



*Social Distancing by Gail McLean*

## Letter from the editor

*By Barbara Jennings: barbara.jennings@ctplc.com*

Good lord! Well, that escalated quickly.... Last month we were looking forward to the water warming up so we could start swimming off that cake and toast from the winter months, and then pesky Coronavirus got in the way. Now the Lido, like everything else, is in lockdown despite our best efforts at social distancing, as shown in Gail's wonderful photograph above from the Last Day #sobs.

But are we downhearted? No... well, there was a slight pause for running around like a headless chicken, but BEC Chat Towers is now back up and working from home to bring you the best in Lido Lockdown Loveliness (please don't judge, it's been nearly a month since my last swim 😞). We have the accounts of the last races until... whenever..., a couple of poems to remind us that whatever you might think, we weren't actually always happy when the Lido was open, and Mark Chaudoir's helpful guide to keeping yourself busy while in lockdown.

If you're missing your swimming, do read Charles Leonard's account of his Windermere end to end on page 4, a ten mile, eight hour swim in less than ideal conditions which I found seriously impressive. I had a Windermere one way booked this year and like many of us, I'm now wondering whether I'll be able to make it, since even if the event isn't cancelled, I will struggle to be properly trained. However, if like me you're in real danger of coming out of lockdown twice the size you went in, there are lots of handy resources listed on page 7.

Finally, in this edition we remember our friend Chris Stanton. The Lido will be emptier in future without his humour, and our sincere sympathy goes out to his wife Erica. Trinity Hospice took care of Chris at the end of his life; details of how to donate to them in his memory are also on page 3.

Until next month, Happy Lockdown!

## March results

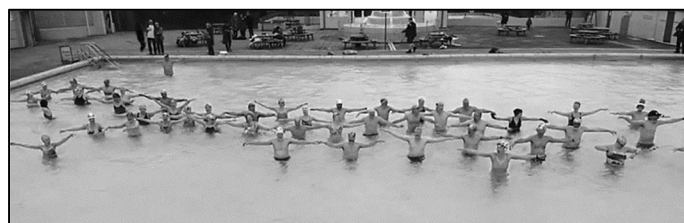
**1<sup>st</sup> March.** Sue Rentoul won the race, and she and Pip Tunstill shared the Spring Points Cup. Great job, ladies!



**8<sup>th</sup> March.** The Heron Cup was up for grabs. Serpentine 1 and SLSC tied for first place, with Parliament Hill just behind – it had been nip and tuck between these three squads throughout the event, with SLSC coming through in the latter stages, thanks to our strong relay and medley results. The second Serpentine team and Brockwell Swimmers also swam powerfully. Thanks to all volunteers for a really smooth and cheerful event.

*Charles Hunter, Swim Captain*

**15<sup>th</sup> March.** The race was won by Vince Burke and Richard Nelson. Lots of swimmers took part in a mass Stanton Cross to honour the memory of our friend.



# The Day the Lido Made the News at Ten

by Len Allen (Olympian 1964)

You will remember Flavio's interview with Len Allen from [the last edition of BEC Chat](#). Len produced this wonderful poem about happier times last summer when the Lido was open for business.... Social distancing was definitely problematic, though!



The day was 25th July 2019. On record as  
The Hottest day there had been.  
38.7 to be exact or 101.66 Fahrenheit  
And that's a fact.

Thousands descended on the pool with one  
Thought in mind, how to keep cool.  
They came from near and they came from far,  
They came by bus and they came by car.

They climbed the fence, they stopped the trains  
Old men in shorts with varicose veins.  
Some with tattoos and some without,  
Some with shingles and some with gout.

Lively fit young buckaroos,  
City slickers in designer shoes.  
Teenage girls with bikinis anew,  
Frisky young men hoping to pull a few.

Some with diamonds in their noses,  
Wondering what time the pool closes.  
Would-be rockers with mobile phones  
Listening to the Rolling Stones.

Bald ones, hairy ones, meek ones,  
Scary ones, they dropped their litter  
Everywhere, so hot they just  
Didn't care.

They queued for hours to reach the gate,  
Wondering was it worth the wait and  
Thinking soon it will be dark,  
Perhaps we should have gone to Brockwell Park.

Tempers flared and fights broke out  
And police were called to sort it out.  
Some will remember when  
The Lido made the News at Ten.

