

ASA WEST MIDLAND REGION CLUB NEWSLETTER DEC 2015

West Midland
Swimming

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Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the West Midland Swimming team.



The following clubs successfully completed their annual health check at the September swim21 panel.

City of Stoke (COSACSS) SC
Stourbridge SC
Oldbury SC
Dove Valley SC
Newcastle (Staffs) SC
Shrewsbury SC
Northgate SC
Wellington (Telford) SC
Orion SC
Wrekin College SC



Congratulations to the Telford and Wrekin Forum for achieving swim21 Club Network accreditation in September, the first in the West Midlands.

The forum emerged in 2007 and the clubs have continued to work together as a collective over the years to ensure that the swimmers in the area have the best experience and the best possible opportunities. The four clubs in the forum are: Newport and District, Telford Aqua, Wellington and Wrekin College. The forum is a constituted group with funding and support from the local council and provides development events for the swimmers such as long course training, swim clinics, race nights for the younger age groups. They also help to drive the Shropshire young volunteer programme and are producing a brochure to promote the opportunities the network has to offer.

Club Development Grant Success

Four Club Development Grants were awarded at the September and November Club Development Group meetings.

Boldmere

Safeguarding courses for club volunteers.

COSACSS

Safeguarding courses for club volunteers.

Lichfield SC

Safeguarding courses for club volunteers.

Bromsgrove SC

Starter pack for galas.

Solihull

Mini water polo goals

[Click here](#) for details how to apply for a Club Development Grant.

Regional Volunteer Courses

Time to Listen Course - FREE

for Welfare Officers

Required for swim21 accreditation

Saturday 23rd January 2016

1.30pm – 5pm

Dolphin Centre

School Drive

Bromsgrove

B60 1AY

Pre-requisite – Current Safeguarding and

Protecting Children certificate

To book a place please email
westmidland@swimming.org or
tel 01527 888929

Young Volunteer Programme

For club members aged 14 – 17 years

Birmingham

Aquatic Helper course:

16th January 2016 at Castle Vale Pool

9am - 3pm

Timekeeper course theory:

23rd January 2016 at Castle Vale Pool

10am - 12 noon

Timekeeper course practical:

30th January 2016 at Stechford Cascades

2pm - 5pm

Safeguarding & Protecting Children course

28th February 2016 at Castle Vale Pool

10am – 12 noon

[Click here](#) for an application form.

Staffordshire

Safeguarding & Protecting Children course

12th March 2016 at Stafford Leisure Centre

10am – 12 noon

Aquatic Helper course

14th & 21st March 2016 at Cheslyn Hay LC

6.30pm – 9.30pm

Timekeeper course

19th March 2016 at Stafford Leisure Centre

10.30am – 1pm (tbc)

[Click here](#) for an application form.

ESSA Primary Age Disability Team

If you have any swimmers with a disability in years 5 and 6 who would like to be part of a team at the ESSA Primary School National finals at Ponds Forge in June 2016 please contact the ESSA WM representative neilmonkhouse@hotmail.co.uk or tel 07786 154411.

Please contact us if you want specific items covered in the newsletter –
westmidland@swimming.org


the asa
affiliated region

Synchronised Swimming Officials training information



Synchronised Swimming officials are vital to the success of the sport. There are a number of different officiating roles within the discipline, including assessors, scorers, judges and synchronised swimming referees and everyone plays a part in ensuring competitions run smoothly.

Officials Training Opportunities

Assessors:



Scorers:

There are two levels of synchro scorer in England:

- National scorer
- Chief recorder

Judges:

There are three levels of synchro judge in England:

- Basic
- General Judge
- National Judge

Referee:

The role of a synchro referee is to oversee the control of a synchronised swimming competition, making sure all aspects of the event run smoothly and follow FINA rules.

Further information

To get a better understanding of the route to becoming a Synchronised Swimming official with the ASA, please visit the [Synchro Hub](#). The hub will provide an overview of the progression you can make through the synchro officials qualifications and grades and the requirements for attending a course.

