



# **Annual Report**

**April 2015 to March 2016**

## Chairman

Over the past year, the staff and Management Board of ASA East Region have endeavoured to steer the organisation to best serve its clubs and members. Freed from the ASA's priority of increasing participation, we are able to focus on providing support to clubs, running high quality regional competitions, and developing our athletes and workforce (both volunteers and paid).

Although managed by volunteers, we do have a small, but dedicated, team of paid staff who work extremely hard to make sure that ASA East Region is an efficient and effective organisation. Now happily settled into our new, and improved office accommodation, our Divisional Officer Manager, Kelly Stannard, is often the first point of contact for clubs and members and always endeavours to help those who need our support. Kelly always goes the extra mile to help those who contact ASA East Region and the Management Board was delighted that her excellent 'can do' attitude was recognised at the 2016 ASA Staff Awards Ceremony when she received a Gold award, for Excellence in Customer Service.

The Regional Club Support Officer, Leanne Brace, and Regional Development Support Officer, Amy Bryant, constantly strive for excellence for our Region, putting clubs and members at the heart of everything they do. They both work in partnership with relevant staff at the ASA to ensure that activities promoted by the Region complement any national programmes.

The Management Board approves the annual budget and plans, and oversees the implementation of plans and strategies against this. The Management Board comprises officers, elected members and representatives from our six counties. During the year we have welcomed Phil Pelling to the Board, as the Bedfordshire representative, replacing Gerry Metcalf who had become an Elected Board Member. The Board has met on six occasions over the past year and has a mix of face to face meetings and conference call meetings. All our Board Members are busy people with a range of other voluntary responsibilities in their clubs and counties. I thank them for the time they give to East Region. Faced with rising balances, the Management Board has taken the decision to invest a greater share of these resources in development across all disciplines. More courses are being organised for coaches and volunteers and additional development camps offered to athletes. We are confident that these initiatives will make East Region stronger in the medium to long term.

The year has not been without its challenges. As a result of a number of resignations, we have seen the appointment of new managers for diving, swimming and synchronised swimming. In addition, the Region has revisited the way it deals with applications for licences for open swimming meets, making temporary arrangements pending the appointment of a new Licensing Manager. In March 2016 Dave Harman resigned from his positions as Elected Board Member and Disability Swimming Manager. The Management Board has advertised the vacancy for Disability Manager, but has decided to defer the election of a replacement for the Elected Board Member post until the 2016 Annual Council Meeting (ACM). I thank all the former managers and officers, many of whom have given years of service to the Region, for their dedication and hard work.

Gerry Metcalf, President for 2014/15, had a great year representing East Region at an impressive range of county, regional and national events across all disciplines events. At the ACM in September, the presidential chain of office passed to Kay McGuire, and she has also been very busy travelling round the region meeting volunteers and athletes from all our sports. Although the ACM failed to elect a President Elect, I am pleased to report that, after much searching throughout the counties and across all disciplines, the solution was found within the Management Board, when Ian Knight was appointed.

One issue which has vexed the Management Board over the past year is the issue of regional awards. Prior to 2015, the awards had been linked to the ASA Volunteer Awards, providing a 'regional heat' to the national awards. Changes to the format and timing for the ASA Awards for 2015 meant that this was no longer practical. The Management Board took this as an opportunity of looking at the format and categories for the awards and has come up with a more streamlined package for 2016 which we feel better meets the needs of clubs and members.

When I attend events and competitions in the East Region, I am constantly amazed by how much our volunteers do to support aquatics in the region, whether it is at a regional, county or club level or, in some cases, all of these. We are truly fortunate to have so many dedicated people who are prepared to give their time and expertise so that our athletes can continue to enjoy their chosen sport and I thank all our volunteers.

**Joan Wheeler**  
**Chairman**

## Membership

During the past year there has been a slight increase in the total membership, from 21748 in March 2015, to 22128, in March 2016. There has been a reduction in category 1 membership, possibly due to either the loss of learn to swim from clubs to pool providers, or to clubs making alternative arrangements for the insurance of their learn to swim members. There has been a significant increase in category 2 members, and a slight increase in category 3 members. The figures for the different categories of membership are shown below:

	March 2015	March 2016
Category 1	8846	8464
Category 2	8467	9089
Category 3	4435	4575

## Finance

The figures below are the current view of what will be submitted to the Independent Examiner. The full set of accounts will be published separately once they have been seen by the Independent Examiner.

	2015/16	2014/15
Income	287,913.93	252,116.17
Expenditure	235,482.87	182,413.94
<b>Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>52,431.06</b>	<b>69,702.23</b>

Fixed Assets	13,835.42	5,926.64
Current Assets	379,457.82	339,736.70
Current Liabilities	855.62	5,638.78
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>392,455.62</b>	<b>340,024.56</b>

The Regional Fees remain unchanged for 2016 at £5 per category 1 and 2 member, and £35 per club. ASA East Region is in a healthy financial state, although it should be noted that the Management Board has set a negative budget for 2016/17 in order to offer a greater range of development opportunities to the athletes and workforce, both paid and volunteers.

## Club Development Group

The Club Development Group has met four times this year to oversee swim21 and to steer the development strategy for clubs and volunteers across all aquatic disciplines.

