

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING 2023/2024 Annual General Meeting

The National Arena Swimming League South 2023/2024 Annual General Meeting was held by ZOOM conference all on Sunday 9th June 2024

1. REGISTRATION AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

The meeting commenced at 10.35. The Hon. Chairman Ian Howes opened the meeting. He requested permission for the meeting to be recorded and no objections were raised.

- a. The Hon. Chairman, Ian Howes, welcomed those present.
- b. Those registered to be present were:

Ian Howes the Hon. Chairman(2 votes) (including Folkestone SC)
Jan Annan the Hon. Vice Chairman (3 votes) (including RTW Monson SC)
Kathy Hook the Hon. Secretary (1 vote)
Karen Sparling – Atlantis SC (1 vote)
Graham Cawte – Bassett JSF SC (1 vote)
Jerome Moerman – Black Lion SC (1 vote)
Brian Smith – City of Brighton & Hove SC (2 votes)
Diane Gamble – Croydon Amphibians SC (1 vote)
Jaz Strudwick – Dorking SC (1 vote)
Richard Garfield – Guildford City SC (3 votes)
Richard Skirving – Kent Weald SS (1 vote)
Veronica Russell – Kingston Royals SC (1 vote)
Chris Ashford – Maidenhead Marlins SC (1 vote)
Graeme Edwards – Mid Sussex Marlins SC (1 vote)
Sacha Djerfi – Sevenoaks SC (2 votes)
Lee Pilcher – Thanet SC (2 votes)
Janie Pengilly – Wantage White Horses (1 vote)
Julia Patrick – Woodside & Thornton Heath SC (1 vote)
Nicky Gale – Woking SC (1 vote)
Kevin Brooks- Wycombe District SC (3 votes)

- c. Apologies:

Peter Harris the Hon. Treasurer
Chris Hobbs – Eastbourne SC
Adrian Smith – Eastbourne SC
David Brazil – Bracknell & Wokingham SC
Kathryn Wyatt – Elmbridge Phoenix SC

3. MINUTES OF THE YEAR 2022/23 AGM

These were approved. The comment on whether officials should be wearing white or black bottoms was discussed. It was decided that in line with common practise the rules should be amended to read black bottoms.

The minutes were proposed by Karen Sparling and seconded by Nicky Gale.

4. HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2023/24

The Hon. Secretary's report was distributed in advance. This was noted

5. CONSTITUTION AND PROMOTER'S CONDITIONS

There was a motion for change to the Promoter's Conditions.

The addition of Point 29:

A" & "B" & "C" teams: Where a club has more than one team in the competition, the "A" team shall be comprised of the club's fastest swimmers. The "C" team shall be comprised of swimmers who are not faster than those in the "B" team. Any club in breach of this rule shall be disqualified from that round.

The Hon. Chairman Ian Howes stated that the Executive from the South did not feel strongly either way about this proposal. They have been asked to submit this proposal by the National Executive. It is a rule that is in the London League promoter's conditions but is not enforced by them. Hon. Chairman Ian Howes said that this proposal has elicited some forthright views.

Richard Garfield (Guildford City SC)

- a. He had sent a strong rebuttal to the proposal which has been circulated to the league in advance.
- b. His reaction is many fold. He understands why some teams would like this proposal to be adopted.
- c. He commented that although this rule is in the London League constitution they do not enforce it.
- d. This rule is anti-competitive, and it means that if clubs who do have more than one team in the league, no matter how hard they choose their teams, run the risk of being disqualified.

Di Gamble (Croydon Amphibians SC) - From her point of view, at a gala with all three of the Guildford teams, it became very clear that shenanigans were taking place and that there were swimmers in the C team who shouldn't have been there.

Di presented an analysis of the Guildford City SC team selection where the C team in the first and third round did not record any faster times than the A team. But in the second round the C team recorded 15 faster times than the A team and 20 faster times than the B team.

Richard Garfield (Guildford City SC) - Feels that she's taking it upon herself to make a team selection and the end results was A, B and C. (A team coming first, B team second and the C team came third)

Di Gamble (Croydon Amphibians SC) - Feels that the results were manipulated to prevent the C team going into the relegation gala.

Graham Cawte (Bassett JSF SC) – This has happened in other leagues. Suggests that if a swimmer swims in the A team in the first round he cannot swim down in further rounds.

