

LASA Swimming Committee Meeting Notes

Meeting held on Saturday 21st March 2024 at 7.30pm by video conference.

Attendees: Ursula Beck; Judy Leader; Paul Sippitt; Geoff Robilliard; Jack Colman, Sue Wainscot; Ron Brewin, Jamie Evans

Apologies: Jill Stidever

Notes below are not necessarily in the order discussed but are set out to make easier reading.

LASA County Championships 2025

- Prior to the meeting GR's de-brief was issued to the Swimming committee members - full notes can be found at Appendix 1 to these notes.
- Prior to the meeting the Swimming committee members were sent details of all the comments received from various Clubs and individuals, which can be found at Appendix 3 to these notes.
- It was agreed and acknowledged that the LASA Promoter will take cognisance of all the feedback, comments and recommendations detailed in Appendix 1 and 2 when considering the organisation of the LASA 2025 Championships for 2025.
- Specific points discussed were as follows:
 - It was agreed that the dates for 2025, subject to pool availability will be as follows:
 - 25th/26th January @ Hinckley
 - 1/2nd February @ Braunstone
 - 8th/9th February @ Braunstone
 - It was agreed that Hinckley shall be used for 200m and 400m events so as to ensure pool loading can be accommodated.
 - RB to look at schedule to determine what is possible and advise ahead of next meeting to allow decision to be made at the meeting.
 - Do we run the 800m and 1500m Freestyle events as mixed events or continue with separate Open/Male and female events. Agreed this is to be considered as part of the overview of events to be run and reported to the next swimming meeting to make final decision.
 - RB to consider and advise impact to allow informed decision at next meeting.
 - As requested by a number of clubs and others, should LASA increase the number of age groups take i.e. take 16&Over age group and split into either 16 and 17&over or 16, 17 and 18&over age groups. As this will impact the time to run finals a review to be undertaken. The consensus at the meeting was to split the 16&Over age group a decision to two or three separate age groups to be confirmed at the next meeting.
 - RB to consider impact when considering schedule and advise accordingly so a final decision can be made at the next meeting.
 - Spectator challenges was discussed but the consensus there is no right answer but based on trying all options over recent years that the way we currently manage spectators is the simplest approach and we should not change.
 - Clubs are asking why they could not have the same lane for each warmup, it is a numbers game and allocation is purely based on number of swimmers from each club in each session. It was agreed that warmup responsibility shall be passed to the clubs, a decision to be made as to whether LASA determines lane allocation, or this is also to be left to the clubs to be confirmed at next meeting.
 - Swimmer Entry and Spectator fees to be reviewed by LASA Treasurer, final decision needed to allow Entry Conditions to be issued in September.

LASA Pathway

- LASA have sent the feedback from the Coaches to SE (Tom McManus) LASA awaiting feedback and update to proposed LASA/Club/Pathway Club Agreement. SW to chase.

LASA Coach meeting update

- When we have the updated pathway agreement from Tom McManus it will be issued to the Clubs for comment. A decision on whether to hold a further meeting to discuss the pathway agreement will be agreed with the Clubs. SW to organise as required.

LASA Inter Club Relay – 7th September 2024

LASA Young Teams Relay – 30th November 2024

- SW to issue the Entry Conditions for Inter Clubs and Young Teams for review.
- JL to review and confirm Club Entry Fee and the Spectator fee to be used.
- PS to issue invites to Clubs as soon as Entry Conditions confirmed, and fees agreed.

ASA County Team for Inter Counties Relay – October 2024

- SE and JE to work together to select the LASA team.
 - Swimmers to be informed of event as early as possible and to advise dates when squad will be selected. Trying to ensure we can reduce the number of swimmers non availability due to prior commitments.
- SE to confirm with CoL, which CoL coach shall attend the event and ask the Clubs for a second coach and Team Managers.
- SE to ask Trevor Hincks to support with organising a coach to the venue.

