



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