Brian Smith (City of Brighton & Hove SC) – if a swimmer gets better then they will have to stay in a lower team. He felt that this was not fair.

Sacha Djerfi (Sevenoaks SC) – He can understand both points. The proposed rule would suit them better as a smaller club, but the bigger clubs are in the position to select their teams accordingly. Larger clubs are being punished for being successful.

Richard Skirving (Kent Weald SS) – so if a swimmer pbs unexpectedly then are the teams disqualified?

Sacha Djerfi Sevenoaks SC)– asked who is going to police this?

Hon. Chairman Ian Howes feels that if we have a rule, you don't police then why have the rule.

Di Gamble (Croydon Amphibians SC) – stated that this is a moral dilemma – not good sportsmanship.

Richard Garfield (Guildford City SC) – reemphasised that the results of the gala that Di is referring to were ABC. And he doesn't feel that they were morally incorrect. If this rule was imposed, then all the teams with more than one team would be disqualified. What kind of competition would that be?

Karen Sparling (Atlantis SC) – This rule is not possible to police. Is there any way of limiting the how much movement is done between teams?

Nicky Gale (Woking SC) – She feels that the gala being referred to had been manipulated, and it was demoralising for smaller clubs. Other leagues have similar rules, and she feels it is unfair that we do not.

Janie Pengilly (Wantage White Horses SC) – She is from a small club and understands the need to move swimmers. But cannot understand a jump from A to C to A. She appreciates that some people do improve.

Kevin Brooks (Wycombe District SC) Although they have three teams in the League they are not as deep as Guildford City SC. He works on A team fastest, next team – next fastest and then the C team. But the depth of his older age group means that national swimmers could end up in the C team. He plays around between teams.

The rate that the younger age groups progress at that time of the year means that teams get swapped around. Guildford City SC is a bigger club, and Richard has the right to play his teams and to select as appropriate. Kevin takes exception to the suggestion that we need to put rules in place to limit movement. To play this game would mean opportunities are limited for teams.

Hannah Davies (South Croydon SC) – Appreciated everything Kevin said and his integrity. The issue is moral integrity.

Kevin Brooks (Wycombe District SC) – the current situation gives a coach flexibility taking into account the swimmers need to get a licenced time.

Brian Smith (City of Brighton and Hove SC) – He wouldn't dream of telling another coach at another club how to pick his team. Up to each coach to pick his own team. If the A team is the fastest team then what is the problem?

Catherine Lewis (Sutton & Cheam SC) – Wycombe District SC are doing it properly but Guildford City SC are manipulating the teams and smaller clubs are being penalised.

Richard Garfield (Guildford City SC) reiterated that he cannot be accuse of manipulation as the order of ABC was achieved.

Di Gamble (Croydon Amphibians SC) - reiterated that she feels that clubs that were moving swimmers around teams are not playing the game,

Brian Smith (City of Brighton and Hove SC)– The proposal is anti - competitive and poorly worded.

The Hon. Chairman Ian Howes emphasised that although the Executive had proposed and seconded this proposal it was on behalf of the National League.

Ian Howes thanked everyone for their views and for being so honest.

There were many abstentions as the rule is unenforceable but it was felt that the issue of fair play needs to be addressed.

The Hon. Chairman Ian Howes thanked everyone for their views and for being so honest.

For: 4 votes. Against: 19 votes. Abstentions: 10 votes.

The motion was not carried.

6. HON. TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2023/2024

The Hon. Treasurer's report and annual accounts were tabled in advance.

The main points were:

- a. Income for the year is up in all areas.
- b. Gala income is up.
- c. Club support to those who travelled to the National Final should be reintroduced this year.
- d. Proposal that membership fees remain at £75.00 per team and joining fee remains at £50.00 per team.

The Hon. Chairman thanked the Hon. Treasurer for his hard work. The accounts were proposed by Brian Smith and seconded by Karen Sparling.