LASA Open Meet for young swimmers

- Consider for 2024/2025 season but realistically may not be possible until 2025/2026 season.
- To be discussed at next Swimming meeting

Future Swimming Meetings

- Agreed dates are as follows and shall be held at 9.00am; max meeting time 2 hours.
 - 11th May
 - 6th July
 - 14th September
 - 26th October
- A further meeting may be added in December if required by the LASA Promoter, specifically to discuss the LASA 2025 County Championships.
- In the event the LASA Promoter requires additional meetings after the AGM, this will be arranged by limited to Swimming Manager, Chair, Treasurer and the Promoter. Other may be added if relevant to the requirements of the meeting.
- Notes for all meeting planned or adhoc will be submitted to the Executive for information and ratifications as required.

Meeting Closed 9.10pm

Appendix 1 – LASA Promoter De-Brief

LASA Age Groups and Championships 2024

Well, where do you begin with having to move all sessions to another pool? I have to thank Hinckley SC for moving their training to elsewhere and for allowing us to hire their equipment. Hinckley Leisure Centre bent over backwards to assist us on getting it on and as we all know the second weekend was altered to accommodate the move. Without that support it would not have happened. Also Russ Trahearn, with his team, for the assistance as we had early access timings for HSC to set up the equipment we had hired from them. Thank also to Matt Fraser (HSC) for deciphering Ron's needs on AOE. To bring it home to all was the news another county had had to scrap their championships at one weekend.

- We were on schedule very relaxed with all but entries literally in place leading into November 2023. So late November when everything looked worrying at BLC we had to be seriously considering a move to another venue. I had already a contingency plan in place which obviously got implemented in December 2023.
- PAT tests on LASA electrical equipment were delayed due to illness of engineer to carry them out. Note to my successor ensure you give yourself two weeks prior to first weekend so you can reschedule.
- Thank you to Swithland Spring Water and to Sporty Swim for agreeing to move to new venue at short notice.
- Entries of our 11 clubs, half were sent to me as promoter and not to entries and I had to pass them on. This came to light on Saturday 23rd December 2023. I was linked to entries as well as promoters so was unaware of issue till that Saturday. NB To my successor have entries to another email address apart from promoter.
- I needed entries information to me by Sunday 24th Dec but actually received them on 29th December which meant I could not start working out poolside numbers for Hinckley where pool deck is tighter than Braunstone LC. Meant preparation was delayed. needs to go back to being within 24hrs of close.
- All risk assessments were looked at and meetings took place with HLC (too many to log as HLC will testify) re poolside numbers and then I released acceptances early to clubs due to change of second weekend and declared we had kept everyone in and pointed out it would be challenging over 3 actual sessions in particular due to numbers on pool deck. Session 5 was the highest number ever on poolside at HLC and was inside their H & S. Uncomfortably warm for the first hour till swimmers started leaving poolside.
- WavePower 2024 also impacted the way the event could be handled particularly no phones in use in the changing village. I must admit it was a challenge on first weekend but we were trying to overturn years of use. I have to say as the weekends progressed it got better and better as everyone was aware of new rules. Also from a personal point of view abuse of vulnerable adults was a welcome addition to WavePower (particularly as I qualify due to age).
- We also had a request from SE to provide a quiet room and also a multi faith room which we did have in place and would have had at BLC too. I can report to LASA that no one asked to use them. However we should continue to provide them is a yes as if we are serious on diversity it will come into use at some point in the future.
- Accreditation was new and proved challenging as we had issues with IoS not sending information to SE re persons attending safeguarding courses in December mainly. We also have to acknowledge the assistance of Helen Bickerstaff, SE East Midlands Club Development Officer, who came for first session. Her attendance was a great help to us. It is really something we should keep in so we know all main club personnel are approved and have the correct accreditation
- A Coach, Poolside Accreditation pass(And an issue)- He came for the second year running and caused me to have to tell him that he was not going poolside, as promoter, I had a duty of care to all on the deck. He insisted I could not do that and was going to report me to SE. He did not make it to poolside and I wait SE to contact me. The accreditation process helped with that as he argued he was

approved and I stated you are not on any list supplied by all attending clubs (This list by club is imperative to be kept in) as an approved person for them. He insisted he was with C of L, which got me to respond with "They are only guests of LASA at this meet and I have checked with them and they deny you are part of their party and as you are not on my list supplied by them you will not be going poolside" I do find it worrying he can obtain accreditation for two separate clubs over two years and both those clubs deny he is anything to do with them. I know there are discussions ongoing on this.

