



BERKSHIRE AND SOUTH BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
AMATEUR SWIMMING ASSOCIATION

Performance Swimming Events Committee

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Annual Report of the Performance Swimming Events Committee:

Please find, set out below, the 2020 Annual Report of the Berkshire and South Buckinghamshire ASA Performance Swimming Events Committee.

For the 2019/20 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 were also attended by the President of the County Association in an ex-officio capacity. The Committee has also been supported by Diana Kennedy in connection with the organisation of volunteers. 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 eighth County Development Meet on the 13th October 2019. 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 increase in swimmer numbers compared to the 2018 competition. 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 £6,581 showed an increase over the previous year (2018: £6,244; 2017: £8,520; 2016: £9,357; 2015: £7,178; 2014: £7,423; 2013: £7,248) as a consequence of an increased number of entrants. Expenditure decreased to £3,119 (£3,535 in 2018; £3,836 in 2017; £3,716 in 2016; £3,071 in 2015; £1,817 in 2014; and, £1,785 in 2013) with the main variation in costs coming from the cost of medals. Consequently, although it is never the intention for this meet to be profitable, a surplus of £3,462 was earned (2018: £2,708; 2017: £4,685; 2016: £5,641; 2015: £4,107; 2014: £5,606; 2013: £5,463 the latter two years 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 appear 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 2020 and has been scheduled for 11th October 2020. It is currently the plan to hold this meet at the new pool in Maidenhead at Braywick. As this is a 10-lane pool, the meet will most likely move to a two-session competition format and will likely include additional (200m) events.

County Championships:

The Committee again organised and ran the annual Performance Swimming County and Age Group Championships; for the fourth year to the new timetable prescribed in the ASA competition Pathway. The Championships took place on the weekends of 11/12 and 25/26 January 2020. The 2017 championships were the first organised under the new ASA competition Pathway and had resulted in several significant changes.

Some refinement to the format was required in 2018, primarily to transition all the competition to the 50M pool at Wycombe which had amongst other things entailed a full re-work of the programme. Less substantial, further changes were incorporated into the 2019 and 2020 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 days of competition, 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; such as the introduction of the new online results service and significantly the launch a full accreditation system (a unique pass for everyone on pool-side).

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 must effectively be run as an age group rather than a County competition.

The program received very positive feedback from the head coaches representing the performance swimming clubs in the County; and accordingly, the Committee made 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 2020 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 faster than the entry time for the equivalent event at the Swim England South East Summer Regional Championships.

For the 2020 Championships, 3,145 swims were entered into the Championships (compared to 3,385 swims in 2019; 3,372 swims in 2018, 3,509 swims in 2017, 2,856 swims in 2016 and 2,987 swims in 2015). In 2020, relay swims were effectively the same year-on-year, though individual swims were down 141 to 3,046. It can therefore be concluded 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 however do plan to continue with this structure and program for the 2021 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 at the Championships this year.

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 and complexity, it did in general run very smoothly across the four days of competition. Particular thanks in this respect should go to Wycombe District S.C. who helped to 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: Diana Kennedy from Maidenhead S.C (in her role as volunteers coordinator); Bev Skelton (for going above and beyond in managing the trophies table); Eileen and Ken Adams (for announcing and stewarding respectively); John Rowley from Bracknell and Wokingham S.C. (in his role as County PR Officer); and, Amanda Bond, Terry Wright, and Jo Stewart all from Bracknell and Wokingham S.C. and Jorge Mateos-Serrano from Maidenhead S.C., all of whom provided additional manpower in the back office meet management area during the Championships.

However, in relation to volunteers, it is unfortunate that for the Championships there was a lack of a trophy secretary present, which did create some issues, most of which were resolved on the day but only with huge effort from Bev Skelton, Gary Shields, and some adhoc volunteers. However, there are still some missing trophies and a large collection of un-catalogued "surplus trophies" that will need to be reviewed. In the light of the foregoing, the lack of clarity about the trophy secretary role going forward remains a concern.

From a swimming perspective, the Championships delivered one new County Record (down from seven 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 finalized, the meet only concluding relatively recently. However, draft accounts indicate that total income of £35,925 showed a small increase compared to the previous year (2019: £33,802; 2018: £32,478; 2017: £33,312; 2016: £23,476; 2015: £21,252; 2014: £24,436) mainly as a consequence of higher entry fees; in part due to the new security levy. Expenditure is currently estimated marginally lower than the prior-year at £17,795 (2019: £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 being more than offset by lower printing and PayPal charges. Consequently, a draft surplus of £18,129 is estimated (2019: £15,296; 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 as the accounts are finalized.

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 programs. 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.

To date, the Committee has received no formal complaints in connection with Championships and only one subsequent issue has arisen since the completion of the 2020 Championships relating to a lost trophy; which the Committee is still trying to locate. However, changes are currently under consideration ahead of the 2021 Championships following the learnings from 2020. Some of the matters covered in the post Championships review meeting with the club coaches, along with selected responses from this Committee, included areas such as:

- The PA could not be heard on window side of the pool but was acceptable from the other side. The Performance Swimming Events Committee would support a grant application from Wycombe District SC to upgrade the mixing desk and microphone equipment.
- Accreditation – why is it required once on poolside? This is the ruling previously agreed by this Committee who feel it should be continued for the security of all involved.
- A suggestion that swimmers might print their own accreditation Without the ability (which we do not have) to include photographs on the pass, home printing would compromise the integrity of the system.
- 10/11-year QTs are too fast as some finals were not full. Entries of at least 8 swimmers per age group should be allowed to ensure a full final. Agreed; the Promoter can re-review QTs for 2021.
- Finals session warmup – a single (and hence shorter) warmup would be fine and allow an earlier finish. Agreed; the Promoter can re-review for 2021.
- We need an “official” photographer for the presentations for all sessions; which could be an outside company who could also sell swimmer photos to parents. Noted; the Promoter can consider for 2021.