2015-16 has been a very productive year for club development in the East Region. We consistently grow the number of learners making use of development opportunities. The appointment of Amy Bryant as Regional Development Support Officer has enabled the region to explore further ways of supporting the smaller disciplines with development both in their clubs and at a regional level. The Club Development Group (CDG) continues to be at the heart of club development for the region in promoting good practice, providing opportunities for development, and to develop proposals of future initiatives. This year has also seen a greater focus on the education opportunities offered to our clubs and their members, and the CDG has attempted to respond to the demands by organising a greater range and number of courses and workshops. In addition, the region subsidises the courses by funding the venue hire for each course, and also, by using the 'club offer' for courses, costs can be kept at a heavily reduced rate for the clubs.

Some of the group's achievements in the past year include;

- 159 people attended Team Manager training
- 31 people attended Time to Listen workshops

- 102 people attended a Helpers course ( a £50 grant has been offered to clubs to assist with delivery of the course)
- 14 people completed the online training to become an Aquatic Helper Presenter
- 32 people attended East Region delivered Safeguarding and Protecting workshops
- 3 young people completed the Young Aquatic Leaders course
- 2 County conferences delivered, reaching 215 attendees in total
- 7 Club Captains attended online training
- 2 people completed online Workforce Coordinator Training
- 2 people completed Train the Trainer Training
- 60 clubs completed the swim21 health check
- 6 new clubs accredited with swim21
- £1500 of funding paid to clubs to assist with specific initiatives to increase the membership of 5- 19 year olds
- The library of best practice case studies on the website downloads now stands at 40,746
- 8 coaches supported through the region's bursary scheme
- 2 Coaching Swimming tutors funded through the tutor trainee programme
- 7 x Level 1 coaching courses held across the region totalling 89 learners
- 1 x Level 2 coaching course totalling 12 learners

swim21 continues to be a priority for the group. For clubs which are already swim21 accredited, the CDG ensures that they carry out their health checks and, every effort is also made to engage additional clubs to see the benefits of swim21 and support them through the process to receiving accreditation. The region began the year with 63 clubs accredited with swim21 and ended the year with 66 clubs accredited. It is a great achievement for clubs to gain swim21 accreditation. Congratulations go to those clubs

## Diving

What another great year it has been for the region, clubs, coaches, divers and volunteers who together have delivered a competition and development programme envied by many other ASA regions.

### **Affiliated Clubs**

Since the last report, our affiliated diving clubs remains at eight. With the expected introduction of a new pool in Chelmsford, this may drop to seven affiliated clubs, as diving may not remain an aquatic activity within the planned centre. The region and the ASA Club Development Officer have been actively involved in discussions with the club and local authority in an attempt to ensure that diving remains part of the community and local authority plans. The region wishes Chelmsford Diving Club well for the future.

### **Swim 21 Accreditation**

Four of the regional diving clubs are swim 21 accredited. These are:

- Beaumont Diving Academy
- Luton Diving Club
- Cambridge Diving Team
- Southend Diving

The remaining four clubs continue to be targeted and encouraged by the region to seek registration and subsequent accreditation.

## Regional Competition

Over the past year the region has delivered three extremely successful 'open' diving competitions attracting divers from skills, age group and elite levels. The final competition, the Diving Club Championships, offered development opportunities for individuals to dive as part of a club team, with and against divers at all levels and ages. For the first time in any ASA Region, these championships included a 'Team Event' which involved one male and one female club diver performing a series of dives from the 3m springboard and platforms up to 10 metres high. This type of event was introduced by FINA in 2015 as part of their revised competition programme, and proved such a great success at the Diving Club Championships in 2015, that the event has now been extended to two days in 2016 to facilitate the anticipated entry numbers.

We are now planning for our 2016 Regional Diving Competitions, all of which will take place at Southend Diving Centre. These are:

16 <sup>th</sup> April 2016	Level 2 Regional Skills	National Qualification Event
21/22 <sup>th</sup> May 2016	Level 3 Regional Age Groups	National Qualification Event
8/9 <sup>th</sup> October 2015	Diving Club Championships	Club Team Event

In addition to our regional competition programme, the Diving Committee is excited to report that the region will host the ASA National Skills Finals for 2016 after being awarded this event by the ASA Diving Management Group in September 2015.

Well done to the events team and all those volunteers who made our events in 2015 such a great success and we now look forward to fantastic 2016 competition season.

## Coach Education

Education underpins coach and diver development, at whatever level, and is an important part of a diver's pathway to success. In 2015 the two Beacon programme sites at Luton and Southend continued to offer weekly and specialist development opportunities for divers, coupled with technical support for coaches within the region. A Beacon training day, under the theme 'Bringing the East Region's Talent Together' was held at Southend Diving Centre on 19<sup>th</sup> March. As part of the region's Coach Education Programme, further coach development opportunities have taken place. A Level 2 Coaching Course (Diving) which took place at Southend Diving Centre in October, was full with twelve candidates. All twelve coaches are now coaching at Level 2.

It had previously been reported that the region had agreed to accept a grant from the British Diving Coaches' Association, which would be ring-fenced for diving coach development. Monies received have now been put to good use by way of an entry subsidy for regional diving club coaches attending the Diving Pathway Conference (The Art of Coaching), held on the 1<sup>st</sup> /2<sup>nd</sup> October 2015 in Leeds. The remainder of the grant will go towards a further coach development opportunity in October 2016.

