

Minutes of Region Artistic Swimming Meeting at 8.30pm on Monday 5 June 2023 via Zoom Platform

Present:

Roger Downing (Chair)
Mary Hooper (AS Manager)
Sarah Pullan (Competitions)
Georgie Coombs (Workforce)
Sarah Garrett (Grades)
Alyson Bashford (Somerset)
Chris Seall (Dorset)
Chrissie Robinson (Regional Chair)
Viv Ebbs (Cornwall)

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

a) Welcome

Roger welcomed everyone to the meeting. County Reps have been invited to obtain their views.

Apologies were received from Mike Coles (Regional Water Polo Manager), Christine Merrifield (Cornwall), Geoff Pearce (Regional Finance Officer), Paul Robbins (Regional Vice-chair) and Angela Boitsidis (Regional AS Development Coach).

b) Notice of Any Other Business not covered below.

Congratulations to the Regional Team which came second out of six Regions in the Regional Games. Well done to the athletes and the Regional coaches.

c) Declarations of Interest.

No declarations of interest were raised.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

a) Region AS Committee 6.3.2023

Minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting

b) AS Leadership Group 25.3.2023

Noted.

c) Regional Board Minutes 12.4.2023

Noted.

3. Matters Arising

a) Terms of Reference

Minutes to be completed within 14 days of the meeting.

4. Regional Manager Report

a) Calendar 2023 Draft 7

Agreed

b) Music Equipment

Mary reported that funding is available to purchase new music equipment. Sarah P is awaiting information from a local company and will follow this up again. **Action SP**

Steve Merrett has agreed to be responsible for the music equipment and play the music at competitions. Sarah to contact him. **Action SP**

- c) Webinars
The Region has paid for three webinars updating coaches and judges, hosted by members of the Leadership Group. Unfortunately, they were all on the same night each week, a training night for many clubs, therefore many people were unable to join the webinars. Mary to ask Karen if they can be recorded and also request a list of attendees. **Action MH**

- d) To note Mary's new email address (swartistic.manager@btinternet.com). Clubs to please delete Mary's previous address. **Action All**

- e) Budget
Roger noted that Artistic Swimming is always well within budget. To add to this the takings at the Cheltenham competition were high, which helps to pay the pool hire charges.

It was agreed that Counties should be funding some of the volunteers to go on courses. Expenses are being reviewed and it is important to help the volunteers. County Reps to follow up. **Action County Reps**

Agreed that travel expenses can be paid to judges for Competitions and Grade Days. **Action MH**

5. Regional Competitions

- a) Certificate of Exception (goggles)
Roger reported that Artistic Swimming in Loughborough is trying to follow the policy that is used in swimming where the application is only made once, and the Referee receives a report that they will have an Exception. Roger to contact Maria Ramos and Claire Coleman to ask if there is any progress on the matter. **Action RAD**

- b) Novice Figures and Combo Competition
Sarah reported that the number of entries was large, and the competition went well. There were a lot of volunteers but a shortage of judges. There was a discussion about the number of entries allowed from clubs per judge. 5 entries per judge did not even allow for a team to swim. If it had been 6 entries per judge, some of the clubs who were not there could probably have entered. For further discussion. **Action MH**

Sarah requested more help on the organisation side. It is too much for one person to take on. The requirement would be as follows and travel expenses will be paid:

- 2 people to take on the organisation and preparation for a competition
- Attendance at all 3 Regional Competitions in order to develop an efficient process
- On the day to run Field of Play

Members to ask their clubs for volunteers. Parents need to volunteer in order to keep the competitions running. **Action All**

- c) Combo Cup Ponds Forge 8.7.2023
Noted

- d) Duet and Novice Figures Competition Plymouth 18.11.2023
To note the pool is booked and we are awaiting licensing advice from the Leadership Group. Mary reported that the competition will require a Level 2 and a Level 3 Licence. It appears from the Licensing Guidelines that for a Level 2 competition only 2 Duets per age group per club are allowed to enter.

Chrissie reported that major changes are taking place for clubs to enter competitions. New DBS and Safeguarding qualifications will be required, and welfare is very important. Teams must be accompanied by a qualified coach and separate qualified Team Manager. If males are in the team a separate qualified Team Manager must accompany them.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that it was not possible to put a closing date on poolside accreditation.

6 Regional Grade Days

a) 13.5.2023

Report received from Sarah G. There were a large number of swimmers for grading and the day went well. Following some confusion over the room for splits, in future the Small Hall will be used for splits assessments.

