ASA East Region Water Polo Junior inter-county Championships 2011

Suffolk Girls retain the Jill Morton Memorial Trophy Essex Boys win the Andy Morton Trophy

This year's championships (for players born in 1996 or later) were held at Basildon Sporting Village pool. The region's under-16 teams put on a superb display of top quality water polo in a thrilling competition watched by a gallery full of spectators, including David Robinson (ASA East Region President) and Andy Morton (East Region past president and former GB water polo manager).

Suffolk Girls were the only qualifying county team which meant they would retain the Jill Morton Memorial Trophy. The Girls competition was boosted by the welcome presence of invited teams from Essex and Welsh Wanderers, with the latter fielding several 94 and 95 born players. The first Girls game saw Welsh Wanderers comfortably beating the less experienced Essex team 11-1. They then faced Suffolk in a game that was evenly balanced 1-1 until a last-minute goal from Rebecca Dyer gave victory to the Welsh girls against their younger rivals.

Suffolk's final game against the young Essex team entertained the balcony with a feast of goals in the first half, including 3 from Suffolk sensation Gemma Bartle in her first county appearance. After the interval the tiring Essex players were unable to add to their tally and Suffolk finished their campaign with a convincing 7-2 scoreline.

David Robinson and Andy Morton presented the trophy and medals to the Girls teams. David expressed the Region's thanks to Welsh Wanderers for taking part, and we hope to see them again in future.

The Boys championship promised to be an exciting contest as always. Last year's winners Herts were able to draw on their reserves and enter two teams, with Beds, Essex and Suffolk fielding their customary strong squads.

Essex opened their account with a steady 4-0 win over Suffolk including 3 from Rob Humphries in his home pool. Beds also kept a clean sheet with a 5-0 win over the young Herts B team. Herts A then recorded a 3-0 victory over Suffolk in a tight game with excellent defensive play from both sides.

Plucky Herts B faced championship hopefuls Essex but were unable to find the net as the home county scored a comfortable 6-0 win. Herts A then lined up against Beds and a tense first half ended with scores level at 1-1. Herts added 3 more after the break before Titmus scored a consolation Beds goal to make the final score 4-2.

An entertaining game between Suffolk and Herts B ended in a 3-0 scoreline with Bruce claiming all the Suffolk goals. Essex then claimed a 4-2 victory over Beds thanks to a trio of goals from Inwood and a rock-solid defence despite conceding several exclusion fouls.

The home derby between Herts A and B got off to a great start as Sam Carling upset the formbook with the B team's first goal of the tournament. But the A team regrouped after the interval and Abeywickrama scored 3 to give them a 4-1 victory. Suffolk were intent on taking the points off Beds and put in a feisty performance, but a string of exclusion fouls undid them as Beds recorded an easy 7-1 win including a hat-trick from Ward.

The points were added up, the goal differences were calculated and last year's finalists Herts A and Essex faced each other in the Championship decider. Herts needed to win – a draw

would give Essex the trophy thanks to superior goal difference. The rivals attacked and counter-attacked but superb defence at each end kept the half-time score to 1-1. The second half saw three exclusion fouls without a score, then Rob Humphries put Essex a goal ahead in the last minute. Herts earned a last-gasp penalty throw and maybe a glimmer of hope, but they hit the post and the game clock ticked away to give Essex a fine 2-1 victory.

David Robinson and Andy Morton presented the trophy and medals. This was David's first water polo championship as East Region President and he praised the teams for a thoroughly entertaining tournament.

Thanks go to all the referees, table officials, parents & supporters and of course the players who made this another memorable East Region event.

> Essex Herts A Beds Suffolk Herts B

Match Scores -	Girls			Results - Bo	ys
Essex	1	Welsh Wanderers	11		sex
Suffolk	1	Welsh Wanderers	2	2 nd He	erts /
Suffolk	7	Essex	2	3 rd Be	eds
Match Scores -	Boys		Suffolk		
Suffolk	0	Essex	4	5 th He	erts I
Beds	5	Herts B	0		
Herts A	3	Suffolk	0		
Essex	6	Herts B	0		
Herts A	4	Beds	2		
Suffolk	3	Herts B	0		
Essex	4	Beds	2		
Herts B	1	Herts A	4		
Beds	7	Suffolk	1		
Herts A	1	Essex	2		

Top	SCC	rers -	Girls
Com	ma	Rartic	`

Gemma Bartle	Suffolk	4
Laura Hatcher	Welsh Wanderers	4
Evie Granat	Suffolk	3
Leah Clark	Welsh Wanderers	3
Rebecca Dyer	Welsh Wanderers	2
Top scorers - Boys		
Josh Inwood	Essex	7
Rob Ward	Beds	6
Rob Humphries	Essex	5
Luka Abeywickrama	Herts A	3
Theo Bruce	Suffolk	3
Dan Paddon	Essex	3
Jack Pickford	Herts A	3

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