

## The 38<sup>th</sup> Swimming Gala of HKTLC: A Splashing Good Time To Warm Up For The New School Year

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As early as 6.30 a.m., the banner of the 38th Swimming Gala of our school was put up to celebrate another school sport event successfully held after the pandemic.

The 38th Swimming Gala was successfully held at Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park Swimming Pool on the 16th October. Our Vice Principal, Mr. Chan Chi Hung, started the event with an encouraging opening speech on how grateful he was that all the teachers and students could experience this wonderful Swimming Gala together again after the great success last year. After Student Lam Ka Po took the oath, the 38th Swimming Gala officially commenced with a launching ceremony. Student representatives on the diving blocks lifted their arms and extended their legs to push off the side. Once the representatives broke the water, the venue abounded with cheers and screams.



Members of the School Emcee Team were hosting at the poolside.



Vice Principal Mr. Chan and our honorable guests had been invited to the poolside of the venue before the start of the opening ceremony.



During the launching ceremony, student representatives got ready with their best positions and hoped to kick off the Swimming Gala with their most graceful yet powerful swim.



The student representatives sprang into a low dive and started swimming the moment they hit the water.



Every ear-ringing honk had brought everyone to an even escalated level of excitement. During the Swimming Gala, there were 22 events, ranging from freestyle to butterfly and individual to team, of long and short courses. All contestants, despite taking down the championship, had done their utmost to break their personal records and accumulate scores for their own house. This year, amazingly, the swimming pool was filled with lots of enthusiastic new faces who were ready to heighten the passion to swim among schoolmates and bring even keen and nerve-wracking swimming competitions to the school!

The climax of the day was, certainly, the inter-house 4×50 metres relay. Right before the blaring sounds from the horn for the relays of each grade, the audience, including teachers, quieted their breath to let the house representatives pay full attention to the starting signal. Soon as the house representatives leapt into the pool and swam with all their power, the audience cheered with zeal. Hearing the thunderous cheers of respective houses, the house representatives swam even more energetically. With heart pounding and the audience holding their breath, the outcome remained uncertain until the very last moment. Despite the wins and loses, it was believed that all the contestants had a splashing good time!



Students from different houses put on swimming caps with colour representing their own house.



Students made surprisingly powerful kicks in the pool.



The winner left the audience awestruck with an astonishingly close finish. Stroke by stroke, swimmers surged towards the wall, all determined to touch it first.



The keen competitions among swimmers had everyone on the spectator's stand feeling really excited.





All the members of Yellow House cheered with their specially-made tool, reused plastic bottles coloured in yellow.



Red House members all incarnated as mini yet ambitious red octopus and cheered for their fellows in the pool.



Junior Blue House members acted as marine animals in the ocean whereas the house committees dressed as fierce sharks.



Green House members wore hair bands with hairy animals ears attached and cheered with their mascots, lizards and Tyrannosaurus held up in the air.



Despite the scary name of the animal this Blue House committee member acting as, the outfit was adorable. There were committee members dressing as Elsa and Athie.



Besides the giant cardboard letters, Green House had made a conspicuously realistic sea turtle outfit. Its shell was unexpectedly hard!



“Down the sea we are swimming by,” watching the nail-biting swimming events, house captains and committee members of four houses, Yellow, Red, Green and Blue, led their junior house members on the spectator’s stand to give roaring cheers to support the contestants. Behind the synchronizing and resounding cheers of slogans and songs were the hard work and strong sense of belonging of each and every house member. Months ago, the house committee members racked their brains for their themes and dress codes of the Swimming Gala. Also, all S1 and S2 students had attended the lunchtime cheerleading training for weeks to memorize the slogans, melodies and dance moves. Apart from seeing the competitions, both teachers and students had a great time appreciating the banners, flags, mascots, costumes and more solely designed and made by each house. They, especially the hair accessories, were eye-catching and absolutely stunning!



