

Berkshire & South
Buckinghamshire
County



Annual
Report

2023-2024

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President's Report

During my five-year tenure as Club Chairman at Amersham, I realised that my end-of-year reports for the year often covered items that the other committee members would cover in their reports. But going first meant I would be in danger of stealing other's thunder if I went into too much detail.

So, to avoid doing that in my end-of-term report as County President, I will be deliberately brief and leave others to fill in the details.

The Clubs within the County have been busy, and at the time of writing, we are eagerly anticipating the opening of the new pool at Reading Swimming Club, which is about to become the next Club in the County to have a new pool.

On Sunday, 8 October 2023, I travelled to Ponds Forge International pool in Sheffield to be with the Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire County Team, which was taking part in the National County Championships. The team was made up of swimmers from across our county, including Maidenhead, Chalfont, Reading, Windsor, Chesham, Bracknell, Wycombe, and Newbury.

My thanks go to Paul Lloyd for organising the team. Team Managers Rachel Russel, Kasia Wozniak, Corin Wing. Coaches Joe Evans & Fabian Whitbread.

I had the pleasure of being there both as County President and as one of our County officials. Boy, oh boy, is it loud sitting under the team seating area.

After a very hard fight, the Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire County Team demonstrated their resilience and determination, finishing in 18th place. This means that next year, we will be in the 2nd Division for the 2024 National County Team Championships, but with every expectation that we will be able to regain our place in Division 1.

The following weekend, we held the tenth County Development Gala, a Licensed Level 3 gala run at Braywick Leisure Centre. This gala is aimed at swimmers who do not regularly achieve County times. This year, the meet was hugely oversubscribed, with three times the entries compared to previous years.

After the New Year break, we swiftly moved on to the County Speed Swimming Championships, which were held over two weekends, 13 and 14 January and 27 and 28 January, at Wycombe Leisure Centre.

The organisation for the Championships takes months of planning, and that effort paid off handsomely with a beautifully run and highly competitive series of sessions. I was pleased to present the medals and trophies to the successful swimmers.

My thanks go to everyone involved, volunteers, coaches, swimmers, and spectators, who made this championship memorable.

While most of my focus has been on swimming, our other aquatic disciplines have been active locally and farther afield. I will leave the discipline leads to fill in the details.

My time as County President has flown by, and I look forward to handing the chain of office (and, of course, the gavel) to my successor.

Peter Roycroft

President



Secretary Report

I am ashamed to say that it is my contribution to this annual report which delayed its publication. All of the report, except this segment, was available on the Association's website at the time of the Annual Council Meeting. I, and you, should express our gratitude to Diane Cryer that there was a report available. Diane very kindly volunteered to compile and edit the Annual Report, from the contributions, made throughout the year, by our discipline managers. She sent me reminders about my contributions.

I would fully understand if the Association decided that it had had enough of the present incumbent in the role of Secretary. I have been in post for c40 years and I am confident that there are younger and more competent members in the clubs out there who could take on the role.

Because I have written the Secretary's report for so many years, I know that its contents are almost changeless. Indeed, I observe that, perhaps lazily, I quoted great chunks of my 2021/22 report in that for 2022/23. I am going to assume that that, which was about the role, function and performance of the Association, can be taken as read. Briefly put, however, your Association:

- provides competitive opportunities in speed swimming for all ages above 9
- provides training camps in speed swimming for younger athletes
- supports county speed swimming teams at national and at regional levels
- provides financial support towards the education of teachers and coaches in all aquatic disciplines.

But, at risk of banging on about it, the "county" is just that – an association of clubs grouped together by geography. It has no resources of its own; it relies on the services of the employees of, contractors to and volunteers of those clubs. Sadly, at times in the past 40 years this has quite often been lost sight of.