## Officials Development

ASA East Region has a list of experienced, and well trained officials who continue to support regional events year on year - for which the Region is extremely grateful. The region also recognises that support must still be offered at the competitions through the Officials Working Group, and new officials must be attracted by offering Officials Development seminars.

On 5<sup>th</sup> March 2016, an extremely successful and well supported Judges Development seminar took place. Ten new officials attended, taking the regional examination at the conclusion. All delegates scored over 72% in the examination, with four getting over the required 85% regional pass mark and they are now included on the Regional list of officials. These were:

- Eve Coomber Cambridge Dive Team
- Alice Clarke Cambridge Dive Team
- Becky White Dacorum Diving Club
- Katie Bell Dacorum Diving Club

The region congratulates these officials and look forward to seeing them all at our events in 2016.

## Volunteer Development

As the clubs and diving programmes expand and develop, the region is keen to respond. For the first time, the regional Diving Committee organised Team Manager training for our diving club volunteers. Module 1 (16 candidates) took place on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and was closely followed by Module 2 (for 18 candidates) on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015, both at Southend Diving Centre. The Awarding Body registered modules were delivered by Ian Mackenzie and, from the numbers attending, this training was clearly needed. Some of those who attended the training have already put their team manager skills into practice on recent diving trips, and this is good for everyone involved.

## Other diving news in brief

Congratulations and best wishes go to the following:

- Tyler Humphreys of Southend Diving, who was selected to represent GB at the Seven Nations International. Tyler is now the Seven Nations 3m Springboard Champion.
- Ben Cutmore of Cambridge/Luton Diving, who was selected to represent GB at the Dresden International.
- Katie Burton of Luton Diving Club, who was selected for the England Talent Programme
- Max Lano of Southend Diving, who was Group 'C' ASA National Age Group Champion 2015
- Liam Morrell Phillips of Beaumont Diving Academy, who was Group 'B' ASA National Age Group Champion 2015
- Henry Biggs of Luton Diving Club, who was Group 'A' ASA National Age Group Champion 2015
- Daniel Goodfellow of Cambridge DT/now Plymouth, who has qualified for Rio Olympics 10m synchro with Tom Daley
- Grace Kouset of Luton Diving Club, who was Group 'B' ASA National Age Group Champion 2015
- Sam Buck, who has been appointed as an ASA Awarding Body tutor
- Hayley Sage and Sam Buck, who have joined the coaching team at Luton Diving
- Grace Alzancak, who joins the coaching team at Cambridge Dive Team from Bradford.
- Sean Veasey, who has been appointed Head Diving Coach at Southend Diving
- Charles Calvert, who has been appointed as Elite Coach to the coaching team at Southend Diving.

Finally the opportunity is taken to thank all of those involved in delivering the regional Diving Programme.

In particular, Bill Clark who, after many years service as Diving Manager, stood down from the post in December 2015. Bill will, however, remain involved with regional diving as the Essex County representative and as a member of the Diving Officials Working Group.



## Swimming

### Competitions

During the reporting period, the Swimming Committee has run its three core regional championships. The Long Course Championships were held over two weekends in May at Inspire; Luton Sports Village and Sportspark, UEA, Norwich and the Short Course Championships, at Inspire; Luton in November. All were well organised and saw some fantastic swimming from our athletes across the region. The weekend at Sportspark

had caused some anguish as the date and venue clashed with the BBC Big Weekend but with some careful planning by the Sportspark and UEA Staff and a lot of hard work from our Finance Manager, Keith Belton, the two events ran side by side without any problems.

The decision to change the format of the championships to have separate heats and finals sessions appears to be working well. It is supported by coaches as the format more closely mirrors the national championships.

In July, teams from five of the six East Region counties gathered at Borehamwood, for the ASA East Region Inter-County Team competition.

In a closely fought competition, watched by the Regional President, Gerry Metcalf, and many of the County Presidents, the home county, Hertfordshire were crowned top county for 2015.



At the ASA Inter-county Team Competition, held at Ponds Forge in October, Hertfordshire were again in fantastic form, being placed 8<sup>th</sup> in Division 1, with Suffolk, the only other East Region County in Division 1, placed 16<sup>th</sup>. The four other East Region counties competed in Division 2, with Essex taking 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Cambridgeshire gaining a credible 7<sup>th</sup> place, while Norfolk and Bedfordshire were placed 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> respectively.

The new format for the summer national competitions, with British Championships immediately followed by ASA Summer Championships, has given more East Region swimmers the opportunity of competing at a level above the regional championships. With qualification for national championships being based on ranking position, rather than a set qualifying time, it is vital that we continue to give East Region swimmers the best opportunity to qualify for either the British Championships or ASA National Championships.

Our clubs and counties have also been busy running competitions for a range of swimmers in the region. The review of the competition structure made significant changes to the calendar for competition and, consequently, county championships will be moved forward to January and February and many clubs, who have developed a tradition of holding open meets at particular times of the year, have had to review when the meets are held and what the target audience is. The need for county qualifying times to come from licensed meets has meant that many more clubs are choosing to licence club championships to give their swimmers the opportunity to gain qualifying times.

