

The Swim England South West Region Water Polo Technical Committee Meeting held on Monday 19.02.2024 via Zoom

Attendees: Simon Tomlinson, Chair SESWR Water Polo Technical Committee (CT)
Chrissie Robinson, Director and Chair, SESWRL Ltd. (CR)
Mike Coles, SESWR Water Polo Manager (MC)
John Spicer, Boy's Head Coach (JS)
Nick Hume, Girl's Head Coach (NH)
Jim Robinson, Finance Officer for Water Polo (JR)
Sue Webb, Talent Centre Administrator (SW)
Stuart Noyce, Devon Representative (SN)
Brad Poole, Somerset ASA Representative (BP)
Glen Mitchell, Dorset Representative (GM)
Toby Hogg, Cornwall Representative (TH)
Phil Whiting, BWWPL Representative (PW)

1. **Welcome from Chair and apologies**

1.1. The new chair of the Water Polo Committee, Simon Tomlinson, introduced himself to those present, and thanked everyone for their attendance.

1.2. Apologies were received from Chris Selby, the Wiltshire Representative; Paul Robins, deputy chair of SESWR; Geoff Pearce, Finance Director for SESWR.

2. Declaration of Interests

2.1. ST declared an interest with Wyvern Swimwear as regards the supplying of equipment. Any discussions that took place on this, he would withdraw.

3. Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 25th September 2023.

3.1. These were formerly agreed as a true record of that meeting. Copy can be found [here](#).

4. Matters arising from those minutes.

4.1. There were no matters arising. Everything covered in the agenda.

5. Updates from Groups (noted as read):

5.1. Swim England Water Polo Leadership Group met on 5th February 2024. No minutes had been published at the time of the meeting.

Post Meeting Note: The minutes of this meeting have now been published, and can be found attached to these minutes as Appendix I.

5.2. Swim England Competition Calendar ([click here](#)).

5.3. Swim England South West Management Board ([click here](#)).

6. Diversity and inclusivity

6.1. In the absence of the newly-appointed Diversity and Inclusivity representative on the board, Mr Paul Robbins, MC gave a brief overview of this to the meeting. Copies of the plan can be downloaded [here](#).

6.2. It was advised that all members of the water polo committee should attend a presentation by Swim England on Diversity and Inclusivity, and they can sign up for it [here](#).

7. Codes of Conduct

7.1. All committee members, coaches, parents and players (over 18 and under 18), and officials needed to sign the appropriate Code of Conduct, and return them to MC at the earliest opportunity.

1.1. MC provided a link to all of the necessary forms:

[Committee Members and Officials](#)

[Coaches and Teachers](#)

[Parents and Guardians](#)

[Athletes Over 18](#)

[Athletes Under 18](#)