## The Swimmer's Warning

Just to prove that nothing changes, this poem was an expression of the frustration felt by some of the South London Swimming Club members at the new rules which accompanied the introduction of mixed bathing in 1932, including those requiring members to change in the new cubicles and to wear trunks while swimming. It would be a brave MAN now who would express such sentiments!

### THE SWIMMER'S WARNING

In days of old, at Tooting Lake,  
(Deny it if you can).  
Away from toil, from care, from home,  
A man could be a MAN.  
For FREEDOM was the watchword then,  
And FREE MEN gathered there,  
While hearts were young and hopes were high  
In Tooting sun and air.

Alas! One day the L.C.C.,  
Those mighty powers that be,  
Said "We'll improve your bath for you  
And do the whole thing free."  
They built a big filtration plant,  
The sides like glass did shine,  
And after many a month, behold!  
A super Serpentine!

So now we have our comforts and  
The water's always clear.  
We've Rules and Regulations, too,  
With penalties severe.  
Within a nasty wooden hutch  
Swimmers remove their clothes.  
Without a permit signed and sealed  
A man can't blow his nose.

We can't do this; we can't do that,  
The L.C.C. say "No."  
We can't dress here, we can't dress there,  
In cages we must go.  
The lake was built for honest men,  
But we're becoming slaves.  
The L.C.C. rules swimmers though  
Britannia rules the waves.

Beware the swimmers awful wrath;  
One day we'll sound the call.  
With shouts of joy, through streets of blood,  
We'll march on County Hall.  
We'll tear the place down stone by stone,  
We'll throw it in the sea;  
We'll burn all regulations, and  
Once more we shall be FREE.

C.S.R.



# Remembering Chris Stanton

Our dear friend and SLSC stalwart Chris Stanton died in Trinity Hospice on 9<sup>th</sup> March. Carole Woddiss wrote this obituary for him, which was published in *The Stage*. And on 15<sup>th</sup> March the Club remembered him by carrying out a mass Stanton Cross and performing The Lido Song. The Stanton Cross was, to quote Sue Rentoul, "Chris' bonkers way of starting his swims – walking from the shallow end towards the deep end with arms outstretched until the water reached his nipples or beyond before he started to breaststroke!". The Lido Song was his masterwork; you can view it here and remember happier times:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=niUPP5MPAow>

Chris's wife Erica set up a JustGiving page to raise money for Trinity Hospice in Chris's memory. She is aware that many people have already given and stresses that she doesn't want anyone to feel pressured to give more than once. The page is here: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ChrisStannyStanton>



## CHRIS STANTON OBITUARY

Chris Stanton who has died at the age of 62 from mesothelioma, lit up the lives of all who knew him.

A talented character actor, he turned to acting having trained as a floor manager with the BBC, becoming a mainstay of their CBBC children's spy series, *MI-High*. Appearing in all 88 episodes of its seven series, he played headmaster, Kenneth Flatley, on the surface easy-going but with a determined if slightly obsessive

streak – a description that might almost be applied to Chris Stanton himself who, acting apart, immersed himself in the minutiae of a dazzlingly various number of sports at which he became expert including real tennis, triathlon, swimming, rowing and cycling.



Chris was born in London and went to St Paul's School in Barnes. After leaving school, he studied English and Drama at Hull university where his contemporaries included actor Adrian Lukis (one of many lifetime friends), director Anthony Minghella then a lecturer, and Philip Larkin, its librarian.

After graduating he worked in several theatres as an ASM (The Molecule Club Trust, the Harrogate Theatre, Deputy Stage Manager at the Bristol Old Vic) before moving to the BBC in 1983 as Floor Assistant, then Assistant Floor Manager, then Location Manager. What he once described as 'the dream job' working on 'everything from *Blue Peter* to *Top of the Pops*, *Grandstand* and *Newsnight*', it was auditioning and being accepted for the topical comedy satire *Newsrevue* in Little Venice in 1988 that convinced him that it was acting not directing where he belonged.

But it was Panto that came to be one of his most enduringly successful skills. Although his many fans remembered him years later in *Only Fools and Horses* with David Jason (1988), watching him in recent years either in panto in Ipswich or in Camden was to see a master at work. Chris had immaculate timing, a perfect understanding of comedy pacing and always a sly but affectionate way of sending up a line or delivering it straight, so that it landed in your lap like a warm puppy.