There was a discussion about providing the judges with laminated sheets showing the elements they were judging. Sarah to tell Mary what is required, and she will organise it with the South West Region office. **Action SG**

b) 22.7.2023

To note that enough clubs have agreed to attend this extra grade day at Hengrove, and the pool is booked from 1.30-5.30pm

c) 14.10.2023

The venue at Marlborough is booked

7. Regional Development Squad

Roger to circulate the report from Angela. The meeting congratulated SWR Squad on their second place in the Regional Games.

There was a discussion about some 2008 swimmers from other Regions. Committee to provide very clear guidelines on the criteria for the squads in the Regional Games. Well done to Angela and the Assistant coaches for a successful season.

8. Workforce and Officials Training

a) FINA changes, Regional Roll out and Swim England Deadlines

Georgie noted the World Aquatics Rule changes and the upskill courses for Judges and Referees. The final upskill for Judges is in October.

There was a discussion about the Technical Controller and the Coach Card in this country. The meeting agreed that there are so many major changes that it will be difficult for coaches and volunteers to implement them in such a short time, especially the smaller clubs.

b) Coach Training

For volunteers wishing to enrol on a Coaches course, Mary has information on available grants. Clubs to contact Mary. **Action CLUBS**

There was a discussion about Coaches and Teachers past qualifications and how they would convert to current levels. Roger to circulate the matrix for clarification of qualifications. **Action RAD**

c) Officials Training

Georgie will arrange a Level 1 Judges course, possibly on Zoom or at Hengrove, on 16 September providing the PowerPoint details have been received. This course would be based on the new judging system. **Action GC**

Mary to contact clubs to see how many members would be willing to take the course. **Action MH**

9. Swim England Updates

a) Heart of Aquatics

Chrissie reported that there is a big emphasis on Safeguarding and Welfare, and it is very important for people to understand. She encouraged clubs to keep checking Wavepower which is constantly being amended.

Roger to circulate the link for Heart of Aquatics. **Action RAD**

- b) Transgender and Non-Binary Competition
Roger reported that each discipline has different guidelines and there is an updated policy for non-contact sport. Swim England has been driving it forward in order to produce guidelines by September 2023.

Currently athletes self-identify themselves and any challenges should be sent to Swim England. Challenges cannot be made at the event.

- c) Connecting with Coaches Session (5 & 6)
Roger reported that a new requirement for coaches and teachers is that they must have safeguarding training and this is effective from 1 September 2023. From 1 January 2024, they can only have Swim England Safeguarding qualifications, although current qualifications will be valid until their expiry date. Anyone with the Swim England qualification can take an online refresher course, but for all other qualifications people must take the Swim England course. Only people with the correct Safeguarding and Enhanced with Barring DBS will be allowed on poolside.

All coaches and volunteers should ask their Membership Secretary for a printout of their information held on OMS. **Action ALL CLUBS**

Chrissie noted the Foundation of Equality Course which is free during UK Coaching week and can be found on the IOS website. Welfare Officers and Cub Chairs must attend this webinar which will finish by midnight on Friday 9 June. Members to inform their clubs urgently.

Action ALL

Any Other Business

- a) National Volunteering Awards
Chrissie reported that these Awards are open to Artistic Swimming coaches, technical officials and volunteers. Clubs are advised to check the criteria if they have candidates to propose for these awards. **Action ALL CLUBS**
- b) Team Manager, Coach and Chaperone Policy
Chrissie reported that all activities in the Policy have been reviewed. The minimum supervision ratios for swimmers under 18 years is 1 qualified coach and 1 qualified team manager for 10 swimmers, followed by a ratio of 1:10. This policy will come into effect on 1 September 2023. Clubs are advised to read the FAQs for the document. Clubs can work together if they only have 1 supervisor for their club at competitions. **Action ALL CLUBS**
- c) Regional Conference 2023
Agreed that the Conference would take place in September on Zoom. Date to be agreed.
- d) Future Committee Dates
The next meeting will take place on Zoom on Monday 11 September. Date to be confirmed for a meeting in December.

To note that there should be a County Rep from Gloucestershire in attendance at future committee meetings. **Action GLOS CLUBS**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.10pm

Circulation: Roger Downing, Mary Hooper, Sarah Pullan, Georgina Coombs, Sarah Garrett, Alyson Bashford, Chris Seall, Chrissie Robinson, Christine Merrifield, Mike Coles, Geoff Pearce, Paul Robbins, Angela Boitsidis, Viv Ebbs