

Notes from Region Artistic Swimming Meeting with Regional Artistic Swimming Clubs at 3.00pm on Saturday 27 November 2021 via Zoom Platform

Present: Roger Downing (Regional President - Chair)  
Mary Hooper (Regional AS Manager)  
Georgina Coombs (Regional AS Workforce Lead)  
Sarah Pullan (Regional AS Competitions Lead)  
Sarah Garrett (Regional AS Grading Co-ordinator)  
Jackie Hilliard (Regional Club Development Officer)  
Chrissie Robinson (Regional Chair)  
Alyson Bashford (Taunton)  
Isabella Hutton (Calne)  
Tricia Maggs (City of Bristol)  
Abi Jay (Seagulls)  
Victoria (Secretary City of Bristol)  
Katy McKen (Team Bath)  
Chris Seall (Dorset)  
Sam Fancourt (Cheltenham)  
Christine Merrifield (Kernow)  
Viv Ebbs (Kernow)

1. Welcome by the Area Manager

Mary welcomed everyone to the meeting and reported that there have been major changes at Swim England resulting in a reduction in staff as well as courses unable to be delivered.

Clubs to please inform Mary of any changes to club officers and emails addresses.

**ACTION All Clubs**

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Mike Coles (Regional Management Board)  
Clair Murphy (Calne)  
Rachel Bennetts (Kernow)

3. Presentation by Jackie Hilliard - Regional Club Development Officer

Clubs are run by volunteers and Jackie's presentation was to enable the recruitment of parent volunteers and the legal requirements in doing so. There is a template for parents to complete should they wish to become a volunteer for their club. The requirement for anyone on poolside is the completion of a Safeguarding course (free through the Region) and to be DBS checked. If clubs are working for Swim Mark or Stronger Affiliation all qualifications must be updated and entered onto OMS by the end of January 2022.

The presentation outlined the format for a meeting with parents, led by the Chairperson of the club:

- Introduce Chairperson, committee and people in other roles
- The history of the club
- Aims and what the club has to offer
- Affiliations to County, Regions etc
- SwimMark and Stronger Affiliation
- How parents can help
- Volunteer roles – on and off poolside
- Codes of conduct
- Payment of fees
- Young volunteers programme
- Succession planning
- The need for a club Welfare Officer and their role

Jackie reported that there are about 14 courses in January, February and March available for volunteers and there are many roles that parents can take on to help the club, on and off poolside. Training and support are available for volunteers.

Mary to send details of Safeguarding and Team Managers courses to clubs, noting that clubs are required to have a qualified Team Manager on poolside at all competitions. **ACTION MH**

The meeting thanked Jackie for her presentation.

#### 4. Competition calendar for 2022 Sarah Pullan – Regional AS Competition Lead

Sarah noted that she is currently the only qualified AS referee in the Region. The Region is hoping to be able to run live competitions from next year. In future all competitions must be self sufficient. There are a range of swimmers in the Region, of different abilities, and competitions are planned for all levels of swimmer as follows:

- February/March 2022 at Cheltenham: Regional Age Groups: Figures and Routines, following the format of National Age Groups but with the qualifying standard being one level lower than NAGS.
- June 2022 (approx. 4 weeks before Combo Cup) at Cheltenham: Novice Figures competition and Combo competition. Figures still to be decided and Combo conditions as for National Combo Cup.
- Mid November 2022 at Plymouth: Duet Competition: Free Duet from 9-10 age group up to and including Masters. To note – Lee Cobb is the contact for bookings at Plymouth Life Centre
- Masters Championships: Waiting for the date for National Masters to see if a Regional Masters competition can be included in the calendar to take place before National Masters. Georgie thought it would be beneficial to have the Masters competitions earlier in the year or maybe involve them in the Regional Age Groups solo and duet. For consideration by the Competition Committee. **ACTION SP**

Sarah reported that the Competition sub-committee has been unable to meet during Covid restrictions. 4-5 volunteers are required for the committee and must be prepared to also help on the day at competitions. To note that the committees as well as volunteers are populated by county representatives.

Mary reported that Alyson is now the Chief Recorder for SW Regional Artistic Swimming events. She successfully passed the course and will work with Richard Crisp and Matt Crowe (currently in Bristol) from the South East Region. Congratulations to Alyson.

