

## In Meerkamp meeting: So much water, so little time.

I personally witnessed a children and young adult swimming competition for the first time. People aged 8 to 32 from four swimming clubs - DeVliet, Z&PC Alkemade, DSZ, WZK- swam. At the beginning organisation looked very sloppy, but when the referees came to the pool everything has changed. Their white outfits undoubtedly gave the kids undeniable confidence. They ran the organisation very smoothly and wisely, a few children who swam for the first time in a competition, took their first lesson on their way to being professionals with their first whistle.

At the stands, a lot of parents, probably more nervous than children, cheered on for their kids and the clubs. From time to time not only splashing water from the pool but also the determination in the children's eyes made me feel the tension as if I was in the competition; so pressure absolutely was there. Most of the swimmers were forced get out of their comfort zone in order to achieve their best. The coaches ran their teams like a conductor, they did everything for their team including giving consolation and an occasional a pat on the back, but most they congratulated the swimmers to be part of the organisation.

The club WZK had very young aged swimmers. Even though they had to face aged and strong swimmers; they manages very well. It seemed that they all very relieved after the competition.

WZK got some medals too: A. Rosato 50 m butterfly 3rd and 200 m backstroke 2nd, I. Azimova 50 m butterfly 3rd and 200 m backstroke 2nd, S. Thijsssen 100 m freestyle 3rd and 50 m backstroke 3rd, A. Eker 100 breaststroke 3rd, E. Franklin 200 m backstroke 3rd, an 4x25 freestyle relay team E.Zonneveld, T. Son, J. Priester, P. Simons 3rd.

After competition I talked to several children but one of the swimmers from WZK who had gotten very close to getting a medal, hit me deeply when she said: "The competitors were really tough, but that did not stop me from trying." I think she had already known that life is often not easy, but they should keep trying. Big applause to the coaches and swimming federation to help us to raise such wise children.

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