- We also had a parent call the police first weekend alleging an altercation between a swimmer and a person from the roller skating fraternity. I was asked about it and the video of HLC was reviewed and nothing found. However, I was informed there had been an altercation in the changing village between two swimmers. Despite asking for more information nothing came. Personally believe that the two incidents are related, hence why we could not find anything on HLC videos. NB They video all areas except changing village.
- The only other incidents were on first weekend when we had 4 persons from the travelling community decide they were going to use the changing village. LC staff quickly dealt with situation and they departed. Plus a dehydration of one swimmer and dealt with by LC.
- Only 3 clubs and I do thank them, bothered to respond to my requests for any health issues regarding their swimmers and in one case we had to make sure LC were capable of dealing with them. My duty of care and diligence was covered for LASA as I have email proof we requested the information. NB To clubs – please do not put the swimmers in danger.
- Further Education Needs of Videoing- My successor to tighten as it is not as the event takes place and all were requested to supply 7 days prior to event – The event started on 27th January 2024 and you cannot just request as I need for safeguarding and due diligence the school to state the swimmer who needs the video and it must be on school headed paper and/or on a school email address with teachers name on it. Record numbers were recorded on this.
- Hope some of you noticed we had the best 15m markings on lane ropes for years. Thank you to HLC for all the effort in January and for allowing me to see the work in progress. You did a great job.
- We also cannot, ad hoc, change printed schedules aka second Long Distance schedule. No matter for the best of intentions. It caused confusion. We had stated last 4 heats .We attempted to reduce to last three but as promoter I could not allow it as we had stated last 4 heats.
- First year we have not had to coerce licensed officials to volunteer, so a big thank you to them and also to Sue Wainscot for coordinating them for us. Also it should be noted that we had two visiting referees – Ken Larkins from Yorkshire ASA- he was previously Leicestershire ASA and his base club was Leicester Sharks CSC and Liz Warner of Nottinghamshire ASA who wanted, having passed her referees exam, to come and say thank you to us for all the help and assistance she had received in gaining her referees status from the Leicestershire officials. NB To all readers of these notes please keep the push for new officials going.
- Also to Sue for all the laminating of signs she did for us. A huge number involved.
- Information we send out- It became obvious this is hit or miss as questions asked were on information already disseminated. Jewellery, schedule, timings, messages re balcony numbers on tight sessions. We also had two cases of abuse during the Age Groups- THAT IS NOT acceptable as we are ALL volunteers trying to do the best for SWIMMERS.
- Please direct anyone (all?) to our website to keep up to date with what we are doing.
- Warm Ups – I note that I was asked re warm ups and I think we need to look at it and try to leave the clubs to sort out where and when their swimmer do the warm up. I also need to reference HLC only have a small warm down/up pool so it was important to get all in the main pool.(Due in part to not culling swimmers and not making life comfortable for ourselves).
- We had two Para swimmers attend this year's Age Groups and we are hoping there will be more next year.
- Only two swimmers has taped fingers(2) during the weekends and both approved to compete by lead referee.
- Website got used more and more by us to get information out there. I believe it had a lot of traffic during the three weekends.

