

Mastersnews



Summer 2019
Number 3

Sussex Masters Newsletter

Welcome to the Sussex Masters Newsletter to keep masters' swimmers in Sussex update to date with swimming events and news in the County.

With participation in adult sports increasing in areas such as swimming, open water, diving, synchro, running, triathlon etc. the demand for competitive sports for adults will continue to grow in Sussex, the South East and nationally. Sussex County ASA is committed to encouraging and supporting the development of swimming in the County.

Information about masters swimming can be found in this Newsletter and online at the Sussex County ASA website <http://www.sussexswimming.org/masters/> South East swimming website <http://www.southeastswimming.org/masters/> and on the ASA website with the Masters Hub <http://www.swimming.org/masters/>

You can also keep up to date with the latest news on the Sussex County ASA facebook and twitter accounts and South East swimming facebook and twitter accounts.



Hastings Seagull SC win at 2018 Sussex Masters Champs in September 2018

Key Dates for 2019

Below are some of the key dates for masters' swimmers.

- **Sussex Masters Championships** – **Sunday 15 September 2019** will be held at Pavilions in The Park, Horsham. This is the key Sussex event for all masters. Please check the Sussex ASA website for the programme and conditions.

- **South East Masters Short Course** – **Saturday 5 October 2019** will be held at The Spectrum Leisure Centre, Guildford. Please check the South East Swimming ASA website for the programme and conditions.

- **Swim England National Masters Short**

Course Champs – **Friday 25 October to Sunday 27 October 2019** will be held at Ponds Forge, Sheffield. It would be great to have a large number of Sussex swimmers qualify for this national masters short course event. Please check the Swim England Masters Hub for the programme, conditions and qualifying times.

- **Inter-Counties Masters** – **Sunday 10 November 2019** will be hosted by Sussex and held at Pavilions in The Park, Horsham. This is a national masters competition where selected swimmers can represent Sussex against other Counties. Selection for this event will be based on best times of masters swimmers and in particular performances at the Sussex Masters Championships in September.



Sussex v Kent Teams 2019

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Masters Club Focus – Hastings Seagull Swimming Club

In this section we ask a Sussex Club to provide details on their masters section. Below are details for **Hastings Seagull Swimming Club** that **Tracy Hedley**, masters coach at Hastings Seagull SC provided:

“Hastings Seagull SC Masters section train up to 3 times a week on Tuesdays and Thursday evenings as well as Sunday mornings offering flexible access to training for competitive swimming or for fitness. The current squad comprises swimmers aged from 18 – 80 years and are coached by Tracy Hedley, Sacha Djerfi & Grayling Clayton.

The aim is to provide a platform for supporting members with their training into adulthood by learning new techniques and drills as well as training fast and at speed to develop skills required for successful competitive swimming. Some members use Masters training to support their commitment to water polo or open water competitions. The main HSSC Club Squad structure currently allows swimmers of any age to continue to train in the Senior Elite Squad with Head Coach Sacha Djerfi providing they can achieve all the squad criteria; but swimmers who

move into the world of work or have moved away to university for example, may find it more appropriate to join Masters and still benefit from professional coaching to compete at a high level.

There are 3 options for commitment in either ‘Masters Fitness’ or ‘Masters Performance Squad’ to attend either once, twice or three times per week, recognising that adult swimmers have other responsibilities but still want to take their training seriously.



The Club regularly attend the Erith Masters Open Meet in the Spring where they won 2nd visiting club overall this year and their annual target meet is Sussex County Championships where they remain the current champions. Several Masters have competed internationally and current members hold records in Regional, National, British, European, Commonwealth & World Championships as well



as the 2004 GB Olympic Team in Athens.”

For more information check out our website: www.hastingsseagullsc.org.uk

Follow us on Twitter: @HastingsSC or Facebook: @HastingsSeagullSC

Sussex Masters Update 2018/2019

Since the last Sussex Masters Newsletter in December 2017 Sussex Masters have had a very successful 2018/2019 season with continued growth and interest in masters swimming at a great many Sussex clubs.

The competitive standard in masters swimming continues to get higher every year with opportunities for Sussex masters to set County, National and International records.

