

**SWIM ENGLAND SOUTH EAST BOY'S WATER POLO**  
**UNDER 16 (2004 & YOUNGER) INTER REGION CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**WALSALL GALA BATHS, 29<sup>TH</sup>-30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2019**

After a number of well attended training sessions, the regions coaching staff selected the following squad of players to play in the 2019 Inter Region championship event at the Walsall Gala Baths; -

1. Owen Street
2. Owen Halligan
3. Henry Broadhurst
4. Antonio Bardella
5. Rico Newman-Morgan
6. Josh Luff
7. Jamie Bond
8. Matty Smith
9. Alexander Sandberg
10. Alexander Stephenson
11. Zach Kingett
12. Henry Plewes
13. Felix Monaghan

The annual championship is played in two divisions with the first division teams in action in Blackpool on the same weekend, and in the second division at Walsall we faced a busy schedule of five matches against Wales, East, Ireland, East Midlands and North West Ravens.

Starting on the hottest day of the year on Saturday, these are the individual match reports; -

Saturday, 13.45

South-East 18, Wales 2

Quarter scores; - 5-0, 3-2, 7-1, 3-3

A dominant display against a limited opposition and we took the opportunity to utilise the 13 players in the squad giving all of the boys a good amount of water time.

We played well at times but we did concede a number of goals that really should have been avoided. Nevertheless, this was a satisfactory start to the competition but we knew that we had tougher tests ahead.

Scorers; - Josh 5, Zach 4, Matty 3, Jamie 3, Owen S 2, Antonio 1

Exclusions; - Henry B 3, Owen H 1

Saturday, 16.00

South-East 12, East 3

Quarter scores; - 4-1, 2-2, 2-0, 4-0

Another good win but this time against a much better opposition and we played well throughout with a solid defence the key to the success.

Our speed on the counter attack regularly caused the East team problems and with better finishing we would have won by a greater margin.

Scorers; - Josh 3, Jamie 3, Antonio 3, Matty 2, Zach 1

Exclusions; - Matty 2, Henry P 2, Josh 1, Jamie 1, Alex Stephenson 1

Saturday, 18.15

South-East 8, Ireland 11

Quarter scores; - 1-4, 2-1, 1-2, 4-4

We knew that this would be a tough game against a physical Irish team and so it proved.

The game turned out to be a very entertaining spectacle for an enthusiastic crowd and at the start of the final quarter we staged a remarkable comeback from trailing 4-8 to score 3 quick goals. We then had a good chance to level at 8-8 but having missed that opportunity a couple of poor defensive goals really cost us the chance of a positive result.

The late come back indicated what might have been possible, but we were undone by a poor first quarter and the loss of Matty Smith for three exclusion fouls before half-time.

At half-time it looked as though the Irish would probably go on to win the game relatively comfortably but all of the squad showed a huge amount of resilience and skill in a very spirited second half display.

Scorers; - Josh 3, Jamie 3, Matty 1, Zach 1

Exclusions; - Matty 3, Alexander Stephenson 1, Zach 1, Antonio 1, Jamie 1

Sunday, 10.45

South-East 6, East Midlands 9

Quarter scores; - 1-2, 0-3, 2-2, 3-2

After the frustrating loss to the Irish on the Saturday evening we knew that we faced a tough opening game on the Sunday morning against a talented and well organised East Midlands team.

Unfortunately, we made another tentative start and by half-time we were trailing 1-5 and we had also lost Josh to three controversial exclusion fouls.

Once again, the boys worked incredibly hard in the second half to try and get back into the game but we had left ourselves too much to do.

The match almost descended into farce with several stoppages because of problems with the table officials and a number of disagreements between the referees. Matty Smith was incorrectly shown a red flag for 3 exclusions when he had only committed 2 which was eventually corrected, but none of this helped the squad maintain the momentum.

Ultimately this was a second narrow defeat but once again all of the squad had given everything in a very tough and frustrating encounter.

Scorers; - Jamie 5, Matty 1

Exclusions; - Josh 3, Zach 3, Matty 2, Antonio 1, Jamie 1, Alexander Stephenson 1, Henry P 1

Sunday, 12.15

South-East 15, North-West Ravens 1

Quarter scores; - 1-0, 6-1, 4-0, 4-0

The final match against a young North-West team was an encouraging win when all of the squad played a part and remarkably 11 of the boys scored goals.

After a relatively slow start in the first quarter we eventually took control and the combination of a pressing defence and a rapid counter-attack soon started to dominate proceedings.

The final score was a fair reflection of the difference between the teams and it was good to sign off with such a comprehensive victory.

Scorers; - Antonio 2, Josh 2, Jamie 2, Matty 2, Owen H 1, Henry B 1, Alexander Sandberg 1, Rico 1, Alexander Stephenson 1, Henry P 1, Felix 1

Exclusions; - Owen H 1, Jamie 1, Matty 1

Three wins and two relatively narrow defeats resulted in a third-place finish which the squad very much deserved.

This was an encouraging weekend and it would have not taken a great deal for the squad to have recorded wins in the two games that they lost, but both eventually came down to relatively small margins.

The boys were always excellent to work with and at all of the team meetings they were quick to take on board the ideas that Ben, who worked tirelessly all weekend, was trying to develop.

The squad was supported throughout the weekend by a large number of friends and families and this created a really good atmosphere at all of the games.

Overall this was a good weekend for the South-East and we were pleased to take a full squad of 13 boys to the tournament after some very difficult selections.

The attached picture of the squad is as follows L-R; - Alexander Stephenson, Jamie Bond, Antonio Bardella, Henry Broadhurst, Owen Street, Matty Smith, Owen Halligan, Rico Newman-Morgan, Alexander Sandberg, Josh Luff, Zach Kingett, Henry Plewes & Felix Monaghan.

Alastair Roberts; - Administration

Ben Alcorn; - Coach

Steve Bond; - Team Manager