

Hampshire County ASA

Swimming Report 2023/2024

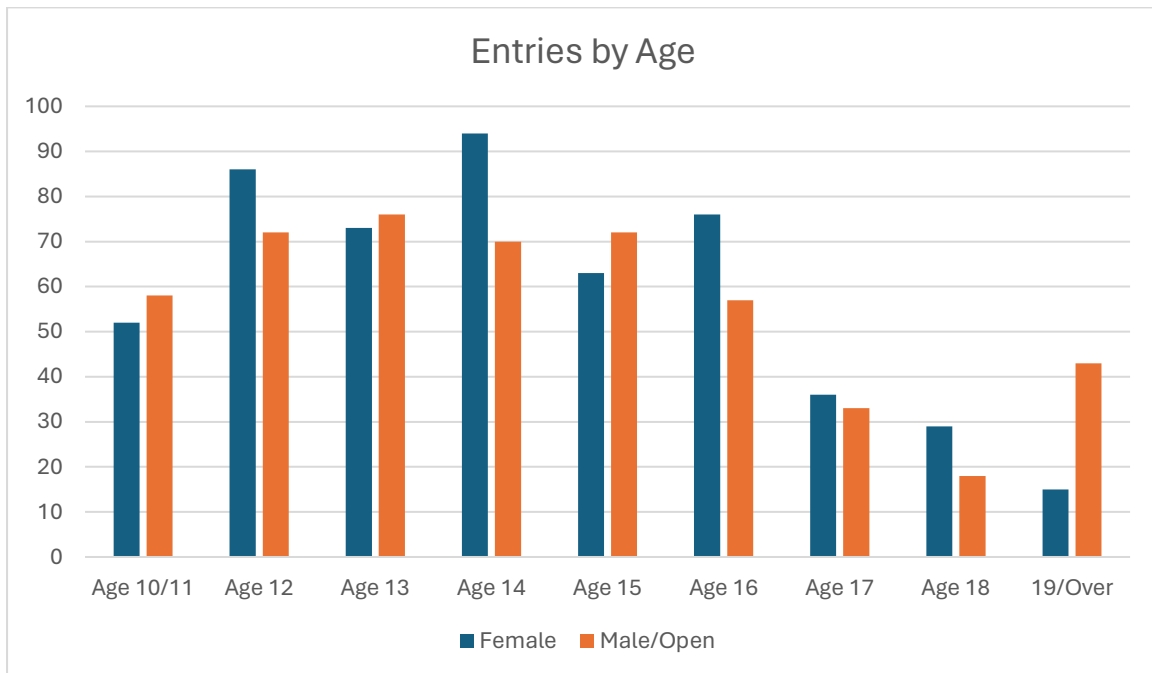
2024 Swimming Championships

The 2024 Swimming Championships were successfully completed over 3 weekends in January and February.

Date	Location
20 th /21 st January	Winchester Leisure Centre
3 rd /4 th February	Winchester Leisure Centre
24 th /25 th February	Mountbatten Centre, Portsmouth

In total, there were 3981 heat swims (including heat declared winner events) and 894 finals swims.

The breakdown of entries by age was:



Highlights

- There were no issues encountered in the technical systems (electronic timing, meet management)
- All sessions had the required number of technical officials
- Almost all sessions had the required number of non-technical volunteers
- All information for the competition used the County web site
- We built a validated GDPR compliant email contact list for championships information

Problems Encountered

- Loss of scoreboard for most of the first weekend at Winchester
- Some of the sessions at Winchester were longer than the target maximum length
- The water depth at the “turn end” at Mountbatten meant no diving at that end of the pool and some late changes to the programme of events
- Restricted pool capacity at Mountbatten (exacerbated by the closure of part of the centre for roof repairs) meant two sessions without spectators
- The set of wireless microphones was lost and had to be replaced

Meet Management/Timing System

The meet management and timing system were extremely reliable this year. New processes to keep copies of the meet database synchronised were developed and once again, the meet was run from the pool deck which significantly eliminates communication problems between the referees and the meet management system. Mark Sadler architected the meet management environment; **Mark Sadler** and **Natalie Ford** ensured that equipment was installed on the Friday evenings before each weekend and scheduled a team of skilled Quantum and Hy-Tek operators for each session.