### **Swimmer Development**

Aligning to the ASA England Programmes Programme of Delivery, the region hosted a two day Talent Camp for swimmers aged 12 and 13 years, in November and December. Selection was based on ranking in Olympic events, and inviting the top two swimmers in each event from the 2002 and 2003 cohorts, we had 35 swimmers from 20 clubs. A fantastic team of 10 staff, including team managers and coaches from around the region, worked hard to make sure that the camp was a success, and the feedback the region received from parents and swimmers was excellent. There were classroom and sports hall sessions lead by the Strength and Conditioning Coach, David Jakeman, and a theory session on Goal Setting was led by Richard Charlesworth (GB swimmer at Beijing Olympic Games). The camp also hosted workshops for 60 parents and guardians on supporting their child's swimming development. One was led by the camp's Lead Skills Coach, and the other by the elite swimmer, Richard Charlesworth. Both gave an opportunity to evaluate the days for the parents, providing them with an understanding of what had been the topics of the day for the swimmers, and then a question and answer session.





### **Coach Development**

The development of coaches is key to the future of our sport. In addition to the formal coach education opportunities reported within the Club Development Group section of this report, the region continues to work in partnership with the England Programme Team to up-skill and train coaches from clubs across the East.



In June, the region hosted a Coach Development Day, which was attended by 42 coaches.

The day consisted of a theory session on breaststroke, led by Andi Manley (Head Coach at Derventio Excel SC). This was followed by a pool session, to put into practice the breaststroke theory. In the afternoon, Karen Howells, a lecturer at The Open University, delivered a presentation on the Health of the Coach.

The day was well received and set a precedence for future development days.

Although primarily aimed at athlete development, the Talent Camps for swimmers also provide an excellent opportunity for coaches to develop their own skills and knowledge. An additional 12 coaches took up the region's offer to observe the camp, enabling them to use the information gleaned to benefit other swimmers in their own clubs.

In December, the region hosted a second Coach Development Day at Culford School, working in partnership with the ASA England Programmes Team and Sports Coach UK. The day covered a wide variety of topics, including workshops on Testing and Monitoring; Race Modelling; Creating a High Performance Culture; Communicate to Consistently Perform and Pre and Post Race Goal Setting. 24 coaches attended the day.

### **Coaches Forum**

During the year, the region has restructured its Swimming Coaches Forum in line with a model promoted by the England Programmes Team. Following advert, coaches were appointed to serve on the Forum, ensuring that all counties and types of clubs are represented. The Forum serves as a consultation body both for the ASA and our own Swimming Committee and is also pivotal in shaping coach development.

## Disability Swimming

### Competition

The 9<sup>th</sup> Regional Disability Championships took place at Newmarket on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June. Nineteen clubs from the region were represented as well as four from outside the region. Spectators were treated to some close races throughout the evening, with 14 East Region records broken in the process. Classification took place for swimmers throughout the day and our volunteers had the opportunity to extend their knowledge by attending a British Swimming Disability for Officials CPD which was held in the morning.

In December our swimmers were in action at the Para-Swimming Championships in Manchester. This competition had previously been a team competition, but a new format saw it change to individual entry. However, the region still supported swimmers who attended with a coaching team present. The other major change to the format was that the competition changed to a long-course meet but the swimmers responded well with 9 regional records and two British records broken across the meet.

The 2015 British Para-Swimming International Meet in Glasgow saw some great swimming from our athletes, notably Grace Harvey (Hoddesdon SC) and Jessica Applegate (City of Norwich) who also won Gold in the 100m Backstroke and Silver in the 200m Freestyle, securing personal bests in all her events at the same time. Basildon & Phoenix's Danielle Hartin won the B Final of the women's MC 200m Freestyle and the Teamipswich swimmer, Suzanne Warren, came 5<sup>th</sup> in the final of the women's MC 50m Backstroke.

This year also saw the World Deaf Swimming Championships in Texas. The region were well represented with, Matthew Oaten, Ciara Tappenden, Oliver Kenny, Jasmine Seamarks all being part of the successful GB team.

In March, East Region hosted the new Dual Regional Para-Swimming Development Meet in St Albans. The meet was a pilot for a new format meet, designed to be a fast, high skilled meet leading into the British Para-Swimming International. Classification was also offered at this meet.

### Records

Jessica Applegate was appointed Ambassador for the International Sports Federation for Persons with Intellectual Difficulties, as well as gaining a World record at the BUCS. She also broke two world records and two European records at the British Para Swimming International Meet in Glasgow this year and set new World times in the 100m Freestyle (59.04) and 100m Butterfly (1.07.28).

Grace Harvey broke the British Record for the 50m Backstroke (S7), which was the split time at the turn of her 100m Backstroke event, 100m Freestyle (1:17.02) and 100m Breaststroke (1:58.07); and set a personal best time for the 50m Freestyle (35.85); 200m Individual Medley (3:20.03); 100m Backstroke (1:34.59); 50m Butterfly (42.20); and finally the 400m Freestyle (5:47.91).

### Talent

Jessica Jane Applegate was awarded the title of British Para Swimming Athlete of the Year 2015 in the British Swimming Awards.

