



Berkshire & South
Buckinghamshire

ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19





Annual Report 2018-2019 Berkshire & South Buckinghamshire

President -	Terry Norris
Secretary -	Røger Penfold MBE (to be tabled at Thursday's Meeting)
Disciplines -	Diving - Emma West Performance Swimming - Stuart Fillingham Masters Swimming - Bob Odell Synchronised Swimming - Beverley Skelton Water Polo - Roger Penfold MBE
Public Relations -	John Rowley
Treasurer -	Jonathan Mills (to be tabled at Thursday's Meeting)
Appendices	a)Accounts 2018-2019 (to be tabled at Thursday's Meeting) (b) Swimming Records since last Annual Meeting



President

I have thoroughly enjoyed my 3 years in the position of President and I have made many new friends along the way. Thank you for your unstinting work in support of County. The County board has continued to implement more positive advancements during this last year and our various sub-committees have again handled many adverse situations positively.

During my time as President I aimed to talk to many of the coaches, volunteers and committee members in our County clubs to identify some of the challenges each of them face. All clubs face issues in relation to pool availability, changes to coaching staff or resignations of voluntary assistance, and there continues to be a wide spread of different requirements faced by our clubs within the County. There are few individuals prepared to look beyond the internal machinations within their clubs and to spread their support to a wider audience such as County or Region in a number of capacities (e.g., Coaching, Team Managing, Volunteering). I think this is a real shame.

In many disciplines there has been a growing problem for our athletes of being able to train locally and without huge expense. I hope that County can continue to support those where local pool closures have made matters more difficult for athletes to enjoy their chosen sport.

The County's main Swimming Championships event in January at Wycombe has now settled in well and the programme alterations required by Swim England have been implemented successfully and resulted in a good format. However, we do realise we can always tweak this programme if necessary to make it a little better for all concerned.

The County Development Meet has an opportunity to potentially grow over the next few years if County can secure a slot at the right time each October from 2020 onwards in the new 10-lane pool in Maidenhead. I hope this opportunity will be supported fully by clubs



who occasionally have a lukewarm reaction to the meet but with no apparent reason for their decision not to send swimmers.

The County Masters Championships were held again held at the Magnet Centre in Maidenhead and appears to be firmly back in the calendar and is going from

strength to strength - well done to all involved. With that in mind it remains a great source of disappointment that we could not secure a Sunday afternoon slot in the County in a pool capable of providing 7 lanes for the Inter-Counties Masters in November 2019. I hope the new President and Board are able to secure an agreement with one of our clubs for the 2020 Championship.

Inter-Counties remains a particular highlight during the year and well done to the County swimmers for cementing our position in Division 1 this year.

Josh Atkins has now stood down as Head Coach and I wish him all the best in his career and would like to offer him thanks for his help in developing and delivering the many camps County provides for our age group swimmers. I understand the appointment process is in hand to search for a replacement for Josh.

Now after 3 years I step down as President. I wish my successor the very best for their period in the role. Thank you to all the kind messages from the clubs and parents over the past few months since I stated I was definitely stepping aside. I hope your swimmers get the most from the sport we endeavour to support in our voluntary roles on boards and committees.

Finally, I would like to reiterate my thanks to all who have worked hard on the various County Committees and on the Management Board during this past year. As indeed my predecessors have stated - it is so easy to take for granted all the work that everyone does.

Best regards

Terry Norris

Diving

Programme

There are two ASA Diving Clubs within the county boundaries:

- Amersham Diving Club who are part of Amersham Swimming Club and are based at GLL operated Chiltern Pools in Amersham
- Albatross Diving Club who, since the closure of Central Pool in Reading now operate primarily out of The Abbey School.

Albatross is a SwimMark accredited club with reaccreditation due this summer. Amersham Diving Club are part of Amersham Swimming Club so, sadly, have lapsed their kite mark accreditation.

Amersham run a primarily skills (novice) level competitive programme whilst Albatross also has Age Group, Elite and Seniors divers. In addition, both have Masters Diving members.

Programme	Amersham	Albatross
Learn to Dive	26	49
Pre-Skills/ Novice Divers	18	11
Age Group Divers	0	6
Elite Divers	0	6
Senior Divers		3
Masters/ Adult Diving	4	2
Level 2 Coaches	4	6
Level 1 Coaches	0	5
Young Leaders	0	1

Competitive Calendar

The early part of the diving calendar year is taken up in preparation for the 4 national events; GB National Cup (February), Junior Elites (April), National Age Groups (June), and National Skills (July) with open competitions supplementing Regional Qualifying Events hosted locally by Swim England Southeast Region and slightly further afield in Southend (East Region), Plymouth (Southwest Region) and Stratford (London Region).

