

Report on Master Activities – January 2017

Masters Conference – Loughborough November 12th 2016

There were several interesting talks at this year's Conference.

- Verity Dobbie, ASA Masters Working Group Chair - Our host and key note speaker will enthral you with her tales of Masters swimming (or in many cases not so much swimming, but jumping in and seeing what happens!) and her journey over the last year as chair of the Masters Working Group.
- Sharon Lock, ASA Masters Officer, explained how the goals of the previous Masters framework had been achieved and that the Masters Working group have devised the new 4 Year Strategy for Masters Swimming and will welcome your thoughts, ideas and feedback on this when it has been ratified by the ASA in the New Year.
- Simon Griffiths, current British Open Water Swimming Champion (50-54 age group) and publisher of H2Open Magazine shared his hints and tips for open water and how he improved his own swimming by altering a few simple things.
- Sue Arrowsmith and Eddie Riach explained the past approach to GB Masters governance, the problems with the 2016 LEN European Masters Championships, Masters' efforts to deal with them and the final outcomes, including the YouGov survey and changes to governance. The survey results are included at the end of this report.
- David Hemmings, Coach for the British National Centre for Swimming at Loughborough University, shared his insights, through analysis of elite swimmers, into how to start races faster using the track start blocks.
- Karen Howells, Sports Psychologist discussed 'Building Confidence' and how to deal with deteriorating performance, coming back to swimming and overcoming injury.
- Osteopath Alex Watson gave a presentation on swimmers' problems, specifically shoulder issues based on his own background as a Masters swimmer and treating Masters swimmers in his own club.
- Liz Fitzsimons of the ASA Masters Synchro Working Group explained the new Synchronised Swimming Structure, and how it includes Masters Competitions, the Synchro Masters success story and what we could learn from the Brighton festival.
- Sarah Darragh, ASA National Synchro Development Officer, explained how the Synchro Masters Working group have devised the new 4 Year Strategy for Masters Synchro and will welcome your thoughts, ideas and feedback.
- Hannah Secher, Sports Therapist, discussed safe flexibility for synchro Masters, some demonstrations on how to stretch and when to stretch to compliment training and also injury prevention in synchro and cross training for synchro swimmers.

Hopefully the full presentations will be available from the Masters website shortly.

Overall, this was a useful day and the insights into the debacle that was the European Masters Championships was illuminating principally because of the way that concerns of the Masters Community before, during and after the event were so badly dealt with in a cavalier and arrogant manner. Hopefully the lessons learnt from this 'experience' will be taken on board by LEN/FINA and lead to more enjoyable experiences in the future.

Intercounties – Dorchester November 20th

Despite having a weakened team through unavailability and late injuries, Gloucestershire performed reasonably well coming third behind a rejuvenated Devon team and the home team – Dorset. Nationally we ranked 16th which is significantly lower than our 2015 position of 10th.

A very, very big thank you is also due to Mike Aldridge and Jayne Ball who stepped into the breach to be our officials for the day. Their contribution is very much appreciated by the whole team and the County.

There will be a change to the format next year with the inclusion of Welsh/Scottish regions in the national programme. For the South West, this means that South Wales will compete in our regional competition and the event will have a permanent base at Millfield as it is centrally located and has sufficient lanes to allow all of the counties/regions to compete.

Masters Decathlon and T30 event results

The results for both these 2016 events should be available soon and will be presented at the next Executive meeting.

Upcoming Events

South West Region – County Reps Meeting

This will be held on February 5th in Taunton at the behest of the new Regional representative, Sue Haigh, and is the first such meeting since 2014. If there are any items that club reps feel should be on the agenda, then please let me know. One item that has been mentioned to me is the lack of a 1500m event in the region and I will discuss opportunities with the other reps.

Royal Navy Meet – Millfield March 12th

Gloucester Masters Meet – April 23rd 2017

The GMSC meet has returned to its usual April slot and will again have a 400IM event. The entry form will be available shortly.

South West Regional Masters Development Day

The South West Masters Officer, Sue Haigh has provisionally organised this event and this year the venue will be the new 50m Mount Kelly pool in Tavistock on June 11th.

Four lanes in the pool have been booked and so the maximum number of places available will probably be 36. If there is a greater demand for more places then there could be an increase to five lanes but this will be dependent on the number of sign ups.