The following swimmers have been selected for World Class Programmes:

#### **WC Podium Programme**

Jessica-Jane Applegate (UEA City of Norwich)  
Harriet Lee (formerly of City of Peterborough)

#### **WC Podium Potential Programme**

Ryan Nicholls (Basildon Phoenix)  
Danielle Hartin (Basildon Phoenix)  
Jaxon Simmons (City of Peterborough)  
Grace Harvey (Hoddesdon SC)

In addition, the following swimmers have been selected for England Talent Programmes:

**Spotlight Programme**

Ellie Challis (Colchester Phoenix)

**Development Programme**

Anya Falkus (Wisbech SC)

Elise Martin-De-La-Torre (Team Ipswich)

Louise Fiddes (Hatfield SC)

**Development**

The region hosted two regional training sessions for the swimmers, the first in Basildon in November and another in February in Hatfield. These were well attended and provided a chance for the swimmers to train together, whilst getting some great coaching from coaches across the region. An exciting development has been the introduction of 'development' lanes where less experienced, or swimmers new to Para-Swimming, can attend and gain experience and tips from coaches and more experienced swimmers.

There have been teacher / coach education sessions at Luton, Watford and Hoddesdon, as well as taster sessions and talent ID sessions at Cambridge, Hoddesdon, Luton and Norwich

**Summary**

This year has seen some phenomenal swims from our athletes despite many changes to the competition structure at a National level. With the support of national and regional staff and our volunteers competitions and training opportunities have been offered. As the Chairman has reported, towards the end of the year our Disability Manager stood down from post. However the new Disability Manager is already working with our staff to formalise a plan to further develop the talent pool within the region.

## Masters Swimming

The 2015 British Masters Long Course Championships were held at Manchester in June, with 81 East Region swimmers, from 22 clubs, competing. They won numerous silver and bronze medals, and a total of 39 gold medals between them, with 6 gold medals going to Janet Masters of South Beds Masters SC, competing in the 75/79 age group. Sally Winter of Bishops Stortford SC set a new European record for the 55/59 age group for 200m freestyle. Lawrence Palmer of Putteridge SC lowered two British records for the Seniors Age Group (18/24). These were in the 50m and 100m breaststroke events. Daryl Mason from Potters Bar SC was also a double British record breaker for the 45/49 years, setting new times in the 50m butterfly and 50m freestyle

In July 2015, Sally Winter of Bishops Stortford SC added the 200m freestyle short course European record, to go with the 200m freestyle long course record gained the month earlier. In August 2015, Kazan in Russia was the destination for 12 intrepid swimmers from eight East Region clubs to take part in the Masters World Championships, and between them they picked up three gold, four silver and nine bronze medals.

September saw the East Region hold its first Masters Development Day, which was a huge success.

32 masters swimmers booked onto the day at Culford School, Bury St Edmunds. The development day included theory sessions on injury prevention, nutrition and hydration and masters support, as well as having a pool practical, with hints and tips for training. Also included was a strength and conditioning session, held in the sports hall.



The ASA East Region Open Masters and 18-24 Age Group Championships took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2015 at Newmarket Leisure Centre. A total of 21 individual East Region records were broken, of which 18 were female and 3 male. Pat Reynolds, from Beavers Masters (Bedford) SC, alone broke four in the women's 65/69 age group. The packed poolside saw a full day of excellent swimming, with competitors travelling from all over the country, plus a small group of swimmers making their regular journey from Spain just for this competition. The East Region President, Kay McGuire, and several County Presidents were on hand to present the medals to the successful swimmers.

A large number of swimmers, approximately 170, from 28 East Region clubs, competed in the ASA National Masters Short Course Championships in Sheffield at the end of October 2015. Collectively, they had an extremely successful weekend, winning many medals and breaking scores of East Region records. Bishops Stortford's Sally Winter broke her own European record in the women's 55/59yrs 200m freestyle. She knocked over a second from her previous record, touching in 2:22.25, for a gold medal. Sally also set a new 100m freestyle British record. Bishop Stortford bagged another British record through the efforts of Elizabeth Bellinger in the 100m butterfly, swimming for the 35/39yrs gold medal. City of Cambridge SC claimed a British record in the Men's 400m medley relay, when they touched first for gold in the 100+ years age group. The team was made up of Simon Morley, Luke Westwood, Liam Barnet and Mark Leamon. In the women's 25/29yrs age group for the 200m butterfly, Robyn Le Freic of City of Cambridge claimed a new British record, while Putteridge's Lawrence Palmer swam for a gold medal and British record in the 50m breaststroke 18/24yrs age group. David Cartledge of Modernian also set a British record in the men's 55/59 100m breaststroke.

Norfolk, after finishing runners up the previous year, emerged as winners of the East Region Masters and Seniors Inter-County Team competition held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at Newmarket Leisure Centre, finishing in top spot with 280 points. They were just 19 points clear of second-placed Cambridgeshire, the highest position for Cambridgeshire since the East Region was formed in 2005.

The competition saw all six counties from the East Region competing for the East Region trophy locally and, when all the regions in the country submitted their results, against all counties nationwide.

