

3rd annual MASTERS Conference on Saturday 30th September at SportPark, Loughborough

There were about 40 persons present, nearly all were MASTERS swimmers and most were County reps. As far as I could tell there were 3 of us from BSB, namely myself, Duncan McCreadie and Russell Simpson (Amersham). Interestingly Russell transferred recently to Amersham from Aylesbury since at Amersham the Head Coach does give some of his time to the MASTERS group. In a later general discussion this was cited as a major requirement for MASTERS which most clubs ignore.

The agenda included information from -

- Sharon Lock, Swim England MASTERS Officer (also Open Water)
- Verity Dobbie, Chair SE MASTERS Working Group
- Emma Langham, Membership (she has now retired!)
- David Chaney, British MASTERS Records Officer
- George Wood, Swim England Development Director (only been in post a couple of weeks).

Verity and David are clearly volunteers. His chat about rankings was interesting. There is a new email address to which results are to be sent, namely rankings@swimming.org. We discovered this ourselves in September when our Open results suffered a delay before appearing on rankings. Being a volunteer and effectively a one-man band there may be a few days delay anyway, especially if there are a number of events on the same day.

The entire meeting was overshadowed by the 'elephant in the room' in the guise of Prof. Sue Arrowsmith (Notts) who had wanted an agenda slot (and had been promised one, she said) to bring up various issues still rebounding from the Euros of April 2016 at LAC. A chap from ASA (believe it was Chris Bostock) was on hand with the obvious remit to stamp down on any contentious issues but had to relent and let her speak when some delegates made it plain that they had come along mainly to listen to her comments. The shambles of April 2016 rumbles on but to what purpose, I ask myself?

Noted a few MASTERS dates for the future -

- 2018 Euro Champs to be held early September at Kranj, Lake Bled, Slovenia
- 2019 18th FINA World Champs to be held early August at Gwangju, S. Korea
- 2020 Euro Champs to be held late May/early June at Budapest, Hungary
- 2021 19th FINA World Champs to be held end July/early August at Fukuoka, Japan
- 2023 20th FINA World Champs to be held at Doha, Qatar.

I do have some notes that I will distribute through the clubs. The most interesting 20 minutes came in the brain-storming session at the end. Most MASTERS bemoaned the fact that their clubs did not take them seriously enough to offer proper training etc. Clubs within BSB cannot be accused of that since I am aware that at least Wycombe, Bracknell, Reading and Amersham DO cater effectively for MASTERS.

Bob Odell - 31.10.2017