

ASA SOUTH EAST REGION WATER POLO
UNDER 14 BOYS INTER REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS
WALSALL GALA BATH, 9TH-10TH DECEMBER 2017

A year ago, we took a South-east boys team to the same competition and at the time it looked as though we would really struggle to have enough squad members to play in the 2017 competition for the 2004 age group.

It has taken time to assemble a squad that could play in this year's competition but we slowly added a number of boys to the core of the squad that had played last year.

After a series of training sessions that were mainly held at Splashpoint in Worthing, a squad of 11 was selected to represent the region at the championships. We knew that we had a good core of players but it is always difficult to judge how competitive they would be in what is the youngest age group in this type of event.

The squad in full was as follows; -

1. George Pirgov (Guildford/Ealing)
2. Zach Kingett (Crawley)
3. Josh Luff (Kingston)
4. Mattie Smith (Worthing)
5. Aidan Johnson (Basingstoke)
6. Matthew Johnson (Basingstoke)
7. Jamie Bond (Worthing)
8. Rico Newman-Morgan (Hythe)
9. Henry Broadhurst (Worthing)
10. Max Luff (Kingston)
11. Owen Street (Mid Sussex Marlins)

The weekend proved to be highly eventful and these are the individual match reports.

Match 1, Saturday 15.30

South East 9, North West Ravens 2 (half time 4-1)

This was a really positive start to the competition when our tactics of a full press defence and a rapid counter attack immediately proved to be successful. The opposition never really came top terms with the quality of our play and we always looked as though we would run out comfortable winners. Josh looked a constant threat at centre forward but the rest of the squad did well to supply the service that led to a number of the goals.

Scorers; - Josh 5, Jamie 2, Matthew 1, Rico 1

Exclusions; - Zach 1, Rico 1, Max 1

Match 2, Saturday 17.00

South East 4, North East 4 (half time 1-2)

A terrific performance when we came from behind to secure a draw against a very good North East team. This was a much tougher game than the opener but our squad made a significant improvement and thoroughly deserved the draw. We possibly did enough to win and we missed a

penalty but George produced a number of good saves and so the final result was probably a fair reflection.

Scorers; - Jamie 2, Zach 1, Josh 1

Exclusions; - George 1, Mattie 1, Josh 1, George 1

Match 3. Saturday 19.00

South East 12, Scotland 2. (half time 7-0)

This was a match that we thought that we would be capable of winning but the squad produced an excellent display to record what was a relatively easy win.

We scored a number of really good team goals when we moved the ball from defence to attack and Josh was clinical at centre forward. The match was over as a contest at half time but we continued to play well and the final score was a fair reflection of our dominance.

Scorers; - Josh 5, Jamie 5, Max 2

Exclusions; - Mattie 1, Owen 1

Match 4. Saturday 20.30

South East 3, West Midlands 4 (half time 0-3)

With two wins and a draw from the first two matches, we knew that a win in this final match would secure a place in the top two in the group and with it a guaranteed top four finish. We made a sluggish start, probably due to the boys having already having played three tough matches, and from 0-3 down at half time it was always going to be difficult to get back into the match. The opposition became very negative as the game went on and we eventually started to break them down but we ran out of time when we were chasing the equaliser.

This odd goal defeat saw us finish third in the group and as a result we would face the South West in the play off for 5th/6th place on the Sunday morning.

Scorers; - Jamie 2, Josh 1

Exclusions; - Max 2, Josh 1, Owen 1

Although we missed out on a final four finish by the narrowest of margins, we were delighted with the efforts of the squad over the four days and we were all looking forward to the play off on the Sunday. What we hadn't expected was the dramatic deterioration in the weather which resulted in heavy snow fall over night. At one point it looked as though we would be unable to travel to the pool from the hotel because of the road conditions but all of the squad and parents were keen to play the match. We were lucky that we had enough four-wheel drive vehicles to transport everyone and we were very grateful to everyone who helped out.

Match 5, Sunday 12.45

South East 4, South West 12 (half time 2-7)

To be fair, after all of the efforts of the day before and possibly the problems of making our way to the pool, we didn't quite play as well as we had the previous day. That said, the boys never gave up against a very strong opposition and we did score a number of good goals. We conceded too many goals to the counter attack but we improved as the match went on and we missed a few opportunities when we probably should have scored.

Scorers; - Jamie 3, Zach 1

Exclusions; - Max 2, Owen 2, Henry 1

Alastair Roberts 10/12/2017 22:01

Comment [1] :

Alastair Roberts 10/12/2017 22:09

Comment [2] :

Overall, we have to be pleased with what we achieved over what was a very demanding weekend. Our final sixth place finish was the best result for a South-East boy's squad at an inter-regional event for a number of years.

To put this in perspective, we played in the tougher of the two groups which produced both finalists and we drew with the eventual runners up (North East) and lost by the odd goal to the eventual winners.

All of the squad were a credit to the region and we were hugely grateful to all of the parents who supported the squad throughout the weekend that particularly as a result of the weather, had its challenges.

Alastair Roberts; - Squad Administration

Ben Alcorn; - Coach

Steve Bond; - Team Manager