In the national competition, Norfolk finished in a very credible 6<sup>th</sup> position, Cambridgeshire 11<sup>th</sup>; Suffolk 12<sup>th</sup> Bedfordshire 18<sup>th</sup>; Essex 19<sup>th</sup> and Hertfordshire 21<sup>st</sup>.



Daryl Mason from Potters Bar SC added the British short course record for 45/49 years 50m butterfly to his portfolio when competing in the South Yorkshire Open Masters Meet at Ponds Forge at the end of November 2015.

The end of 2015 saw David Cartledge of Modernian finish 8<sup>th</sup> in the men's British Swimming Masters National Decathlon competition. There were top twenty finishes for Hatfield's Chris Dunn (15<sup>th</sup>) and Modernian's Marcel Scholten (20<sup>th</sup>), while Hayley Davis of City of Cambridge, in 16<sup>th</sup> place, was the highest placed East Region swimmer in the women's competition. The Decathlon is an annual competition for master's swimmers, who try their hand at competing in races across a range of strokes and distances. The competition has two main aims: one is to encourage greater participation across the different swimming events, and the other is to encourage competition across the different masters age groups.

East Region masters have made an excellent start to 2016. Hatfield's Chris Dunn broke an amazing five European records and seven British records, in the 70/74 men's age group, at the South East Region Long Course event held in Crawley at the end of January. This outstanding achievement included European records set in the 400m freestyle, 400m individual medley, 200m freestyle, 200m individual medley and 800m freestyle events. Chris also gained British records in the above, as well as the 50m freestyle and 100m freestyle events.

## Open Water Swimming

In the past, if you talked to swimmers at your average pool, the chances were that, if you mentioned that you enjoyed open water swimming, you were seen as some strange alien entity that needed saving from yourself. Not any more though. Today, open water swimming has become the area of our sport that is intriguing and is enticing more and more swimmers to come along and give it a try.

Whilst a large number of first timers only ever take the plunge at a seaside or lakeside public venue, there is an ever-increasing number who seek a more intense challenge, by participating at commercially organised personal achievement events, such as the Great Swims series, or, for those seeking a more competitive environment, they need to look no further than the ASA, where the answer lies with regionally organised Open Water competitions; most of which are open to ASA registered swimmers of any age.

Here in ASA East Region, the competitor numbers at the regional Championships rose again, with 402 swimmers in the water on the day vying for a podium place over their chosen distance of 800m, 1500m, 3000m, or the whopping 5000m event. Fortunately for all concerned, this year the weather decided to give us a break after the thunderstorm of the previous year, and all events were completed in-full (if a little wind swept by the end of the day)

With our regional age group winner from each qualifying event guaranteed a place in the Open Water National Championships, regardless of any pool qualifying time needed by other entrants to that event, the battle for these places amongst our swimmers was very keen. In the end East Region had fourteen qualifying swimmers.

There was only one week between the Regional Championships and the National Championships at Rother Valley Country Park in Sheffield, so there was little time for our swimmers to do further preparations ahead of the competition. This did not appear to be much of a worry for Nathan Hughes of Hatfield, as he was obviously in good form in the 3km 15/under event, where he finished 1<sup>st</sup> an impressive 14 seconds clear of his closest rivals. Other East Region athletes who did well at this year's National Championships were Tia Wilson from Modernian, who came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 13/under 1.5km competition, along with Timothy Hughes from Hatfield, who came 3<sup>rd</sup> in his event.

Competing in open water is not just the preserve of the younger members of our community; those slightly more senior also have the chance to compete at the Regional Championships, and their own national masters event. At the ASA Open Water Masters Championships 2015, held at Rother Valley on 2 August, East Region Masters swimmers were well represented and very successful, with ten of the Region's masters swimmers placed in the top three in their age groups.

The East Region has been well represented on the International scene as well this year, when Caleb Hughes swam his World Championship debut in the 5km Open Water race in Kazan; finishing 7<sup>th</sup> after leading the field for much of the race. Look out for Caleb in future competitions - he is a force to be reckoned with.

Fast on Caleb's heels, there were three East Region junior swimmers named as part of the Great Britain squad for the Junior Open Water Swimming Championships in Tenero, Switzerland. All from Hatfield, the three were twins, Tim and Philippa Shuttleworth, who, along with Nathan Hughes formed part of the 10-strong team selected to compete in the beautiful Lake Maggiore. The officiating team at Tenero also had another East Region representative amongst their number, in Paul Kendall, who was the recorder and radio coordinator for some of the competition, and one of the referee's for the 3km team time trial event.

Success in open water competitions is not gained without year-round training, though discipline-specific open water skills development is usually limited to the warmer months of the year, and a lake or sea environment. However, that theory is being challenged here in the East Region, when on a wet and cold Saturday afternoon

and evening in March, the first of a two-part open water swimming specific development programme took place in Basildon. This pilot programme is the first of its type run in the region, and is geared to provide swimmers and coaches with an opportunity to develop skills which will hopefully lead to class-leading performances in the future. On this occasion, participation was limited to just 30 athletes and seven coaches, though this will likely be increased for the next course. Lead by Mike Parker – England Programmes Officer, Technical Lead Open Water, participating athletes and coaches received valuable information during classroom sessions, on a wide range of topics, whilst the open-plan pool session gave the opportunity to discover and develop better awareness of the techniques necessary to be competitive in an open water environment.