**Every Yellow House member put on a mini bath duck clip in their hair and followed the big bath duck, a prop made by the committee members, held by the house captain.**

After all the fierce competitions, it was the long-anticipated prize-giving ceremony. We were delighted to have the Senior School Development Officer of Central, Western and Southern District, Mr. Cheng Pak-chung, as our guest to address the crowd. Mr. Cheng showed great appreciation towards how students made every effort into the Swimming Gala and encouraged all the contestants to stay passionate towards their interests regardless of any obstacles and defeats. Furthermore, Mr. Cheng also praised students for their warm welcoming and politeness. After Mr. Cheng’s sharing, Vice Principal Mr. Chan reminded students of the important lessons one should learn through every sport. Rather than bringing victories to oneself, sports teaches one to be resilient and perseverant when things do not go as planned, and teaches one to cooperate in teams. Followed by the invigorating speech by Mr. Chan, the school announced the winners of all the events. Lam Ka Po from Class 6B, Leung Pui Yung from Class 3A and Chan Tam Yi from Class 2A were crowned individual champions of Grade A, B and C respectively. With the active participation and wins in swimming competitions, both Red House and Blue House won the House Overall Champion of the year. Amidst the roars and chants, Yellow House won the Overall Cheerleading Champion and the Cooperation Award, while Green House won the Most Creative Award. Congratulations were to all the winning parties!



**Mr. Cheng praised the students for their effort during the closing ceremony.**



**Mr. Cheng presented prizes to the winners.**



**Captains and committee members of four houses hugged each other close and sang “Auld Lang Syne” together. How wonderful!**

Ultimately, students from both the spectator’s stand and the poolside hugged each other and swayed gracefully side by side while singing “Auld Lang Syne”. This affectionate scene was really touching and unforgettable! The Swimming Gala would not have been such a resounding success without the effort of every teaching and non-teaching staff and the commitment of our contestants.

As the English campus reporters, we were pleased to conduct an interview with Mr. Cheng during the Swimming Gala. We had learnt a lot from him!



**Both English and Chinese Reporters had a photo with Mr. Cheng before the interview.**



### *Working In A School and With Schools*

Mr. Cheng has worked as the Senior School Development Officer since August last year. Before that, he worked in the Quality Assurance Division as an inspector and visited our school for External School Reviews (ESR) many years ago! To become an eligible candidate for School Development Officer, one must work as a teacher for years in order to understand the structure of a school and daily challenges of teachers and students, so did Mr. Cheng. Mr. Cheng used to teach Mathematics and Computer Literacy when he worked in a school. Compared to being a teacher, being an inspector and a School Development Officer were more interesting and challenging to him. Visiting different schools allows him to learn about the teaching experiences and ideas with students in schools with different settings. Also, Mr. Ching was happy to contribute to society by sharing views and opinions to help schools develop better for students.

### *Living in The Age of Technology*

With the advance in technology, the lifestyles of people around the world have drastically changed. Instead of looking for information in books and learning through face-to-face lessons, students in different age ranges have been increasingly getting used to learning through videos and online activities with tablets. The world may rely even more on electronic devices and new technologies, such as ChatGPT, for all aspects of life including studying in ten years. To Mr. Cheng, technology is a powerful tool to unleash the learning capabilities of students. However, his biggest concern is never about whether students can catch up with the growth of the world as most of the latest generation were pretty familiar with any electronic devices or softwares and well-equipped with basic and even advanced knowledge of technology. Knowledge is not as important in the advanced world. To prepare for the future global trends, students, instead, should develop related skills like locating and evaluating information, coping with the dynamics in the information world and the ethical usage of information. To achieve all these, secondary schools in Hong Kong have been incorporating Information Literacy in their curriculums.

### *All-round Development in Hectic Learning Schedules*

Education is to draw out the best of an individual, not only the academic aspect. Mr. Cheng noticed that students, especially those who were determined to be a part of Hong Kong's representative teams, have to spend hours on practicing every day, and some even have to return home at around 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. For senior secondary students, the situations were even worse as there are usually extra lessons after school or on Saturdays. To balance between studies and hobbies to develop holistically, Mr. Cheng pointed out the most important qualities: strong determination, perseverance and self-discipline. Only a strong determination towards what one exactly wants can drive one to feel hungry for more and excel under unfavorable circumstances.