

HIGH-grade competitive swimming heads for Retford Leisure Centre on Sunday when Retford Swimming Club hosts the Nottinghamshire ASA County Championships.

The county's top distance swimmers will compete in the Retford pool on Sunday evening when a number of home town swimmers will be hoping to add to the excellent results achieved by the club in the championships in recent weeks.

Rachel Lefley, who had earlier broken a county record which had stood for 13 years to capture the 100 metres backstroke crown, duly added the 200 metres backstroke title to her tally.

The outstanding 16-year-old also finished fourth in the 100 metres freestyle, second in the 50 metres backstroke and third in the 50 metres butterfly to underline her status as the county's most exciting all-round prospect.

But Rachel is not Retford's only star performer. She was joined in the 50 metres backstroke final by 15-year-old Lauren Fisher, who came in fifth. Lauren repeated her fifth place in the 50 metres butterfly and 13-year-old Jessica Tomlinson also claimed fifth places in the 100 metres breaststroke, 200 metres individual medley and 400 metres freestyle.

It has been tougher for the Retford boys to make the same impact as the girls, but they have continued to achieve some impressive personal best times.

Ryan Roberts, 13, performed strongly in the 200 freestyle, 50 metres butterfly and 100metres breaststroke where 17-year-old Adam Morton claimed seventh place overall.

The championships continue throughout March, culminating in relay races at Watermeadows in Mansfield on March 25 where Retford are confident of further glory.

Club chairman Andy Johnson said it was an honour for the club to be staging an important series of races, but no more than the swimmers' efforts had deserved.

"For a small town club like ours to be involved in so many finals is very satisfying. It shows the coaching here is right up with the best and that the youngsters lack nothing in terms of motivation and competitive spirit. We have a lot to be proud of," he said.