#### 5. Workforce Development Georgie Coombs

##### 5.1 Athlete Development

Georgie reported that she has also taken on the role of Athlete Development. She would like the whole Region to be involved with development as well as a volunteer to assist her in her role. Georgie outlined her proposals for Athlete Development as follows:

- The Development of a Regional Squad and a Regional Pathway, prioritising 11–14 year-olds in 2022, in line with the National Pathway for athletes: Club - County – Region – National. Athletes attending the trial must not be part of the Youth or National programme.
- Athletes will attend a trial and selection day in January 2022, possibly at Cheltenham (to be confirmed). The level recommended is Grade 2 Bronze in Figures, Routines and Land grades. 10-15 athletes will be selected.
- All Regional Club coaches will be expected to support this programme and will be invited to attend the four training days leading up to the Regional Games in May. To note the National Squad trains at Hengrove Pool in Bristol, and it may be possible for the Regional Squad to train alongside the National Squad. Georgie to check the dates with Karen. **ACTION GC**
- The programme must be financially sustainable to support the future of the programme. The cost for the four training days will be in the range of £100-£150. The fee for the selection day is £20 and this will go against the training day fee for those who are selected for the squad.
- The four training sessions will lead up to the Regional Games which take place at the end of May – the Friday and Saturday of half term week

At the selection day athletes will be expected to complete the following:

- Land Grade:
  1. Ariana (land grade 3)
  2. Plank Hold (land grade 1)
  3. Head stand – Tuck to vertical then split
  
- Speed Swimming:
  1. Dive
  2. Timed swim starting in the water
  3. 25m Front Crawl
  4. 100m Front Crawl (starting in the water)
  
- Artistic Swimming
  1. Hanging Vertical
  2. Fishtail
  3. Bent Knee Surface Arch into Knight Hold (first section of Swan figure)
  4. Barracuda

Georgie will expect to see quality in skills and athletes holding a minimum of Grade 2 Bronze. She is planning to include 15-18 year olds in the Development programme next year.

Discussion about expected times in speed swimming. Roger to give Georgie some guidance on speed swimming times that can be achieved. **ACTION RAD**

The training day structure will be as follows:

- 3-4 hours pool time
- 1-2 hours landwork
- 1 hour education to include sports science, nutrition, psychology and lifestyle. The education session will be open to athletes, parents and coaches.
- Athletes will work on speed, strength, flexibility and the 13-15 age group figures

## 5.2 Workforce

Georgie reported that Regions can deliver Level 1 Judges courses, but Level 2 Judges courses are held nationally, although these will take place after Christmas.

There was a discussion regarding payment and expenses. Chrissie reported that the new national guidance is that no expenses will be paid to volunteers. Lead coaches can be paid £25 per day. Chrissie to send Georgie the up-to-date figures of payments that can be made. **ACTION CR**

To note that Club coaches and officials are volunteers and will not be able to afford to travel the distances to development days etc in such a vast Region without help with expenses. Roger to consider the whole picture and look at the costings with a view to asking Counties if they can help. **ACTION RAD**

## 6. Grade days Sarah Garrett

Sarah reported that Grade days will return to face-to-face sessions in 2022. Grading will be held at:

- Cheltenham in mid-January

and at Marlborough College on the following dates:

- 19 March 2022
- 14 May 2022

Calne will help with the organisation at Marlborough. Mary to contact Clair Murphy. **ACTION MH**

The entry will be £17.50 per grade.

There may have to be a restriction on numbers on poolside at one time and it may not be possible to have a “crossover” of swimmers in the changing rooms when moving to another grade.

Parents will not be allowed in the building and each club should have one responsible adult in reception as a contact for the swimmers.

Grade days will be for the host Region only, and no travel between Regions will be allowed.

If swimmers fail a grade, they will not have to wait a month before taking it again. This rule will apply until 22 March 2022.

7. AOB

7.1 Courses

To note the following Artistic Swimming Courses:

4 December 2021: Judges Refresher

20 January 2022: Judges Course

24 February 2022: Judges Course

12 March 2022: Judges Course

The Level 1 Coaches course is being re-vamped in January 2022.

The Calendar will be available in the next few weeks.

**ACTION MH**

7.2 Music Licences

There has been an increase in the cost of music licences to £390 per annum. Agreed that the information needs to be updated. Roger to contact Swim England for information and he will pass the information on to clubs.

**ACTION RD**

7.3 Competition Licences

Sarah P reported that competitions still must be licensed.

7.4 Welfare

Roger reported that it is very important for clubs to keep members' Safeguarding training and DBS certificates up to date. If members are not certain of their status the club Membership Secretary will be able to print off all the information.

8. Closing remarks from Roger Downing SW Artistic Chair

Roger thanked everyone for attending the meeting, It was good to welcome so many clubs He stressed that the Region is there to help, so please keep in contact.

He thanked all the Officers for their presentations and thanked Chrissie for her input.