

Junior 'Diddy' League 2020

The 2020 edition of the Junior League is fast approaching with Morpeth's young athletes working hard to develop the skills and technique required to swim fast. We are regularly asked questions about the format of the Junior League and many other Junior League related questions. Please read below to find out more.

What is it?

Morpeth compete in the Northumberland and Durham (N&D) County Division of the National Junior League which is often called the 'Diddy League' (it's the same thing). There are 3 divisions in Northumberland and Durham and Morpeth are now in DIVISION 1 (after winning the Division 2 Final in 2019) alongside Tynemouth, Sunderland, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Gateshead & Whickham, Aquaforce Hartlepool and Stockton. There are 3 qualifying rounds throughout the year with the top 6 teams progressing to the N&D Division 1 final which is now held in September. Last season we achieved our goal of gaining promotion to Division 1! This season our goal is to maintain our place in Division 1 (The team who finishes lowest rank after the rounds is relegated).

Division 1: The top team in Division 1 go through to a Northern Final where if they finish top 4 they qualify for the National final. In 2017 & 2018 I was lead coach for Tynemouth ASC who reached the National Final and finished 7th & 4th (out of over 200 teams nationally).

Format

The Junior League is a team competition where swimmers compete in short individual and/or team events in a 49 event programme which lasts less than 2 hours. It is a fantastic competition to introduce young swimmers to competitive swimming and great for skill development. It is something that all Morpeth's youngest swimmers strive to compete in, it is a priority for our youngsters. Swimmers are aged between 9 and 12 (age at the end of the year) so the swimmers competing in 2020 will be born between 2011 and 2008.

There are 3 'rounds' and the top 6 teams after the rounds qualify for the final in **September 2020**

Morpeth ASC History

Morpeth ASC have climbed the Junior League ranks rapidly over the last three seasons. In 2016 the team finished 5th in Division 3 final. In 2017 a new strategy was applied to the team resulting in more swimmers taking part than ever before and the club ensuring a place in the Division 3 final in 2nd place. The team competed well in the 2017 Division 3 final successfully winning the overall title and gaining promotion to Division 2 for the first time since joining the league. In 2018 Morpeth's team held their own in Division 2 qualifying for the final in 3rd place. The team weren't quite able to take the top spot in the final but finished a fantastic 2nd just 18 points away from promotion to Division 1. **In 2019 Morpeth ASC qualified once again for the Division 2 final this time in 2nd place. A fantastic showing so the club win the Division 2 final and gain promotion to Division 1 for the first time in the clubs history.**

Selection Policy

Division 1 is a much more competitive division than 2 & 3. Our goal is to maintain our place in Division 1 and continue to develop a strong squad of younger swimmers. Swimmers will

be chosen from each age category 9 – 12 years (age at the end of 2020). In order to find our fastest team and help the development of as many athletes as we can, we believe in providing a large number of young athletes an opportunity to compete in the qualifying rounds whilst remaining competitive. Swimmers attendance, attitude and their performances in training, in other competitions (such as time trials, development meets, local meets) and in the Junior League itself are what we base our selection on. The fastest team will be selected for the final. Obviously in some cases this may be disappointing for swimmers who could've previously competed in some of the rounds, but ultimately this is the fairest way to select any team and should encourage swimmers to listen and work hard in training. Any swimmer who competes in the rounds but does not make the final team is invited to attend the final and cheer on their team mates.

Selected swimmers will not all compete in an equal number events. Again this will be selected based on the above selection policy. Swimmers (and parents) are strongly encouraged to embrace the 'team aspect' and recognise the value of every swimmers contribution to the points total.

Expectations

Swimmers:

All selected swimmers are expected to compete when selected for the Junior League team
All swimmers are expected to arrive at the competition venue at the time stated
All swimmers travel to and from the venue on the team bus for the final
All swimmers wear Morpeth kit which includes racing in a club swim cap
All swimmers are to remain on poolside for the duration of the event, including the announcement of scores. (If they need to use the toilet then they must inform the team manager)
All swimmers are expected to give 100% in all of their events and to cheering their team mates on.

Parents:

If swimmers are not available for any of the rounds parents **MUST** let me know at least **2 weeks prior to that round**. This is to ensure another young athlete can be given the opportunity to compete. During 2019 others athletes repeatedly missed out on the opportunity to compete and be part of the team due to parents not informing anyone until it was too late to call on another athlete.

Morpeth parents are expected to be the loudest group of parents during the competition!
And cheer for every swimmer on the team!

2020 Dates – Please keep these FREE

19th January 2020

29th February 2020

12th July 2020

6th September 2020 – FINAL

