

# Mastersnews



**Winter 2017**  
Number 2

## **New Sussex Masters Newsletter**

Welcome to the second edition of the Sussex Masters Newsletter keeping Masters' swimmers in Sussex update to date with swimming events and news in the County.

Apart from the newsletter information about Masters swimming can be found online at the Sussex Swim England website <https://goo.gl/Pf1tJg> The South East swimming website <https://goo.gl/rXottS> and on the Swim England website with the Masters Hub <https://goo.gl/mkxRUL>

You can also keep up to date with the latest news on the Sussex Swim England Facebook and Twitter accounts and South East swimming Facebook and twitter accounts.

Sussex Masters' covers every adult age group from aged 18 to swimmers in their 90s and beyond and represent every background. Currently, there are over 10 swimming clubs in the Sussex area that offer Masters swimming. Sussex clubs provide a range of different training sessions and other activities to support Masters swimmers. The contact details for all of these Clubs can be found on the Sussex Swim England website.

## **Sussex Masters Championships 2017**

The 2017 Sussex Masters and Senior Age Group Championships took place on **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September** at The Triangle, Burgess Hill. This was the Twenty-Ninth time the Championships have been held with the first one being held in 1988 and have been held every year since apart from 2010.



### **Hastings receive the new Top Club Trophy from Sussex President Hilary Brown**

The 2017 Championships was a record breaker with a total of 697 individual swims and 38 relay entries. This compares with 572 entries in 2016 and 445 in 2015.

***This means that the number of entries at the Sussex Masters Championships has grown nearly 60% in two years!***

The 2017 Sussex Masters Championships also had a first with the inaugural Top Club Sussex Masters Trophy being presented which was won by Hastings Seagulls SC in an amazingly close competition. Hastings Seagulls finished with 703 points just three points ahead of Brighton Dolphins. Mid-Sussex Marlins finished 3rd and Beacon SC finished 4th - in just its second year of re-commencing masters swimming. Congratulations to Hastings Seagulls !

A big thank you also to all the officials and other volunteers that made the Sussex Masters Championships possible including **Dave Chan** from Worthing SC that lead on the technical side.

We look forward to next year's Championships which will be the **Thirtieth (30<sup>th</sup>) Anniversary Championships** to be held on **Sunday 23 September 2018** at the Pavilions in The Park, Horsham starting at 2.00pm where it is hoped that the record number of entries will continue.

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During the 2017 Sussex Masters and Senior Age Group Championships a number of Championship records were broken including by:

## Womens

**Abi Jaques** in the 25m Free, Backstroke and Butterfly in the 18 to 24 age group

**Sarah Nisbet** in the 400m Free in the 25 to 29 age group

**Emma Dean** in the 25m Free, Backstroke, 50m Free and 400m Free in the 30 to 34 age group

**Karina Smith** in the 25m and 100m Breaststroke in the 30 to 34 age group

**Sally Blick** in the 25m Backstroke in the 35 to 39 age group

**Kristy Krouwel** in the 25m Breaststroke in the 35 to 39 age group

**Gina Hobson** in the 50m Free, 100m Backstroke and 100m IM in the 40 to 44 age group

**Marie Wrapson** in the 100m Breaststroke and 400m Free in the 40 to 44 age group

**Wendy Pritchard** in the 25m and 100m Backstroke and 100m IM in the 50 to 54 age group

**Sally Mills** in the 25m, 50m and 100m Fly in the 60 to 64 age group

**Valerie McLaren** in the 400m Free in the 70 to 74 age group

## Mens

**Ben Horner** in the 25m Free in the 18 to 24 age group

**Craig Steenhoff** in the 25m, 50m and 100m Backstroke and 25m Fly in the 35 to 39 age group

**Matt Lambert** in the 25m Free in the 35 to 39 age group

**Paul Allen** in the 50m Free and 100m Free and 50m and 100m Backstroke in the 35 to 39 age group

**Richard Arthur** in the 25m

Back in the 45 to 49 age group  
**Neil Smith** in the 100m Free in the 50 to 54 age group

**Andrew Jackson** in the 25m Free in the 55 to 59 age group  
**Mike Hazelden** in the 25m Breaststroke in the 55 to 59 age group

