

## The changing face of Essex Swimming

For some time the Essex committee has been excited in the fact that 2011 will mark a significant change in the face of swimming in the County and have been working to ensure that they utilise all available facilities efficiently.

By the end of the year the County will have its own 50 metre swimming pool, that means less travelling up the M1 & M11, together with at least 2 more new pools incorporating 8 lane 25 metre swimming.

The swimming committee were not working in isolation and requested feedback from coaches, Officials and administrators in order to factor in all thoughts before adopting a new annual calendar.

In addition there were a number of external factors that needed to be considered before finalising any future programmes, the ASA have revamped their annual calendar and pool providers are looking to ramp up the prices for hiring their facilities.

Taking all these factors into consideration the Swimming committee is excited with the new proposed format, we have managed to keep all our current events, maintained our traditions, added a couple more and ensured that we utilise the facilities efficiently.

The proposed Annual Calendar for County events will be as follows.

### **Age Group Championships**

3 weekends within 6 week County window Mid February to end of March in 8 lane 25 metre pools

Relay events will be excluded

### **Winter Championships**

Last weekend in November in 50 metre long course pool

Senior /Junior competition

Relay events will be excluded

### **County Relay Championships**

Proposed date would be late June/early.

Age groups

9 years 4 x 25

10/11 4 x 50

12/13 4 x 50

Junior 4 x 50

Senior 4 x 100, 4x 200

## **Age Group Championships**

In order for us to manage this event efficiently and complete within the prescribed timescales without causing unnecessary impact we have had to make some minor alterations to proceedings.

There will be 1 closing date, mid January. The County recognises that this is a busy time for all and has agreed that at the initial closing date clubs, if they wish, can pay 50% of the total entry fees with the balance being paid 7 days before the second weekend. Swimmers of clubs who have not paid the balance will not be allowed to swim.

**This year all entries must be licensed events times except those swimmers in the youngest age group in each event who due to their age may not have had the opportunity to swim that event in a licensed meet.**

Warm ups will be uniform, all events up to 400 metres will receive 15 minutes and 800 metres plus will receive 30 minutes. The total warm up for each session is predicted to be 1 hour 15 minutes.

Age Groups for heats will be as follows

Girls 9-13 years in their agreed Bagcat events

Girls 14-17+years

Boys 9-14 years in their agreed Bagcat events

Boys 15-17+ years

Finals will be in age groups as normal for 50's and 100's with awards in those age groups. 200,s and above will be heat declared winner events.

In order for us to incorporate the whole programme we need to compress an extra 16 + hours of swimming activities into the remaining 12 sessions and allow all level of swimmers their opportunity to compete and recover we have decided to no longer have presentations for our events. The committee believes strongly that in an ideal world we should be able to celebrate the achievements of these award winners but after taking representation from coaches and officials alike we feel it is the only logical step to ensure we do not finish up with 12 hour days at the pool.

We will ensure all medal winners receive their awards from the County President or their elected representative and with a photographer available to record the event. The County has also decided to fall in line with National, Regional and many other County events nationally and will no longer be making awards for positions below 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

None of the decisions to change our age group championships have been taken without in- depth discussion and we hope that everyone will realise that for swimming to move on in Essex certain sacrifices have to be made.