



## COMAST Cyprus Training Camp 2020

The City of Manchester's National Squad visited Limassol, Cyprus for the first time in February to complete a training camp in preparation for Olympic Trials and the National Qualifying window.

The purpose of the camp was to immerse the athletes in a controlled environment where we could test their physical and mental capabilities across 11 pool sessions and 3 gym sessions and provide them with some momentum going forward into the final part of the season.

We arrived at the Park Beach Hotel on Saturday evening where we had the opportunity to visit the Limassol Municipal Training Centre that would be home for the week. The 8 lane 50m facility with an additional 25m pool was ideal for all our needs during the week. The pool staff were incredibly welcoming and ensured any additional requests we had been catered for.

Following our tour of the facility we sat down for our evening meal. The food at the hotel was delicious and most importantly for the swimmers nutritious and with plenty of variety. The hotel managers and staff were outstanding and went out of their way to arrange for specific meals to be prepared based on our requirements.

During the week we trained early in the morning and at lunch time as well as incorporating gym and land sessions in 3 times per week. Every evening we also completed a run session that added additional training loads for swimmers to deal with. Some days we ran distance, some days we ran against the clock and on one day we ran to the tune of capture the flag, which always provides its share of laughs.

We had Wednesday afternoon off which gave us the opportunity to have some down time. We decided to visit MY MALL, which was a short bus ride from the hotel. The mall provided us with a bit of an escape from training and allowed us to shop, grab a bite to eat and for some a game of ten pin bowling where I could show off my naturally gifted sporting talent. Unfortunately, I had an off day.

Our most memorable session was arguably the toughest set to complete during the week, which came on Friday. The weather had taken a turn for the worst delivering us relentless rain and a huge drop in temperature. All this combined provided us with an added mental and physical obstacle of overcome (not least me coaching in shorts soaking wet through) however; we decided to turn what was initially perceived as a negative training experience into a positive one. With all the elements stacked against us performing well in the session, if we can find the belief, resilience and determination that we can perform when life is very uncomfortable then no event, race or situation, will phase us in the future. This is as hard as it gets. The results of the sessions were fantastic, with swimmers hitting and surpassing targeted times throughout. There was a real sense of spirit and unity throughout the 2 hours and sense of relief but most importantly accomplishment at the end. These are the types of day that you never forget.

As our final session commenced, the sun was shining, and morale was high knowing that we were nearly there. I even managed to join the swimmers for a 100m swim, which highlighted the old saying "do as I say, not as I do"

It was great to see everyone enjoying themselves at my expense, which was only made sweeter when I revealed the set for the final time that seem to make the feeling of completion seem again so far away.

Over the course of the week we completed 76km of training in the pool. Each session was designed to complete the block of 6 weeks training we had done leading into this camp. The swimmer's performances were exemplary. It isn't easy to prepare for these types of session especially when they come at you thick and fast. However, they prepared in the best possible way aided by the fantastic services of both the pool and hotel.

We would like to thank the Park Beach hotel and all their staff for their hospitality and outstanding services as well as the Municipal Pool for providing us with such fantastic facilities and opportunities. Thank you to Steve and the rest of the Sports Abroad team for helping to facilitate the trip as well as Karen Rose for leading the organisation and finer details of the week. The swimmers were outstanding. Their character, attitudes and performance-based decisions made the camp an overriding success and one that we hope pays off during our targeted meets towards the end of the season.

*"If you want to be the best, you have to do things that other people aren't willing to do"*  
*Michael Phelps*

Matt Turner