The competitive diving year starts with the GB National Cup in February. This senior event, held in Plymouth, saw 2 Albatross divers (one having flown in from his university course in America) representing Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire, compete against the top divers in the country. It is both a massive achievement to be eligible to compete and an honour to be amongst such a talented group of dedicated sportsmen and women, some of whom will represent Great Britain at next year's Olympic Games.

This was followed in April by the GB Junior Elites, this year held in Sheffield, with Albatross fielding 6 divers, the largest number for some considerable time. It is important to remember that the size and volunteer status of Albatross means that it runs a programme with significantly less diver numbers and pool and dry training hours than all the other clubs at this level of competition where the top tier of junior divers in Great Britain compete for podium positions. The fact divers reached the qualification scores that puts them within the top 20 of their age band is testament to the dedication and focus given by the team of divers, parents and coaches.

Albatross is also almost unique in its capability of maintaining interest and competitive position at all levels throughout teenage years with 2 of the 6 divers competing having risen steadily through the age and competitive levels to reach their pinnacle in this, their last year as juniors; in perhaps larger and more competitively focused clubs these divers may well have been lost along the way as their talent may not have had the opportunity to grow in such a slow and nurtured way. The respect afforded the club and its divers across the country is tangible; diving is a sport which crosses club boundaries with divers and coaches supporting one another, something that remains hugely beneficial in Albatross Diving Club's search for pool space during this period before the new pool opens.

The forthcoming National Age Groups to be held in Sheffield will see 6 Albatross divers compete having qualified recently across two qualifying events held in Tunbridge Wells and Crawley for the Southeast and in Southend for the East. The competing numbers are down on last year (matched by the rise in Elite divers), and the club are consciously growing the base of the club, where pool time capacity permits, to ensure sustainability and a depth of talent to transfer into new facilities when they are opened. They have a hard act to follow with 2018 seeing the club with a record medal haul of 5 golds, 6 silvers and 3 bronze medals! Following the event 5 of the team will be joined by the 6 Elite divers and 1 senior to fly to Rome to represent Albatross at the **Rome International Diving Cup** open competition performing a full FINA elite set of dives in the hope of qualifying for next year's GB Junior Elites/ GB National Cup.

National Skills will, this year, be held at the Life Centre in Plymouth in July. Qualification rules for this event mean that a diver must reach the qualification standard at a regional qualifying event in the year of competition, so it is common for divers to attend at least 2 qualifying competitions. The south has 4 event options available over a period of 3 months and the qualification standard is challenging. There will be 8 divers representing the County at the National finals with 4 coming from Amersham and 4 from Albatross.

Administration & Coaching

Both clubs remain committed to supporting past divers who wish to remain in the sport. Amersham has a thriving Masters section diving at National, International and World events. 4 divers from Albatross have now gained full scholarships to universities in America, all of whom return each year to train with their old coaches during the Easter and summer holidays. This opportunity affords the diver both a chance to carry on in their chosen sport whilst studying and also the gaining of a debt free degree, something the UK cannot yet match. Albatross have part funded (along with utilising SE Regional bursaries) 2 divers to achieve their Assistant Coach (old Level 1) qualification this year and a further ex diver to obtain her Diving Coach (old Level 2) qualification. Amersham also supported a Level 1 coach in gaining their Diving Coach qualification on this same course which was offered by the East Region.

Albatross currently have 2 Assistant Coaches looking to gain their Diving Coach qualification and

a further parent looking for an Assistant Coach course.

Access, and the fact that courses are now blended learning, means that there is less time spent face to face with tutors requiring coaches to be away from their home pools, to the provision of more coaching courses. This has been hugely beneficial to both clubs as the release of coaches and young leaders/ divers has created resources issues as previously highlighted by Amersham in particular. Both clubs operate a Young Leaders scheme which encourages divers to assist qualified coaches from age 14 to maintain low coach to diver ratios. These Young Leaders are then encouraged to complete the Assistant Coach qualification at 16.

SwimMark support Albatross in its operation and, during 2018, it was also recognised by Swim England as a Diving Development Centre (DDC) with funding offered to build sustainable, competitive clubs for the future of the sport. Both County clubs are non-selective in their Learn to Dive programmes with Amersham offering local competitions for whole club participation. The Lead Coach, Shiraz Shamshudin reports that Amersham Diving currently has 89 members with Albatross standing at 101. Both clubs are looking for their new pools to grow membership further and introduce Talent Identification progression (TID).

