

Public Relations

The County Swimming season was largely completed before the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic put paid abruptly to the 2020 season at Regional, National, and International level including the postponement of the eagerly anticipated Olympics in Japan.

Just some of the key tasks for Public Relations are the pulling together of the Annual Report, designing programmes for the various swimming events staged throughout the year and keeping a photographic record of key events for use in publicising the work of the County.

Annual Report

The Annual Report happens in June and July in the run up to the Annual General Meeting. The task has been made easier with each part of the report presented to the Management Committee over the course of the year during its regular cycle of meetings. The 2018-19 report was completed back in July 2019, but because of data issues, the Treasurer's Report was omitted. The final document is usually uploaded to the website for reference and access by interested parties. The finished report was shared with the Committee but has not been published on the website as is the usual custom. The Annual report aims to project an informative and positive image of county activity and is generously illustrated with images from a wide range of events held during the year.

Photography

Having a wide ranging photographic record is vital to communicate the successes of the County.

The now well established County Masters meet in September, and 2 of the 4 days of County Competition in January at Wycombe were comprehensively documented in photographs.

The Masters Meet was staged at the Magnet Leisure Centre for the last time. From a photographic point of view the pool with its glass roof makes the perfect location to take great action shots with the ample natural light. Photographs were shared with many of the competing Masters clubs and several

swimmers asked for specific images which were duly supplied.

The County and Age Group Championships provided another opportunity to capture many of our talented young athletes in action. A comprehensive photographic record was kept of the two Saturdays of competition at Wycombe. All podium presentations were captured along with images of swimmers in action, swimmers preparing for races and general images that captured the atmosphere and excitement of the event. Images were sorted by club and forwarded to the individual clubs for their use. This continued the practice of previous years. Many clubs were delighted to receive the images and pass them on to individual swimmers if they felt appropriate.

The Sunday presentations were covered by photographers from Wycombe and Chalfont. These were also shared with clubs for use on websites and in publicity. Many thanks to those who carried out this role for the County.

Programmes and Design

Working closely with the Swimming Events Committee the design of programmes for a range of swimming events has become a key task. Programmes were designed for the County Development Meet, the County Masters meet and the County and Age Group Championships. For the latter a single programme for each weekend was adopted for 2020 simplifying the task immensely. Along with the listing of swims and Promoter's conditions other useful information was included. Along with the Regional qualifying times was a comprehensive guide to the current holders of the County and County Junior Records. Condensing this information into two landscaped pages made for an economical method of sharing. Another part of the programme focused on the County's developmental programme and also how our swimmers got on at the Inter counties event staged annually in Sheffield. The articles are a valuable opportunity to share the tremendous work going on throughout the year.

Final thoughts

At the time of writing it is hard to foresee what effect this enforced hiatus will be on aquatic sports. Clubs have had to be ingenious in keeping momentum going among members.

How events will unfold is anyone's guess.
There is no doubt this is a critical and
challenging time for clubs in the County.

My final task will be collating the material for
the 2019-2020 Annual Report which will be
considered at this year's AGM later in the year.

I would like to thank Stuart Fillingham and his
team on the Swimming Events Committee.
They have helped me immensely with all of my
activities. And a big thank you to our
Chairman Roger Penfold who has kept the
County ship on an even keel for as long as
anyone can remember. And a big thank you to
all of the members of the Management
Committee for their support, advice and
friendship.

John Rowley
June 2020