So, in a sense, it is still not clear why Swim England has embarked on its review of the governance of counties. I mentioned this governance review last year. I have to admit that the Association is not in the vanguard on this – indeed, we are probably very much back markers. However, I am always open to plagiarism, so am looking at what others have already done! I acknowledge that the sorts of things counties are expected to produce to show good governance are right and proper. I do wonder, on the other hand, about their relevance when set against what your association provides. Part of me, indeed, suspects that this is connected to an exercise by Swim England to meet conditions imposed on it by Sport England in order to continue to receive grant from the centre. And then, you may ask, how much of that grant trickles down to counties? Our accounts are included in this annual report.

Of course, I acknowledge that there have been events elsewhere in the country, in the sport, which have caused a more vigorous approach by the national governing body in respect

of welfare and safeguarding. The NGB has certainly expanded its workforce in this arena, has sharpened practice in regions, and is expected a stronger response from counties. However, as a sport, we are still feeling our way along a difficult course. In the meantime, each county is expected to have a County Welfare Officer. I took the role on, many moons ago, in the absence of any other volunteer. It has now been pointed by the NGB that, because I am an officer of the Association, I cannot be the County Welfare Officer. Unfortunately, I'm still nominally that person, because no-one from the clubs in the county has stepped up to the plate so far.

What is more, counties may well be asked to find volunteers from clubs who are prepared to be the chairs of club internal dispute panels. Sadly, the likelihood of volunteers coming forward is slim, I fear.

Looking further afield, the national governing body is reviewing its way ahead, with a new Chief Executive at the helm. This has been exemplified by the recent roadshows, and last year's listening exercise. There are hints that the relationship between the centre and the regions will improve, with a relaxation of what some saw as a somewhat dictatorial approach from Loughborough in the past. Whatever we may have felt in the past, we should all be on the same side and page, striving to do our best for the sports we love and cherish, and the participants of today and the future.

Closer to home, this County continues to punch well above its weight regionally. Sara Todd has succeeded me Chairman of the Regional Management Board. All 3 regional chairs since 2006 have come from clubs in this County. Roger Prior and I continue to serve on the [unincorporated] Regional Management Board, and, together with Sara, form $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Board of the Company. Roger is the unincorporated Board Member for Finance and the Finance Director of the Company. Incidentally, the Company has still to take over the operation of the Region: while the Company has bank accounts (at last), it still awaits advice on taxation issues concerning the use of the cash assets of the unincorporated entity.

As you will know, and beyond the end of the year under review, Roger Prior was elected as Vice-President of Swim England, and will become President in 2025. We should congratulate him on this. He will be the first President of Swim England, and the former Amateur Swimming Association, from a Berks and South Bucks club ever! Enjoy your year as the head of our sports, Roger.

Many other members from Berks & South Bucks clubs play important roles in the sports both regionally and nationally. I will not attempt to list them – I have tried in the past – for fear of offending someone who I omit. Very many thanks to all of them, both club employees and volunteers. Without their input, the sports would be in danger of diminution, and, perhaps, even death.

Finally, I come to water, a vital constituent for all our sports: axiomatically, aquatics would not exist without it. While I guess we could survive with natural water courses, gravel pits and quarries, they might not be the safest of venues, particularly given the evidence about discharges into rivers! So we are reliant on swimming pools, most of which are indoor facilities these days: indeed, are there any outdoor pools in the county now? We are fortunate in Berks & south Bucks to have a usable long course pool at Wycombe – so many counties don't. The number of good short course facilities remains about the same – some die, and are replaced, although those replacements often take a long time to arrive! And we don't just need racing tanks. We need pools with deep water and boards for diving, and deep water for waterpolo and artistic swimming. It has been a long time coming, but the new pool at Rivermead in Reading finally opened, albeit after the year under review, in June this year. It has an 8 x 25m racing tank, a 5m board and diving pit, a moveable floor for artistic and polo and a spectator balcony with 250 seats. I was proud to be the lead referee at the first gala on 29 June. Albatross, Reading and Reading Royals are delighted to have a home pool again, at long last.

