

SWIM STARS SET FOR BRITISH GAS DUEL IN THE POOL AGAINST USA

Britain's best swimmers will come together with athletes from Germany and Italy as a European Select team that will go head-to-head with the might of the USA at the British Gas Duel in the Pool in December.

The biennial Duel in the Pool is a USA Swimming event designed to showcase the sport's most exciting swimmers in non-Olympic years and will be co-hosted this year by British Gas and British Swimming.

The British Gas Duel in the Pool will be held at the Manchester Aquatics Centre on 18-19 December and takes on a new format with the USA facing a combined European Select team.

The event provides a unique opportunity for fans to see the world's greatest swimmers going head-to-head for supremacy in the pool.

Double Olympic Champion Becky Adlington believes the opportunity to see so many stars in action in Manchester should not to be missed.

"Following the success of the World Short Course last year, it's great that the British public will have another opportunity to watch a world class swimming event in Manchester this December," said Adlington.

'It's been an outstanding year for British Swimming with a best ever medal haul at the World Championships in Rome and it seems only fitting to finish the year on a high with the greatest talent Europe and the USA have to offer going head-to-head.

"To be able to watch the cream from Britain, Italy and Germany race the best of the United States, including Michael Phelps in the UK for the first time, is an amazing opportunity."

The event provides the British public with a first ever opportunity to witness Michael Phelps, the greatest Olympic swimmer and one of the greatest Olympians of all time, in action as part of a very strong USA team.

And British Swimming Chief Executive David Sparkes is delighted to see such a high-profile event being staged in Britain.

"The concept of a USA versus a European Select team was first raised during the World Championships in 2005.

"With regular dialogue, a real willingness on both sides and with the support of British Gas, Speedo, Daktronics and Manchester City Council, we're now able to realise these dreams and bring some of the world's greatest swimmers to Manchester.

"We expect to host a very strong USA team packed full of mega stars. Alongside our own Becky Adlington, Liam Tancock, Gemma Spofforth and Jo Jackson, we will also welcome some of Europe's greatest swimmers to bring to Manchester the best swimming it's ever seen in a head-to-head challenge.

"What better preparation for all swimmers and spectators alike prior to 2012."

Both teams will include up to 18 men and 18 women with British Swimming, Germany and Italy sending a team of six men and six women each for the short course (25m) meet.

Executive Director for USA Swimming Chuck Wielgus commented: "The Duel in the Pool is an event that we are extremely proud of. This event allows us to keep the excitement of international swimming - which was such a runaway hit during the Olympics - in the public spotlight.

“We expect a fantastic field of top American and European swimmers to compete in Manchester and we look forward to seeing fast swims and great racing at this duel meet.”

Spectators wishing to see the likes of Phelps and Adlington in action as the European Select take on the USA can buy reserved seating tickets now by visiting www.duelinthepool.com

Athlete line-ups for both teams will be announced next week.

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For further details contact Dave Richards, British Swimming Media Manager, on 01509 632237, 0778 992 6136, email dave.richards@swimming.org or visit www.duelinthepool.com

About British Swimming

British Swimming is the National Governing Body for Swimming, Diving, Synchronised Swimming, Water Polo and Open Water in Great Britain. It is responsible internationally for the high performance representation of the sport. The members of British Swimming are the three Home Countries national governing bodies of England (ASA), Scotland (Scottish ASA) and Wales. (Welsh ASA) British Swimming seeks to enable its athletes to achieve gold medal success at the Olympics, Paralympics, World Championships and Commonwealth Games.

About British Gas

The nation's leading energy supplier, British Gas is the Principal Partner of British Swimming, supporting the sport at all levels: 'From paddling pool to podium'. Since March British Gas has been driving shared objectives with British Swimming to get more people swimming regularly through Swimfit and Learn to Swim. Recently British Gas launched a high profile campaign with Rebecca Adlington to give a free swim to all of its customers. British Gas also wants to ensure local pools stay open and stay at the heart of the community. In areas of 'aquatic deprivation' British Gas is helping Pools 4 Schools to bring swimming to urban communities. For more information visit www.britishgas.co.uk/swimming

About Speedo®

The world's leading swimwear brand, Speedo® is passionate about life in and around the water, creating revolutionary new technologies, designs and innovations. Supporting swimming from grass-roots through to elite level, including the phenomenal Michael Phelps, Speedo® is owned by Speedo Holdings B.V and distributed in over 170 countries around the world; SPEEDO, the ARROW device, FASTSKIN, LZR PULSE, SPEEDO ENDURANCE, FLIPTURNS, FASTSKINFSII, SPEEDO BIOFUSE, SWYM and LZR RACER are registered trademarks of Speedo Holdings B.V. The LZR RACER suit has worldwide design rights and patents pending.

About Manchester City Council

As host of the British Gas Duel in the Pool, Manchester continues to strengthen its impressive reputation for successfully hosting major international sports events, recognised when the City was awarded the SportBusiness Sports City 'Gold' Award in 2008. This year has seen no let up with the staging of innovative events such as the City Games, that brought the phenomenal Usain Bolt to the streets of Manchester, Skyride, that opening up the City Centre roads for a mass participation cycling experience and most recently the World Netball Series that showcased a fast and exciting version of the sport to packed galleries at the MEN Arena. Whilst the City recognises the profile and economic benefits that these events bring, its excellent range of accessible sports venues and facilities, combined with its school and community sports development programmes ensure that residents see real legacy benefits.

Daktronics - Official Pool Timing Systems

Daktronics is a worldwide leader in LED scoreboard displays and timing systems, with reference sites all over the world. Daktronics specialize in providing affordable scoring solutions to elite venues, local authorities, clubs, schools and colleges with a product for every budget. Daktronics offer a full turnkey solution to include, project management, design, manufacture, installation and service with all product fully warranted. With The recent

introduction of the GPR and SSL even more variety is now available to our customers. What was once considered too expensive and complicated, Video, live and recorded is now been regularly seen in Swimming pools across the UK, thanks to Daktronics. www.daktronics.co.uk