Both Amersham and Albatross have divers involved with the SE Region ACE Diving Network and the SEEDS Talent Scheme. Amersham have highlighted that Network and Talent Scheme sessions can be difficult to resource with coaches when there are clashes with the home programme, a problem experienced by several clubs, despite their increase in qualified Coaches. Albatross utilises CPD sessions offered in Southampton as part of these programmes alongside locally arranged training for Safeguarding. 3 parents will be attending the Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire Team Manager Course.

Facility Development

Although the redevelopment plans at Amersham are positive, the initial plans were rejected due to aesthetic and parking issues. Appeals have been lodged and the next planning meeting is in June.

Albatross train locally at the Abbey School during the week and travel at weekends to Hemel Hempstead, the London Aquatic Centre, Southampton and Southend. Reading Borough

Council are now in the latter stages of the competitive tender process and it is hoped there will be an announcement of the preferred bidder at the end of the summer. Planning permission will then be sought with the planned opening being towards the end of 2021. Whilst the club have met with both potential operators there is, as yet, no clear decision on the size of the facility and if there will be two pools or one. A consultation process is in operation for the smaller facility planned at Palmer Park alongside the tender process. Albatross have the written support of both Swim England and British Diving for a 10m diving facility with a separate tank.

Local Recognition

2018 saw Albatross being awarded Club of the Year at the Reading Sports Personality Awards alongside special recognition of Anne Green Jessel for her contribution to local aquatics. The club also celebrated its 40th anniversary this year with an evening of reminiscence and looking forward to the future attended by current and past club members including Olympic gold medallist Chris Mears MBE.

Emma West



Performance Swimming

For the 2018/9 swimming season, the Committee has constituted the following members: Stuart Fillingham; Rob Moore; Jonathan Mills; Sue Green; and Gary Shields. Most of the Committee Meetings have also been attended by Terry Norris in an ex-officio capacity. The Committee has also been supported by Brian Bolton. All members and attendees have made an active and important contribution to the smooth running of the Committee and the events that have been organised. As Performance Swimming Events Manager, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Committee for their ongoing support and dedication to the County.

The following four sections of this report respectively cover the key areas of responsibility of the Committee.

Development Meet

The Committee organised and ran the seventh County Development Meet on the 14 October 2018. This was once again a successful competition, aimed at and provided for those swimmers who did not have, on entry, a County Championships qualification time in the strokes in which they were to compete. The Committee continue to re-emphasize that this meet is not a feeder meet for the County Championships and is aimed at those swimmers that do not regularly achieve County Championship consideration times.

There was a modest decrease in swimmer numbers compared to the 2017 competition. This was primarily due to the absence of Tilehurst SC for the first time; though Slough & Eton Dolphins SC did not enter for the second year running. As in the prior-year, the meet was run over three sessions to allow for the participation of more clubs and swimmers. This format continued to prove to be successful.

The meet ran well on the day and had an appropriate number of entries. The sessions ran close to time and the meet finished just ahead of the scheduled time. The Committee received no complaints in connection with this meet.

From a financial perspective, the meet total income of **£6,244** showed a decrease over the previous year (2017: **£8,520**; 2016: **£9,357**; 2015:

£7,178; 2014: **£7,423**; 2013: **£7,248**) as a consequence of the reduced number of entrants (mainly the Tilehurst impact). Expenditure decreased slightly to **£3,535** (**£3,836** in 2017; **£3,716** in 2016; **£3,071** in 2015; **£1,817** in 2014; and, **£1,785** in 2013), with no material variations in costs. Consequently, although it is never the intention for this meet to be profitable, a surplus of **£2,708** was earned (2017: **£4,685**; 2016: **£5,641**; 2015: **£4,107**; 2014: **£5,606**; 2013: **£5,463** the latter two years again excluding medal costs). This surplus has been remitted back to the County for investment as the Management Board consider appropriate.

The Committee has agreed that since the meet was well supported, was not massively oversubscribed, and continues to fulfil a need within the County that it should continue. The meet also remains consistent with the aims of the ASA in their competitive pathway.

Accordingly, the meet will run in 2019 in its three-session competition format (and has been scheduled for **13 October 2019** at the Bracknell Leisure Centre). Consideration though is being given to moving this meet to the new pool in Maidenhead for 2020.

County Championships

The Committee again organised and ran the annual Performance Swimming County and Age Group Championships; for the third year to the new timetable prescribed in the ASA competition Pathway. The Championships took place on the weekends of 12/13 and 26/27 January 2019.

The 2017 championships were the first organised under the new ASA competition Pathway and had resulted in a number of changes. Some refinement to the format was required in 2018, primarily to transition all of the competition to the 50M pool at Wycombe which had amongst other things entailed a full re-work of the programme. Rob Moore and I were particularly grateful to the County for recognising the efforts this had taken through the presentation to us of The President's Cup in 2018.