I should like to conclude with a list of thanks, to

- Diane Cryer and Peter Roycroft, the Presidents for the year in question. They have been dedicated and hard working in support of the aquatic disciplines in the County;
- the Hon Treasurer and the members of the Management Board;
- the discipline managers (many of whom are also Board members), and the swimming officials' co-ordinator. Their support and endeavours are vital to ensure the success of our sports in Berkshire and south Buckinghamshire;
- Kristie Jarrett, the Regional Club Development Officer assigned to this County, who has attended, and reported to, meetings of the Management Board during the past year: she has also been Acting Regional Manager for 2024, covering maternity leave;
- Sandra, my wife, who tolerates (or perhaps secretly welcomes!) my absence because of my continued involvement in the wider world of swimming.

Roger Penfold

Performance Swimming Report

Introduction

Please find the 2024 Annual Report of the Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire ASA Performance Swimming Events Committee.

The report is written to cover the 2023/2024 season, including:

1. The 2023 County Development meet
2. The 2024 County Championships
3. New County Swimming Records (since April 2023)

4. Developments in county swimming facilities

The Performance Swimming committee comprises the following members:

- James Glazebrook (Committee Chair),
- Stuart Fillingham,
- Rob Moore,
- Andy Mackay,
- Johnathan Mills,
- Sam Dyson,
- Peter Button

All members and have made an active and important contribution to the planning and execution of the events organised. As Performance Swimming Events Manager, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Committee and for their support and commitment to the County.

Development Meet

The Development Meet is an annual meet aimed at swimmers 17 years old and under in the county who do not yet have licenced times that allow them to be considered for entry to the following County Championships. In 2023 additional events were included into the programme to take advantage of the additional capacity provided by the 10-lane pool at Braywick; 200m Breaststroke, 200m Butterfly and 200m Backstroke.

Following feedback from the clubs from the 2022 development meet, the meet was better advertised in advance to the clubs and the entry process was improved to allow TeamUnify compatible entry files to be used.

As a results of this, the large number of meet entries meant it was over-subscribed and we needed to reject 30% of entries to keep the meet within the pool capacity. We would also have needed to scratch some events and more swimmers if we did not get the goodwill and cooperation of Windsor SC to allow us to extend the pool booking later into the evening.

Thanks to the high number of entries, total income from the meet rose to £12,558, almost doubling the previous year total. Costs of running the meet were slightly down on 2023 levels at £3,115, mainly from being able to reuse some of the medals in stock.

Due to the strong support from our clubs, we are more than happy to run the Development Meet again in 2024 and have booked Braywick pool for 13th October. In order to better manage entry numbers we will reintroduce Qualifying Times in the meet conditions.

May thanks also go to Maidenhead Marlins SC who helped the committee with some of the planning of the meet and advised on the best way to use the facilities.

County Championships

The 2024 County Championships took place on 13th/14th and 27th /28th January. The meet was held with a full programme of events including a new event – The Tandem Relay.

Unfortunately, due to restrictions from the leisure centre management, we were only allowed to use 1 section of the sports hall to provide space for the swimmers to wait and perform their warm-up when not on the pool deck. This did make the sports hall more crowded, however the space was well managed and did not result in over-crowding or the pool deck becoming congested.

Entries to the meet were close to pre-pandemic levels with 2,864 swims. The total meet income from entries was up to £42,546, an increase of £5,822 from 2023. Costs were down slightly at £20,923 (a reduction of £2,931) due to use of existing medals stock.

Feedback from the coaches forum, held after the championships, was largely positive and highly appreciative of how the competition was organised and run. While entry numbers are similar to pre-pandemic levels, it is clear that the long-distance events and a few short distance categories are still undersubscribed. The consideration times for these events will be reviewed against rankings and Regional entry times to ensure the county swimmers are properly represented at the championships, the pool capacity available is used effectively, and finals are run with the full complement of 8 swimmers as far as reasonably practicable.

The 2025 Championships are planned to be held at Wycombe Leisure Centre on 11th/12th & 25th/26th January.