Officials

David Greenaway recruited and organised the team of technical officials for every session. Despite some late withdrawals of officials because of illness, every session had the required number of officials and provided plenty of opportunities for mentoring of officials in training.

Field of Play

Julia Willcocks took on the role of “Field of Play Manager” which entailed recruitment of “non-technical” volunteers to manage the logistics of the competition, including poolside passes, marshals, spectator management, medals and catering. With a few exceptions, clubs provided volunteers requested.

Mountbatten Centre

Prior to the competition, we had serious concerns about running a competition at Mountbatten Centre, because of condition of the pool and the age of the timing system. Largely thanks to the active support of the Portsmouth Northsea team under **Kevin Ellis**, the potential problems did not materialise.

BUT it is unlikely that we will be able to plan on using Mountbatten in 2025. There are no plans to repair the moveable floor which restricts the depth at the turn end to 1.3m and the next phase of work on the roof will further restrict the facilities available.

Streaming Video

The allocation of a budget for maintenance and improvement of the county video equipment was justified by improvements this year. The new mixing equipment allowed the use of an additional camera and much better on-screen captions. Matt Legge ensured that the system

was installed prior to each weekend and scheduled a team of people to operate cameras and video mixing. For the first time, we were able to have two cameras with operators, enabling much more interesting coverage with a mixture of wide shots and close ups.

As an experiment, we used a lower spec camera as the fixed turn camera. For normal full HD coverage, the quality was indistinguishable from the more expensive high spec cameras that the county owns. That kind of camera is NOT suitable for panning and zooming because it does not have the inertia to ensure smooth operation, but it does mean that there is no need for us to replace one of our high spec cameras with a like-for-like model. Ideally, the configuration going forward should be:

2 high spec cameras (currently we have 3)

2 lower spec cameras (currenty we have none)

It was not necessary to replace the audio mixer as originally expected. We fixed the hum problem with a new cable.

Looking Forward to 2025

Planning the 2025 championships will not be easy. We need at least 3 weekends of swimming in January and February.

Winchester is normally available for only 1 weekend per calendar month. I have asked for 3 weekends on 11th/12th January, 1st/2nd February and 22nd/23rd February. This is being considered.

As explained above, the Mountbatten Centre is unlikely to be available.

The only other long course pool in the county is Aldershot Garrison, which is not easy to book and has a lot of restrictions.

Swimming Development

The Swim England Talent Development team have a structured plan for the development of talented swimmers at National, Regional and County Level. Hampshire County is asked to run a series of development camps for young swimmers with potential. Like many counties, Hampshire “dropped the ball” in 2023.

In 2024, we have offers from Winchester City and Rushmoor Royals to operate the Hampshire development camps. The two clubs have agreed to work together to share the load.

Swim England County Teams Competition (“Inter County”)

The County will be entering a team for the 2024 competition. The income from the County Championships was sufficient to cover the costs.

Swimming Secretary

I have decided that it is time for me to stand down as swimming secretary, Ideally, I would like to stand-down at the 2024 ACM, but if no replacement can be found, I am prepared to continue in a management and coordination role for up to another year.

At the age of 75 and with some minor health issues, including back problems, I think relying on me to be responsible for executing major elements of the swimming committee work represents an unacceptable risk for the County.

Over the last few years, we have built a good team of people who know what their job is and have the skills and commitment to get on with it.

There are two major activities that I will not continue to do:

1. Project Management of the 2025 County Championships.
2. Management of the County online video streaming capability

As a County we need people to take on these tasks

1. No Project Manager → No championships
2. No one managing the video streaming → No video streaming

Hampshire County ASA

Draft Job Description – Swimming Secretary

Role Description

The County Swimming Secretary is responsible for *managing* all aspects of speed swimming in the region, except Masters, Open Water and Disability Swimming.

This includes:

- Convening meetings of the County Swimming Committee as required
- Preparation and management of an annual plan for speed swimming activities
- Preparation and management of an annual budget (working with the County Treasurer)
- Scheduling, planning, and delivery of Swimming Championships (and any other County Speed Swimming Competitions) within the period defined by Swim England
- Development of coaches and swimmers, within a framework established by Swim England
- Managing risks associated with all speed swimming activities
- Liaison with the South East Region Swimming Manager
- Maintenance of information relating to speed swimming on the Region Website
- Ensuring that the necessary equipment is available to support speed swimming activities, including overseeing the storage and use of capital assets (such as computers, printers, PA and Video equipment, radios and necessary network and communication equipment)

This is a voluntary position.