Whilst less substantial, further changes were incorporated into the 2019 Championships. The most significant of these changes was to re-instate the 800M for male swimmers and the 1,500M for

female swimmers; now that they had been re-introduced at ASA National events. In an endeavour not to increase the number of competition days, this did make the programme tighter and led to longer days of swimming. A few other changes were made in the current year; mostly reflecting feedback that had been received in the previous year.

The licensing panel continue to insist that the Championship must have age group finals instead of Championship finals and accordingly the latter were therefore again run on a virtual basis to determine the County Champions. The Committee therefore continue to be disappointed that this meet has to be effectively run as an age group competition.

The final program received very positive feedback from the head coaches representing the performance swimming clubs in the County; and accordingly, the Committee will seek to make only limited changes for the 2020 Championships.

A review of the entry times was completed, though with minimal changes in the current year. At the request of the County Coaches, the aim continues to be that of reducing the number of swimmers eligible to compete in the Championships so as to reduce the volume of entries. Accordingly, in 2019 on the whole it again became more difficult to achieve a county consideration time. It is also worthy of note that in some instances, the County Championship consideration entry time is now faster than the entry time for the equivalent event at the ASA South East Summer Regional Championships.

For the 2019 Championships, **3,385** swims were entered into the Championships, compared to **3,372** swims in 2018, **3,509** swims in 2017, **2,856** swims in 2016 and **2,987** swims in 2015. In 2019, individual swims were effectively the same year-on-year, largely reflecting increases for the newly added events, compensated by reduced entries in existing events. Team swims decreased by 8 to 198. One can therefore conclude that the entry times for individual swims remain at an appropriate level in the context of the amount of water time available.

The Championships therefore remained manageable in terms of swimmers and available water time; but from a back-office perspective the

finals sessions remain administratively onerous. The Committee will however continue with this structure and program for the 2020 Championships given the atmosphere and excitement that the finals sessions bring; compounded by the positive feedback that is always received.

All of the County's performance swimming clubs were represented, other than Slough & Eton Dolphins SC who unfortunately did not enter this year (or last).

The Coaches in the County, reporting at the annual feedback meeting subsequent to the Championships, expressed their gratitude to the Committee and declared that it had again been a successful and well-run Championship. Albeit, it would have been preferable for more of the clubs to have been represented at that feedback session.

Whilst there were some inevitable problems in running a championship of this size, it did in general run very smoothly across the four days of competition. Particular thanks in this respect should go to Wycombe District SC who helped us ensure that our visit to Wycombe Leisure Centre was very well supported by the local team.

The Performance Swimming Events Committee would also like to extend a formal thanks to all of the volunteers and officials who gave up their time to make this (and the Development Meet) possible. Worthy of particular mention are:

- Herman Bleekendaal, who admirably supports the committee in his position as Trophy officer;
 - John Rowley, in his role as county PR Officer;
- and,
- Amanda Bond and Jo Stewart from Bracknell and Wokingham SC and Jorge Mateos-Serrano and Diana Kennedy from Maidenhead SC all of whom provided additional manpower in the back office meet management area during the Championships.

To date, the Committee has received no formal complaints in connection with Championships and no subsequent issues have arisen since the completion of the 2019 Championships. There was however one changing room incident that occurred during the Championships, though this matter was addressed with the Welfare Officers from each participating club during the

competition. Changes are currently under consideration ahead of the 2020 Championships following the learnings from 2019.

Some of the matters covered in the post Championships review meeting were areas such as:

- Results were not available on line (due to GDPR concerns over the SwimResults website)
- The qualifying time of the boys 200m needs revisiting
- Having one club doing the same volunteer role for the whole championships received negative feedback
- The runner's role for finals sessions requires two volunteers
- In some respects, the Championships feel like a Wycombe District SC open meet.

From these matters, a few key decisions have already been taken:

- A rolling program of QTs review would be implemented
- Changing room security and an accreditation system will be considered for the 2020 Championships.

From a swimming perspective, the Championships delivered seven new County Records (up from five in the previous year) and, alongside this, there were a significant number of Meet Best times.

From a financial perspective, the meet accounts have yet to be finalised, the meet only concluding relatively recently. However, draft accounts indicate that total income of **£33,802** showed a small increase compared to the previous year (2018: **£32,478**; 2017: **£33,312**; 2016: **£23,476**; 2015: **£21,252**; 2014: **£24,436**) mainly as a consequence of higher entry fees.

Expenditure is currently estimated marginally higher than the prior-year at **£18,507** (2018: **£18,137**; 2017: **£15,106**; 2016: **£13,628**; 2015: **£9,490**; 2014 **£7,316**, the latter two years excluding the cost of medals); mainly as a consequence of slightly higher pool costs.