**Dave Hamm** in the 25m Back and 25m Breaststroke in the 60 to 64 age group

**Steve Braine** in the 25m Fly and 50m Back in the 60 to 64 age group

**Andrew Burgess** in the 400m Free in the 60 to 64 age group

**Bill Rhodes** in the 25m and 100m Breaststroke in the 70 to 74 age group

**Anthony Gimson** in the 25m Breaststroke, 50m Free, 100m Fly and 100m IM in the 80 to 84 age group

**Edward Askew** in the 25m and 100m Free, 25m Fly, 50m Breaststroke and 100m IM in the 85 to 89 age group

## Swim England Masters Inter-Counties 2017



### Sussex come 6<sup>th</sup> Nationally at Inter-Counties 2017

The Sussex Masters County Team competed in the 2017 Swim England National Masters Inter-County competition which was held on **Sunday 12 November 2017** in Portsmouth.

The Sussex Team was selected based on times in 50m events

swum over the previous 12 months including the 2017 Sussex Masters and Senior Age Group Championships. This resulted in a team of 41 swimmers drawn from 8 Sussex Clubs.

The Sussex Team performed extremely well and finished in second place in the South East Region round just behind Hampshire by just 24 points.

**Nationally after all regional competitions were held and the overall points were calculated Sussex finished 6<sup>th</sup> out of 29 teams.**

The Sussex Womens' 72 yrs+ relay team (**Sophie Quach, Rachel Bowen, Megan Keen and Jessica Frayne**) came first nationally in both the 4 x 50m Medley Relay and the 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay events.

Nationally the top 10 placing County teams out of 29 were as follows:

1. Yorkshire 1624 points
2. Warwickshire 1576 points
3. Hampshire 1549 points
4. Devon 1536.5 points
5. Cheshire 1487 points
6. **Sussex 1467.5 points**
7. Kent 1260 points
8. Notts 1225 points
9. Gloucester 1196.5 points
10. Bedfordshire 1188 points

Well done to all the swimmers and thanks to all the officials that took part.

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## Sussex Masters Swimmers from the Past

One of the great attributes of swimming is the level of determination and stamina that it engenders.

These are qualities that are very evident in the life of Sussex swimmer and Olympian Vera Tanner. However, Vera was also blessed with an exceptional swimming ability that makes her one of the most successful Sussex female swimmers of the Twentieth Century.



**Vera Curran (nee Tanner) (1906 – 1971) Eastbourne SC swimmer and 1924 and 1928 GB Olympic Medalist**

Vera was born in November 1906 in Eastbourne and swam for Eastbourne Swimming Club. Vera's exploits and success as an Olympic swimmer were well reported but an early sign of Vera's determination was reported in March 1920 when according to the Nottingham Evening Post while walking along the cliffs at Eastbourne the path crumbled

and one of the friends had to hold on to the cliff by roots of wild flowers. Vera aged 13 managed to climb back up the cliff and ran for help with the friend being rescued by the coastguard. Vera at this young age already held the Swimming Championship of Sussex which Vera held every year between 1919 and 1928 – that is from ages 13 to 22 !

Vera was also for a number of years both Southern Counties Champion and National Champion in the Freestyle and Backstroke.

***“Last season was notable for the outstanding performances of Miss Joyce Cooper and Miss Vera Tanner. They swept all before them in the National Championships where they placed first and second in every Southern and National championship....”  
Britannia, July 1929***

In 1924 Vera was selected to represent Great Britain in the Olympics in Paris, which is where Chariots of Fire athletes Eric Liddell and Harold Abrahams competed and won gold. Vera won a silver medal in the 4 x 100m freestyle relay alongside Joyce Cooper the world famous GB Olympic swimmer of the 1920s and 1930s. Vera was just outside the medals finishing 5th in the individual 100m freestyle.



**1928 GB Olympic Relay Team – Vera on far right and Joyce Cooper on far left**

In 1925 Vera assisted the American swimmer Gertrude Ederle, in her cross-channel swim attempt, swimming with Miss Ederle for over three hours. Although the attempt in August 1925 was unsuccessful in the following year in 1926 Miss Ederle did become the first woman to ever swim across the channel.

Vera was no stranger to open water swimming winning national open water events and coming 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Women's National Long Distance Swim held on the river Thames in 1925 and in 1926 in a time of 76 minutes.

In 1928 Vera was selected for the GB team at the Olympics in Amsterdam and won a silver medal again in the 4 x 100m freestyle relay and was 6th in the individual 400m freestyle event.