At the **British Masters Championships in Plymouth in June 2018**, Mid-Sussex Marlins set a new World record for the ladies 280+ 4x200m freestyle (Mary Johnson, Jenny Dean, Rose Dudeney and Alison Gwynn). The Mid-Sussex Marlins ladies also set a British record for the Ladies 240+ 4x100m freestyle (Jill Rocky, Alison Gwynn, Sally Mills and Coral Wallis) while Sally Mills achieved a British record in the ladies 60-64 200m Butterfly.

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At the **European Masters Championships in Slovenia in August 2018** Sussex swimmers from Mid-Sussex Marlins again led the way with three European titles and gold medals for Alison Gwynn (70-74) in the 200m Freestyle and 400m Freestyle and with Sally Mills (60-64) in the 200m Butterfly. Silver Medals also went to Alison in the 100m Freestyle and the 3,000m Open Water events while Sally Mills (60-64) took a silver medal in the 100m Butterfly. Alison also added to her collection with a Bronze Medal in the 50m Freestyle and Sally with a Bronze Medal in the 50m Butterfly.

On **23 September 2018** the **Sussex Senior Age Group and Masters Championships** was held at Pavilions in The Park, Horsham. Over 160 swimmers from Sussex clubs competed with 90 men and 71 women who entered a record 819 events including 56 relays. Overall 43% of swims resulted in PBs and there was a 20% increase in the number of entries compared with 2017. Hastings Seagull won the Championships with 1,294 points, with Mid Sussex Marlins second with 871 points, Brighton Dolphins third with 858 points and Beacon SC fourth with 442 points. The entry by Hastings with over 200 swims was the largest ever and included many younger swimmers. This demonstrates the increasing popularity of masters swimming by younger swimmers who are increasingly recognising the competitive nature of masters swimming and so continue to raise the

standard among all masters swimmers.

Sussex had 35 swimmers take part in the **Swim England Short Course Masters Championships in October 2018 in Sheffield** who achieved a very credible 53 medals – with 17 Golds, 19 Silvers and 17 Bronzes. Mike Reid from Brighton SC achieved 8 medals while Alison Gwynn from Mid Sussex Marlins achieved 4 golds from a total of 4 events.



Mid Sussex Marlins World Record Holders

At the **Swim England National Masters Inter-Counties Competition in Haslemere on 18 November 2018** Sussex came 6th nationally overall out of 28 competing counties which was an excellent result. A special congratulations should go to the Sussex 280+ relay team who came a very convincing 1st overall nationally, beating their nearest rivals by nearly 5 seconds!

On **30 March 2019** two teams of Sussex masters swimmers took part in the **second Kent v Sussex Masters Challenge Cup** held at the Tunbridge Wells



Sports Centre. In total over 130 swimmers from Sussex and Kent took part and at the very competitive but friendly competition Sussex Blue won their match against Kent White while Kent Green were successful in their match against Sussex Gold. In recognition of the 150th anniversary of Swim England a 50m time handicap event was included, where swimmers were set off at intervals based on their personal bests with the event being won by Donna Trotman from Beacon SC.



Kent v Sussex Scoreboard - Sussex Gold v Kent Green match

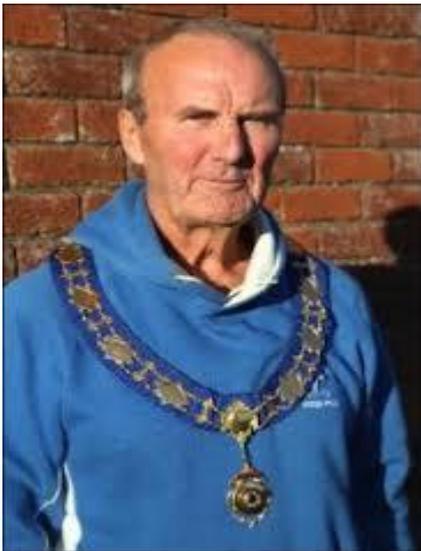
At the **British Masters Championships at the Wales National Pool in Swansea from 14-16 June 2019** more than 680 swimmers took part with a total of 66 British, 16 European and 5 new World Records being set. Of particular note was the fact that Mid Sussex Marlins achieved a world record as they took gold in the 280 Years Women's 4 x 100 Freestyle Relay !! The Mid Sussex world record team

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consisted of Alison Gwynne, Jennifer Dean, Mary Johnson and Sally Mills finishing in a time of 5.42.24

The Masters Interview

Below we set out an interview with **Tim Pearce** of **Hastings Seagull SC** who has had a lifetime of competitive swimming and waterpolo as well as being a past President of Sussex County ASA.