Consequently, a draft surplus of **£15,296** is estimated (2018: **£14,341**; 2017: **£18,205**; 2016: **£13,628**; 2015: **£12,060**; 2014: **£16,871**, the latter two years excluding the cost of medals) though this is obviously subject to change. This increase in surplus is partly the consequence of some specific

actions that the Committee has taken and implemented in order to reduce running costs in an endeavour to deliver at greater return to the County Association. For example, weekend rather than daily programmes.

However, unlike the Development Meet, this meet is designed to be profitable, as it represents virtually the only source of income to the County for the funding of its wider activities. Accordingly, the surplus has also been remitted back to the County for investment as the Management Board consider appropriate.

The Committee has agreed that since the meet was well supported, and continues to fulfil a need within the County, that it should continue and accordingly, the meet will run again in 2020. For 2020 the Championships will be run again at the Wycombe Leisure Centre on the following dates in January: 11/12/25/26.

Performance Swimming Records

The Performance Swimming Events Committee continues to take responsibility for the administration of Performance Swimming County Records. The Committee also retained responsibility for administering County Championship Meet Best Times.

The administration system written a number of years ago along with a database and reporting mechanism has been maintained throughout the year. This aligns the meet best times and the records into a single database. The system continues to generate a certificate of achievement for records that is presented to the new record holder. The up-to-date records list continues to be re-published on the website each time after a new record has been set.

An appendix to this paper sets out all of the new County records ratified since the last annual report of the Performance Swimming Events Committee. A listing of new County Championship meet best times is also available on request.

Performance swimming facilities within the County

The Performance Swimming Events Committee also takes a keen interest in the facilities available

in the county which are suitable for the organisation of galas and competitions. To this end, the Committee notes the development of two new pools in the county. A new ten lane short-course pool is planned to replace the Magnet Leisure Centre in Maidenhead with estimated completion in Q1 2020. Secondly a new short-course pool has also recently opened in Slough.

The Committee has already participated in discussions about the requirements and development of the new pool in Maidenhead and will continue to note progress with interest to ensure relationships with the operator are maintained. The Committee will consider use of this pool for future county competitions in due course.

Stuart Fillingham
BSB ASA Performance Swimming Events
Manager

31 March 2019



Masters Swimming

November 2017 - October 2018

In November 2017 the Inter-County event was hosted by Hampshire at Portsmouth. This gala was stronger than last year as we slipped to fourth place, which translated to twelfth overall in the national standings (of 29 districts); this despite the fact that we amassed more points (1128) than the previous year (1081). Our area winners were Hampshire who came third nationally, having won the event the previous year. Our individual winners were Phillipa Williams and Dave Milburn both in 50m breaststroke, aged 55 years. In fact Phillipa had placings of 1 - 2 - 3 and 5 nationally in her 4 individual swims.

This year 5 competitors contested the Barnet 1500 (SC) with wins for Glen Hall and India Lee.

18 swimmers took part in the SER MASTERS (LC) at Crawley in January, gaining a total of 20 Gold Medals (6 of these by 23yr old Ami Pantridge of Wycombe). This year the competition was dominated by Mid-Sussex Marlins with 27 competitors and the same number of Gold medals.

In March the Bracknell Masters Open Meet was as popular as ever. Extra poignancy this year as one of our leading swimmers Mike Daniell had passed away suddenly in January at the age of 77. He was swimming competitively right up to the last minute - his signature stroke being 200m Butterfly. This was commemorated with a bumper entry in that event at this meet and the introduction of a unique 4 x 25m mixed fly relay. The largest team came from Teddington with 27 swimmers taking home about 50 Gold medals. Gina Heyn won all her 8 individual events.

The inaugural SER 1500m (SC) at Aldershot was attended by 5 members from BSB. 38 of the available 48 spaces were taken up. April/May saw small numbers of our swimmers competing all over the place, i.e. Newmarket, Norwich, Nottingham, Millfield and Rugby. In the Midland MASTERS it was good to see that Jane Stalker, now 34 and formerly of Amersham, is still winning medals with 2 x Silver and 2 x Bronze in individual events.

The British MASTERS (LC) in June attracted 20 competitors from our district. Amanda Heath of Maidenhead, but representing Spencer, took 5 individual Golds and 4 more in relays, easily our top

performer. Amanda remained busy in July, clocking 3 more Golds at Barnet Sprint Meet and 4 at Aldershot (Rushmoor LC).