Performance Swimming Records

During the 2023/24 season (up to the 31st March 2024), 6 new Junior County Records and 1 new County Record have been set by the county's athletes:

Gender	Course	Event	Swimmer / Club	Location	Date	Time
Junior County Records						
Open/Male	LC	50m Fly	Ethan Richards-Knight (Chalfont)	Sheffield	28/07/2023	00:25.29
Open/Male	SC	50m Free	Noah Wheeler (Chalfont)	Surrey Sports Park	19/11/2023	00:23.49
Open/Male	SC	50m Fly	Noah Wheeler (Chalfont)	Surrey Sports Park	19/11/2023	00:28.91
Open/Male	SC	100m IM	Noah Wheeler (Chalfont)	Surrey Sports Park	19/11/2023	00:58.11
Female	LC	200m Breast	Hazel-Anne Carter (Wycombe District)	Wycombe LC	14/01/2024	02:40.83
Female	LC	4x100m Medley	Wycombe District	Wycombe LC	14/01/2024	04:29.82
County Records						
Female	LC	100m Fly	Lucy Fox (Wycombe District)	Wycombe	14/01/2024	01:02.15

Performance Swimming facilities within the County

The Performance Swimming Events Committee takes a keen interest in the development of facilities available in the county which are suitable for the organisation of galas and competitions.

The new Palmer Park Stadium and Rivermead swimming pools opened in the Reading area during 2023. The Palmer Park pool is not suitable for open meets and the current pool at Rivermead is only temporary. The temporary pool will be replaced with a new 8 lane 25m competition pool, planned to open in Summer 2024.

The facilities in the county suitable for holding open meets are:

- Braywick Leisure Centre, Maidenhead (10 lanes, 25m)
- Bracknell Leisure Centre, Bracknell (6 lanes, 25m)
- Chiltern Lifestyle Centre, Amersham (8 lanes, 25m)
- Crossfield's School, Reading (5 lanes, 25m)
- Rivermead Leisure Centre (8 lanes, 25m) – Opening June 2024
- Wycombe Leisure Centre (8 lanes, 50m)

James Glazebrook

Performance Swimming Events Manager

Masters Swimming (November 2022-November 2023)

The Inter-County event in November 2022 was organized by Kent at the London Aquatic Centre (Olympic Pool). B&SB came 3rd in the region, which is very good as we are the smallest district. Although there were many fine performances, the only individual winner on the night was Amanda Heath (Maidenhead) in her favoured 50m breaststroke event. The result translated into 7th place nationally (from 33 districts).

At the South East Regional LC meet in January 2023 at Crawley, 11 different individual swimmers took 19 Gold medals between them. The pick of these would be Pip Williams (Wycombe) who won all 4 of her 50m discipline events. The next best were Caroline Jubb and Gregory du Tertre (also both from Wycombe) who took 3 Golds each. A 1500 freestyle (LC) was run at the same venue in March with a full complement of 51 swimmers (6 from B&SB). The evening session was devoted to relays for which, sadly, there were no B&SB entries this year.

Earlier in the month at Swansea Amanda Heath was setting another new European LC record for 200 fly. She broke this at the British MASTERS meet at Sheffield in June with a time of 3.16.19 sec on the way to winning 6 events. Dan John (Reading) was next in line with 3 Golds, hotly followed by Alfie Evans (Reading) and Dave Milburn (Newbury) with 2 each.

The Bracknell MASTERS Open meet in early March was as popular as ever with entries from 38 clubs spread out from Dover to Poole to Etwall (Derbyshire). Once again, the top visiting club was Teddington who provided the top male swimmer Mark Deakin. In fact, the top 4

males were all from Teddington! The top female swimmer was Liz Woolner (Flitwick) with 2 more persons from Teddington in hot pursuit.

The World MASTERS swimming and diving championships were held in Fukuoka, Japan in August. Due to the distance, there were notably fewer entries from UK than normal, but Amanda Heath again performed out of her skin collecting 5 individual and 1 relay Gold medal - 6 in all. Probably most remarkable was her Silver medal in the Open Water 3K event. Guy Emerson (Amersham and Spencer) returned to competitive swimming after 3 years dogged by various injuries and also took a relay Silver medal. The diver Katie Bell (Amersham) took 3 Silver medals whilst her more senior former colleague Jenni Cluskey (now at Southend) achieved 3 Golds.