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## **British Swimming Records for 2017 for Sussex Masters**

During 2017 a number of British Swimming Masters records were claimed by Sussex masters swimmers including:

- **Anthony Gimson** from Mid-Sussex who achieved 2 new British masters long course records in 200m Free at the SER Masters in Crawley in January and 400m Free at the Swim Wales Masters in Swansea in March and 2 short course records in the 100m Fly at the Sussex Masters Championships in Burgess Hill in September and 100m IM in the 80-84 age group at the Swim England Masters Nationals in Sheffield in October.
- **Sally Mills** also from Mid-Sussex achieved a long course and short course British masters record in the 200m Fly in the 60-64 age group at the World Championships in Budapest in September and at the Swim England Masters Nationals.
- 2 Relay long course records were achieved by Brighton Dolphins swimmers **Andrew Farrell, Paul Allen, Chris Tait** and **Matthew Lambert** in the 4 x 100 Freestyle 160-199 years and the 4 x 200m Freestyle 160-199 years both achieved at the British Swimming Masters Championships in Aberdeen in June.
- A Relay short course record was achieved by Mid-Sussex swimmers **Mary Johnson, Jennifer Dean, Rose Dudeney** and **Alison Gwynn** in the 4 x 200m Freestyle 280-319 years at the Swim England Masters Nationals.

Congratulations to all the Sussex masters recordholders !!

If anyone is aware of any swimming records by senior age group or masters members of Sussex Clubs please let the Sussex Masters Manager know: [sussexmasters@btinternet.com](mailto:sussexmasters@btinternet.com)

## **Sussex Masters Dates for 2018**

Below are some of the key dates for Masters' swimmers in 2018.

### **South East Masters Development Day 2018**

The South East Masters Development Day will be held on **Saturday 7 April 2018** at the ACS International School in Cobham where there will be a focus on swimming technique and other highlights include a panel discussion with masters world champions !! More details will be published soon on the SE Region website.

### **Sussex Masters Championships 2018**

The **Thirtieth (30<sup>th</sup>) Sussex Masters and Senior Age Championships** will be held at Pavilion in The Park, Horsham on **Sunday 23 September 2018** with a start time of 2.00pm.

This is the key Sussex event for all Masters. Please help us celebrate the Thirtieth Anniversary Championships by trying to get the total number of swims over 1,000 for the first time. Please check the Sussex Swim England website for the programme and conditions.



## **British Masters Championships 2018**

The British Masters Championships (which is long course) will be held at the Plymouth Life Centre, Plymouth from **8 to 10 June 2018**. It would be great to have a large number of Sussex swimmers qualify for this national Masters long course event. Please check the Swim England Masters Hub for the programme, conditions and qualifying times

## **Masters Club Focus – Beacon Swimming Club**

Below are details for Beacon Swimming Club masters section that Beacon masters swimmer Donna Trotman provided:

*“Just over two years ago seven very nervous adults stood poolside for the resurrection of the Beacon Swimming Club Masters squad [Beacon had previously had some masters swimmers back in the 1990s].*



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*Each was trying to gauge how good the other swimmers were, whether we would be able to keep up, or even finish the set! No one had any kit we were all total newbies.*

*I'm pleased to say that we all made it and loved it so much that we continue to swim today, our numbers have swelled to a healthy 30 and a fair bit of kit has been purchased along the way. We are mixed in our abilities, ages and goals but remarkably we all get on and love the training, boring our respective partners with tales of sets and funny poolside incidents.*

*Since that first October swim in 2015 we have been split into two squads, Masters Fitness who swim twice a week and Masters Development who may swim for up to five hours per week and from 1 January 7 hours a week. As well as time in the water Beacon Masters also enjoy regular Pilates sessions, long course training and the occasional social event.*

*In April 2017 several of us were fortunate enough to secure places on the SER Masters Development Day which we all agreed was time well spent, particularly the dry side warm up/warm down exercises and the talk by Alex Watson on how to avoid shoulder injuries.*

*Those who choose to swim competitively have attended several long and short course events over the past year including the Sussex Masters and Senior Age Group Championships. We are also delighted that one of our number*

*was selected to swim at the Inter County South East Masters competition. A full events programme has been drawn up for 2018 culminating in The Swim England Masters National Championships in October.*

*The future looks bright for Beacon Masters with several of our Senior Age swimmers on the cusp of ageing up. Apart from having fun and keeping fit our real aim is to keep our younger swimmers engaged and attending throughout their adulthood so that swimmers joining the Club at age 7 will still be swimming when they are 97!"*