At the European Championships in Kranj, Slovenia we supplied 16 competitors, half from Wycombe. Amanda was again amongst the medals with Gold on 100m breaststroke and several Silvers, including the 3km Open Water, which I believe was a surprise even to her. The Wycombe 'team' atmosphere brought out some good performances, eventually being rewarded with a Bronze for their organiser Phillipa Williams in almost the last event (50m backstroke).

In September our County Open MASTERS event at Maidenhead attracted 161 competitors from 44 clubs with the largest number being a group of 27 from Wycombe District. Over 60% of entries came from outside our area. Phillipa Williams was undefeated across 5 events. Only about 10 swimmers attended the SSE SC at Guildford where a new kid on the block James Blaby (19) from Bracknell took 4 Golds. The rest were obviously saving themselves for the National MASTERS (SC) in Sheffield where 45 of our members took part. Duncan McCreadie showed a welcome return to fitness with 5 medals (2 Gold) and the ladies 280+ years 4 x 100m medley relay team from Spencer (including the ubiquitous Amanda) posted a World record time.

Everyone is now looking forward to the upcoming Inter-County event on Sunday 18 November at Haslemere, Surrey. Next year it will be the turn of BSB to act as hosts.

Bob Odell - Masters Secretary

Synchronised Swimming

June 2019

(Reviewing 2018)

The County still has 2 synchro (Artistic Swimming) clubs although Bracknell club continues to struggle with numbers due to the time they have for training. Reading Royals, however, continues to thrive. The loss of Central pool led to a change of training and a loss of full club training time. This impacts more specifically on the younger swimmers who do not get the opportunity to see the older swimmers practising their routines and giving them something to aspire to.

Reading Royals swimmers collected a raft of medals at all age groups at all the National Competitions culminating in winning Gold in the 15/18 team competition at the National Age Group Competition in November beating Bristol by a whisker! A change to the Competition rules means that this is the last time that the 15/18 teams will compete in the National Age Group competition but will still compete at the British Championships in May time.

The Grade system has changed over the year from Skills to Grades. This has been a huge challenge to swimmers and Coaches, but they have worked hard ensuring swimmers have passed the necessary grades to compete.

Reading Royals have supplied all the National Teams with swimmers. 3 swimmers were in the GB Senior Team competing in the French Open and the Senior Europeans in Glasgow. Cerys Larsen excelled during the year. She was selected for both Junior and Senior teams but started the competition rota as reserve. During the first competition she was required to swim and performed so well she was selected to swim in all future teams in both Age Groups. 4 swimmers from the club were in the Junior team competing in the Junior Europeans in Finland and the Junior World Cup in Budapest. The

combo team broke the 80 mark for the first time in Budapest. 5 members of Reading Royals were selected to swim in the England Age Group Squad with the Team collecting a Silver medal in Croatia; Isobel Blinkhorn swimming her solo and then teaming up with her sister Eleanor to swim their duet. All of these swimmers (apart from an injured Mimi Grey) have continued to compete at GB level into 2019.

Unfortunately the club were unable to hold their Novice Competition again in 2018 due to the lack of a suitable pool but there are hopes that the competition will be reinstated as and when a new pool is built. Many of the club members are involved in the drive to persuade the Council to build a pool suitable for club use.

The change in pool usage has led to a need for more coaches to cover all the different pools which is always a challenge but the club is managing to recruit new coaches. The club has 3 paid part time coaches - Kelly-Ann Russell, Kate Coupar and Katie Clark. Katie is also a member of the GB coaching team and continues to help other coaches. Katie Skelton, the club's other Olympian, also coaches the younger swimmers as able. The club is fortunate to have an experienced groups of coaches.

Moving forward the club is continuing to recruit new swimmers despite the pool difficulties and rank among the best in the country. They continue to achieve the SwimMark accreditation and move into 2019 with confidence for great achievements. The club is 50 years old in 2019 and planning a celebration of the successes over the years.

Beverley Skelton

Competitions

February 2018

GB Senior Squad, French Open included Harriette Smith, Abi Taylor and Mimi Grey.

April 2018

British Championships

Tech Team, Free Team, Combo team – Silver
Free Solo, Mimi Grey – Bronze
Free duet, Mimi Grey and Alyssa Bassinger – Bronze

June 2018

Junior Europeans in Finland –

Abi Taylor, Cerys Larson, Harriette Smith, Mimi Grey
England Age Group Squad – Competed in Croatia. Alyssa Bassinger, Beatrice Crass, Daisy Gunn, Eleanor Blinkhorn and Isobel Blinkhorn.

Team Silver
Solo Silver for Isobel Blinkhorn

July 2018

Junior Worlds in Budapest Cerys Larsen, Abi Taylor, Harriette Smith broke the 80 point mark

England Age Groups at the Comen Cup in Seville Alyssa, Daisy Gunn, Eleanor and Isobel Blinkhorn with Isobel swimming her solo.

