

CHESHIRE COUNTY WATER POLO & SWIMMING ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING
12th NOVEMBER 2011



WATER POLO REPORT

1 Introduction

The report covers the water polo activities in the County for the period from 1st October 2010 to 1st October 2011. As the majority of water polo competitions are played in the period from 1st April to 15th December the report completes and comments on a number of matches played at the end of the 2010 season and covers the initial part of the 2011 season.

The carry over of matches into the next season is now becoming a regular feature of an extended and overcrowded competition period. A large increase in the number of external competitions has been seen in the last two years resulting from the introduction by the North West Region of two Inter County Sport Partnership championships for the women and one for the Junior Men with each competition contested over four weekends, the introduction of two additional ASA Inter Regional Championship for Men and two for Women for players at age 16 years and 14 years, the expansion of the Regional Training Centres (RTC) and the expansion of the National Water Polo League into three divisions for the women and four divisions for the men now taking place every weekend from the start of September to the middle of December. The increasing number of competitions is thus reducing the availability of players for the Junior, Youth and Academy matches normally played at the weekend and is increasing the demand on a limited number of players, facilities and officials.

As a result of the school pressures on the junior and youth players it is often difficult for teams to get them available to play until after the summer break which then results in too many competitions at National, Region, County and Local Association level trying to be played in the later part of the year. The long awaited water polo calendar from ASA and GB has still not been produced but is urgently needed.

2 Completion of 2010 Season

At the time of the last Annual Water Polo Report in November 2010 it was reported the County had played a number of matches with some outstanding matches to be played in a range of different competitions. The majority of those matches were subsequently completed, although in a number of cases the competition was not completed until the early part of 2011.

2.1 Senior Mens Championships 2010

The use of a league structure for the County Championships continued in 2010 and once again resulted in some fixture congestion at the end of the season as the water polo calendar became overloaded and a number of pools were closed, in some cases for an extended period of time. This resulted in the league programme not being completed at the time of the report for the Annual Council meeting in November 2010.

For the second time in very many years Birkenhead withdrew from the senior league due to an over commitment of fixtures in other competitions and to a reduction in the size of the pool of available players. It is with regret that in 2010 the MMU Cheshire team, the team originally based at Alsager withdrew from the league following the move to a new campus at Crewe and the loss of a suitable pool facility.

All senior teams are currently having difficulty in maintaining a squad of senior players as all the players at 18 years of age are now expected to leave the area to go to University. I am pleased to report that despite all the difficulties the Senior County Championship was eventually completed with the results given below. Congratulations go to City of Chester for winning the Championship Trophy and to Port Sunlight for their success after many years of difficulty.

Senior League Table 2010

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts	Pos
Chester	6	6	0	0	82	28	12	1
Port Sunlight	6	3	1	2	41	56	7	2
Warrington	6	1	1	4	45	51	3	3
Wallasey	6	1	0	5	35	68	2	4

2.2 Youth 16 Under Championships 2010

The Youth Championship final, for players born in 1994 and later, was held over from 2010 and it was arranged for the final to be played in the early part of February 2011. However due to a requirement of ASA Law 408.3 that prevents mixed teams competing at Youth level unless the competition is held in the year that the players reach their 16th birthday the 2010 final could not be held in the early part of 2011 as many of the players would have their 17th birthday in 2011. As a consequence the 2010 competition was not completed.

2.3 Academy 14 Under Championship 2010

Due to the congestion of the water polo calendar and the pressure on the available facilities the championship was scheduled to be played towards the end of the year. However due to the difficult weather condition prevailing at the end of 2010, when many leisure centres were closed it proved impossible to find a suitable pool at a time when the clubs were available. As a consequence the competition was not held in 2010.

3 2011 Season

3.1 Senior Mens Championship 2011

A total of four teams have entered the 2011 championship. A fixtures meeting was held at the end of February and matches are continuing to be played. The closure of the Guinea Gap pool for some three months at the time when the league matches would be played has caused some considerable delay to the completion of the home fixtures involving Wallasey. A number of matches have been played and the completion of all the matches is scheduled for the early part of December.

