

County Championships Update – Sandwell Weekend 20/21 January 2023

Following all the posts on Facebook I felt it was appropriate, now the weekend is complete, to make a statement on behalf of the Staffordshire ASA Executive and Organising Committee.

Saturday was a very trying day as we all know. A new programme at a new venue with a new operating system was always going to have a few teething problems however the scale of the problems we faced on Saturday was unprecedented. This event was only the 2nd Long Course event that had been held since the re-opening in July last year with that event not having had any 50m events. Our key issues on Saturday related to these and the communication between the Centre's Electronic Timing System and Scoreboard. When one issue arose and was solved another issue arose, followed by another and another. This went on throughout Session 1. This was the reason for the delays and lengthy running of this session. However please be assured that, the times from the Electronic System were not the problem – these were accurate and used, it was communication to the score board that was the issue.

Our Technical Team members and the Centre Staff worked tirelessly together to resolve the issues throughout session one and during the interval between session one and two. Once the issues were resolved the meet began to run as expected. These issues would have happened to ANY organisation first using the pool for 50m not just Staffordshire. Centre Staff and Team Members then remained at the pool long after the event was finished on Saturday evening to try and ensure we did not encounter any issues on Sunday. They then arrived early on Sunday morning ensure things were still working as they had left them the evening before. We all know the results of this hard work!

Can I please also point out that all members of the Executive and Organising Committee are VOLUNTEERS. NO ONE is remunerated for the roles they do; they are all done for the love of swimming and for the benefit of the swimmers. A considerable number of the members do not have any swimmers involved in the sport. Expenses for travelling are available, as for any other volunteer at the event, but the majority will refuse to claim these expenses. Many also have full time jobs and either work well into the evenings or prior to work to assist, or even take time out of their holiday allowance to do the jobs they do.

Facebook is not an appropriate channel to make comments on officials and volunteers. It can/will be treated as inappropriate and abusive and may lead to the post being removed. Criticisms and feedback are always welcome however they should be directed through the appropriate channels so they can be dealt with specifically. Anonymous posts will no longer be permitted. Members are welcome to post and are encouraged to do so but any items that are considered abusive, disruptive, or potentially bring the sport into disrepute will be removed.