- I did not check website enough due to my lack of time.
- Photography and videoing from the spectator area was again a huge nuisance by a small number of persons. I can spend my time better than trying to stop it. If you buy a ticket to spectate you need to abide by the rules not ignore them. I know several took away as although asked to delete they would not have and one a video as I could not get to them.
- Water temperature in the competition pool over this year's Age Groups was the lowest it has been for years (26.9c) and that includes are attendance at BLC and Whitwick and Coalville LC. For information we need (would require) between 25 to 28 degrees C.
- Splash area should not have had any swimmers on it or in that area. They triggered the residue water which remains in pipes after switch off. Splash area is for the medal table only.
- As we have had some comments from me on poolside numbers already it is important to inform you that all sessions were approved by HLC and their H & S person. We knew that Session 5 was going to be a test for all concerned and it was uncomfortable for approx 1hr which is what we had factored in and I thank all clubs who adhered to poolside bags only and no chairs. Again it would have been easier to have culled and disappointed a lot of swimmers. I personally thank HLC for its trust in me and LASA, & for its total assistance in getting through 3 of the sessions, where numbers were high, that we had this year, meaning all swimmers competed.
- Personal thanks to clubs for their cooperation in getting it done and also brought home to us all when you hear a county had to cancel its Age Groups due to pool failure.
- Spectator tickets – Braunstone LC have 206 seats. Hinckley LC has 150 seats and 40 standing. As again, we did not cull swimmers. All clubs were made aware of the situation and told to try and get parents to work together. It should be noted we could have allocated pro rata on entries but clubs have previously said they do not want to do it. Pre paid would not work if people did not share. There is no easy answer, except pools with bigger spectator areas.
- Abi Crane's WhatsApp group of volunteers and helpers worked extremely well with all persons able to help each other out on volunteers for door /medals/heat senders per sessions.
- Lucy Harrison for her continued brilliant support and hopefully we gained two more new blue shirts (LASA events team) who will assist in years to come.
- Trophies- These MUST come in when requested as the state some were returned in was shocking and we had people having to clean them before they went out again. Even in some cases being cleaned on poolside. We also need to repair some. Abi to review/comment on what she would like to happen.
- Swimmer needing hospital treatment was back the following day swimming!
- Swimmers with health issues dealt with. One incident where due to a swimmer stoppage we had to offer a rerun.
- Swimmer who made a final (having an issue with elbow) and was not allowed to swim as lifeguard had said it would be unsafe and risked further damage. Heart breaking yes but the correct call under welfare of the swimmer. Lead Referee made the correct decision on the facts available. Promoter was approached by 3 parties to overturn and would not do so. I also was asked to explain to the swimmer which I did (his coach was in attendance).
- The new food system in Studio 3 worked well and hopefully officials will have given us feedback on it.
- Most people were happy that the Age Groups and Championships were going ahead.
- Withdrawals worked well. We can review timings back as Kim is very good at taking late withdrawals and giving herself time to print start sheets.
- Refunds- Persons requesting must have filled in a withdrawal form prior and any refund must comply with attachments required.
- Wifi- All pools have an issue and at HLC it is often where you sit whether you get a signal or not. BLC is the same but not quite as bad presently.
- We had some success in getting officials through- I am concerned that we did not have trainees coming forward. It is vital they come to these types of events as it adds to knowledge and how a Level 2 meet is not quite the same as just a gala.

- Backstroke turns seem to give the most issues over the sessions- That is me with the official's hat on and also as promoter. We missed too many illegal turns.
- Officials did leave in some cases early to report infractions. That is me with the official's hat on. Again they were requested not to.
- Kim for writing the programme (entry file) for us and working with the AOE across all sessions together with getting things going. She deservedly also got rewarded for her work by being the winner of the President's Trophy which goes to the person of the Presidents choosing.
- I have had a brilliant team of people behind the scenes who have backed me up. This year they were presented at the start of a session and they deserve the accolade of being recognised for their hard work.
- To Sue Wainscot for all the new laminated signs which we needed to have a huge thank you.
- To Carla Simpson for taking on the LASACATS and also for other trophies winner sheets. LASACATS are not the easiest to do or to work out and you are continually under the cosh for it too. Thank you for standing up to be counted.
- To Paul Sippitt for being LASA Swim Manager and hosting the meetings necessary for the Age Groups review and the way we go forward.
- To Ursula Beck who is LASA Chair, LASA Welfare and SE East Midlands Welfare for her unstinting support and guidance throughout the process.
- To Judy Leader, LASA Honorary President, LASA Treasurer, LASA IT, LASA referee for her assistance in getting equipment we needed and for all her outstanding work on our website. Not to mention presenting and refereeing.
- I would like us to carry on with the introduction at each session of the Lead Referee for the Competition, Lead Referee of the session and the other referees and the starters. It is good for people to see a younger element and get the message out there we need new officials.
- Look forward with the return of LASA Inter Clubs and Young Teams galas after an absence of many years. Sorry LASA Mini Meets are not happening, personally always thought they were good value for swimmers/parents/guardians and worth the effort.
- If anyone reading this wishes to assist us or would like to consider being involved please, please, come forward you will be supported till you are confident. Succession HAS TO HAPPEN. Please consider assisting and taking our (your) sport forward.
- Thank you to all the clubs volunteers who have assisted in making the event possible.
- Thank you to Loughborough Town SC for the tub of sweets donated to officials/volunteers. Also to City Of Leicester for the copious packets of biscuits at weekends.
- Thank you to LASA for the opportunity to be a Lead Referee of counties for many years and then Meet Coordinator for even more years and a thank you to all the club Age Group Delegates and Secretaries who receive my emails for disseminating the information and requests and for putting up with me.