Becoming a Synchro Official

There are Synchro officials courses taking place across the country each year. Please visit the [Synchro hub](#) to obtain a more in-depth look at the current pre-requisites for examination for each of the official's grades and to search for an [upcoming Synchronised swimming officials course](#) near you.

Synchro coaching

If anyone is interested in taking a Level 1 Coaching Synchro qualification - please contact Helen Slatter.
Helen.slatter@swimming.org

Water Polo Officiating information



Water Polo officials are vital to the success of the sport. There are a number of different officiating roles within water polo, including timekeepers, table officials, goal judges and water polo referees and everyone plays a part in ensuring matches and tournaments run smoothly. There are four grades of Water Polo referee qualification ranging from A – D and two grades of table official; regional and national.

To better understand the route to becoming a water polo official with the ASA, download the [Pathways Document](#) for an overview of the progression you can make through the water polo officials qualifications and grades and the requirements for presenting a course for any of the grades.

Becoming a Water Polo Official

There are water polo referee and official's courses taking place across the country each year. Please visit the [Water Polo Hub](#) to obtain a more in-depth look at the current pre-requisites for examination for each of the official's grades and to search for an [upcoming water polo officials course](#) near you.

Licensed Officials

Once you are a registered official, you can apply for British Swimming Water Polo Officials Licence. The licence lasts for four years and helps the ASA ensure the sport of water polo benefits from the highest possible standards.

To renew your licence, you must satisfy a number of criteria and pass various modules. There is no requirement to be licensed in order to officiate at a water polo event but holding a licence demonstrates that you are maintaining and upgrading your skills and knowledge of the game.

Useful documents for Water Polo Officials

Officials may find it useful to have additional guidance on the rules governing water polo. The documentation below outlines some of the current rules and how they are interpreted and applied.

Interpretations and applications of the rules of water polo

- [FINA Water Polo Rules 2015-2017](#)
- [Recommendation to referees relating to conduct & behaviour of coaches, officials & players](#)

Disciplinary

- [Disciplinary Report Form](#)

Education Courses

[Click here](#) for full list of all IoS courses in the West Midlands



Level 1 Courses

[ASA Level 1 Teaching](#) starts 16/01/2016 at Stratford Leisure Centre

[ASA Level 1 Teaching](#) starts 15/02/2016 at Fox Hollies Leisure Centre

[ASA Level 1 Teaching](#) starts 15/02/2016 at Malvern College Sports Complex

[ASA Level 1 Teaching](#) Starts 15/02/2016 at Wolverhampton Swimming and Fitness Centre

[ASA Level 1 Teaching](#) starts 15/02/2016 at Stafford Leisure Centre

[ASA Level 1 Coaching](#) starts 01/03/2016 at Wrekin College, Wellington, Shropshire

Level 2 Courses

[ASA Level 2 Teaching](#) starts 30/01/2016 at Meadowside Leisure Centre, Burton-on-Trent

[ASA Level 2 Teaching starts](#) 15/02/2016 at The Queens Diamond Jubilee Centre, Rugby

[ASA Level 2 Teaching](#) starts 13/02/2016 at Shrewsbury School, Shropshire

Level 3 Coaching

The application stage for the Level 3 Coaching Swimming Programme is now open until 9th January 2016. [Click here](#) for further information.

Flanders Speedo Cup

24 swimmers have been selected to attend the meet from a range of clubs such as: City of Birmingham, City of Coventry, City of Hereford, Ellesmere College Titans, Royal Wolverhampton School, Stafford Apex and Wrekin College. Coaches supporting the team will be Adam Ruckwood (City of Coventry), Adam Taylor (City of Birmingham) and Mark Stowe (Worcester).

[Click here for the selection criteria.](#)

Swimming records

Congratulations to Tazmin Pugh (Ellesmere College Titans) on achieving a British and English Junior and Age Group short course record in the 100m Butterfly in Toronto in a time of 58.90.

Also congratulations to Rebecca Redfern (Worcester) who shaved 2 seconds off her previous best time in the SB13 100m Breaststroke at the National Para-Swimming Championships in Manchester to achieve a European record in a time of 1:18.99.