*Turn practice.*



*A good finish can make all the difference! The region's equipment in its 'small' 3m wide mode.*

The second part of this programme will hopefully take place in much warmer conditions, at Stanborough Park Lakes, near Welwyn Garden City, in June. In addition to this regional scheme, several counties also provide their own swimmers with opportunities to work on their open water development at a more local location. County initiatives have previously only been held in the period immediately leading up to the Open Water swimming season, when the water temperature at their training venues has risen to tolerable levels. In light of the regional success in a pool environment, it is hoped that this format will be copied by the counties as well; which will bring open water skills to more swimmers throughout the year.

No swimming event can succeed without support from many others. In open water it is not just the officials and administration helpers who provide this support; it is also vital that a strong and sufficiently manned safety team are on-hand to give help if it is needed. Within the East Region we have been fortunate to receive welcome support from a small group of regulars who provide cover as canoeists, first aiders, programme sales, muscle-power, refreshments dispensers, security, cooks, etc. The list is long, but the numbers coming forward to help is not so long. All thanks to everyone who already give up their time to make, what has been described as the best ASA regional open water event in the country, happen.

However, we do need more people to assist. If you would like to help provide support to East Region open water, in any capacity, please contact the East Region Open Water Manager ([openwater@eastswimming.org](mailto:openwater@eastswimming.org)). Those who are willing to be trained as officials are especially sought after, as the event cannot successfully proceed without them. A classroom session, followed by attendance at a Regional Championships, usually means that Open Water Judge Level 1 can be completed in the same Come along, you will find that you do enjoy yourself.

## Swimming Officials Group

The East Region continues to enjoy success in the numbers of volunteers applying for technical officials' courses, and those qualifying during the year. Counties continue to support the region in the theory and practical training of officials from Timekeeper to Starter. The number of newly qualified at Judge L1 was 91 (compared to 129 in the previous year). The turnover of officials still continues to be an issue. As swimmers leave the sport, in the main, their parents who are officials, also leave. Consequently, the importance of clubs continuing to train officials is vital as ever. Since March 2015, as the new ASA Licensing Criteria requires for gala level 3 licences, the minimum level of official is a Judge Level 1 in training who has passed the timekeeper poolside assessment for Inspector of Turns.

East Region officials' licensing (JL1+) has continued to increase during the year. There is still room for improvement and, although there will always be some officials who do not wish to licence, we must continue to encourage more officials to become licensed. The process is always subject to churn.

Five candidates from the East Region passed the British Swimming Referees examinations held in and November 2015.

Qualification	Technical Officials Training 2015/16		Qualified during the year	
	2014/15	2015/16	2014/15	2015/16
Timekeeper	274	326	286	288
Judge Level 1	243	260	129	91
Judge Level 2	58	51	55	35
Judge Level 2s	29	20	17	27

The Swimming Officials Group continues to offer training and support to our volunteer technical officials during the year, together with support from our county volunteers. The courses we offered were: -

- British Swimming Referee training for new trainees
- British Swimming Contemporary Issues 2011 CPD
- British Swimming FINA Rules 2013 updates
- British Swimming Disability awareness officiating training CPD
- British Swimming Mentoring of Officials

Officials from the region continue to support the British Swimming, ASA National and the Disability Sport England Championships. It is pleasing that we continue to have a large representation on the deck. The region is fortunate to have all its swimming championships continually well supported by technical officials. This is certainly not reflected in other regions.

Competitive swimming relies on the continued support of our dedicated volunteer trainers and technical officials, who give their time freely to help others. We record our thanks to all those volunteers.

## Synchronised Swimming

Synchronised swimming in the region has had a successful year during 2015/16. Official's courses, skill level assessment days and regional championships were all run and the talent development team has continued to progress.

### Officials' Courses

Following on from the very successful Basic Skill Assessor course held last year, an Assessor and Advanced Skill Assessor course was run in June to enable Basic Assessors to move up and be able to assess higher skill levels. 11 attended with 7 passing the exam. Their qualification will be valid for four years as long as they assess at

least once a year over that four year period. We now have 1 Advanced Assessor within our region which is an incredible gain on previous years and continues to help the region become self-sufficient with officials.

We also held a Basic Judge course in February, with high attendance, all of whom were from the East Region, which is a great asset and will enable us to hold competitions effectively and to a high standard. 7 of the 12 who attended the course were under 25 years of age which is great for the succession of the discipline.

In addition to regional courses, three regional judges attended national judge training to help raise the knowledge and experience of judges in the East. The region already had one judge who had passed national judge exams, Samantha Dowson, who has continued to judge at national competitions and also continued her referee training by being assistant referee at the national age group competition in May 2015.

### **Skill Level Assessment Days**

We have held three successful and well attended Skill Level Assessment days this year. Most of the swimmers attending have been from the region which is very encouraging to see. Nearly all our clubs are now pushing down the skill level route. There are very hard standards to pass for skill levels so the success rates have not been very high but it is good to see that girls are not put off by this and continue to persevere and attend the next one to try again. Girls within the development squad have achieved more skill levels and continue to strive forward.