7. COMPOSITION OF THE LEAGUE FOR 2024/2025

The Hon. Secretary tabled the "League Composition" for 2024/2025.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2024/2025

The summary of the appointments for the year 2024/2025 is as follows:

Hon. Chairman	Ian Howes (Folkestone SC)
Hon. Vice-Chairman	Jan Annan (RTW Monson SC)
Hon. Secretary	Kathy Hook (Beckenham SC)
Hon. Treasurer	Peter Harris (Rushmoor Royals SC)
Hon Independent Examiner of Accounts	Position Vacant

(The identification of the Clubs in the above list has no particular significance to their role).

The officers were elected unanimously.

8. CONFIRMATION OF FUTURE DATES.

2024 Competition	Saturday	12 October 2024
	Saturday	9 November 2024
	Saturday	14 December 2024
2024 League Final	Saturday	1 March 2025
2024 Cup Final	Sunday	2 March 2025
2025 Competition	Saturday	11 October 2025
	Saturday	8 November 2025
	Saturday	06 December 2025*
		This is not in line with normal dates of second weekend of the month.

9. CLOSURE

The Hon. Chairman declared the meeting closed at 11.30 am.

3. HONOURY SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2024/2025

I would like to report that we have had a very successful year with 82 teams competing across five leagues. Five of our teams qualified for the National Finals. Congratulations to all of them. They are Bromley SC, Guildford City SC, RTW Monson SC, Woking SC and Wycombe District SC.

At the Cup Final Guildford City SC came first for the second year in a row. What a great achievement. Wycombe District SC came fifth and Bromley SC came eighth.

At the B Final RTW Monson SC came third and Woking SC came seventh.

The Arena Swimming League isn't all about the Premier Division who make it to the National Finals but about everyone who takes part. We pulled together to put on 39 licenced galas. By far the biggest league in the competition .

I would like to say thank you to –

To all of the clubs that took part in the League.

To all of the clubs that hosted in 2024.

To all of the officials who enabled these galas to take place and for them to be licenced.

To all the swimmers, coaches and parents.

To the National Arena Swimming League South committee. Ian Howes as Hon. Chairman, Jan Annan as Hon. Vice Chairman and Peter Harris as Hon. Treasurer. To Brian Smith who helps all of us with the team sheets and getting the results in rankings.

To Jonathan Mills who puts everything on the website.

And last but not least to our sponsors Solosport who are the UK distributors of Arena Swimwear.

Thank you to all of you for your support and help.

Ian Howes has served his term of office and Jan Annan will be taking over. We'll be looking for a Hon. Vice Chairman. It's not an onerous task so please consider getting involved.

For 2025 we have 82 teams in the League. Guildford City SC have withdrawn their C team, Maidstone SC and Woodside and Thornton Heath SC have resigned. Andover SC and Dunmow Atlantis SC have joined us.

Sadly, I heard this week that John Ramsay, the treasurer of the League for many years, passed away last year. He was a true gentleman and great support to me when I started as secretary.

Kathy Hook –
Hon. Secretary

4. CONSTITUTION AND PROMOTER'S CONDITIONS

(See attached file for the current Constitution and Promoter's Conditions.)

PROPOSALS FOR CHANGES TO RULE 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF NASLS

The rule currently reads:

LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

The League shall be managed by a General Committee consisting of one delegate from each team competing. The Officers of the NASLS shall be the elected Hon. Chairman, Hon. Vice-Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer. These Officers are ex-officio members of the General Committee and any contingency not covered by the Rules shall be referred to the Officers for interpretation, decision and appropriate action. Decisions and actions taken by the Officers shall be reported to the next AGM for ratification or comment. The elected Hon. Chairman may remain in office for not more than three years.

PROPOSAL No. 1:

We believe that when this Rule was written the words 'Club' and 'Team' were interchangeable. Over time, clubs have been able to enter more than one team and the wording of Rule 3 allowed the assumption that each TEAM had a vote. We believe this to be an error.

No member club should have more power than other member clubs just because they have more teams entered into the League. The current situation is self-perpetuating, as, if clubs with multiple teams so choose, no resolution would ever be passed due to their block votes.

We, the undersigned, believe the current wording of Rule 3 above, in particular the first sentence, is undemocratic, discriminatory and ambiguous. By allowing one delegate per team, smaller clubs are discriminated against to the benefit of larger clubs. The fact that swimmers from one club are allowed to move between the teams of that club, between rounds, shows that each individual team (A, B, or C) is part of that one entity, and should therefore not be given its own vote at AGM.