Like the Bracknell Open in March, the County Open in early September attracted entries from 38 clubs from as far afield as Medway, Ely and Poole. The Turner family (husband and wife Spencer and Fleur - both World and European Champions) brought a battalion of competitors from Basingstoke and easily took the trophy for top visiting club. Wycombe retained their hold on the top local club award with Reading just behind. Top male swimmer was Dave Milburn (Newbury), and top female was the afore-mentioned Fleur Turner.

There were a couple of new British records set by our swimmers at the South East Region SC MASTERS in late September. Kirsty Johnson (Bracknell) clocked 1.07.49 sec in 100 backstroke and Amanda Heath set 3.11.75sec on 200 fly, which was also a European record.

There were many entrants from B&SB at the British MASTERS SC at end of October in Sheffield, notably Dan John who took 4 Golds in 200,400,800 and 1500 freestyle - a full house! Not to be outdone Amanda Heath also bagged 4 Golds with the 100 breaststroke posting a new World record at 1.27.95 sec. Other top spots were achieved by Patrick Gore (Reading - 2), Kellyn Caldwell (Wycombe - 2), Laura Cooke and Kirsty Johnson (both Bracknell). An EBP (event best performance) time for 1500 freestyle set in 2005 by Duncan McCreadie was finally beaten.

This report finishes where it began, namely at the London Aquatic Centre (Olympic Pool) which Middlesex had hired as hosts for the 2023 Inter-County event. There is no doubt that this pool provides a marvellous setting for this event with enough space all around such that all competitors are poolside. The only downside is the cost (ca. £4500 for pool hire - I believe) but may be worth considering cost share amongst the 7 districts?? A question for the future. On the day B&SB came 4th which will probably still be good enough to place us in the top 10 districts nationally. There were 9 individual wins for the ladies with Amanda making a clean sweep of 4, followed by Kirsty Johnson with 3 and Laura Cooke with 2. Best of all was the sight of the evergreen Duncan McCreadie recording our only individual male win of the day. Normally Sasha Forster takes care of everything on the day and in the build-up but this year, as she had to be away in Australia, much praise should go to Terry Wright who perfectly managed all aspects on the day.

Bob Odell

Masters Manager

Artistic Swimming Report

The only Artistic Swimming Club, Reading Royals Artistic Swimming Club, in the county has had another busy competitive year. The training has been hampered by pool closures, so they are looking forward to moving into the new Rivermead Leisure Centre where they will, for the first time since Reading Central Pool closed, be able to have the whole club together for training sessions. It's also been a difficult year for coaches coming to terms with all the new competition rules and judging criteria.

Eleanor Blinkhorn, Florence Blinkhorn, Lily Halasi and Holly Hughes have been selected to swim in the Senior GB team at the European Championships in Belgrade. Florence has also been selected to swim the junior duet and competed in the World Cup in Beijing and Paris. She will also compete in the Junior European Championships in Malta together with Lily and Holly.

4 Swimmers from the county were selected to swim for the South East Region at the Regional games in Bristol 31st May. The swimmers were Rie Bracewell, Lottie Cotton, Lulu Teague and Stella Kinalopoulou. In the figure section, Stella finished a very creditable 4th, Rie 26th, Lottie 39th and Lulu 40th.

At the National Age-Group Championships the results were as follows:

12 Years and Under Solo Rie Bracewell 9th, 12 Years and Under Duet Rie Bracewell and Romilly McQuillan 4th and the 12 Years and Under combo, 5th.

At the National Championships the results were as follows:

Junior Technical Solo Cara Ziedler 9th, Beatrice Asker 12th and Jessica Hinxman 14th
Senior Technical Solo Cara Ziedler 9th, Beatrice Asker 14th and Jessica Hinxman 17th
Junior Technical Duet Cara Ziedler and Jessica Hinxman 2nd
Senior Technical Duet Cara Ziedler and Jessica Hinxman 3rd
Junior Free Solo Francesca Pringle 3rd
Senior Free Solo Francesca Pringle 4th
Junior Free Duet Beatrice Asker and Francesca Pringle 2nd, Amy Wilson and Eloise Haskett 4th
Senior Free Duet Beatrice Asker and Francesca Pringle 2nd Amy Wilson and Eloise Haskett 6th
Senior Acrobatic Team 1st
Senior Free Team 2nd
Senior Technical Team 5th

The club also competed in the SE Regional Competition Free combination event.