3.2 Youth 16 Under Championship 2011

The final of the championship for players born in 1995 and later was played at the Liverpool Aquatic Centre on 27 February 2011 between City of Chester and Warrington. Warrington won the championship after a close match. Congratulations go to Warrington for retaining the Dr David Cooke Memorial Trophy for a further year. The result of the match played is as follows:-

Chester v Warrington 2 – 6

3.3 Academy 14 Under Championship 2011

The arrangements to play the Academy Championship final, for players born in 1995 and later, between City of Chester and Warrington should be completed at the next meeting of the Water Polo Committee scheduled for Tuesday 18th October 2011.

4 North West Region County Sport Partnership Championships 2011

The players to represent the Cheshire County Sport Partnership continue to be selected from the teams at City of Chester and Warrington. Unfortunately the players at Birkenhead, Halton, Port Sunlight and Wallasey, although the clubs are affiliated to Cheshire County, are prevented from representing Cheshire as they are part of the Merseyside County Sport Partnership area.

Normally the North West Region has three separate County Sport Partnership Championships each year namely Senior Women, Youth Women and Junior Men with each championship taking place over a period of three or four weekends starting in June and extending to the end of November each year. To date the North West Region has not issued any dates for any of these three championships to be held in 2011.

5 Development Programme

The County Water Polo Development programme is now fully integrated into the North West Region Water Polo Development programme. It is making a positive contribution to satisfying the ASA Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for the Region and for the County.

Priority is being given to helping clubs to meet the new requirements for the water polo Swim21 modules associated with the development of water polo coaches and officials. A number of clubs in the County have been successful in obtaining Swim 21 accreditation for water polo while a number of others are currently in the process of submitting a water polo Swim21 programme and we wish them every success.

It is pleasing to report that a number of individuals from the Cheshire clubs were successful in passing the theory examination element of the Water Polo Referees course held at the Liverpool Aquatic Centre on 4th and 6th March 2011. Congratulations go to the following who will now proceed to being appointed to matches before completing the practical examination element of the course

Stephen Bennett	City .of Chester
Alexander Blood	Port Sunlight WPC
John Bulmer	City of Chester
Isaac Jones	City of Chester
Isaac Short	Port Sunlight WPC

Clubs in the County continue to support the Water Polo Regional training centre at Manchester and the pilot programmes at Liverpool and the City of Chester with the clubs now hoping to see the benefit of the academy and the youth age water polo training programme. The County championships at youth and academy level continue to support the Region competitive structure but the senior competitions in the Region are currently under review by the Region.

A number of players in the County have gained recognition in representative teams. Congratulations go to the following

GB Senior Women

Playing in the Hungarian National League, European Championships and the World League

Fiona McCann	City of Chester
Hazel Musgrove	Warrington

GB Women Youth European Championships, Madrid, Spain, August 2011

Courtney Dean	Warrington
Sophie Gilbert	Birkenhead
Maria Kendall	Wallasey
Kate Tompson	Birkenhead

North West Region Boys Youth ASA Inter Region Championship

Nial Crilly	Wallasey
Bryn Edwards	Warrington
Tom Hadley	Warrington
Daniel Peek	Wallasey
James Williams	Warrington
Stephen Williams	Wallasey

6 Conclusion

Although the County has a relatively small water polo base in terms of the number of clubs involved in the game, only five, the clubs and the Officials from the County are very active in the North West Region Championships and in the local Liverpool and District and Manchester and District Leagues. It is with pleasure the County recognise all their achievements. Virtually all the water polo in the County is still concentrated in the Merseyside area and the County still does not have any teams competing from the Greater Manchester area of the County.

The Water Polo Committee wishes to record its thanks to the Officers and to the Executive Committee of the County Association for their continued help and encouragement. In particular, thanks are recorded to the water polo committee members for their support throughout the year, for their help and organisation of the County Championships and for officiating at the different events. The Committee also thanks the club Officials and Water Polo Secretaries for their valued help and assistance.

For and on behalf of the Water Polo Committee

Mr P Fisher
Chairman
1st October 2011

Dr A Boyle
Secretary