



Junior National Winners

Lancaster reached the ASA Junior Men's Water Polo Final via the Preliminary and Qualification rounds.

Lancaster was undefeated in reaching the finals, in the Preliminary round they beat Exeter, Welsh Wanderers, Sutton and Cheam and drew with Dunfermline.

They played with winners of the other two Preliminary rounds plus the highest placed runners-up. Lancaster drew their opening game in the Qualification round against Birmingham and beat Cheltenham and Manchester. Manchester came second and qualified to face Lancaster in the final

The finals were held in Manchester at the Aquatic Centre.

Lancaster were the defending Champions and were facing their most competitive rivals in the City of Manchester

The two teams were introduced to the crowd before the game.

Lancaster playing in White hats started the game positively and was rewarded with Manchester exclusion in the first minute; unfortunately they were unable to take advantage. Manchester quickly regained possession and in their first attack had a Lancaster player excluded. Manchester scored to take the lead.

The game was very closely contested and neither side could dominate.

In the last minute of the first quarter Lancaster were awarded a penalty as Manchester wilted under the Lancaster pressure. Captain Decland Ellwood scored to level the scores.

The second quarter started with Lancaster on the attack, again they were rewarded with Manchester exclusion and again Lancaster could not score. Manchester as resilient as ever forged forward and were awarded a penalty as Lancaster defence lost concentration.

Manchester scored to retake the lead.

Lancaster regained possession and raced forward, heavy defensive play by Manchester saw Lancaster awarded exclusion, this time Mathew Calvert scored to level the scores. Manchester charged forward with confidence as Lancaster seemed to be unable to control the ball. Manchester scored to take the lead for the third time.

In the last minute of the quarter Lancaster gained possession and Robert Simpson sped forward to score a spectacular goal to level the score at half time.

Manchester started the third quarter finding Lancaster slow to the ball and were rewarded with a Lancaster exclusion, Manchester were unable to take advantage as Lancaster swam forward to force a Manchester exclusion. Neither side could breakdown the opposing defences as the quarter saw the game flow from end to end without either side scoring.

Both sets of players were starting to tire as the game became stretched.

Manchester coach called a time to reassess the situation but no advantage came of it. In the last minute of the quarter Mathew Calvert gave Lancaster the lead for the first time with a perfectly judged lob.

The last quarter started with Lancaster gaining possession from the swim off, Decland Ellwood managed to shake off the strangle hold the Manchester defence had placed on him and increased Lancaster lead to two goals. Lancaster continued to attack as Manchester suffered another exclusions. Lancaster was



unable to take advantage. Manchester undaunted attacked again and scored from an extra man situation. Although Lancaster seemed to have the upper hand Manchester continued to press forward and was rewarded with the equaliser.

Lancaster undeterred by the Manchester fight back scored through Mathew Calvert. Manchester forges forward again and was rewarded with a Lancaster double exclusion. Brilliant defensive play by Lancaster prevented Manchester from scoring. Lancaster continues to attack and force Manchester exclusions but is unable to increase their lead.

Elliot Trafford scores a fine goal for Lancaster to give them a two goal advantage. Manchester calls a time out but fail to score from their set up play. Lancaster calls a timeout with just over a minute to play. Lancaster's coach Zak Sly calls for controlled and no extravagant play.

Lancaster sees out the rest of the game with controlled polo and regains the ASA Junior Men's Championship

Final Score Lancaster 7 Manchester 5

Lancaster's all round team performance won the day. The players can be proud of their effort on the day and the preceding year of hard work.

Credit must also go to the Coaching team of Zak Sly, Gary Ellwood and Ron Winn

Winning Lancaster team

Matthias Reichel, Robert Simpson (1), Elliott Trafford (1), Jake Starkey, Sam Smith, Mathew Calvert (4), Decland Ellwood(1), Lawrence Daykin, Scott Sharpe, Noel Howson, Ben Walker, James Alker, Luke Saul.