*For more details of master swimming at Beacon Swimming Club please email:*

[beacon.sc@swimclubmanager.co.uk](mailto:beacon.sc@swimclubmanager.co.uk) or visit the website  
[www.beaconswimmingclub.co.uk](http://www.beaconswimmingclub.co.uk)

## **The Masters Interview**

Below we set out an interview with Anthony Gimson, former President of Sussex ASA and for many years the Sussex Masters Secretary who is a masters swimmer with many records and who has been involved in running of masters swimming at a County and National level since the 1980s.



**Anthony Gimson – former President of Sussex ASA**

## **Q. How did you first get involved in swimming?**

I was very lucky being brought up in Watford which in the 1940's had the only indoor pool in the whole of Hertfordshire so at Primary School, we got swimming lessons. I took to it easily and was swimming by the time I was 7 which was unusual in those days.

My first competition was the Primary School's Gala when I came third in the Best Style Breaststroke! When I went to the Grammar School, it had an open-air pool and my first summer I was selected for the School squad which was coached by Bill Juba. Bill was a lovely man, Hertfordshire Schools coach, Watford SC coach, as well as Editor of Swimming Times. Needless to say, I joined Watford Swimming Club in 1949 so I suppose that was when I first got involved in swimming. There was very little age group swimming then, you were either a junior under 16 or senior, so the only competitions I had were within the Club and School matches.

I went away to HMS Conway (Merchant Navy training ship) when I was 14. There were no swimming facilities there other than swimming in the Menai Straits in the Summer term but I used to go back to the Club during holidays.

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***Then followed six years at sea with Cunard. My first ship was the Queen Mary where I became Champion of the North Atlantic!***

I used to swim in the First Class pool when the passengers were at dinner and the pool attendant told me that there were annual seamen's championships decided on times set at the New York YMCA pool. This was a 20 yard long pool on the fifth floor, it was a novel experience going upstairs to a pool but I won the 100 yards freestyle.

When I left the sea in 1961, no-one swam competitively in their 20's so I played water polo for the next 20 odd years until I moved to Haywards Heath in 1982.

***Q. What was the first masters swimming competition you went to and what do you remember about it?***

In late 1982 I saw the results of the National Masters in particular that of the 45+ freestyle relay and thought my Watford friends and I could have a go at that. So in October 1983, I entered the Masters Nationals to be held at Nuneaton. In those days I was allowed to enter individual events for Haywards Heath but could compete for Watford in relays.

My mates and I were very impressed when we went onto poolside for our race as there were at least three retired internationals swimming for

other teams but we saw them off, winning in what was then a British Record time. We really thought ourselves the cat's whiskers!



**Gimson on the Queen Mary in the 1950s – second from left in back row**

***Q. When did masters swimming first get started in Sussex and who were the main individuals involved at that time?***

The leading swimming administrators in Sussex in the late 1980's were **Margaret Tuppen, Lis Hartley, and Pat and Richard Wadmore**. After the first Southern Counties Inter-County Masters in 1987, I suggested that Sussex introduce a County Masters Competition. The great and the good decided this was worth a go particularly as through my work I was able to find a sponsor, and Lis, Pat and I worked out details of the first

meet which was held in 1988 in what was then Chelsea College Pool, Eastbourne. It all went rather well and has been held almost every year since.

***Q. How have you seen masters swimming develop in the County, Nationally and Internationally over the years – what have been the main changes?***

***The principal change has been the growth in numbers participating and the extremely high standard of some of the competitors.***

Until recently the universal aim was friendly participation with no entry standards except in the European and World Championships where standards were essential but modest so almost all regular swimmers could take part.

There probably is no practical alternative but I was sad when I heard that tested entry standards have been introduced for this year's Swim England Nationals. It caught me by surprise and has stopped me entering at least two events this year because I haven't swum them for a while. *[Anthony set a new British Record for 100 Fly in the Sussex Championships but would not have been permitted to enter this event at the Nationals.]*

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**Q. When did the National Inter-County Masters competition come into being?**

I must not overlook **Tony Ward** in answering this. When I first got involved in Masters, Tony was the ASA Masters Secretary as well as the Southern Counties Masters Secretary, he seemed to do everything. I am sure there were others who made major contributions to the start of Masters in the UK but I don't know them.