Beacon Games – Figure Competition

12U Gold – Louisa Horlock
13/15 Silver – Alex Thickett

Combo Cup - Gold for the 13/18 team

August 2018

Senior Europeans in Glasgow – Abi Taylor, Cerys Larsen, Harriette Smith

September 2018

Multi-Regionals Recreational competition–

12U team Gold, 13/18 Team Bronze

November 2018

Multi-regionals 12U Team - Silver

13/15 Team Beauty and the Beast - Silver
Solo – Eleanor Blinkhorn - Silver
Duet – Eleanor Blinkhorn & Beatrice Crass – Gold
Figures – Tara Dakovic – Silver
Eleanor Blinkhorn - Bronze
15/18 Team – Gold
Solo – Isobel Blinkhorn – Bronze
Duet – Isobel Blinkhorn and Cerys Larsen – Silver

National Age Groups (NAG's) – 12 Team – Bronze

13/15 Beauty and the Beast – Gold
13 /15 Diversity – Silver
15/18 – Gold
13 /15 Duet Eleanor Blinkhorn and Beatrice Crass
15/18 Duet Isobel Blinkhorn and Cerys Larsen

County awards taken from NAGS

12U Figures Gold – Florence Blinkhorn
Silver – Sofia Dakovic
Bronze – Louisa Horlock
Solo – Florence Blinkhorn
Team – Gold
Combo Team – Gold at Multi-regionals

13/15 Figures – Gold Tara Dakovic

Silver – Eleanor Blinkhorn
Bronze – Alexander Thickett
Solo – Gold – Eleanor Blinkhorn
Silver – Tara Dakovic
Bronze – Beatrice Crass
Duet – Gold - Beatrice Crass / Eleanor Blinkhorn
Silver – Alexandra Thickett / Lottie Moghul
Team – Gold – Team A
Silver – Team B

15/18 Figures – Gold – Victoria Usher

Silver – Abigail Taylor
Bronze – Isobel Blinkhorn
Solo Gold – Isobel Blinkhorn
Duet – Gold – Isobel Blinkhorn / Cerys Larsen
Team - Gold



Water Polo

There are 2 clubs in the County who offer water polo as a specific aquatic discipline – Reading SC and Wycombe District SC. Reading has a long tradition of water polo, while the discipline has only been re-introduced at Wycombe in recent years.

Reading

The greatest challenge to water polo at Reading SC was the closure of Central Pool, Reading in February 2018. With help from the Swim England Club Development Officer, Rosa Gallop, pool time was secured at Minley pool (Gibraltar Barracks), for training on Sundays and Thursdays. Following closure for refurbishment, the military have introduced new procedures for use of the pool, to which the Club has managed to adapt. The Club looked at other locations – Bradfield College, Eton College and Reddam School, Bearwood - but there were seemingly insurmountable issues at all of these.

Basingstoke SC has kindly agreed to matches being played in their pool, for which the Reading Club is most grateful. Some teams in the London League

have been reluctant to travel so far west, so Reading have had to play some “home” fixtures at “away” venues!

Membership remains fairly static, which is unsurprising given the upheaval in the past 12 months, but the Clubs hopes to recruit 3 new players imminently.

Reading were relegated from Division 1 of the London Summer League in 2017. In the series just concluded, the team has gained promotion back to Division 1 for 2019.

There is demand from juniors who want to play polo, and the Club’s polo players/coaches are keen to try to start a junior polo section at Reading in the future, but without any available/suitable pool time at the time being, this cannot progress.

Roger Penfold

Interim Water Polo Manager

Public Relations

The use of video and photographs to celebrate and publicise the work of the county continues.

Much of the focus of this activity takes place at the County Swimming Championships held in January. For the first time in a long time only the first two days of Competition were comprehensively recorded. However all the 50 and 100 metre finals from that first weekend were videoed, edited and uploaded to You Tube for parents, swimmers and coaches to access. With the introduction of Age group finals last year each event now has seven finals which meant this task increased exponentially. The big plus is that our youngest swimmers get to experience what a Final is like, and learn to handle the pressures of delivering a performance in the spotlight of an evening session. The downside of having more finals is this means more video to upload, and uploading speeds can be frustratingly slow. This is the main reason why the longer events are not uploaded as files become prohibitively large.

This service was greatly valued particularly by the parents of swimmers taking GCSE Physical Education where evidence of performance in a chosen sport is required.