The club looks forward to 2025 in their new 'home' and embracing any changes to rules that World Aquatics introduce.

Jenny Gray

Artistic Swimming manager

Diving Report

Programme

There remain two Swim England Diving Clubs within the county boundaries:



Amersham Diving Club based at the Everyone Active operated Chiltern Lifestyle Centre in Amersham



Albatross Diving Club who since the closure of Central Pool in Reading now train primarily at The Abbey School in Reading. From July 2024 the club hope to be in their new home pool at GLL operated Rivermead Leisure Centre.

Both clubs use alternative venues for highboard training, mainly in Luton and Southampton.

Both Albatross and Amersham are SwimMark accredited clubs with SwimMark HealthCheck Reaccreditation being presented to the next Southeast Regional Board for Albatross.

Diving in Amersham is well integrated and supported by the Amersham Swimming Club and is now providing competitive diving at all levels: Pre-Skills, Skills and Age-Groups, Masters diving and junior/adult Learn to Dive groups. The volume of divers and lessons remain similar to that of 2023 with a similar number of coaches. Facilities are running better, but they are still experiencing challenging outages that impact the divers training and there are conflicts between pool hire times and swimming galas. They work with the operator as much as possible to minimize the impact to the club and divers. The number of competitions has increased with some promising results from performance squads and masters.

In addition to Skills and Age Groups, Albatross also have Elite divers competing at national level. The club do not currently have an adult section, but a weekly session will be offered in the new Rivermead Programme. The club also have a flourishing recreational Learn to Dive teen section who include some junior master's divers.

Both clubs have continued to build their programmes over the past year and expect to enjoy a boost in enquiries during and following the Paris Olympics with diving having increased in mainstream sport television coverage and online with live streaming of competitions.

Albatross move into their new facilities this summer in the recently built Rivermead Leisure Centre where they will benefit from 2 x 1m, 1 x 3m and a 5m platform with dry training continuing in the on-site sports hall. The club are restructuring and, for the first time in their history, will be paying for coaching hours. Increased capacity will allow expansion to almost twice the current Learn to Dive programme which should support sustainability going forward.

With two new pools in the county the two diving clubs are working collaboratively to host a triangular stage competition across three levels of diving; Recreational Learn to Dive, Skills and Advanced, which could work as a county event with other clubs diving as guests. This will

promote diving in the county and allow Pre-Skills and Learn to Dive divers their first entry to competition complementing the Southeast Region supported ACE Network events.

Additionally, Albatross plan to reintroduce their annual Inter-Club event in the spring of 2025 and will be hosting the Southeast Division English Schools Diving Championships Qualifier in October 2024.

Statistics

	Amersham	Albatross
Lesson/ Learn to Dive Programme	57	86
Recreational Divers	15	
Pre-Skills Competitive	26	3
Skills Qualifiers	2	7
Age Group	4	3
Elite		1
Seniors		
Masters	13	1

Amersham support the club with 4 Dive Coaches and 1 Assistant Coach. Albatross have 6 Programme Dive Coaches with 4 Bank Dive Coaches who support absences. They also have 7 Assistant Coaches. Both Amersham and Albatross have identified candidates under the Swim England Training Needs Analysis for coaching courses. Albatross have 2 Assistant Coaches on the June Dive Coach course in Sandwell, Birmingham with one being financially supported by a bursary from the County. There are currently no Assistant Coach courses available.

Both clubs have had movement in their coaching numbers due to changing personal circumstances but are active in promoting coaching opportunities to parents and older divers on their programmes from which all new coaches have been drawn.