This penalises smaller clubs and those with only 1 team, meaning that smaller clubs have less voice than the larger clubs with multiple teams.

By implication each delegate should only have one vote, however this is unclear in Rule 3 currently.

For reference, the London, North West and East Midlands Leagues currently state 1 delegate/vote per club; Western states 1 delegate per team, but no multiple votes per delegate.

The proposal is that the first line be changed to read:

The League shall be managed by a General Committee consisting of one (1) Delegate from each **CLUB** competing.

PROPOSAL NO. 2:

In line with the above proposal, we would like to propose the addition of the following statement, which we believe clarifies Rule 3 of the current Constitution:

Each delegate shall have one (1) vote only at AGM.

PROPOSAL No. 3:

In order to make Rule 3 clear and unambiguous, we also would like to propose that the following statement also be added to Rule 3:

Each Officer of the NASLS shall represent the NASLS League only (not their Club) and shall have one (1) vote only.

Proposer – Diane Gamble – Croydon Amphibians SC

Seconder – David Andrews – Sutton & Cheam SC

A vote on each proposal is required. As this is a change to the Constitution, to be carried, twice as many votes in favour of the proposal as against is required.

5. **TREASURER'S REPORT for the period ending 28th February 2025.**

Please refer to the attached file.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Please refer to the attached files for the Income and Expenditure Statement and the Balance Sheet.

6. **COMPOSITION OF THE LEAGUE FOR 2025**

Please refer to the attached file.

7. **NATIONAL HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT 2024/2025**

The League year 2024/2025 saw the embedding of the programme changes tried in the previous year, adding the 8 x 50m mixed squadron relay at the end and making all the other relays 4 x 50m. Not all galas were licensed however, and hopefully this will be corrected in the coming year.

Brian Boyle stood down as the Secretary of the North West league, having been in post for 50 years; an incredible achievement and I take this opportunity of thanking him for his support of the league, its clubs and its athletes. Kate Vincent has taken on the role of Secretary of the North West league. She will continue to receive support from the North West league committee, and we all wish her well.

All leagues had challenges in finding suitable pools for the three rounds. An added challenge being that pool operators are restricted by the pool owners as to the number of galas they allow. Increased costs have also been an issue to accommodate.

Clubs have rallied around to support their athletes so they can take part in this National League. More officials have been recruited by the clubs to ensure that the correct officials are available to comply with licensing requirements. There has been more liaison between the clubs, working together so that there are fewer cases of fines imposed for non-compliance.

Cardiff International Swimming Pool was again used for the national finals weekend in 2024, but there was very little support again, and in addition a parking fee was charged for the teams' coaches. Prior to the event I had made enquiries about the venue for the final in 2026 if there was no change in the pool operator's co-operation. As there was no benefit in staying at Cardiff, the national finals weekend will be moving in 2026 to Sandwell Aquatics Centre and a suitable hotel has been found to accommodate the volunteers responsible for organizing the weekend.

There has been discussion across the country about the lack of consistency of the rules for the six leagues. Consequently, the six league secretaries have discussed having a national constitution and national conditions. These have been drawn up and will be presented to the six leagues' Annual General Meeting (AGM), then come to the national AGM for adoption. Each league will need to have their own constitution and conditions to reflect local variations but must not be in conflict with the national constitution and conditions.

Discussion about the selection of the finalists from the virtual gala has bubbled around for several years, as has what the two finals are called. These issues are to be discussed at the six league AGMs as well. Each club has a vote at their own league AGM, then the league Secretary and one other has a vote at the national AGM. However not all clubs send delegates to their league AGM and not all leagues send two delegates to the national AGM. These meetings are to make sure that your athletes get the best experience and they need their representatives to ensure this. Please make sure that you attend your AGM, and vote in your Secretary, Treasurer and other committee members to represent your athletes. Also ensure that your league is fully represented at the national AGM.

A massive thank you to the six league Secretaries for all that they do to ensure that the three rounds take place, and finalists are identified for the national finals weekend. Thank you also to all the officials and other volunteers who give up their time to ensure that the League works well. The League could not operate so successfully without this excellent support, as well as, of course, the financial support of Solo Sport/Arena and their co-operative, generous and positive support throughout the year – thank you!

Ian Mackenzie
May 2025