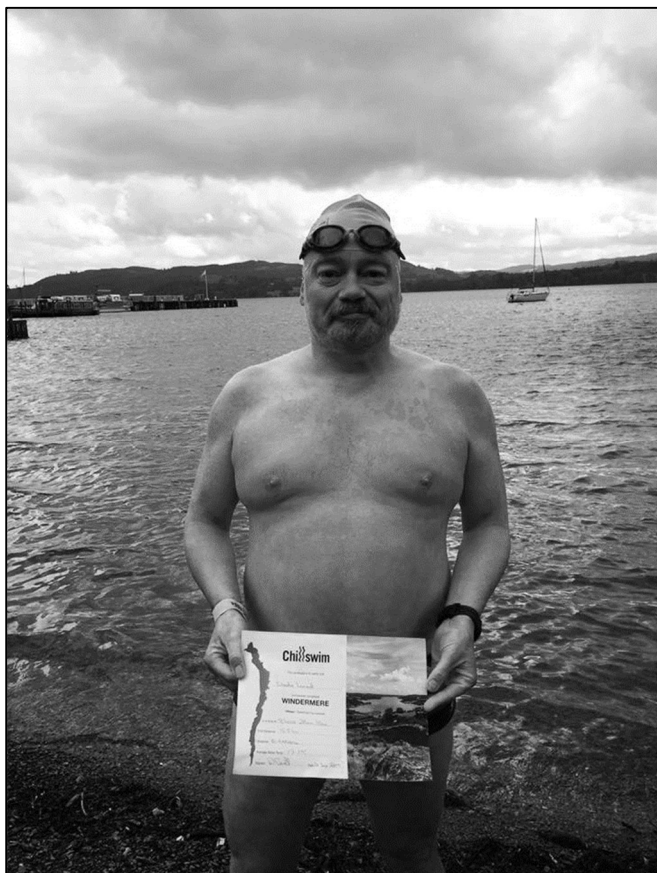
He said "a friend of mine once described me as the 'John Lewis' of the acting profession – never knowingly underacted!" But whether a wicked uncle in East Anglia, compering one of his beloved swim galas sartorially dapper in a country check suit, or writing lyrics for an hysterical George Formbyesque song for *Swinderella* (a swimming version of Cinderella), Chris Stanton was the epitome of style and fun: big hearted, witty, wise, erudite (particularly about everything cinematic), gallant and kind. He will be sorely missed.

Chris Stanton: born June 25, 1957; died March 3, 2020.

# Windermere End to End

By Charles Leonard, SLSC member

*(Charles kindly wrote this for me last year but I didn't have room for it until now. This seems the perfect timing, though – we may not be able to swim, but at least we can read about swimming! Ed.)*



My original plan for this year had been the ChillSwim Coniston End to End swim, 8.5 km (5.25 miles) on the 31st August – one of my target swims. However, one of the Friday countdown emails from the organisers ChillSwim contained the intriguing information that there were still places available for guided solo swims of Windermere and, checking the available dates, Wednesday the 4th September was still available. The timing seemed auspicious – I had completed my longest single swim of 13km the previous weekend at the Humdinger Swim and the prospect of an additional 4km to complete the 16.9km (10.5 miles) of Windermere although daunting, didn't seem impossible, although it would be a little cooler than the tropical temperatures of a lake outside Reading in late June. I dithered for the weekend to give someone else the chance to take the spot and as it was still there on the Monday I signed up.

The Coniston swim went well, although the start was delayed by five hours to allow the weather to improve, and with a mix of sunshine, blustery wind and short hard rain showers I managed to complete the swim in just under four hours. The water temperature was around 15-16 degrees Celsius, three or four degrees

cooler than what I was used to in London, but manageable, at least for four hours. As the swim was half the length of Windermere, I knew I should at least be able to get halfway. After a couple of days walking on the Lakeland hills and enjoying the Lakeland rain, I dropped down into Ambleside to get ready for the swim.

The day of the big swim started at 6:15am at the northern end of the lake at Waterhead Pier, where I met Dave the boat pilot and Josh the observer, who would manage my feeds during the swim. The forecast was for south-westerly winds and rain during the day, but at the start of the day the lake was mirror flat. We set off down the lake to the start at Fell Foot with Dave pointing out a couple of key points for the swim along the way. At that time of day, we had the lake to ourselves with the exception of a couple of swans and a flock of geese. Once at Fell Foot Park at the southern end, I stripped down to my swim costume, jumped into the water (slightly warmer than Coniston at around 17 degrees Celsius), swam over to the red buoys that marked the start of the navigable channel, and a little before 7am set off up the lake.