Social Media Guide for Beginners

The ASA uses social media to communicate key information, events and changes to the world of aquatics, as well as share good news from our clubs, members, key stakeholders and anyone else in the aquatic community.

We want to share our news and the news of our affiliates, but we are not always aware of what is going on at ground level. This is why we rely on our CDO's to help spread their clubs' messages with us, so we can in turn share this with the wider audience.

The main aim is to ensure that our audiences are engaging with our content (and the content of our stakeholders and affiliates), talking about and engaging with our brand (swimming and aquatics, not just the ASA) in a positive way and also being influenced, or influencing others, to get down to their local pool to swim.

Using Social Media

Important info before you start:

- Do not follow club members or anyone that you know is under the age of 18, for safeguarding reasons.
- Always make sure that you follow the ASA Photography Safeguarding guidelines when posting or using images online, listed at the bottom of the document.

Facebook

Posting content on Facebook is a great way of highlighting the achievements of a club or its members.

If your clubs are holding an event or one of their members has successfully achieved something that they want to share, the best way to make sure that the ASA sees their post is for them to tag the ASA before they send the status. They can do this by writing @ASASwimming and then selecting The ASA from the list. This will notify us and allow us to share the post.

While we cannot share everything, we can like and comment on most of these statuses and posts, and share those which we feel are relevant to a wider audience.

To give the posts the best chance to be shared, here are some key things for your clubs to remember:

- Try to keep posts short and sweet, with a link through to content or some call to action. Try not to give away too much information as you want your audience to click through to the website to read more. For example, <http://j.mp/GoodFBPost>
- Write in good English and do not abbreviate where possible. You want to show your followers that you are a professional organisation, and the ASA will only share posts which give this impression of the club (Example of a bad post: 'Gr8 2 C tht Mel Marshall won Coach of the Yr')
- Use bit.ly to shorten your links to show how many people have

clicked through to the content (bit.ly is explained later)

- Make sure that you use an image to accompany the post where possible as it will appear higher up in an audience's newsfeeds

Twitter

Twitter is another great way of sharing content, with over 270 million users worldwide. Content is shared in the form of Tweets, which allow you to use a maximum of 140 characters only, so you have to ensure your posts are clear and short (this should not affect the standard of English). As Twitter is mostly looked at on mobile and tablet devices, it is almost essential that you shorten links using bit.ly to keep your Tweets looking tidy. Here are a few top tips for sharing content on Twitter.

If you want your Tweet to be picked up and 'Liked' or 'Retweeted' by the ASA, then you need to mention @ASAAquatics in the body of the tweet, or use the Club hashtag #ASAClubs. We will try to share as much relevant content as we can, much the same as with Facebook. Key things to remember:

- Keep your posts as short as possible, include a link or a call to action and include an image where possible. Images increase engagement from your followers.
- Bear in mind that an image uses up to 25 characters and a link uses up 23 characters, so you really have to get creative if you want to use both. Follow this link for an example of a good Tweet: <http://j.mp/GoodTweet>
- As with Facebook, write in good English and try not to abbreviate. Try to use relevant Hashtags to get your post noticed. There are two ways to use hashtags; the first is to use a unique Hashtag that no one else is using e.g. for an event or conference, so that you can track all of the traffic for that particular event. Use as little characters as possible and always make sure it hasn't been used in the last couple of months. (For example ASA County Team Championships may become ASACTC15). The other is to utilise popular or trending hashtags to get your message to more people. Hashtags are a way of users searching for a particular topic, so if a user wanted to know about Water Polo they might search for that hashtag in Twitter. By using #WaterPolo you will get your content in front of all those people interested in the sport. The same applies for #Synchro and #Swimming etc.

Instagram

Instagram is a fun way for people to quickly share their photos, but it is also great for sharing professional looking pictures of your sporting or club events. Here are a few things to bear in mind when using Instagram:

- Images must be taken on a mobile phone, or sent to your mobile through an email client system and then uploaded from your pictures.
- Instagram also uses hashtags to group together collections of images, e.g. at an event, or to help make the images more visible to a wider audience, just like Twitter. If you want your images to be picked up by the ASA and shared, you can tag us in the pictures using @ASAAquatics.

