

SOUTH WEST VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATION

I am pleased to report continuing progress in terms of volleyball development in the SW – particularly in junior volleyball. However I will start the report by congratulating those who were the victors and runners up in our wide ranging regional competitions. We ran two regional leagues – one for men and one for women, plus a veterans championships and a full range of junior age group competitions:

Competition	Winners	Runners Up
Men's Premier League	Priory	Bath Aquae Sulis
Women's Premier League	Plymouth	Torex (Devon)
SW Men's Championships	City of Bristol 1	City of Bristol 2
SW Women's Championships	Weymouth / Wessex	City of Bristol
SW Veterans (2004)	Whitefield	Speedwell

Junior Championships	Winners	Runners Up
U12 Boys	Plymstock Pumas	Melksham
U12 Girls	Portman Wessex	Devizes
U13 Boys	Portman Wessex	Melksham
U13 Girls	Melksham	Priory
U14 Boys	Portman Wessex	Melksham
U14 Girls	Melksham	Devizes
U15 Boys	Wessex	Plymouth
U15 Girls	Wessex	Melksham
U17 Boys	Wessex	Melksham
U17 Girls	Plymouth	Melksham

A five event Grand Prix series also provided regular competition through the season for U11 to U14 age groups. We are grateful to Mike Halse for his organisation of the series. Winners were: U11 Lydney, U12 Boys Melksham, U12 Girls Melksham, U13 Boys Melksham, U13 Girls Melksham, U14 Wessex, U14 Girls Melksham.

Finally on competitions, it was good to see City of Bristol (the “superclub” formed a year ago by the merger of Speedwell and Whitefield) win the NVL Men's Division 2, gaining promotion to the top division, a year after Speedwell were relegated. Wessex Women fared better with fifth place in the highest division.

Development Activities

The 4 regional junior squads continue to offer more talented players the opportunity to receive high quality coaching and the opportunity to represent their region. This was again a good year for the SW, though for the first time in many years we did not gain a victory in the National Regional Junior Championships. Congratulations however to the teams for their final positions: U15 and U17 boys were runners up, U16 girls were 3rd and U14 girls were 5th. Many thanks to the squad coaches and managers and also to the club and school coaches who have provided them with such a rich pool of talent. Youth development continues to be very strong in the region.

In conclusion

This has been a season of transition with a number of new officers taking up positions. We missed Ros Sutherland who was travelling around the world for much of the season. We are grateful to those who stepped in for her in her absence. As with last year we had some sad times, saying goodbye to Doreen Dingle, former SW Treasurer who died earlier this year. She will be sadly missed and our thoughts are with Dan who in difficult circumstances did so much to take on many of Ros' tasks this year. As always, the strength of the region and its areas come from the quality and dedication of its volunteers. I would like to thank all those who have given so willingly of their time to ensure that we have strong area and regional activities.

Ron Richards, Secretary
Area Reports

Gloucestershire

This season the GVA has had a reduction in the number of teams taking part in Men's events (Divisions of 7 and 9), but an increase in the Women's Division (7 teams). We have however extended the boundaries of the GVA still further with a team from Brize Norton in Oxfordshire joining the competition. Lydney continue to fly the flag in terms of local Junior participation, and have had some success in the Grand Prix, whilst the team from Farmor's School is in the top 3 of Division 2 this season, and also hopes to enter a team in the Women's competition next year. Three clubs with GVA connections are playing in the NVL, with City of Bristol and Stroud having very good seasons. The committee is currently operating under strength, not helping our efforts to progress the game locally, but a number of people approached informally this year have indicated that they might be persuaded to serve next year.

Mark Horseman

Poole and District VA

There was good news again in junior volleyball: Wessex Sportset National U18 Men's Champions (Runners-up U16 boys and girls, 3rd U18 women, U15 boys and girls).

At senior level Wessex Women finished 5th in NVL Div 1, and Wessex Men won NVL Div 3 South-West ining promotion to Div 2.

In the local league: 4 divisions (1 women's) of Coles Miller Winter League. Sandbanks won Div 1 for first time, and Wessex Ladies the women's division. A Summer League is also being arranged.

A Level 1 Coaches Course was held producing 13 new coaches

Portman Building Society Junior Development - coaching in schools, 6 mini-volley Grand Prix tournaments, schools age-group championships at U12, 13, 14, 16 and 18.

Beach Volleyball in the area is still very popular. The Sandbanks Classic had over 200 teams, and hosted the British Senior and Junior Championships, with many local champions (details available on request).

The following local players won representative honours for England:- Senior women - Leanne Eddie, Zara Dampney; Junior women - Leanne Eddie, Henri Creasey, Hannah Ruddick, Zara Dampney and Vicky Palmer; Junior men - Alex Robertson, England.

Geoff Allen

Wiltshire

This year has seen some expansion in Wiltshire with 19 teams entering the Mixed League (3 divisions), and 12 teams in the Ladies and Juniors League (2 divisions). The top division of the Mixed League was won by Aquae Sulis of Bath and the top division of the Ladies and Juniors League was won by Melksham A. Additionally 3 mixed league tournaments and 3 ladies tournaments have been played. This increase in competition has resulted in over 300 registered players. Teams from Devizes, Calne, Westbury, Trowbridge and Melksham took part in the successful Mini Grande Prix volleyball series for under 11s to under 14s.

The county has ladies representative teams (Mavericks) in the SW League and Division 2 of the NVL; the Mavericks NVL squad has achieved its most successful season finishing fourth in Division 2, under the coaching of Cliff Ball in his last season as coach. Unfortunately there is not a men's Mavericks team at the moment due to a lack of coaches with the time to commit. The Melksham junior section has continued to support both SW and National junior squads with several players. Calne and Devizes have also supplied a player each to the SW squads. A Scorers Course was organised in October and a Grade IV Referees Course in April, tutored by Stewart Dunne, produced 22 newly qualified referees. In summary, this has been a very successful season for the county but there are coaching concerns at the representative level.

Richard Morten **WVA Co-Chair**