

## Junior 'Diddy' League 2019

The 2019 edition of the Junior League is fast approaching with GAW'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 things. Please read below to find out more.

### What is it?

GAW 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 we are in the top division alongside reigning champions Tynemouth as well as Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Stockton, Sunderland, Chester-le-street and newly promoted Aquaforce Hartlepool. There are 3 qualifying rounds throughout the year with the top 6 teams progressing to the N&D final which is now held in September. The winner represents N&D in the Northern final in October. The top 4 in the Northern final qualify for the National final which is always held on the last Sunday in November.

### GAW's History

We have a fantastic recent history in the competition with our best result being in the 2016 edition where we won the N&D Division 1 trophy for the 2nd year running and then qualified for the national final via a 2nd place finish in the Northern final. We went on to finish 5th in the National final out of over 200 teams who started the competition! Our 12 year old boys (Ryan Zhao, Adam Barrett, Jamie Young and Adam Strickland) set a new national Junior League record in the 4x50 medley relay. The previous year we'd finished 6th in the National final. Prior to 2014 we had progressed through the divisions culminating in a division 2 victory in 2013. In the last 2 seasons GAW have restructured their squads and are now gearing up to challenge once again at county, regional and national level.

Year	Position
2019	?
2018	Joint 4th
2017	4th
2016	1st
2015	1st
2014	2nd
2013	Division 2 - 1st

### 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 should be something that GAW's youngest swimmers strive to compete in. Swimmers are aged between 9 and 12 (age at the end of the year) so the swimmers competing in the 2018 final were born between 2006 and 2009. Therefore for next year's competition our 2010 born children will be eligible to compete for the first time.

## Selection Policy

GAW's goal is to have our fastest possible team swimming in the final in September. The swimmers will be chosen from the age categories below. In order to find our fastest team, we believe in providing a large number of young athletes an opportunity to compete in the qualifying rounds. 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.

Before the final in September we will hold trials to decide our team. Obviously in some cases this may be disappointing for swimmers who could've previously competed in all of the rounds, but ultimately this is the fairest way to select the team. It's worth noting that not all swimmers specialise in shorter races and whilst Junior League is a brilliant experience, it is not the be-all and end-all.

Diddy Age	DoB
9	01.01.2010 - 24.11.2010
10	01.01.2009 - 31.12.2009
11	01.01.2008 - 31.12.2008
12	01.01.2007 - 31.12.2007

## Expectations

All selected swimmers are expected to compete and must wear Team GAW kit which includes racing in a club swim cap. If there are any issues then parents are expected to discuss this with the team coaches, not with each other in the stands. Team GAW parents are expected to be the loudest group of parents during the competition!

Swimmers are to remain on poolside for the duration of the event, including for the announcement of scores. If they need to use the toilet then they must inform the team manager.

## 2019 Dates

The 3 qualifying rounds which we will compete in plus the final are:

Date	Venue	Start Time
10th March	Stanley	11:45
31st March	Durham	9:10
30th June	Stanley	14:30
15th September (Final)	Tynemouth	TBC