### **Regional Championships**

The Annual Routine Championships were held in November. A high number of solos, duets and combination teams were entered and we saw a great improvement in standard from the swimmers. The categories were split by skill level and, for skill 0s, were further split into 12 & under and 13+. As a result, we had a lot of entries for skill 0 than in previous years and it is great to see so many of our younger and less experienced swimmers eager to compete on their own, and as a team. This also demonstrates the progress the region has made with achieving skill levels as basing entries on skill levels had not been possible before as not enough swimmers had achieved them.



### **National progression**

Several of the swimmers who started at clubs in the squad, competed at the Synchronised Swimming National Age-Group competition in December. Many of these swimmers have now gone on to larger clubs outside of the region for more training opportunities, but are still based in the region. Chelmsford SSC also sent a recreational team to compete in the combination team event held on the first day of the competition.

### **Regional Development Day**

On 5 September just less than 60 girls took part in a Synchronised Swimming Development Day in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. Enthusiasm was high with attendees from Aqualina, Potters Bar, Norwich, Clacton, Brentwood, Chelmsford and Dacorum. The day was designed to cater for all abilities and all ages with swimmers from 7 years old to 17 attending, which was great to see and confirms the sport continues to appeal to participants of all ages. The day started with an inspirational presentation from Rhiannon Williams, a previous double gold winner at the Synchronised Swimming National Championships. She gave the girls an insight into the mind of a winner and sports psychology. This was followed by pool sessions focusing on skill level figures, aqua aerobics, with a synchronised swimming twist, and routines. Best of all, Rhiannon was able to join us to offer her coaching skills for the session. The girls also took part in yoga sessions, which were focused on flexibility and core strength, which are two of the key components of Synchronised Swimming.



Synchronised Swimming Committee hopes to maintain its success and progression and, together with a similar timetable of events for 2016/2017, it has more competitions and training planned to develop coaches and swimmers.

## Water Polo

East Water Polo added a new venture to its calendar in 2015 with the successful launch of the Regional Development Camp during summer half-term.

Fifty players born in 2001-03, led by the region's coaches, enjoyed an intensive programme of water polo activities at Culford School including skills training, workshops and tournaments. They even had energy to jump for joy at the end!

Arrangements are already underway for a similar camp, which is planned for June 2016.



July brought success in the ASA U16 (00) Inter-Regional Championships with East Girls and Boys teams both winning promotion to Division 1 for next year under the guidance of Head Coaches Brian Poole & Tim Whitwham.



*East Angels U16 IR team with Brian Poole*



*East Boys U16 IR team with Tim Whitwham*

We held our Inter-County Junior Championships at Basildon Sporting Village on 7<sup>th</sup> November with U17 Girls and Boys teams representing Essex, Hertfordshire and Suffolk. Suffolk Girls capitalised on the presence of their England Talent players and convincingly retained the Jill Morton Memorial Trophy, while Herts Boys overcame Essex to win the Andy Morton Cup once again.

December's highlight was the U14 Inter-Regional Championships (for players born in 02 and later), giving several East players their first experience of national competition. Girls Head Coach Chris Cawood was delighted to steer East Angels to the Bronze medal position. Ashley Bygraves did an excellent job coaching the Boys in his first Inter-Regional campaign: East finished in 5<sup>th</sup> place ahead of SW, NW Ravens and the combined Midlands team, and we can be sure there is more to come.

February saw the U18 Inter-Regional Championships, the final Inter-Regional competition for some of our junior players.

Tim Whitwham and Dean Walker guided East Boys to 3<sup>rd</sup> place in Division 2, while Brian Poole & Chris Cawood took a young Angels team to a creditable 5<sup>th</sup> against strong opposition including Wales, Scotland & Ireland.

Ten of the girls will still be U18 next year and East has high hopes for their medal prospects.



*East Angels U18 IR team with Chris Cawood and Brian Poole*

The success of East Region's development strategy can be measured by the number of our young players picked for England and GB squads. Dani Brazier (Chelmsford) played for GB in the U17 European Games at Baku and Abbie Turner (Bedford Modern School) made the England U17 team for the EU Nations at Odense. Dan Paddon (Chelmsford) and Peter Pickford (Watford) were chosen for the GB U19 Men's European squad, Brad Watts (Team Ipswich) featured in England U17 Boys and Finlay Parnell (Team Ipswich) was chosen for the GB U16 squad. Finlay and four Watford players - Will Eggleton, Joey Gardner White, Thushira Kumarage and Anil Pandya – were selected for the U17 EU Men's Junior Championship.

It's not all about juniors though. Closer to home, we held the Senior Inter-County Championships at Inspire Luton Sports Village in March, with Cambridgeshire collecting both the Men's and Women's trophies from East Region President Kay McGuire and Suffolk President Chris Vinter.



*The victorious Cambridgeshire teams*

Water polo competitions could not take place without officials, so we were very pleased to welcome new East referees and table officials who qualified this year including Paul Botje, Dan Paddon, Joe Clark, Anne-Marie Houghton and Duncan Wyatt.

2016 is the end of an era as we say farewell to East Water Polo Manager Chris Stephens. Chris has been at the helm for a decade and feels it's time for new faces and fresh ideas. His parting words (borrowed from Tim Whitwham) are "The only way is East"!

**End**