Competitive Calendar

Amersham Swimming & Diving Club have entered children in the following competitions this year:

- Irish Open in Dublin
- Surrey Skills
- Gavin Brown Love to Dive
- GBDF Winter and Spring Masters
- East Region Skills
- Southeast Region Skills
- East Region Age Group

- Southeast Region Age Group
- English Schools Diving Championships Regional Qualifiers and Finals
- Swim England National Skills Finals (with two qualifying divers)
- Swim England National Age Groups (with four qualifying divers)



Albatross too entered divers into the Irish Open in Dublin, Gavin Brown Love to Dive, English Schools Diving Championships Regional Qualifiers and Finals, East Region and Southeast Region Skills, East Region and Southeast Region Age Groups, Swim England National Skills Finals (with seven qualifying divers) and Swim England National Age Groups (with three qualifying divers) but, in addition, have attended the following:

- Southampton Invitationals
- Armada Cup, Plymouth

Both Amersham and Albatross competed at the Irish Open Championships in Dublin with this being the first international event for Amersham and both clubs had divers, coaches, and officials as part of the Southeast Division English Schools Diving Championships Finals team in Manchester.

The county had regional medalists from both clubs at Skills and Age Groups vents with Millan Colton, Sam Roberts, Ariana Fox, Alice Jones and Thomas Oxlade shining at Skills and Finlay Stratford, Naya Sogut (who has been selected as part of the Turkish National Team to compete in Bulgaria in July) and Jaspas Hussain shining at Age Groups. Masters Divers from Amersham have also been doing well, attending the Winter and Spring Masters, and bringing home a large number of medals, both Novice and full masters. Their divers also attended the World Masters Championship in Japan and in Doha. Katie Bell, one of their diver coaches, attained three silvers in Japan and gold, silver, and bronze in Doha. Stephen Raine also attended his first World Championship attaining a silver medal on platform.

Administration, Coaching and Recognition

Both clubs remain committed to encouraging and supporting past divers who wish to remain in the sport. Amersham has a thriving Master's section diving at National, International and World events and Albatross now have a growing group of teen divers and a number of ex competitive divers who wish to join the adult squad and potentially compete as Masters divers in the future. All the Albatross coaches have come from involvement in the sport either as a diver themselves or as a parent of a diver.

Both clubs also support Swim England with judges and officials with Amersham having 5 Regional Judge 1's and Albatross having 8 Regional Judge 1's, 2 National Judge 2's and 3 Senior

Judge 3's. The county was represented at all Swim England and British Diving Regional Qualifiers and National Events this year by a selection of these judges.

Facility Development and Growth

Both clubs are non-selective in their Learn to Dive programmes and will be looking to their new pools to grow the clubs further once operational issues are fully resolved in Amersham and the new pool is open in Reading. Despite delays the relationship between Albatross and the operator, GLL, has remained good and the club has been using the new sports hall for the past year for its dry training. The dry programme is supported by equipment housed on two badminton courts offering two dry boards, two trampolines, an air track and wall bars. There will be a rig installed above one of the boards. The Southeast Region financially supported a rig training course in Reading attended by coaches from both county clubs.

Albatross have recently shared its new programme with members and are migrating the divers over to the new facility alongside promoting more spaces in the Learn to Dive programme. There is a constant flow of enquiries which are supported with free taster sessions run weekly.

Coach and elite athlete development continues to be led through Regionally funded SEEDS and ACE programmes.

Emma West
Diving Manager

Water Polo Report

Water polo is played competitively in one club – Reading SC, to my knowledge, but a weekly one-hour water polo session features in the timetable published on the website of one other club – Wycombe District SC. This report I based on material made available at the AGM of the Reading Club in November last year.

During the year in question Reading SC water polo squads train and play matches in the “Athens” pool at Eton College, with moveable bottom/all deep water. The visiting teams that have played at the pool have all said what a good facility it is. The squads have been based at Eton since the demolition of the Central Pool, Reading, but were hoping to return to the new competition pool at Rivermead, Reading, when it opens. Post year note: that pool opened in late June 2024, but I have no knowledge as to whether polo has returned to Reading.