Whilst it is understood that Tavistock is not a good venue for those of you who will have to travel quite a way but it is hoped that in subsequent years the training day can be shared around the counties.

If club reps have swimmers interested, then please get in touch with me and I will pass on details to Sue.

British Masters Championships 2017

These are to be held in Aberdeen, June 16-18th 2017.

Details at <http://www.scottishswimming.com/news-events/events/2017/british-masters-and-senior-age-group-championships-2017/>

Fina World Master Championships, Budapest and Baltonfured, Hungary

Full schedule has been released and is available at <http://masters.fina-budapest2017.com/en/events>

In summary

- Open Water – 10-12 August, Lake Balton, Baltonfured, Hungary
- Swimming – 14-20 August, Budapest, Dagály Aquatics Complex & Margaret Island, Alfréd Hajós Complex
- Diving – 7-13 August, Budapest, Dagály Aquatics Complex
- Synchro – 7-13 August, Budapest, “City Park-known as Városliget”

Entries are due to open in the middle of January.

Glos & Somerset Master Meet

Currently looking at options for location

- Horfield
- Hengrove
- Hutton Moor

If anyone has any ideas of pools in the South Glos/North Somerset area (that maybe don't start with the letter “H”) that could also be suitable for this event, then all suggestions gratefully accepted

ASA National Championships – October 2017

The dates for this event have been announced and it will take place from 27th to 29th October 2017. Due to the continued success of this event there will be qualifying times put in place for the first time. Anyone not registering a qualifying time in the previous two years (based on times in the ASA database) will not be able to swim.

Brian Armstrong
Hon. Master Manager

YouGov Survey Summary – European Masters Championships

The following is a summary of responses to key questions from the YouGov survey commissioned by the ex GB Masters Technical Committee on the European Masters Aquatics Championships 2016. It is based on 899 responses, representing about 10% of swimmers at the event. This includes about 25% of competitors from GB and 10% of those from France, with responses coming from 27 different countries in total.

OVERALL EXPERIENCES

Do you agree or disagree with these statements?			
	'The 2016 LEN European Aquatics Championships were a success.'	'Taking everything into account, competing at the 2016 LEN European Aquatics Championships was good value for money for people like me.'	'My experience at the 2016 LEN European Aquatics Championships has made me think twice about taking part in international masters competitions in the future.'
Agree	22%	24%	62%
Disagree	62%	67%	30%
Don't know	17%	9%	7%

On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 is very bad and 10 is very good, how would you rate:			
	The management, organisation and running of the 2016 LEN European Aquatics Championships PRIOR TO THE COMPETITION ITSELF?	The organisation and running of the 2016 LEN European Aquatics Championships DURING THE MASTERS COMPETITION ITSELF?	Your OVERALL EXPERIENCE of the 2016 LEN European Aquatics Championships?
Mean score	3.5	3.72	4.45

RATINGS FOR KEY INDIVIDUAL ASPECTS

	The judges and officials	The members of staff at the venue	The process of registering your entry to compete	Communication of news and updates from the organisers	Arrangements for warming up	The London Aquatic Centre as a venue generally	Arrangements for spectators and others to watch
Very good	42%	16%	8%	2%	0%	33%	1%
Good	41%	41%	39%	18%	4%	42%	6%
Neither good nor poor	10%	23%	21%	20%	5%	11%	8%
Poor	3%	11%	17%	32%	17%	7%	28%
Very poor	2%	7%	15%	27%	75%	6%	55%
Don't know	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%

OBJECTIVES OF INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

<p>If you had to choose, which of the following statements about INTERNATIONAL masters competitions would you say comes closest to your own view?</p>		
<p>At international masters competitions the top priority should be to allow as many people as possible to take part</p>	<p>At international masters competitions the top priority should be to have the highest possible standard of competitors participating</p>	<p>Don't know</p>
<p>20%</p>	<p>73%</p>	<p>7%</p>

<p>Generally speaking, which of following statements comes closest to your view of the qualifying standards needed to take part in the masters events at the 2016 LEN European Aquatics Championships?</p>	
<p>They were far too difficult</p>	<p>1%</p>
<p>They were slightly too difficult</p>	<p>1%</p>
<p>They were about right</p>	<p>13%</p>
<p>They were slightly too easy</p>	<p>27%</p>
<p>They were far too easy</p>	<p>54%</p>
<p>Don't know</p>	<p>3%</p>