



Cheshire County Masters Annual Report 2014

At last years ACM back in November Alan Rowson was awarded the John Wright salver for outstanding services to Cheshire WP&SA. Alan has been a Masters swimmer for many years although he is unable to swim competitively on health grounds. He is a former Masters secretary for Cheshire and still sits on the NW region committee and organises the NW sprint and distance Masters meets. Last year his age adjusted formula was adopted by British Swimming so it was fitting that he should receive this prestigious county award as an important member of the Masters community.

Tom Walker:

It is my sad duty to report that Tom passed away in April 2014. Tom was a long standing member of Co of Chester SC, a true stalwart of the Masters community and one of the founders of Masters swimming in the UK. He held numerous world, European and British records throughout his swimming career and was a former masters secretary for the county as well as being involved regionally. His name appears on the trophy awarded to the top club at the annual county masters gala and in the fullness of time it will also appear on an individual Masters trophy for the county. Tom's children and wife Brenda, another long standing stalwart of Masters swimming, survive him.

Intercounties Masters Competition:

Illness and injury to some of our key swimmers, notably the older ladies, left us a little under-strength compared to the previous year. The gala was held in Darlington and the county agreed to finance a coach for transport rather than paying expenses. The net cost was similar but it enabled swimmers to arrive fresher for their swims. Cheshire finished a creditable 5th overall in the country. I am grateful to Richard Symons who took responsibility for team selection and to all the swimmers that took part.

Development Plan:

Increasing participation is the general focus. This is proving to be difficult to achieve as the Masters community is quite disparate with a handful of clubs and pockets of small numbers of swimmers. Communication is a major stumbling block that needs to be overcome. Hopefully having an ASA national Masters representative will help to improve this situation next year. Masters once again piggy backed off the regional open water event. Discussions are underway to develop open water swimming for the county generally that Masters will be able to take advantage of if talks are successful – watch this space!

Cheshire Masters & Senior Age Group Sprint & Middle Distance Championships:

Held on the 27th September once again at Macclesfield. The 400 freestyle and IM events didn't attract any increase in numbers from last year. On balance though, there are sufficient numbers to continue running these events.

Despite numbers being down on the previous year there were still 17 individual county records broken and 4 new 400IM records set. Details of the records can be seen on the county website – follow this link

<http://www.SwimCheshire.org/Masters/files/2014/cc2014MasRecords.pdf>

The 400IM was only introduced in 2013, which explains why there are new records, as not every age group was contested in the first year.

A major change for 2014 was to the relay events. The age ranges were amended to fall in line with standard masters age group ranges. This has resulted in a large number of new records. The previous age category records will still be maintained for posterity. The 8x50 mixed freestyle and medley relays were dropped in favour of 4x50 mixed events. The intention here was to make the events more competitive, as many clubs don't have sufficient numbers to field teams of 8. Some of those that can, struggle to compete, which reduces participation. These changes were met with general approval from swimmers.

Despite 24 clubs being represented there were 24 fewer swimmers at this years meet compared to last year, which is disappointing. The number of male swimmers was about the same with 53 competitors but the number of female swimmers fell alarmingly to only 26. I've no idea why this should be but during the next 9 months efforts will be made to increase competitors, both male and female.

The entry this year was entirely on line with Paypal payments. This included the relay events for the first time. My thanks go to Andy White for all his back office work on the IT side to make this work.



Trafford Metro won the Tom Walker trophy with a points tally of 582 with Macclesfield Masters in second on 254 and Warrington third with 125. Cheshire President Allan Freeman presented Richard Symons with the trophy. The Claire Dickinson salvers for best male and best female performers were awarded to Jimmy Rogers and Rachel Barton respectively. Allan Freeman also made the presentation to Rachel.

Finances:

Income:

Entry monies via PayPal	1104.91
Entry monies by cheque	29.00
Cash entries	18.00
Programme sales	<u>28.00</u>

Tot 1179.91

Expenditure:

Pool hire	736.20
Officials expenses	283.79
71 medals @ 2.58 each	183.18
Engraving	<u>30.00</u>
Tot	1233.17

Net (53.26)

Pro's & Con's:

A handful of additional swimmers would have resulted in a small surplus instead of the small loss. The event was publicised in much the same way that it was last year and following my request we had an additional emailing to neighbouring counties by the new national Masters representative Sharon Lock. Despite this numbers were down so this will have to be addressed next year. Those that did attend enjoyed a well organised meet with some chaotic relay action at the end.

It was a struggle to find officials for the meet due to clashes with several other events so my thanks go to Colin Huck our 'officials finder' and lead referee Claire Dickinson and her team of officials.

My thanks also go to Cheshire President Allan Freeman for his help in the 'timing suite' and for trophy presentations. Sincere thanks also to John and Val Mellor, Graham Heginbotham, Elaine Ludgate, Alan Hallmark, Alan Rowson, Sheila Symons and Judy Zolkiewski. Apologies if I've forgotten anyone.

R.W. Bolton
Cheshire Masters Secretary
18th October 2014.