We then settled in to what would become my routine for the next eight hours: swim along keeping the boat to my right (my breathing side) with Dave setting the course; Dave would give me a two minute warning when I was due a feed (I'd chosen to do so every forty minutes); and then a short stop for some warm energy drink and a gel, banana, Soreen or jelly babies (rotating through one of these three each feed).

For the first half of the swim, we headed up the eastern side of the lake, and then as we got closer to the mid-point at Bowness moved across the centre of the lake. It was around this point that the wind picked up and the water started to get a bit choppy. This was the hardest bit for me: I wasn't entirely convinced by this point that I knew how to swim, halfway was a good distance, I could easily hop out on to the boat and enjoy the ride back. Fortunately, according to Dave, my stroke was exactly the same as at the start and we were doing OK.

The halfway point is roughly where the chain ferry from Bowness crosses Windermere, and we arrived just as it was crossing, so had a pause and a bob around while we waited for it to pass, and then set off with the sound of chains rattling underwater. After this, we were into the islands that sit in the middle of Windermere – the water here was calmer and we threaded our way between the islands and the yachts that were harboured around them. Once through the islands, we headed up the west side of the lake. On the way down, Dave had pointed out a jetty (Bark Barn) – the '5K to go' point – so this was my next target.

As we went up the side of the lake, I could see that on the boat Dave had put his rain trousers and jacket on, and in due course Josh got an umbrella out. When you've been in the water for nearly six hours, it helps to have distractions – such as watching your boat crew struggle to control an umbrella in the wind.

We reached the jetty and I knew that the end was in reach, although still two and a half hours away. According to Dave: "Your pace and stroke rate are exactly the same as at the start – which just goes to show how bad you were at the start..." – thanks Dave. From the jetty we cut back across the middle of the lake, and back through choppy water. By this point, I was beginning to feel less than fully warm, so I focused on keeping my arms turning and counting down the feeds as the rain cloud covered hills behind Ambleside started to get closer.

The last feed done, it was a steady swim into Waterhead, past the large YHA building, past the pier for the ferries and I got the signal – Windermere End to End done. I swam into shore while Dave and Josh moored the boat. After a brief rest to let my legs remember how to function, I cautiously stood up to be greeted by a couple of ducks and a tourist who asked me how my swim round the bay had been. A quick certificate handover and photo done, I put on as many warm clothes as I had and set off for the chip shop.

## Let's fight the Virus from the sofa! Guide to Culture.....

*By Mark Chaudoir*

Like all SLSC members I'm missing the Lido like mad, mainly the familiarity of the just being in the Tooting Oasis and seeing people I know or faces I recognise and having a coffee in or out of the cafe. I've been coming to the Lido since the early nineties and remember on Sunday mornings watching the races from afar and just never thought about joining as competitive swimming wasn't and isn't for me! It was only three years ago when my friend Toa Stoppard told me that he was winter swimming and convinced me that I give it a go. I took out SLSC Winter Membership and haven't look back. I'm kicking myself after living in Tooting/Battersea for 29 years that I didn't join earlier as I hadn't appreciated what a unique community SLSC is, the socialising, BBQs, Lido band and of course the cakes... It's been a cold blast!

We now all find ourselves with a huge blue void in our lives; as everyone's world has been turned upside down with no certainty as to when we can return – it

sounds like months! As a freelancer, the lockdown has not been a challenge thus far as I'm used to daily working in isolation, uncertainty, having to be frugal, resourceful and finding things to do with my time in between jobs. I, however, of course recognise that it will be a hugely challenging time for many people on so many levels – health physical and mental, economically and if they or a relative is sick or worse. I'm trying to approach it like a submarine captain about to go under for several months in the cold ocean so trying to get a routine of daily exercise cycling and doing all the jobs around the house which I've dodged for years, decluttering, painting, DIY and cleaning!

I've written a list daily and as I love cycling as much as swimming, I'm taking Government advice to get my exercise once a day on my bike. I have used this opportunity to take photos on my phone documenting London and SLSC colour inspired photos around the Tooting area and have gone further afield which has been eye-opening. I'm looking forward to reading, catching up with friends online/SKYPE. Strangely enough this National breather presents some real opportunities to binge on culture for those like me who enjoy watching TV and screens!

