

Chairs Report to Annual General Meeting 24th March 2020

I write this report at the most extraordinary of times. The Country is in the midst of a national crisis, Covid-19. All swimming pools have been required to close and social distancing has been implemented in order to prevent the spread of the virus. There is still great uncertainty as to how long it will take us to get this virus under control. Following advice from Swim England the committee took the decision to suspend all club activity from Tuesday 17th March for the foreseeable future. This obviously caused great upset amongst members at all levels. All competitions have been suspended for the rest of the season and the swimmers who have worked so hard to get qualifying times have been left feeling bewildered at the turn of events. The coaching and communication team continue to encourage the swimmers to keep active with land-based training whilst observing the need to remain isolated from each other. We all hope that normality returns as soon as possible and our thoughts and prayers are with those families affected by this terrible disease.

I would still like to table a chairs report as the club will return to training and competing at some point this year and I know we are in as strong a place as ever. So here goes:

As is traditional I'd like to start with a number of 'thank you's':

- Claire Earnshaw - our Club Secretary who has taken on the role this year. Thanks to Claire for keeping the minutes of our often-complex meetings and keeping the club in touch with the rest of the swimming world.
- Lizzie Lee Hoyle – our membership Secretary- who has maintained our role and helped us shift to Swim Manager. She has also been instrumental in helping us formalise the system for new members joining the club.
- Dawn Cole – our Club Treasurer – who has kept a firm grip on the ins and outs of the finances with so many pressures on the budget and unknown costs that might occur. Dawn and Lizzie have worked hard to maintain the systems they inherited for running the club and I know they now have plans to further develop the use of Swim Manager.

Also a big thank you to the rest of committee who keep the back room parts of the club ticking over.

- **Duncan Evanson** – communications Svengali
- **Annie Lazenby** – our fundraising and social organiser and this year managing Pointscore.
- **Anne Rockliffe** –who keeps our focus on the things the club needs to deal with in a sensible and organised way.
- **Chris Webb** – Workforce Development and events organiser
- **Frankie O'Brien** – who has supported with web based issues and the ongoing review of the club fees.
- **Judy Noah** who looks after the Junior Waterpolo and **Simon Jones** the senior Waterpolo team. The waterpolo side of the club has gone from strength to strength and the number of members seems to keep increasing in direct correlation to the success in the pool.

- **Hanna Critchley** who has taken on the Welfare Officer role to look after all our swimmers

Also the other volunteers who keep the club going.

The desk team who are our first point of contact for people joining the club and what I think make a big difference between us and other clubs. **Nikki, Eddie** and **Andrea** are the human face of Stretford SC and make for a warm welcome.

Thanks as always to **David** and **Glenis Hoskins, Alan** and **Heather Potts** and **Elaine Armstrong** for their ongoing support as officials for competitions throughout the year.

The swimming coaching team have gone from strength to strength this year. **Tom** remains our head coach. **Jared Armstrong** has taken on the Assistant Head coach role and it is clear to see the progress his swimmers are making and the development of his own coaching style. **Alistair Stout** continues with his input to coaching which is much appreciated. Shelley and myself continue with our input. Tom has also further developed younger swimmers to coach and it's great to see **Anna O'brien** and **Izzy Key** regularly taking lanes and now joined by **Alfie Jones, Scarlett Lazenby-Tracey, Ellie Patterson, Noah Critchley, Luqa Ismail-Keyes, Harriet Thompson-Ogden, Bethan** and **Nina Roberts** and **Abbie Lee Hoyle**.

Some of this group also completed their Young Volunteer award this year along with **Conor O'Brien**. This is the most exciting part of the club's development as it will ensure our future is bright and helps the swimmers develop outside of the pool.

As part of the committee work this year, we identified the risks that the club face and tried to address each of these. Many of these remain the same issues we were dealing with the previous 12 months. We identified:

- UA92 impact on the club – the University has now opened in the old Kellogg's offices on Talbot Road. There seems little movement on the development of a new leisure centre attached to this.
- Behaviour of swimmers off pool side - a job for all in the club but seems to be slightly better at the moment. Needs to be continuously monitored. A team building event at Jump Ninja tried to address some of the issues.
- Trafford borough galas – Well run events again this year and a big finance boost for the club. Needs to be addressed again with the Network as the vast majority of the work falls to Stretford and taking 1/3 of the proceeds seems generous to our borough buddies.
- Swim Manager – this now seems to be well established and those members of the committee with regular use of it are getting to know its strengths and weaknesses. Plans to start to use the direct debit function in the year to come should make the finance elements of the system more streamlined.
- Financial viability of the club - Treasurers report and planned review of fees to ensure ongoing viability. 12 months on the club is financially as healthy as ever. This is related to other income sources as well but the adjustments made to fees have kept pace with other rises in expenditure.
- Training new officials to run galas This remains a key area of risk and now that Swim England have decided how they will train new officials and we have our own fully qualified Referee we can hopefully encourage our parents to get involved.

- Adult swim session- continues to be without resolution as to how best to maintain the offer.
- Financial plan for the club – *Treasurers report*
- Developing a coaching pathway – *Head coaches report*
- Waterpolo integration into the club- *Waterpolo report*

Numbers of Members

Always difficult to quantify but the information held on Swim Manager would suggest we have 241 Accounts up 39, with 350 members down 48 – although some of these ‘members’ are parents carers of swimmers. Active members also includes masters and waterpolo.

Chair of the Swimming Club

Having announced at the Championship Presentation Evening that I was stepping down as Chair due to work commitments, I have agreed (sic) with committee to stay on until the current closure of the club is ended. I have thoroughly enjoyed being chair of the committee and working with a really dedicated group of volunteers to maintain this great club. I would like to note that once the decision was made that the vision for the club was a clear focus on being a competitive swimming and water polo club was made it became much easier to prioritise issues and develop the club to once again being one of the best clubs in the north west and definitely the best club in Trafford.

Phil Hoyland
1st April 2020.