8. Updates from Head Coaches

- 8.1. NH gave a report on the last competition, which unfortunately he had been unable to attend as was in Doha, and SW had been coach of the 2010s, and they finished a creditable third place. He then proceeded to talk about Talent Centres in the absence of Craig Figes, the Swim England Water Polo Programme Lead. He gave a details insight into the programmes, and how the two programmes could possibly come together in the South West as they were already closely aligned. Discussion took place between all the committee members. It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged with Craig Figes to discuss.
- 8.2. John Spicer reported back on the boys competition, and also mentioned the clashes of the RTCs with NAGs. This would come up under RTCs.
9. Update on inter-regional competitions.
 - 9.1. After much discussion regarding the dates for the inter-regionally competition that went on in the meeting, post meeting all dates have now been published on the water polo calendar:
 - 9.1.1. U14 (Born 2011 and under) Boys to be hosted by the West Midland Region at the Walsall Gala Baths on 30 November-1 December
 - 9.1.2. U14 (Born 2011 and under) Girls to be hosted by the West Midland Region at the Walsall Gala Baths on 7-8 December
 - 9.1.3. U16 (Born 2009 and under) Girls. Division 1 to be hosted by the North West Region at the Liverpool Aquatics Centre on 29-30 June for South East, North West, Ireland, South West and London. Division 2 to be hosted by the West Midland Region at Walsall Gala Baths on 29-30 June for all other entrants
 - 9.1.4. U16 (Born 2009 and under) Boys. Division 1 to be hosted by the North West Region at the Liverpool Aquatics Centre on 29-30 June for North West, South East, West Midlands, Ireland and South West. Division 2 to be hosted by the North East Region at Bolton One on 29-30 June for all other entrants.
 - 9.1.5. U18 (Born 2007 and under) Girls. Division 1 to be hosted by the East Region at Habs (Haberdashers' Boys' School in Watford) on 28-29 September for North West, Ireland, West Midlands, South West and East. The Division 2 venue is still to be confirmed on 28-29 September for all other entrants.
 - 9.1.6. U18 (Born 2007 and under) Boys. Division 1 to be hosted by the London Region at Habs (Haberdashers' Boys' School in Watford) on 12-13 October for Ireland, North West, London, East Midlands and South West. The Division 2 venue is still to be confirmed on 12-13 October for all other entrants.
 - 9.2. Concerns had been expressed regarding the Under-14s competition, but this has been alleviated with the publishing of the above dates. Discussion had taken place on whether the south west would hold it's own inter-regional event.
10. Inter-County Championships at Millfield on 21st and 22nd September.
 - 10.1. MC confirmed the booking.
 - 10.2. It was agreed that if one county did not have enough players in one particular age group, then two counties would be permitted to join together to play. Competition Conditions would be amended to allow this.
 - 10.3. Devon would be contacted through the county secretary to see if they wished to enter two teams, and additional players be allowed to play for other teams.
 - 10.4. Entry forms would go out at the end of April.
11. Regional Academy and update on Talent Camps.
 - 11.1. The update on Talent Camps had been covered earlier in the agenda.
 - 11.2. Swim England's IoS had requested to use 22nd June to help with practicals, as well as another date in July. This was accepted on condition they ran their plans past the two head coaches prior.
 - 11.3. The clashes of RTCs was discussed, and it was pointed out that the bookings for Millfield had to be made well in advance, before dates were published by Swim England and Talent Camps. MC would go back to Millfield to see if there could be some movements. Post meeting note: Unable to change dates, but extra booking in July was made.
 - 11.4. Discussion took place on whether boys in Devon should be allowed to attend the RTC being held in Exeter, but after much discussion it was decided that they boys most attend Gloucester and the girls go to Exeter on 24th February, when the sessions had to

be split because of Somerset holding their county championships for swimming at Millfield.

11.5. Remaining dates for the year were as follows:

- 16/03/2024 17:00 until 21:00 (Saturday)
- 20/04/2024 17:00 until 21:00 (Saturday)
- 05/05/2024 10:30 until 13:30 (Sunday)
- 22/06/2024 17:00 until 21:00 (Saturday)
- 06/07/2024 12:00 until 15:00 (Saturday) Assistant Coaches Course running
- 07/09/2024 17:00 until 21:00 (Saturday)
- 12/10/2024 17:00 until 21:00 (Saturday)
- 16/11/2024 17:00 until 21:00 (Saturday)

12. National Age Group Championships

12.1. Mention was given for the event taking place at GL1 on 20th and 21st April.

13. Finance Report and Budgets

13.1. JR gave an update to the meeting regarding budgets and why they had been reduced for this year.

14. Water Polo Training Courses.

14.1. IoS had published a number of dates for coaching courses.

14.2. Referees' Course had been arranged for 8th April. The SE Water Polo Leadership Group had granted permission for the South West to trial Parts 1 & 2 online, as opposed to only allowing Part 1 to be held online, and Part 2 being a face-to-face.

14.3. Table Officials Course had been arranged for 22nd April.

15. County Officer Reports

15.1. Cornwall currently has 2 Waterpolo clubs providing junior Waterpolo at both St Austell & Newquay, after the last SESWWP meeting they have had a zoom meeting between the clubs coaches and put a plan in place to enter teams into the 2024 inter-counties. With the clubs make up of juniors they will aim to put 2 junior squads into the event a mixed under 12's & a under 16's team, in addition to a senior men's team. They are hoping to have enough to make the under 12's solely from Cornish players but with the under 16's are hoping to receive help with additional playing numbers from Devon. St Austell juniors currently have training numbers between 13-15 with ages ranging from 8 to 13, they are trying to improve opportunities by strengthening a relationship with Newquay and participating in joint training sessions. They are hoping to contribute some players to the under 12 Cornwall team this Autumn. Newquay Waterpolo currently have between 20 & 25 juniors training on a weekly basis with 2 of the elder juniors recently progressing up to the senior sessions and playing with the men's team. They are hoping to get some friendly matches arranged with some Devon clubs for their under 16's to get some much needed match experience. Currently the only senior team in Cornwall are at Newquay who are taking part in the Devon League for the second consecutive year. They will also be taking part in multiple friendlies scheduled and one day tournaments including hosting a men's Waterpolo tournament at Trevassack Lake on the Lizard Peninsula in September. They currently have a playing squad of 22 members including multiple under 18's looking to experience more game time this season.