### **Mark's Lockdown Tooting SLSC Sofa Guide Free Streaming Services**

Prime Video – 30 Days free

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/video/offers/ref=dvm\\_uk\\_sl\\_cbr%7Cc 294479711641\\_m\\_aUMQUFlq-dc\\_s](https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/video/offers/ref=dvm_uk_sl_cbr%7Cc 294479711641_m_aUMQUFlq-dc_s)

Personal fav film "Sugar Man", Binge set "All or Nothing on Man City"

Disney + 7 day free trail -

<https://www.disneyplus.com/en-gb>

BFI 14 day free trail - <https://www.bfi.org.uk/>

Personal fav's "Bait" and "The Elephant Man"

Britbox UK – best of BBC 30 day free trail

<https://www.britbox.co.uk/>

Netflix - <https://www.netflix.com/gb/>

Personal binge fav's





Top Boy, The Crown, Sex Education, Sunderland Till I Die, Line of Duty, Messiah, and I've been recommended Tiger King.

### Theatre Streaming

Time Out have 13 theatres streaming plays from the Globe to Sadler's Wells.

Free National Theatre Live, every Thursday at 7pm.

Guardian Free Culture Guide: excellent guide to free culture: comedy, theatre, gigs, art exhibitions, digital books and magazines, opera and ballet:

<https://www.theguardian.com/money/2020/mar/28/best-free-online-experiences-lockdown-boredom>

Chronicle Live Content Guide:

<https://www.chroniclive.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/netflix-style-free-trials-binge-17916493>

includes more info on free streaming services, SKY, Audible, Spotify, Apple Music, Kindle United, etc.

### BBC

Last but not least! Massively biased as I worked at the BBC for over 20 years, including three years in BBC News & Current Affairs – the BBC coverage TV, Radio, online has been compelling and informative!

Thanks Mark. Hilary Jennings has also shared this link: <https://culturefix.digital/>, which has loads of free online cultural stuff from podcasts to exhibitions.

On which note....

## Ask the Librarian

Dear Librarian

The Lido is closed!

Arrrrrrggggggghhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh.....

Yours

Shocked of Tooting

Dear Shocked

Yes, the Lido is closed and frankly, the Librarian is relieved. Daily visits for dips into freezing water, trivial chats in the sauna and even more trivial chats in the cafe were wearing the Librarian out. The Librarian had no time to learn macramé or Sanskrit or write a novel in blank verse, all of which the Librarian intends to have achieved by the end of May. Not to mention the regular dates with Joe Wicks. In fact, the Librarian is surprised that they had time to visit the Lido in the olden days...

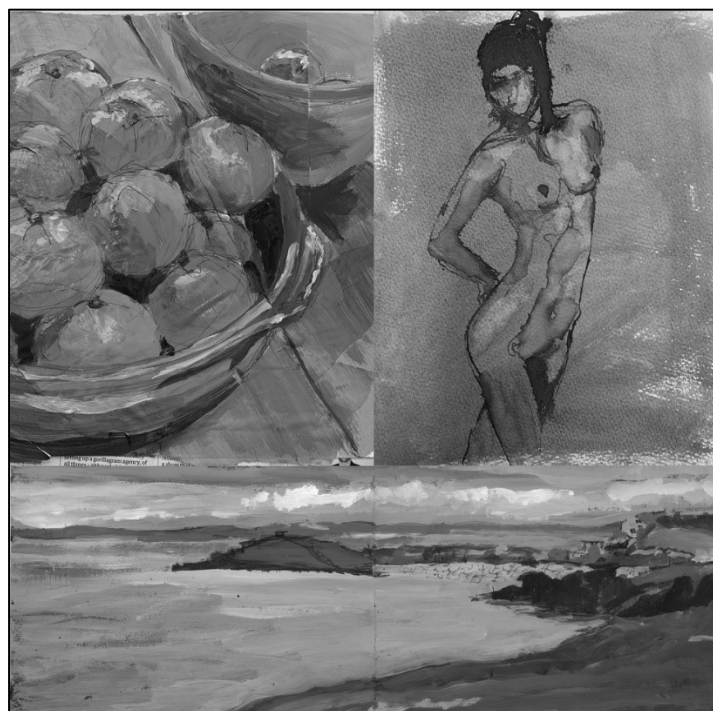
Well, there you have it. Quit your whining about not being able to swim and make the most of your time in lockdown, taking our wise counsellor as your guide and mentor. The Librarian will of course be taking time out from self-improvement to answer any questions which you send to the editor. Anonymity is assured!

