

Our Olympic Games Maker... At the Aquatics Centre

Last year I applied to be a Games Maker - as a sports lover it would be amazing to be part of the biggest sporting event in my lifetime.

Over 265,000 were interviewed and in October I was told I had been selected to be part of the Games Maker team of 70,000 nationwide.

I was regularly emailed and given a portfolio of facts to learn during 2011.



The Hard Work Begins

Then at the beginning of 2012 the next phase began with an Orientation Day. Jonathan Edwards told us about the various sites, the nature of security and the expected Olympic protocols and gave us a huge folder to read covering everything.

In February the hard work began. I had been selected to work in the Aquatics Centre as I hold a current N.P.L.Q but nevertheless had to retake all my qualifications in front of the Olympic examiners. This was exhausting as the pools are twice the length and depth that I normally use and require you to tread water for about eight hours in all! Once re-qualified, I joined several test events to check the venues' operations. The most entertaining one being synchronised swimming, with some coaches using very unconventional methods! The Olympics began and I worked over our three sites - the Aquatics

Centre, Water Polo Arena and Eton Manor. My favourite was Eton Manor. Here there are three 50 metre pools, a water polo pool, syncro-pool, and gym and massage rooms. This is where all the teams prepare, warm up and cool down all out of the eye of the cameras. I saw most of our team GB and many others. I chatted

with Rebecca Adlington and watched Tom Daley do so well.

All the visiting swimmers were complimentary about our facilities and many said they were the best they had seen. They were also very grateful to all the Games Makers for the professional, cheerful service they provided and the wonderful atmosphere created.

The Best Party Ever

The atmosphere all over the park was just tingling with expectation and very uplifting throughout the games.

Obviously the more medals we won the greater the build up of excitement. It was like being at the best party ever! It has taken over five weeks of leave over the last two years to be part of this historically successful Olympic Games. I feel it has showcased Britain and its people at their best. I feel proud to have been part of it.

Well done team GB. These memories will be with me forever.

Thomas Rigby