- The final heat of HDW events should be announced in the same way as the finalists Agreed; the Promoter can re-review for 2021.
- Requested we consider separate distance session(s).
Disagreed as this would mean having a 5th / 6th day and we may not even get additional water time at Wycombe.
- Request for a two-tier closing date, a normal date, plus an extended date (by say a week) with an entry fee triple the normal fee.
Disagreed as this will only be practically possible by bringing the normal closing date forward and creates significantly more administrative burden for the group of volunteers running the meet.

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 2021. For 2021 the Championships will be run again at the Wycombe Leisure Centre on the following dates in January: 16/17/30/31.

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 several 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 County website each time after a new record has been set. An appendix to this paper sets out all 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 continuing 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 Q3 2020. Secondly, the development of the new pool in Amersham to replace the current pool.

The Committee has already participated in discussions about the requirements and development of the new pool in Maidenhead and has visited the construction site to see the development and meet the developer. The Committee 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. The Committee has also had some, but lesser, discussions with Amersham S.C. around their new pool; and remain available for consultation.

Finally, a new short-course pool has also recently opened in Slough. The Committee were not consulted on this pool, nor its configuration. Subsequent to the opening of the pool, the Committee has advised on how it may be further developed in order that it may become more suitable for competition.

2020/2021 Performance Swimming Events Committee

Finally, in concluding my report for the current year, it is with some regret that I have to share the news of my letter of resignation from my position of Performance Swimming Events Manager; as communicated to the Officers of the County in January 2020. This resignation and the fact that I will step down from the Performance Swimming Events Committee will take effect from the ACM in the summer of 2020. These are both positions I have held since 2013. At the same time, I also have to share the news of the resignation of Rob Moore from his position as a member of the Performance Swimming Events Committee with effect from the ACM in the summer. Between Rob and I, we have been the Promoter of the County's performance swimming events for the last fifteen years.

Rob and I have discussed this position at length and would make the following collective observations:

- The roles had ceased to be "fun". There were a number of situations at the Championships this year and last which a volunteer should not have to deal with, including but not limited to:
 - swimmers blaspheming at volunteers
 - quarrelling swimmers and staff
 - non-compliant coaches
 - complaining club officers
 - complaining coaches
- The attitude of some of the coaches is now uncooperative / demanding / etc.
- The attitudes of some of the swimmers is unacceptable in terms of common decency and manners.
- The role of Promoter is now too large a job for a single volunteer. Everything to do with the meet in all aspects currently channels through either and only Stuart and Rob.
- An expectation that "the County" should solve all of the problems; when in reality there is no "County". The County is just a collection of the Clubs.
- There remains a difficulty to get volunteers to assist.

As a consequence of these resignations, action now lies with the Clubs of the County under the direction of the Management Board to identify a new promoter. Ideally, the role of Promoter should go to an individual who has previous experience as a promoter.

However, to conclude on a more positive note, I can confirm that both Rob and I have indicated that we would be happy, if asked, to continue to deliver the meet from an AoE and results perspective on the days of the Championships / Development meet. I am also reiterating my previous offer to take calls from and advise the new appointee as required.

Stuart Fillingham
BSB ASA Performance Swimming Events Manager
15th March 2020

Appendix – New County records since the last annual report

Sex	SC / L	Distan	Strok	Age	Swimmer	Club	Meet	Venue	Date	
Boys	LC	400	Free	County Junior Record	Joshua Williams	Wycombe District	British Swimming Championships	Glassgow	16.04.19	03:57.83
Mens	LC	400	Free	County Record	Joshua Williams	Wycombe District	British Swimming Championships	Glassgow	16.04.19	03:57.83
Boys	LC	1500	Free	County Junior Record	Thomas Sansome	Wycombe District	Wycombe Swimming's 4th LC Premier M	Wycombe Leisure Centre	22.03.19	16:33.84
Boys	LC	200	Fly	County Junior Record	Thomas Sansome	Wycombe District	British Swimming Championships	Glassgow	16.04.19	02:09.04
Boys	LC	1500	Free	County Junior Record	Thomas Sansome	Wycombe District	British Summer Swimming Championship	Glassgow	25.07.19	16:12.05
Mens	LC	1500	Free	County Record	Thomas Sansome	Wycombe District	British Summer Swimming Championship	Glassgow	25.07.19	16:12.05
Boys	LC	200	Fly	County Junior Record	Thomas Sansome	Wycombe District	British Summer Swimming Championship	Glassgow	24.07.19	02:07.01
Boys	LC	1500	Free	County Junior Record	Joshua Williams	Wycombe District	British Summer Swimming Championship	Glassgow	25.07.19	16:05.72
Mens	LC	1500	Free	County Record	Joshua Williams	Wycombe District	British Summer Swimming Championship	Glassgow	25.07.19	16:05.72
Boys	LC	50	Breast	County Junior Record	Nikolai Khutoryanskiy	Reading	British Summer Swimming Championship	Glassgow	24.07.19	00:30.28
Boys	SC	50	Breast	County Junior Record	Nikolai Khutoryanskiy	Reading	Swim England National Winter Champion	Sheffield	7.12.19	00:29.50
Boys	SC	100	Breast	County Junior Record	Nikolai Khutoryanskiy	Reading	Swim England National Winter Champion	Sheffield	5.12.19	01:04.10
Girls	LC	100	Free	County Junior Record	Jemima Hall	Wycombe District	County Championships 2020	Wycombe Leisure Centre	12.1.20	00:57.42