15.2. Devon reported that the Devon County Cup Competition 2023 were completed. All four competitions were won by Exeter. Devon League 2024 Started in February. U13 mixed– Exeter x 2, Paignton, Newton A, Barnstaple, Taunton. U15 mixed– Barnstaple, Devonport, Exeter, Newton A, Paignton, Taunton. U17 mixed – Barnstaple, Devonport, Exeter, Newton A. U19 boys – No competition. Ladies – Devonport, Exeter, Newton Abbot. Mens - Barnstaple, Devonport, Exeter, Newton A, Newquay. Minimum age for competing clarification. Following the publication of the 2024 Swim England Handbook, and the revised Rules on ages, it was apparent that this change could impact on player availability for some clubs. The matter was raised with Swim England, and I am pleased to say that we can now play 9 year olds in our U13 tournaments in 2024, subject to the following: "A risk assessment must be undertaken by ALL Clubs who wish to use players of 9 years of age, as to their ability, and suitability for these events. A hard copy of the Risk Assessment MUST be brought to the event, and handed in to the Table prior to the commencement of matches. These assessments must include – Player Name, Gender, Swim England Registration

Number and Name of Club, it should be signed and dated by a Club Official.” Clubs must have three Officials on the poolside, ie Coach, Team Manager, or two Chaperones. Because this is a mixed gender Competition, then their must be one female and one male. excluding the Coach, ALL must be identified on the Team Sheet, and must be qualified, and hold current Swim England Certification for the position they hold. The team manager and chaperone(s) need not be on poolside, but MUST be in the spectator/viewing gallery, and be able to reach the poolside within two minutes, they must also be available during the match. “The Coach has a duty of care to take all factors into account when selecting a Team, including, but not exclusively, the age, gender,, physical capability and skills of all players in the team, and of the opposing team” Wavepower 2024.

- 15.3. Dorset: Junior Polo: We have made Pool Bookings for five monthly county training sessions in the lead-up to the SW Inte-counties competition. 23/3, 13/4, 4/5, 29/6, 14/9. These will be 2 hour sessions for boys and girls aged 13-17 with some classroom based work before hand. Invitations are yet to be sent out. Bournemouth and W&P junior teams to take part in a “Hampshire” tournament April 2024 at Eton (details to be finalized). Mens Polo: Bournemouth and W&P continue to complete their fixtures in Hampshire league. Although a Dorset league is not currently running, Bridport and playing friendly fixtures Home and away against the other two Dorset teams. We will hold a ‘Dorset Cup’ later in the year between the three main clubs on 1 day Tournament basis. Womens Polo: All Dorset Clubs have females regularly training but there has been neither enough numbers or appetite to compete as club teams. There is a proposal to form a Hampshire Women’s League which we will investigate if we can enter as a ‘Dorset’ women’s team.
- 15.4. Somerset reported that speaking recently with the three main clubs in Somerset, Taunton, Weston super Mare and Frome, between us in terms of Junior numbers we have approx 30 U’13’s, 25 U15’s and slightly less U17’s with around 15-20. These are approx numbers taking part in training sessions so many will be far from Country standard but still gives a good idea of what we are dealing with. I keep meaning to get in contact with Yoevil Spartans who I know have a good training structure and I now have a contact there so it will be good to have some communication with them. Swindon are hosting a Junior Tournament coming up in March and we hope to have some players from the Somerset clubs taking part in that so that will be some great experience for them. I myself, if I can steal some pool time from the swimming club, hope to host something similar in Frome in the summer, giving the Juniors another competition to look forward to and gain experience from.
- 15.5. JS gave a verbal update on Gloucester County situation, commenting that water polo was commencing at Tewksbury.

16. Any other business.

16.1. There was no other business.

Meeting closed at 20:44.

Dates of next meetings:

Monday 24th June 2024

Monday 23rd September 2024

Monday 2nd December 2024

Monday 20th January 2025