My successor will be supported by me, throughout the process, but they will be in charge of next year's LASA Age Groups and Championships 2025 together with LASA Swim Committee and LASA Executive Committee. Please give them your support.

I hope you all have a great years swimming and look forward to seeing all at some point.

That is it from me

Geoff Robilliard
Meet Coordinator LASA Age Groups and Championships 2024

Points which I believe we should review/agree on and/or discuss (I am sure there will be other remarks from Paul as he should have had the feedback from all 11 clubs)

- With approx 100 extra entries we go again with entry times would be my suggestion, except maybe the Long distance times need tweaking.
- Open/Male began competing again. Welcome addition to equality. Still way short of 50% • Review long distance 800/1500 times and do we go to mixed gender races?
- Discrepancy date removal? It dates from when things were manual but as we download from the club file there is no longer a need for it to delay proceedings. It was not or never has been a loophole for late entries. Most clubs tell their members what they have them down for on the entry file prior to sending file to us. Its removal gives us an extra week of preparation.
- Look at schedules to see if we can make better use of the actual swimming time we spend so much hire time not actually racing. It is not value for our money is a remark from me.
- Warm ups to be given to clubs coaches to sort by Age/ability and keep clubs to a designated lane wherever possible. With 11 teams and only 8 lanes I know that it can be a challenge.
- Warm up times and timings to be reviewed.
- Venues to be assessed- Costing to be sort early for LASA Swim Committee to make a decision on where, when and costs to present to LASA Executive and also LASA Chair and Treasurer. After this year I believe it would be ethical and correct to take one weekend there as a thank you for the tremendous effort they, HLC put into allowing us the ability to run our Age Groups and Championships 2024. They were brilliant with us.
- Trophy return prior to Xmas so we can get repairs done by Wallace. Abi to decide on this please.
- Schedule of Events review especially around the Long Distance and warm ups being a waste for some (BLC might solve this as they have a 25m pool for warm up and warm down). HLC incurred separate warm up as small pool is only 12.5m
- Clubs to actively look for younger swimmers so we can fill all finals. This is something we all need to encourage. • Quiet Room and Multi Faith Room to continue and maybe we need to publicise its availability more.
- Spectator ticket allocation or even more contentious a free for all or pre purchased which would mean only those with immediate access to wifi would be able to purchase. It will continue to be a thorn till we state we limit to one ticket per swimmer and cull swimmers till we meet the number of seats. The last point is meant to ensure everyone realises just how difficult the situation is and no matter which way you go there will always be criticism. Price is still one of the cheapest around.
- Hoodie Company for next year should be able to have a full shop if we are at Braunstone LC and thereby increase LASA monies. County wear at HLC only.
- Do we purchase a LASA sign board for photographs to be taken at for the swimmers? Foyer areas?
- Long Course is a discussion which has been going on and also for LASA to hold a "Racing" gala.
- Para with LASA assistance may well be double the representation next year.

Appendix 2 – LASA County Age Groups and Championships Feedback

LASA President (5th February 2024)

I chatted with the clubs poolside yesterday (4th February 2024) to introduce myself and to ask how the Age Groups were going from their perspective. All were pleased from their club's performance perspective and swimmers were having a good time.

I also asked for feedback, good or bad, which they could give me there and then or after the competition had finished. Some points that were mentioned are listed below.