Bit.ly

Bit.ly is an important tool which should be attached to all of your social media accounts. It allows you to shorten your hyperlinks, so for instance:

www.swimming.org/volunteering/about-volunteering/ would become <http://bit.ly/1LWYEDW> which makes your tweets look tidier.

Bit.ly also allows you to track how many people clicked on any link you have shortened, what social media platform they have clicked through from (Twitter, Facebook etc), and also the date they clicked on your link.

This means that if you are planning to use the same link to go out in a series of different tweets, you can work out which tweet was most effective through the number of clicks that your link received, and then use similar hashtags or mention the same Twitter user in order to increase clicks on future campaigns.

To set up a Bit.ly account, just visit www.bitly.com. In this instance, it doesn't matter what username you register with, as it is not external facing.

Best Practice

The publishing of a photograph or video footage on a social networking site is governed by the same requirements as those contained in the ASA Photography Policy. Always make sure that you take safeguarding precautions and make sure you have the consent of the parents if the person is under the age of 18. Also all images of children under the age of 18 must be:

- Above the waist; or
- In full clothing, i.e. not swim suits.

You can see the full guidelines in the ASA Photography Policy.

Changes to ASA Membership announced

The ASA has announced updated information on its membership application process and fees for 2016.

From 1 January 2016, Category 1 membership fees will increase from £8.50 to £8.70 while the fees for Category 2 and 3 memberships will remain £25.50 and £5.00 respectively. These will be payable throughout the full membership year (1 January – 31 December).¹

This change has been introduced to help to bridge the gap between the cost of membership for the training and competitive members of your club.

Additionally with the launch of the ASA's Online Membership System (OMS), membership applications can be processed instantly. Completed membership applications are required for all new members throughout the entire 2016 membership period.

This will not change how clubs renew their existing members and pay membership fees, however all applications for new club members must be fully processed before they are able to take advantage of the ASA membership benefits.

For any queries relating to membership or for more information, please contact the ASA Membership Team on 01509 640727 or email <mailto:renewals@swimming.org>. To access the Online Membership System please [click here](#).

FAQs

1. Why has my membership fee increased?

The category 1 membership fee has been increased to bring it closer in line with Category 2 membership. Fees for category 2 and 3 memberships have remained the same.

2. What does the Online Membership System (OMS) mean for my club?

While it could take a couple of months for ASA memberships to be processed previously, the new online membership system allows applications to be processed instantly.

The new system allows individual club members to view details of their club membership including ASA membership number, category of membership, club details and officials qualifications. Plus individuals can update their details directly.

3. How will this change affect my club?

Your club will still be able to renew your existing club members and pay membership fees from 1 January until 31 March, however applications for new club members must be completed during the year in order for them to be registered.

It would be beneficial therefore, to encourage new members to join early and take advantage of the full year membership.

4. What are the benefits of being an ASA member?

Benefits of being an ASA Member include:

- Insurance
- Discounts on products from Speedo
- Discounts on hotels through Intercontinental Hotels Group (IHG)
- Competing swimmers aged 9-15 can access AquaZone, an online magazine packed with news, interviews, reader letters, competitions and lots more

- Regulated competition structure for Category 2 members
- Access to low level competition for Category 1 members
- Volunteering opportunities – free and discounted CPDs
- Access to the ASA-employed clubs team through regional offices to help your club and its members achieve your full potential

Also, remember the Online Membership System (OMS) is quick and easy to use – all new club members and those upgrading will only need to be added/upgraded via OMS, no forms need to be sent to us. Plus online members can log in and change their own details

More information about ASA insurance can be found [here](#)

5. Where does my money go?

The ASA is a membership organisation. The income from membership fees is spent on achieving the ASA's vision:

- Ensure everyone has the opportunity to learn to swim
- Offer everyone the opportunity to enjoy swimming or water-based fitness activities for health and fun throughout their lifetime.
- Ensure everyone achieves their different personal goals throughout their lifetime.
- Ensure the nation achieves gold medal success on the world stage.

¹Please be aware that the above fees do not include any county or region fee contribution.