



ASA East Region Senior Water Polo Championship 2013

East Region's premier water polo event was held on Sunday 10th February at the splendid new Inspire Luton Sports Village pool. Men's teams from five of the Region's six counties competed for the President's Cup. Reigning champions Cambridgeshire were absent because of a fixture clash so the trophy was up for grabs.

Bedfordshire and Essex opened the tournament with a thrilling match which saw exclusions and goals aplenty. Essex led 4-2 at the interval, then Beds pulled one back before a controversial timeout call and converted penalty restored the Essex lead. More goals followed on each side, and with a minute left Beds needed a single score to tie the match, but Essex found the net in the dying seconds to win 7-5 including three from Robert Eastman.

Norfolk faced Hertfordshire in a contest of experience against youth, but Herts led the way and reached 5-2 at half time. The young Herts defence stayed solid and Walshe completed his hat-trick to give them an 8-2 victory. Suffolk then lined up against Beds and a tense first period finished 1-2. Suffolk seemed to have lost their way as Beds raced to a 1-5 lead, but two goals from Pryke in the final minute made amends and the game finished a more respectable 3-5.

Essex took to the water against Norfolk and took them apart. The scoreboard showed 6-1 at the interval and 11-1 at the final whistle including another hat-trick from Eastman. Herts threatened to hand Suffolk the same treatment. The half-time score stood at 6-2 including another triple from Walshe, but Suffolk regrouped and the second period saw a more even contest that ended 9-4.

Norfolk gamely faced up to Beds but again found themselves quickly falling behind as the Beds tally increased. Two goals from Norfolk left-hander Artt livened the second half and in the end they were pleased to hold Beds to a single-digit score as they went down 3-9. It was a similar story as Suffolk struggled against title hopefuls Essex, and the first half finished 1-7 including a Neil Coles hat-trick. Suffolk were tiring and Essex swept past to win 3-12.

The Herts-Beds match was a lively affair which kept the referees busy, including 15 exclusions and a penalty. Attwood's hat-trick and two from Walshe put Herts on a strong footing and their defence denied the Beds attack until they claimed a 7-3 victory. Neighbours and old rivals Suffolk and Norfolk then took to the field, each scenting a win, and both keepers were kept busy as the score reached 4-3 at the break. Suffolk then extended their lead and maintained the gap to win 7-5 despite Norfolk's Carnerous clocking his third.

The stage was set for a title showdown between the unbeaten Essex and Herts teams. A draw would give Essex the trophy thanks to better goal difference so Herts had to win, but it was Essex who opened the scoring. Herts levelled but were soon behind again and chasing a 4-3 deficit at the interval. The second half saw a titanic struggle with many exclusions but no goals till the last minute bell sounded. Then Herts conceded a penalty which Essex gratefully converted. Herts countered and

found the net, but they had no more time and Essex won the match 5-4 to regain the trophy they had relinquished two years before.

East Region President Paul Hayes declared himself proud to be an Essex boy as he presented the President's Cup to his county team. He thoroughly enjoyed his first water polo championship and was full of praise for the teams and coaches, the officials and everyone who made this a memorable East Region event.

Special congratulations are due to Cameron Baker, at 14 years old the region's youngest qualified referee, who officiated at his first regional event with confidence and authority that impressed the watchful senior referees. He will go far!

Results

1 st	Essex	12 points
2 nd	Hertfordshire	9
3 rd	Bedfordshire	6
4 th	Suffolk	3
5 th	Norfolk	0

Top Scorers

Neil Coles (Essex)	9
Ciaran Walshe (Herts)	9
Robert Eastman (Essex)	8
Robert Pryke (Suffolk)	7
Jared Baker (Herts)	6
Zoltan Vanyi (Beds)	6
Jasdon Attwood (Herts)	5
Tom Ealham (Suffolk)	5
Stefano Carnerous (Norfolk)	5
David Lambert (Beds)	4
Mick Artt (Norfolk)	4
Adrian Westlake (Essex)	4

Exclusion Kings

Ciaran Walshe (Herts)	5
Zoltan Vanyi (Beds)	5
Kevin Hall (Norfolk)	4
Tom Ealham (Suffolk)	4
Nick Blaxill (Suffolk)	4
Jack Pickford (Herts)	4
Jared Baker (Herts)	3
Owen Stephens (Suffolk)	3
Charles Costin (Beds)	3
Matt Oughton (Beds)	3

Chris Stephens
ASA East Region water polo manager