“Success breeds success” is a saying widely used in sport, but it was no more evident than at the Royal Commonwealth Pool last weekend where 13 Step Rock swimmers took to the East District long course event.

Eleven-year-old Kayla Bain sliced almost 6 seconds of her PB in the heats to qualify for the 50m breaststroke final, grasping the opportunity and incredibly taking a further second off her time to secure a superb bronze medal. Following on from Charlie Gillespie’s 50m freestyle bronze medal last year, this was only the second medal for a Step Rock swimmer at this level in many years and an outstanding achievement. Kayla’s time of 40.09s is a consideration time for the Scottish Nationals 11-13 age group. Isla Thoms, also 11, raced superbly all weekend, qualifying for both the 50m and 100m butterfly finals. A 6 second PB brought her a 6th place in the 50m event, whilst a 9 second PB in the final gave her 5th place in her first ever long course 100m butterfly event.

In the 11-12 age group, Fraser Stewart, Rowan Geary, Corey Findlay, Anna Suttie and Maddy Wallard all raced well, having never even previously trained in a 50m pool. Fraser qualified for no fewer than 9 events – his 50m butterfly a particularly impressive swim. Also making his long course debut was Angus McCallum (15). Adjusting well to the 50m pool after his first swim (100m backstroke), Angus raced to a PB in the shorter 50m event the following day.

Jack Webster (11) drew on his experience from last year, with a great 5s PB in the 50m freestyle. Charlie Gillespie should be encouraged by a PB in the 50m butterfly, suggesting a good end of season once he is back to full fitness.

Always an exemplary trainer, Laura McInnes (21) raced in 3 events, with 2 long course PBs in 100m freestyle and 100m backstroke. Isla Hedley patiently waited all weekend for her single event. Sharp off the blocks, Isla raced to a hard-earned 10s PB in the 100m butterfly. Elder sister Anna had a busier programme, achieving 6 long course PBs from her 8 events, including a long-overdue PB in the 50m butterfly.