steve Cardownie, said: "The Royal Commonwealth Pool is the ideal venue to host competitive diving.

"Following its modernisation in 2012 and a spectacular diving display this summer, when the 'Commie' played host to the 2014 Commonwealth Games, we've seen an increase in visitors to the pool. This goes to show that these major events encourage participation in sport and physical activity in the city.

"It is fantastic that we can offer local people such a world-

class facility in which to hone swimming and diving skills, and I'm sure the Thistle Trophy will also result in another boost to user numbers."