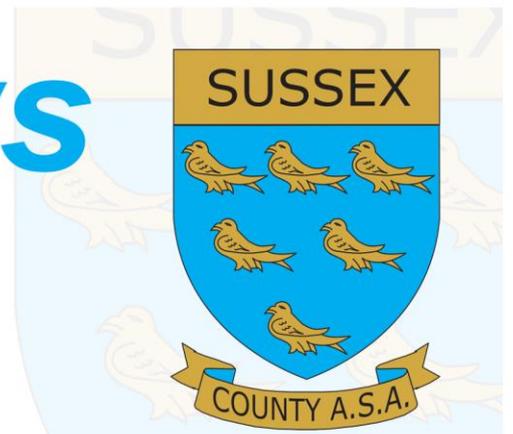
Tim Pearce with Sussex ASA President Chain of Office

"It was two years after WW2 finished in 1947 that the Brighton beaches were cleared of barbed wire, guns, mines and obstacles, that the beautiful Art Deco Black Rock swimming pool and Lido was reopened. I lived close by and my Mother took the job of Manageress alongside an old ex Scottish International swimmer called Jock Thompson who became the overall Manager.

This complex boasted a 50yd long salt water pool with multiple diving boards, paddling pool and play area for table tennis, a private beach and marvellous restaurant and sunbathing areas. I naturally spent most of my time there and in my little knitted swimming trunks became a competent swimmer under the tutelage of Jock Thompson and his team of lifeguards.

On Sunday afternoons the pool hosted Water Polo, Diving, swimming races and an amazingly eclectic range of activities from Canadian Log Rollers to demonstrations of how the Mulberry Harbour operated during the Normandy Landings in 1944. All to entertain the visitors who paid 6d to a shilling entrance fee for a swim and a 2/6d deposit for the hire of a big fluffy Brighton Corporation towel.

As the pool opened my Mother was anxious about my swimming abilities so she joined me to the Brighton Swimming Club. We swam every week at the North Road 40yd long pool and also in the winter used the St Luke's tiny pool which had large changing cubicles for multiple users adjacent to the sides of the pool with big canvas sheets to hide behind and protect ones modesty whilst changing.



Hastings and St Leonard's Bathing Pool – one of the largest pools in Europe and site of many ASA National Competitions in 1940/50s

The discipline of the Club soon led to opportunities to race so there were regular opportunities to show off the developing skills and compete against all comers as in those days there were no obvious age groupings. I would swim against other boys up to 15 years old in both Club and School competitions. The Club environment set high standards in both technique and speed and my tuition at the age of 7 or 8 stood me in good stead until I vividly remember the training routine set the fastest swimmer to the right of the pool and I was

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surprised that a certain Neil Tasker suddenly appeared on my right when I was about 9 years old. I never did swim as fast as him and he went on to win a place on the England team and play polo for Poly and Kingston. We remained friends and met again when we both played polo for Brighton B team in the 1980s and then went on to compete together in the Sussex Masters swimming events.

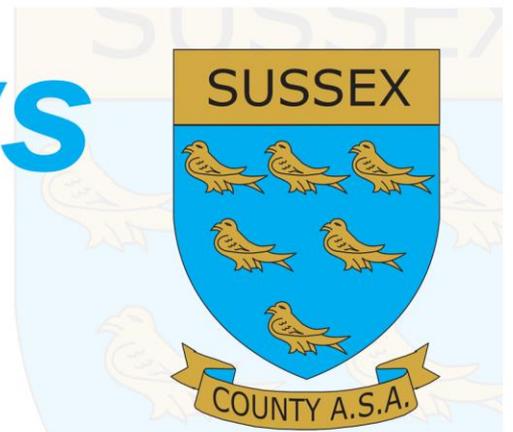


Hastings White Rock pool

That period from the age of 7 to 11 gave me a solid grounding in competitive swimming and at the time I rubbed shoulders with a number of top swimmers and Coaches like Maudie Ottaway and her brother Arthur Holman, who gave diving demonstrations with Miss Martin and Burt Spicer at the Black Rock Pool on a Sunday afternoon, Anne Caplin who represented England swimming breaststroke in the 1952 Olympics and, of course, Neil Tasker who recently passed away after an illustrious

career in swimming and Water Polo.