Website

The official website continues to provide an important service to clubs. The facility to easily enter swimmers for official County Meets through the site has made handling entries and monitoring uptake for events a plus both for swimmers and the organisers. It enables fine-tuning of start times for sessions and the virtual elimination of dead time within the overall schedule. The Website also publishes regularly up to date information on records achieved by our County swimmers.

Because of concerns over the data security of the results service website the County used in 2018 to publish race results almost immediately during the Championships, this value added service was not used at this year's Championships. This was a shame since this facility was greatly valued by parents. It is worth exploring other options to reinstate something similar at the first opportunity.

Video

The main purpose of videoing County activities is to keep a record of successes that can be shared by swimmers and their family and friends.

Because only part of the Championships were filmed the overall 'hits' were down on the previous year. In contrast to the 2700 'hits' for 31 items in 2018, this year the 14 separate videos achieved 1356 'hits' at the time of writing. The most popular video was the Junior Boys 50 Butterfly Finals which received 187 'hits'. The most popular Girls event was the Senior Girls 100 Butterfly Finals which had 131 'hits'. Each of the uploaded videos has a consistent format, and is prefaced with a BSB Championship logo.

As I remarked last year in reality the recording of a race with a single camera has probably developed as far as it can go. It will need the use of several camera feeds to improve the end result if there is an aspiration to further develop video in the county. In the past streaming was not considered appropriate because of Swim England's Photographic and Video policy. However looking at You Tube quite a few counties are going down this route. The status quo is labour intensive and although resulting in a professional end product is not a sustainable solution for sharing video.

Photography

As with video a comprehensive record was only made of the first two days of the County and Age Group championships. A great image has more impact than a thousand words. Having a good fund of images makes my work so much easier. The policy of sharing images with clubs of medal and trophy winners on the podium together with action shots was continued. To aid clubs the images were sorted by club this year. In effect clubs were given a personalised disk for their use. The images were distributed either by CD or by email attachment depending on whether the County had an up to date contact in each club. It is always pleasing seeing images used imaginatively on club websites.

John Rowley June 2019

Appendix B - New County Records since last Annual Report -

	Age	Stroke	Swimmer	Meet	Time	Date
Boys LC	County Junior	800 Freestyle	Joshua Williams Wycombe District	British Swimming Summer Championships Sheffield	8:31.69	28 August 2018
Boys SC	County Junior	1500 Freestyle	Joshua Williams Wycombe District	South East Regionals Portsmouth	15:29.86	4 Nov 2018
Mens SC	County	1500 Freestyle	Joshua Williams Wycombe District	South East Regionals Portsmouth	15:29.86	4 Nov 2018
Boys SC	County Junior	800 Freestyle	Joshua Williams Wycombe District	Swim Wales Open Meet Swansea	8:14.28	1 Dec 2018
Mens SC	County	800 Freestyle	Joshua Williams Wycombe District	Swim Wales Open Meet Swansea	8:14.28	1 Dec 2018
Girls SC	County Junior	200 IM	Emilia Sansome Wycombe District	National Swimming League Wycombe	2:12.69	8 Dec 2018
Womens SC	County	200 IM	Emilia Sansome Wycombe District	National Swimming League Wycombe	2:12.69	8 Dec 2018
Boys SC	County Junior	400 Freestyle	Joshua Williams Wycombe District	Swim England Winter Championships Sheffield 2018	3:53.20	14 Dec 2018
Mens SC	County	400 Freestyle	Joshua Williams Wycombe District	Swim England Winter Championships Sheffield 2018	3:53.20	14 Dec 2018
Boys SC	County Junior	400 Freestyle	Joseph Buxton Reading	Swim England Winter Championships Sheffield 2018	2:18.60	16 Dec 2018
Boys LC	County Junior	200 Butterfly	Thomas Sansome Wycombe District	County Championships Wycombe 2019	2:09.26	13 Jan 2019
Girls LC	County Junior	100 Breaststroke	Megan Daley Wycombe District	County Championships Wycombe 2019	1:14.66	27 Jan 2019
Girls LC	County Junior	1500 Freestyle	Ella Dyson Wycombe District	County Championships Wycombe 2019	17:36.33	27 Jan 2019
Mens LC	County	50 Butterfly	Adam Barrett Tilehurst	County Championships Wycombe 2019	24.12	12 Jan 2019
Mens LC	County	400 Freestyle	Jamie O'Connor Wycombe District	County Championships Wycombe 2019	4:03.80	12 Jan 2019
Mens LC	County	800 Freestyle	Joshua Williams Wycombe District	County Championships Wycombe 2019	8:28.40	13 Jan 2019
Womens LC	County	100 Freestyle	Jemima Hall Wycombe District	County Championships Wycombe 2019	58.01	13 Jan 2019

