

Autistic swimmer Sam is on the crest of wave thanks to coach Geoff

By Andrew Bettridge
News Reporter

THE mother of an autistic 12-year-old swimmer has hailed her son's coach as "amazing" after she help to dramatically improve his confidence.

Nicola Parry said her son, Sam who suffers from autism has come on "leaps and bounds" under the guidance of Boldmere swimming club coach, Geoff Fowler.

Sam who has competed in the Birmingham Special Olympics and won numerous awards in the two years at the club, is even more remarkable since he was confident around water when he first started swimming.

Nicola told the *Observer*: "Geoff has done absolutely loads for Sam and he's been really good to us.

"The support from Boldmere swimming club was as soon as he came along.

"I just want to thank him for all the support he has given Sam.

"He's (Geoff) been fantastic and Sam has come on absolutely leaps and bounds."

As well as suffering from Autism, the 12-year-old also has ADHD (Attention deficit



AMAZING: Sam Parry has come on "leaps and bounds" under Geoff Fowler's guidance at Boldmere swimming club.

disorder), the same as multiple Olympic gold medal winner and swimming legend, Michael Phelps.

Before taking up swimming, Sam wasn't very confident in and around the water.

"He didn't like the feel of the water," Nicola explained.

"Sam hated the idea of wearing goggles but Geoff really helped with that."

"I would certainly recommend Geoff as a coach."

As well as big improvements in his swimming, Nicola has also seen big improvements in her son's confidence, a view shared by Geoff himself.

He explained that despite the disability, Sam worked very well with all the other swimmers at the club.

"The both of us get on very well and we have been on the same wave length. He's got a great deal of talent and he's so much quicker than everybody."

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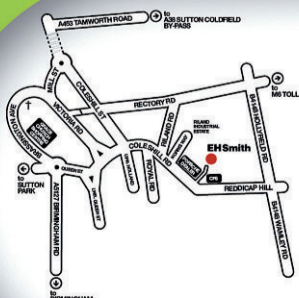
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