The timings of the available sessions are not ideal, and the cost of the facility is relatively high. As a result of both these factors, there are presently only 2 training sessions a week.

The senior membership stood at 14, last November. The junior membership/section has been thriving and there are now 26 junior members training. The issue remains that the majority of the juniors are from the Windsor/Maidenhead areas and only a few are from the Wokingham/Bracknell/Reading area, so the Club needs to decide the best location(s) for the juniors going forward. In addition, a number of the juniors will be leaving for university etc this September.

Readers of this report each year will recall that the Club had a disastrous return to league polo in 2022, being relegated to Division 2 of the London League. 2023 was a much better season, with the Club securing 2 nd spot in Division 2, hopefully, as a result, securing promotion back to Division 1.

The junior section previously played in the London League U16 winter mixed league but were unable to meet the age criteria for the winter 2022/23. However, the Club has helped develop a Southern Summer U17 league with clubs like Winchester and Basingstoke, and there are proposals for U14 friendly matches, going forward.

The Club currently has 3 level 1 qualified coaches for the seniors and juniors. One of the level 1 coaches will now have completed his level 2 course, while another is intending to undertake that course in 2024.

With thanks to the former Water Polo Secretary, Reading SC

Roger Penfold
Interim Water Polo Manager

Treasurer's report

As reported last year, this year's financial plan was expected to be "return to normal" after the pandemic. In this we were partially successful. We held the full quota of meets – Masters, Development and County Championships. We attended the National County Team Championships in October, albeit on the same one-day event. We had hoped to return to the slightly less rushed more team focused overnight stay format from previous years.

Plans for this are already in place for the coming year, where we fell short was in the training camps and events which we had previously held. We didn't hold any. As a result, the expected investment in our County swimmers did not take place this year didn't happen.

The budget was planned to deliver a slight deficit – but after a wildly oversubscribed Development meet in Maidenhead's 10 lane pool, and a very well attended County Championships we had a larger surplus than expected. Whilst some monies were spent on bursaries for training teachers and coaches, this allocation was not fully taken up.

My thanks to Barbara Garden for examining the accounts for 2023-2024.

Jonathan Mills
Hon Treasurer

Appendix - Accounts

Berks & South Bucks County ASA Accounts at Year Ended 31 March 2024

Income and Expenditure Account	Year Ended 31 March 2024	Year Ended 31 March 2023
Income		
County Championship receipts	42,575	36,724
Development Meet	14,424	6,783
County Masters	4,434	4,553
Artistic Swimming Receipts	-	-
English Programmes Camps	-	-
Inter County Gala rebate	-	-
T shirts sold	-	-
Interest received	1,709	141
	63,141	48,200
Expenditure		
County Championship expenditure	21,732	23,854
Development meet	4,981	4,020
County Masters	4,270	2,723
U12 Camps	-	-
Bursaries	436	395
Diving	-	840
Meet Equipment	660	2,303
Artistic Expenses	-	-
Masters expenditure	-	-
Development camp	-	-
Regional camp	-	-
Inter county Gala expenditure	1,879	900
Trophies ¹	115	299
Management Board	-	-
Room hire (meetings etc)	-	-
Officials	435	(132)
Website	95	120
Miscellaneous expenditure	-	99
Bank Charges	60	60
	34,664	35,482
Income over expenditure	28,476	12,718
Balance sheet		
Assets		
Closing Cash Balance	175,818	148,320
Liabilities	-	(12)
Fixed Assets ³	-	-
Accruals	(167)	-
Stock	3,394	2,030
	179,045	150,338
Liabilities		
Opening Funds	150,568	137,620
Income over Expenditure	28,476	12,718
Closing Funds	179,045	150,338

Independent Examiner's Report
Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire ASA Accounts

Basis of report

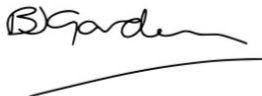
My examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the association and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items in the accounts and seeking explanations from the treasurer concerning any such matters.

The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records have not been met
- 2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Barbara Garden
DipPFS

9th July 2024