The Swimming Secretary may (and is encouraged to) delegate the delivery of specific tasks to other individuals or working groups but remains accountable to the County Management Committee for all activities. Appendix A shows tasks which could be delegated and the extent to which they were in 2023/24.

Reporting

Primary:

The Swimming Secretary is accountable to the County Management Committee and is required to produce reports to that body as required.

Secondary:

The swimming Secretary is accountable to

- The Swim England Swimming Leadership Team for operation of competitions

Operation

The Swimming Secretary works with:

- South East Region Swimming Manager
- Swim England Talent Development Group (for the delivery of athlete and coach development camps)
- County Treasurer

Knowledge and Skills Required (To the extent required to understand, validate, and be held accountable for tasks that are delegated to others).

The Swimming Secretary must

- Understand the structure of the bodies that govern the sport in Great Britain
- Understand the Laws and Technical Rules of Swimming
- Understand the Health and Safety and Safeguarding requirements mandated by Swim England and Pool Operators
- Understand the Rules and Criteria applying to the delivery swimming competitions
- Understand how to plan and programme swimming competitions
- Understand the technology (hardware and software) required to run swimming competitions

The Swimming Secretary requires the following skills:

- Risk Management: Be able to build and operate a Risk Assessment
- Communication: Be able to communicate clearly and effectively both verbally and in writing
- Finance: Be able to construct and manage a budget
- Competition Management: Be able to plan a swimming competition, including programming and development of competition conditions
- IT literacy: Word processing, spreadsheets, email, web-site maintenance, video conferencing (e.g. Zoom)

APPENDIX A – BREAKDOWN OF RESPONSIBILITY

Task	Description	Can be delegated	Who did this in 2023/24 (This does not mean that the same individuals/teams are prepared to carry out the same and does not commit the Swimming Secretary to take the same approach in future years).
Strategic planning	Preparation and management of an annual plan for speed swimming activities	No	Swimming Secretary
Financial management	Preparation and management of an annual budget working with the Region Finance Group	No	Swimming Secretary + County Treasurer
Region championships	Scheduling and strategic planning of Swimming Championships	Yes	Swimming Secretary
	Overall Project Management of a single championship	Yes	Swimming Secretary
	Detailed planning of a championships Schedule of events, Qualifying criteria, Conditions	Yes	Mark Sadler
	Provision of medals and trophies	Yes	Julia Willcocks
	Competition entries management	Yes	Mark Sadler
	Competition delivery – Field of play management	Yes	Julia Willcocks
	Competition delivery – Welfare	Yes	Lynn Harrison
	Competition delivery – Recruitment and provision of technical officials	Yes	Officials Coordinator – David Greenaway
	Competition delivery – Technology (electronic timing, meet management)	Yes	Mark Sadler/Natalie Ford
	Competition delivery – Streaming Video	Yes	Provision of equipment and oversight: Mike Lambert Setup and staffing: Matt Legge
	Post meet reporting	Yes	Swimming Secretary
	Financial management – Invoicing and payment reconciliation	Yes	Creation of invoice data and invoicing – Swimming Secretary Reconciliation – Treasurer
Swimming Development	Development of coaches, and athletes – Including talent development	Yes	Dropped ball in 2023; Winchester and Rushmoor in 2024

	Development of officials	Yes	County Officials Development Officer – George Adamson
Risk management	Ensuring risk assessments are in place for all swimming activities	Yes	Swimming Secretary
South East Region	Liaison with the South East Region Swimming Group	No	Swimming Secretary
Communication	Maintenance of information relating to speed swimming on the County Website and via email and social media	Yes	Swimming Secretary supported by Mark Sadler for Competition
Capital equipment	Ensuring that the necessary equipment is available to support speed swimming activities, including overseeing the storage and use of capital assets (such as computers, printers, PA and Video equipment, Radios and necessary network and communication equipment)	Yes	Swimming Manager: 2 computers (currently used for streaming video) County currently used PA equipment owned by South East Region. County owned equipment for meet management at County Championships held and maintained by Mark Sadler. Video equipment held and maintained by Mike Lambert