

Water Polo

Liverpool lift title

Liverpool ladies lifted the Division One National Women's Water Polo League title for the third year in a row and **Hannah Wild** was voted Division One player of the year following the final weekend of play in Manchester.

Liverpool A were beaten 9-4 by Manchester



Liverpool ladies celebrate their Division One title in the national women's league

A in the final showdown, just like last year, but were too far ahead on points to be beaten by the home side. It was Liverpool's only loss of the season, and cemented Manchester into second place. The game featured three goals by Manchester's **Chloe Wilcox** and another entry on to the scoresheet for **Angie Winstanley-Smith**, taking her total to 37, 10 more than the next best shooter in the league.

Liverpool's other victory during the final weekend was a 20-3 win over **Manchester B**. **Sheffield** took third place in the league, also beating Manchester B fairly convincingly.

Performance update

Competition calendars for the men's and women's senior squads will include the European qualifiers, World League for the women and some good competitions in Slovakia and Georgia for the men.

Focus is now on the European A qualifiers at the end of April, where both teams will be competing for a place in the European Championships later this year.

The women started their preparation with a training camp in Hungary, followed by a competition in Greece. They also have camps in Italy and France. Male players based overseas will return to Manchester for an intensive training period during April.

Jowell cancels Manchester visit

Minister for London and the Olympics, **Tessa Jowell** was due to visit the high performance centre in Manchester in January, but unfortunately had to cancel at the last minute.

Jeremy Beeston, director general of the Government Olympics Executive, attended in her place and saw a strength and conditioning session and water polo session. He met GB players **Adam Schofield** and **Chloe Wilcox**.

Leeds lead the way in Div 2

Leeds took the Division Two title with 10 out of 12 games won during the season.

Their final weekend featured wins over **Coventry** and bottom team, **Hucknall**, who struggled following the loss of several players to new Division Four team **South Derbyshire**. Leeds were helped to victory by 47 goals from **Lisa Lang**.

Manchester C finished second with seven victories and **Penguin B** were third. No teams face relegation this year because of the reorganisation of the league, saving **Hucknall** from a potential play-off with **Sheffield B**, who were runners up in Division Three.

Carlisle clinch Div 4 title

Carlisle secured victory with wins over **Sunderland** and **Polytechnic**.

South Derbyshire finished just two points behind, having also won both final games. All five teams in the new division scored points this season, with bottom side **Penguin C** having won two games and picked up valuable experience.

Provisional dates for next season are available on <http://nwwpl.co.uk> with a grand finale again planned for Manchester at the end of January 2011. Details of the Spring Cup are also available with games scheduled for **Hucknall** and **Walsall**.

Men's top division cut to eight teams

Delegates at the National League annual meeting on January 24 agreed a reorganisation plan that will see four main divisions, each of eight clubs, established after the 2010 season.

It will mean the bottom two teams in what is now a 10-club top men's division automatically dropping down a level in the new British Water Polo League.

Clubs finishing below the top 32 next season will compete in a feeder division in 2011, which will also involve new applicants.

Precise details of how the 2011 programme will be organised - to include play-offs after 2010 - will be decided after a general consultation period.

Bristol unbeaten in Division 3

Bristol maintained their unbeaten record in Division Three.

Only **Cardiff** got close to beating them when they drew their match at the start of the

season. Bristol's wins in Manchester were achieved against the bottom two teams, **Invicta** and **Walsall**, and **Andrea Holmes** secured her position as the league's top scorer with 32 goals.