Tony started the Southern Inter-County Masters in 1987 and provided the trophy that we now compete for. Interestingly 1987 is also the year of the first European Masters held in Blackpool which I feel sure Tony was behind. Sadly Tony died of a heart attack aged only 60 in 1997.

When the ASA Masters Committee were seeking a project to commemorate the Millennium, I suggested the National Inter-Counties based on what we did in the South, and persuaded all the other Regions that they should participate in 2000. I think of it as my major contribution to English Masters, and I am very proud that the competition has continued virtually unchanged.

**Q. What would you say to someone who is thinking about doing Masters swimming or restarting Masters swimming?**

Give it a Go. Certainly at my Club Mid Sussex Marlins, we encourage any adult to try us

provided they can swim sufficiently well not to disrupt sessions.

**Even then, if the individual can swim OK but is not very fit, we point out that we are not doing it to knock ourselves out, but for pleasure and camaraderie. So if it all gets too much, miss a couple of lengths and get your breath back.**

Within our 200 members we include all abilities and have sessions every day of the week which can only be done with a lot of volunteer involvement and support.

**Q. What has been your best memory of masters swimming?**

Sorry but I have two which I cannot split. The first is the year 2000 when I was in a relay team which set a World Record. We had trained hard (for us) aiming to do the Long Course Record at the World Masters Championships in Munich.



**World Record Relay Team in 2000**

We did beat the Record but a Japanese team beat us so we ended up with the Silver medal. We decided to have a go at the Short Course Record in the Nationals at Sheffield and were delighted to get that.

It was only three months later that we found that the same Japanese team had beaten our time literally one day later in Japan so we probably held the Record for perhaps 12 hours but at least we have the certificates to prove it. The event was the 240 – 279 mixed medley relay.

It was an interesting team with two reasonably capable male swimmers and with two female Olympians – see photo above. The team comprised of **Margaret Wilding** (Edwards) who had won bronze in 100m back in 1956, **Chris Jones** on breast, **Christine Perfect** (Gosden) on fly who was in the GB teams of 1956 and 1960, and me on free.

**The second memory was selecting and leading the Sussex Masters Inter-Counties team to win the Swim South East round at Crawley and the National title in 2006**

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**Q. What would you say are the main benefits you have gained from masters swimming over the years?**

It has kept me reasonably fit and sane as well as providing a reason to get up in the morning. I have always enjoyed swimming for its own sake but the benefits of belonging to a Club so that one knows at certain times in the week one goes swimming regardless of the weather and how one feels on the day are immense. For me it is the cherry on the top that I can compete from time to time.

**Q. Looking ahead how do you think Masters swimming will develop? For masters swimming to grow what do we need to get right?**

To the best of my knowledge Swim England Masters membership has been fairly static for some years. This

is despite the massive ongoing publicity that as a Nation, we must get fitter.

The underlying main problems in my opinion are (1) swimming is relatively expensive, (2) there are insufficient available facilities, and (3) not enough Masters will spare some time to help maintain and develop the discipline. On this last point, I find it a shame that so many Masters can find the time to train and compete but not to help out unless their arms are seriously twisted.



**Sussex Masters Inter-Counties National Winners in 2006**

**Q. What is your favourite pool to swim in as a masters swimmer in competitions and why?**

***This has to be Ponds Forge, Sheffield. It is showing a bit of age now but is still in my experience the best designed facility in the country.***

The water is light and bright, and the ends are not slippery which helps my dodgy turns.

**On behalf of all masters and Sussex thank you Anthony for all you have done for swimming and masters over more than 40 years !**

## **Saltdean Lido Opens**

The historic Saltdean Lido near Brighton was re-opened in June 2017 after having been closed since 1996. The Art Deco lido was built in 1938 and was hailed as the most innovative design of its type in Britain.

The pool which is now heated has been returned to its original 1930s length of 40 meters. The re-opening of the pool was the first phase of the renovation project with Phase 2 renovating the main building. Funding is anticipated to be secured by summer 2018 and the building re-opened in 2021.



**Saltdean Lido Re-opened on 17 June 2017**

The Lido will be closed over the winter and will open again in Easter 2018. Any masters swimmers than fancy training in an outdoor pool or just a great day out should pay the lido a visit in 2018. See the Saltdean website for details: [www.saltdeanlido.org](http://www.saltdeanlido.org)