At the age of 18 I was invited to join the Water Polo Team – the start of a lifelong passion. We trained once a week at North Road Baths and competed in the Sussex League and played games against the Armed Services teams, the Post Office and the Civil Service and the Banks. Our Captain in those early days was a big charisma player who had jumped ship from the Shiverers team called Julian Chalcraft. In 1962 I married my sweetheart Joan Mortimer who was by that time a keen team wife so my polo activities did not suffer in spite of the fact that we moved out of town to Handcross. I joined the Hastings Seagull club which at this time still played in the old 50 yd long White Rock Baths on the seafront in Hastings. I continued my passion for polo and we played regularly in both the Sussex and Kent leagues. Teams like Maidstone (disbanded back in the 1990's) Dover Folkestone, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells and Hythe were visited and came to Hastings on a regular basis and we continued to play Brighton, Worthing, Crawley, Eastbourne and Haywards Heath in the Sussex League and Knockout competitions.



The Observer Trophy in 1927 won by The Polytechnic Water Polo Team

Throughout my time in Hastings the highlight of the polo calendar was, and still is, the Observer Trophy Tournament. The shield, which is the most celebrated trophy in the known polo world, is truly impressive. It was subscribed for by inhabitants of Hastings and presented by the Observer newspaper in May 1908 for an international water polo match to be played at Hastings once a year.

Since 1947 I have records of the Club organising this tournament which always included the team from Dordrecht, the twin town in Holland, since as far back as 1947. In 2017 we organised the 70th anniversary of this first visit by the Dordrecht team and were able to beat them 4-2 having lost to them

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in 1947 by 4-3. There have been many enjoyable occasions over the years against teams from the south of England and a few from Europe but one of the most poignant for me was in 2011 when in one match the Hastings team included me, my son Neil and his son Joel; what a great memory for a proud Grandad.

One amusing event occurred when it was revealed that I had actually played for Kent, Surrey and Sussex in the Master's tournaments over a number of years and in doing



Observer Trophy in 2017 with Hastings Water Polo Team and Tim Pearce.

had inadvertently broken one of the arcane rules of the Sussex County rule book. I was fined five pounds by a rather sheepish County President who claimed that he had to observe the rules. I have not mentioned each of the hundreds of the individual games that I have played with all the goals I have scored, all the exclusions I have endured, all the great

characters I have met and all the incredible fun I have had from being a water polo player and a masters swimmer but I can say simply that it has been and continues to be a joy for me."



Tim Pearce at the Sussex Masters Champs in 1989 – 4th from left back row

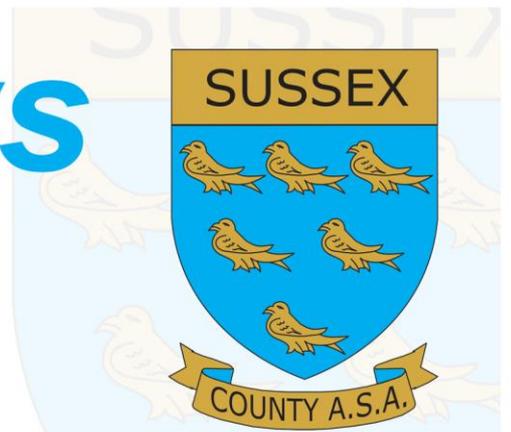
Sussex County ASA 125th Anniversary

In 2020 Sussex County ASA will celebrate its 125th Anniversary being formed in 1895. The first President being L.R. Styer who was also President of Brighton Swimming Club.



L R Styer (centre) first President of Sussex ASA

Sussex has a very rich history of the sport of swimming,



waterpolo, diving, synchro, open water and life saving with many achievements, great memories and stories to tell over 125 years. Sussex also has the oldest continuously formed swimming club with Brighton Swimming Club being formed in 1860. For much of the remainder of the 19th Century swimming as a sport was the preserve of men with most competitions being open water. It was not until the early 1900s that there were any age group competitions.



Brighton Swimming Club members in 1863

Sussex County ASA would like to celebrate the 125th Anniversary in 2020 and if you have any suggestions as to how masters in Sussex should do so please let the Sussex Masters Manager know...!!

Further Information

For more information on masters swimming in Sussex please email –

mastersmanager@sussexswimming.org

**William Long
Sussex Masters Manager**