- **General organisation.** Overall view was very positive with comments of "its great" with a nice atmosphere and swimmers enjoying themselves.
- **No food poolside.** While there was an understanding why this was the rule it did present an issue from a TM/Safeguarding perspective. TM's could not supervise swimmers poolside and outside the pool without more numbers which they didn't have. Also presented an issue for some coaches particularly where warmups immediately followed the end of a session. One coach had come prepared to not eat all day knowing there was no opportunity for them to have a break away from the poolside. There was a suggestion that Clubs pay a deposit, and if their area was not cleared of their rubbish at the end of the day they forfeit it.
- **Accreditation Pass Process.** This was problematic for some (as we are already aware). For one club they have a lot of people who were DBS checked with Safeguarding but not TM so couldn't be used. They said they could be chaperones but that's 1:1 so they asked if there was any movement on this. [I didn't ask why they didn't do the TM training, and will go back next week to ask.]
- **Hinckley pool.** While appreciate why its at Hinckley, and grateful the competition is running, Hinckley not best the best pool
 - **Fun Spray area.** While the activation points were covered to prevent activation this wasn't 100% successful with them being triggered several times. Could these be turned off completely?
 - **Swimmer seating at Hinckley.** Cramped and not enough
 - **Space around poolside at Hinckley.** Cramped and not enough not helped by the number of 'whites' walking around in pairs, impairing the view of the pool for coaches.
 - **Water** temperature too warm
- **Officials quick to report.** Officials leaving their station before the end of a race to report an infringement.
- **Spectator tickets.** (from a TM who also spectated) would prefer a pre-paid/ticket allocation system.
- **Delays.** One club acknowledged that it was mainly their swimmers who were responsible for causing delays in each session.
- **Communication.** While everything is sent to a specific contact within the club the information is not always passed on to the people who need it e.g. 2 club coaches were not aware of the potential for food until after the deadline. It was acknowledged that this is an 'internal' club problem, but the request for LASA to review its comms process was made.

LASA Promoter (12th February 2024)

Please see attached (*below*) from Tracy Mchie
I, verbally, had the same from Jim West LPSC

2024 Leicestershire County Championships Warm Up Schedule - Session 12

Will coaches from each club liaise with other club/s in their lane to ensure swimmer safety during all warm up periods.

There will be a maximum of 13 mins (incorporating 5 mins for sprints) per warm up slot

During continuous swimming odd number lanes will swim in a clockwise direction and even number lanes will swim anticlockwise.

Note: Warm Up session 3 will contain swimmers of both sexes.

Please clear the pool promptly at the end of your warm up to allow the next group and the gala to start on time.

*FEEDBACK From
TRACY MCGH...*

Session 12

Sunday 11 Feb at 16.45

Warm up Start Finish

Open/Male	16.45	16.58
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Lane 1		Lane 2		Lane 3		Lane 4		Lane 5		Lane 6		Lane 7		Lane 8	
Club	No.	Club	No.	Club	No.	Club	No.	Club	No.	Club	No.	Club	No.	Club	No.

BSTA	10	COAA	7	HINA	9	LSHA	7	NEPA	10	LOUA	9	MEMA	6	MEMA	
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Warm up 2

Open/Male	17.00	17.13
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BSTA	9	COAA	7	HINA	9	LSHA	8	MKHA	9	LOUA	9	OAWA	5	SHEA	
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Warm up 3

Open/Male/ Female	17.15	17.28
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PENA	9	COAA	7	HINA	9	LSHA	7	Female HINA	5	Female PENA (4) LSHA (2)	6	Female COAA (4) LOUA (1)	5	Female NEPA (4) MEMA (3)	
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Warm up 4

Female	19.30 Approx	19.43
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BSTA	5	BSTA	4	COAA	5	HINA	5	PENA	3	LSHA	5	LOUA	3	NEPA (1) OAWA (1)	
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NOTE; Warm up 4 will commence immediately after the completion of the final events.

