



## **Nick Gillingham** **Swimmer**

A double Olympic medallist, former World and Commonwealth Champion, European Champion on three successive occasions rewriting the history books, Winner of 17 Championship Medals gaining three World Records, nine Commonwealth, 11 European and 17 British Records, represented Great Britain for 13 years and is the current National Record Holder. Nick received the M.B.E. during the New Years Honours list 1993 for 'Services to Swimming' and is a World Masters Champion and record holder for 100 and 200 metres breaststroke.

### **What is your favourite/most important piece of kit?**

My most important piece of kit has to be my swimming goggles!

### **Best piece of advice that you have ever been given:**

When I was very nervous before a swimming competition my mother would ask "Well, what have you got to lose"? She allowed me to think for myself and as many swimmers were much better than me, I learnt that it was those people who would be even more nervous and scared about losing. I always set myself a personal goal to achieve and learnt it was often much more than 'just winning'.

### **What advice would you offer for any one looking to try something new or to better themselves?**

Always accept something new as an exciting challenge, it's the journey that shapes us whether we win or lose, life is not so black and white that losing makes us a failure, it's what we learn about ourselves that matters and how we move forwards to better ourselves. Achieving your personal goal is a true measure of success, which may be the taking part for the very first time

### **What is the most challenging situation that you have been in and what was the outcome?**

I have had many challenging situations in life and in sport. If I were to choose a sporting challenge, it would have been to win an Olympic medal in 1992 whilst carrying an acute injury. The outcome was that I swam faster than the Olympic record and won my medal!

### **Why have you decided to become an athlete mentor?**

I am involved to allow others to benefit from my sporting and life experiences both high and low, to broaden horizons and instil a positive outlook. I simply want to help. I have a personal attachment with regard to young people from children's homes as both my parents were brought up in such an environment; I understand the lifelong issues. I have a 'can do' attitude'

and in particular I am a good listener, offering choices for all the young people I work with to ensure a sustainable exit route and positive life journey. I once had low confidence and low self belief, people around me helped me become the person I am.