## A pop up window art show

Landscapes, life drawings and still lives by our very own Susan Rentoul in aid of the Trussell Trust

If you live in Tooting or Streatham and fancied taking your daily exercise by walking, running or cycling past Sprout Arts at 74 Moyser Road, SW16 6SQ, do take a look at the pop up exhibition in the windows. There are life drawings, still lives (mainly of fruit) and landscapes by Susan Rentoul. The show will be in the windows until 19 April.

All profits raised will go to The Trussell Trust who support a nationwide network of food banks and together they provide emergency food and support to people locked in poverty, and campaign for change to end the need for food banks in the UK.



If you are interested in anything in the windows please contact Sprout at: [sproutcommunityarts@gmail.com](mailto:sproutcommunityarts@gmail.com). Or contact Susan at: [sue@susanrentouldesign.co.uk](mailto:sue@susanrentouldesign.co.uk).

### PROCRASTINATION FOR CREATIVE WRITERS, A 10-WEEK COURSE

 <b>BOOK NOW</b> <b>SHARE</b>	<b>TOPICS COVERED INCLUDE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• WORKSPACE ARRANGEMENT</li><li>• PRE-WRITING RITUALS</li><li>• STATIONERY CHOICES</li><li>• WAITING FOR INSPIRATION</li><li>• SNACKS AND BEVERAGES</li><li>• FINDING THE PERFECT FONT</li><li>• WORKSPACE REARRANGEMENT</li><li>• UTILIZING SOCIAL MEDIA</li><li>• PAUSES, TEA BREAKS AND NAPS</li><li>• ADVANCED WORKSPACE REARRANGEMENT</li></ul>
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The superb Tom Gauld

# FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

## TRAINING AND EVENTS AT THE LIDO AND ELSEWHERE

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic is likely to result in the cancellation of some or all of our summer events, and, for the time being, online registration is closed. The Lido is currently closed and we do not know when it will re-open. If you have already registered we can either refund you or move you to one of the later events in the hope that we will be open again. Apologies for the uncertainty. We will update our website at <https://www.slsc.org.uk/> when we have more information.

**However, there are still lots of things you can do to keep your swimming fitness!**

*Outdoor Swimmer* magazine edited by our own Jonathan Cowie has lots of free resources on its site on how to keep fit while you can't swim: <https://outdoorswimmer.com/>

Our own Eddie Sullivan of Mangomanmovement has various yoga, stretch and breath classes on Zoom. <https://www.instagram.com/mangomanmovement/>

Caroline Ross is posting daily T'ai Chi on Instagram @greatrivertaichi plus one hour zoom lessons on Wednesdays [www.greatrivertaichi.blogspot.com](http://www.greatrivertaichi.blogspot.com).

Most Lido Pavilion regulars have classes online. <https://www.slsc.org.uk/whats-on-in-the-lido-pavilion/>

Also a Lido regular, Baz Moffat has an online training course at <http://www.bazmoffat.com/strong-online/>. This is a 14 week online course designed to create strong, resilient women (who of course don't have time to get to 5 yoga classes and 10 bootcamp sessions a week!). It's the result of years of sport, coaching and studying, which has helped me understand what women really need in a workout. You do the course in your own time and at your own level – material is online until August 2020. £99 – 10% discount if you quote FRIENDS10

Dan Bullock from Swim for Tri is posting a lot of at home fitness sessions on his You Tube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/swimfortri/videos>

Swim Smooth have loads of stuff on their various channels: <http://www.feelforthewater.com/2020/04/suffering-from-swimming-withdrawal.html>

Go to SwimEngland for great free workouts on their Facebook and Instagram pages.

Swimming Specific Yoga is posting a number of free classes on their webpage:

<https://www.swimmingspecificyoga.com/>

SwimCycleRunCoach has some exercises to keep your swim fitness while you're out of the pool at <https://youtu.be/XGKmX7yrrLA>. Note these are for triathletes so focus more on upper body than cardio and you do need to have some bits and pieces.



Finally, going by the Outdoor Swimming Society Facebook page, a surprising number of people have bought above ground pools online (Bestway seems to be the favourite supplier) and are using them with tethers to continue to exercise. If this is your bag, there's loads of information on the OSS Facebook page, but be warned – you'll need a big garden and don't expect your lawn to survive.... Jonathan Cowie has written a useful article on tethered swimming on the Outdoor Swimmer site: <https://outdoorswimmer.com/news/tethered-swimming-how-to-train-for-the-open-water-in-your-back-garden>

**Closed for a bit, but not for good!**



Picture courtesy of Nicky Smith