Gala Start time - 17.30

Check count	
Open/Male =	157
Female =	23
Female =	32

1st 3 heats
Last 4 heats

*Same lane warm ups as much as possible
Why do we segregate male/female?
(Train in mixed lanes, mixed
warm up in league)
Better if clubs able to match ability/spe*

Melton Mowbray via LASA Promoter (12th February 2024)

Dear Geoff,

I hope that you have had a far more relaxed day today after what has been a very busy few months for you!

From everyone at Melton Mowbray Swimming Club, we wanted to say a HUGE thank you to you for all of your hard work and commitment with regards to the County Championships. I fully appreciate that behind the scenes it has been stressful, what with Braunstone out of action, but you put on a great Championships and it was smooth from our side of things with great communication.

Please do pass on our personal thanks to your team behind the scenes, we appreciate everything you all did.

No doubt see you poolside again very soon.

Thank you again and I hope you can relax for a bit now!

Best wishes,
Hanna
MMSC

Hinckley Swimming Club - reported in Club Committee Meeting Minutes (15th February 2024)

Counties feedback – ML acknowledged that Geoff Robilliard had done a great job organising this year's event. Communication from him was very good. Other comments were that there were some long breaks between sessions (this would be due to the licence conditions), long distance events are better on the Friday nights, girls' 800m heats being split between before and after boys finals was not ideal, separate age group for 16-17 year olds and then 18 and over, spectator discounts for multiple sessions, issues with DQs being rejected by referees.

Loughborough Town via LASA Chair (21st February 2024)

Good afternoon

Please find attached feedback from LTSC regarding the County Championships.

Best wishes
Claire

Counties 2024 Feedback

- The continuing issue with taking of photographs. Could LASA please look into this to see if it possible for teams to get a photograph inside the building. They could get some of the stand-up banners that advertises LASA to mark out area where pictures can be taken as it's a shame not to get pictures on social media to promote swimming, clubs, LASA and most importantly the swimmers! Other Counties are sharing photos of their swimmers on podiums alongside the pool – it is such a shame that we cannot celebrate our swimmers' achievements the same way.
- Whilst we appreciate that last minute changes that needed to be made regarding the scheduling of Counties this year, the weekends were long with 8.30pm finishes on most days. This is difficult for swimmers, coaches, parents and officials. With some warm-ups commencing at 12.30pm and finals not finishing until gone 8.30pm, this meant a significant time at the pool for all involved. Sunday evening late finish when children have school on Monday. We fully understand the closure of Braunstone made things incredibly difficult this year and appreciate all the work done by Geoff and his team to let us have a County Championship this year.
- Warm up allocations split by gender often mean that 9 year olds can be in the same lane as 16 year olds (for example). Would it be possible to allocate lanes by Clubs and allow the Clubs to organise who is in which warm up (with mixed genders) to enable swimmers to swim with others of a similar ability (as they would do in training). This does happen at open meets.

- There was a fantastic number of swimmers entering the Championships in the 16 years and over age group. How impressive that the County is retaining these swimmers in our sport! Could consideration be given to introducing a 16/17 years age group for medals (and finals for the 50m/100m events)? With separate finals for swimmers aged 18 years and over. Therefore, allowing even more swimmers to be rewarded for their commitment to their sport. Senior/Junior trophies would still be based on the same format as they are now. Alternatively, if the age bands remain the same, and to retain the competitive finals, is it worth considering 'A' and 'B' finals for the 16 years and over age group – thus giving these swimmers a different goal to aim for?
- The amount of information readily available on the LASA website this year was superb. Communication with parents/swimmers was so much easier – just by providing the link to the website the Club knew that all information was accessible by parents. (Thank you also to Geoff for the regular updates by email).
- LTSC felt that doubling up clubs for volunteer run sessions helped greatly. The ability to provide volunteers varies greatly on the races in that session so having another club to assist made it all that little bit easier. Hopefully, this will remain the same in 2025.

Thank you to the organisers of the event and to all officials and volunteers.

City of Leicester (21st February 2024)

City of Leicester – Feedback from LASA Championships 2024

Firstly, congratulations on getting the Championships to go ahead. With BLC being out of action options weren't great.

Below is the Coaches feedback from the Championships.

