



Dragon A check Avon 1.



Aberfan Youth play Friends of Allonby D.

Results not entirely predictable

National Championships

After the previous year's successes the national championships were back in Liverpool again. David McBay, the only member of the Polo Committee present, masterminded an excellent tournament at Friends of Allonby's venue, facing Everton's almost completed football stadium, with full support from the club and welcoming staff everywhere from the control cabin to the toastie team. Results were put on a Dutch polo website almost in real time. There was ample parking and nobody trying to take money for it, no blue green algae and no goose muck on the pontoons.

The only thing they could not control was the weather, catching a late winter storm full on although the dock provided some protection from the warm southerly blast. The event managed to dodge most of the rain, being dry and quite sunny, especially on the Saturday, so timekeepers' shelters were taken down to stop them from being blown down.

It was easy to lose count of the number of Friends of Allonby teams, including nearly all of the juniors, and there was a good spread of other teams although none from north of Cumbria. Ulster sent a team less strong than last year's winners but they still produced some significant scores. The highest scoring match of the weekend was their 14-5 win over Cumbria but the most decisive win was their 13-0 defeat of Southend Sloths and the same score for St Albans against Liverpool A.

Dragon A took a 12-2 win over Avon 1, seemingly a succession of easy shots into goal. Friends of Allonby A's win over Manchester Wildcats A was one of the better ones and much more even than the 7-1 result would suggest.

East End Princesses held Kingston Ladies to a 3-3 draw, a final goal being discounted as the hooter was already sounding when it went home.

One of Sunday's best games was between Dragon A and Ulster, end to end with successive goals each time although the Welsh 6-3 win shows a less balanced result. Uncharacteristically, Clive Hammond arrived in front of an open goal and bounced the ball away off the top of the frame. Perhaps it was the wind.

Manchester Wildcats A failed in one attempt when they deflected the ball off the back of the frame and St Albans managed to hit one of their own players on the back of the head with a long pass. The 1-1 score fed into extra time, St Albans being the scorers.

An interesting women's game was between East End Princesses and Friends of Allonby Y, the Friends' only goal in this 7-1 defeat coming from a penalty shot. The start of each half saw only one side ready to go for the ball. The Princesses took one goal after a fumbled ball by FoA and there was a nice paddle flick at one point but a two handed shot backwards over the head met too many obstacles.

The youth final was between the hosts' E and D teams, who had each got there after 7-0 wins over their C team and Aberfan respectively. When they had met in an earlier round the E team, whose members looked the larger of the two, had won 8-2. They quickly took control of the game, scoring in the first minute. After bouncing a shot back off the frame they put an oblique shot home in the third minute with two more later, one into an open goal after a break and another gentle shot. A couple of shots in the final minute of the half bounced back off the frame and another sailed over for a 4-0 lead at half time.



FoA Y block East End Princesses.



Manchester Wildcats A oppose FoA A.



Rhondda Rhinos taunt Blackwater-ish.



Kingston Ladies face East End Princesses.