Scheduling

- Back-to-back female or open/male events aren't desirable for performance, events and/or finals.
- Session 11 and 12 50m Bk and 100m IM throws in some clashes for swimmers.
- Session 6 had three separate warm ups, session 12 had a separate warm up but session 11 (1500m Fc open/male) didn't have this option.

Finals

- Joining of the 100m Fly finals wasn't taken well by parents and some club coaches. Do we want the swimmers to have their own time to shine? Two finals at the same time were difficult to follow as the 12yrs were in front of some of the 13yrs.
- Most finals were full and of a good standard. Allows good prep/exposure for Regionals.

Officials

- Good numbers in whites, good to see the uptake/training taking place.
- A few backstroke ledges were left in and swimmers turning on them.

Accreditations

- New system worked well, had teething problems but it was new to all involved.

Events and Swims

- 50-100m events very popular, 400m+ events didn't have great numbers also 200m Fly was low.
- Higher quality of swimmers than previous years on display.
- Should the LASACATs be 10yrs up to 16yrs+ individual age group awards including the top six swimmers (not top 10). Or 10yrs, 11yrs, 12yrs, 13yrs LASACATS and 14yrs, 15yrs and 16yrs+ top World Aquatic Points event.

Venue

- Hinckley is not a great competition pool, atmosphere on poolside isn't great (lots ill after weekend one). Swim down pool doesn't offer a great recovery process.

Spectating

- Pricing/concessions to be reviewed, multiple people didn't have seats but paid the same amount. Do we need to charge young children to watch when realistically they aren't watching the swimming.
- Could a season pass be an option? If a parent had a swimmer in each session, they would be paying upwards of £60. In session five the girls only had 50m Fc so is £5 the correct price as the open/males had two events that session.

Future planning

- As the Championships take place in the Long Course window will LASA investigate having a Long Course Championships? There are only seven counties that don't run Long Course currently. Could we use the Alan Higgs (Coventry) or pair up with Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, or Northamptonshire?

City of Leicester Chair (9th March 2024)

No comments from me. Just a massive thankyou to you and all of the team for laying on a fantastic few weekends of racing in very trying circumstances.

Leicester Penguins via LASA Chair (11th March 2024)

Hi,

Thanks for organising under tricky circumstances this year.

We preferred the distance events on the Friday evening.

There was a lot of waiting around for swimmers who weren't competing in these events and made for very long days.

Thanks, Nicola

John Edwards - Hinckley Swimming Club (12th March 2024)

Hi Paul,

I was speaking with Geoff and he was saying they'd not had much feedback about county champs. I just wanted to put my thoughts across.

If you look at the competition now, its not far off 50% 'open' in terms of the overall entries in a lot of the events. Its hard to say at this point if thats coming at the expense of the younger ones or in addition to, but the field is substantial yet there are age groups further down that are very thin. It didn't used to look like it does now and its concerning.

The issue I have with the 'open' category is that it just doesn't make sense. You've got kids that literally could have turned 15 about three weeks before the competition racing as 'open' in competitions that are basically against grown men with a huge biological advantage, its just completely unfair.

Swim England makes a hug deal about long term participation in sport, but a lot of kids are going to look at that and just be defeated by it and you can see why.

In other sports, football for one, they have under 17s, under 19s, under 21s and even under 23's so you end with like youths competing on an even playing field.

If there is the scope to do so, I think I would introduce a 16-17 category as a first step, which is for me is the most important one. I'd even go further and consider a 18-19 category, before 'open' starts at 20. I've got no concept what flexibility the county has if any, but I really think some pressure needs putting on the associations about this because its the most poorly thought out system completely contradicts the stated aims the governing body has.

The other thing you could do is take LASACATS to 16. I mean, why not? Its something you can easily do and its an incentive for the kids at 16 to compete.

Cheers,
John.

Braunstone Swimming Club (15th March 2024)

Paul

I have asked our coaches for feedback on this years County Age groups and on the whole they were pleased with how they went.

The only slight negative comment was about delays when swimmers required assistance due to injury. Although our coach admits they were mostly Braunstone swimmers!

Apparently there was only one lifeguard on poolside so there were delays whilst the incidents were sorted.

Trevor