

Chairman's Summary Report - AGM – 7th July 2013.

When we agreed back in September 2012 that the new date for the AGM would be prior to the season end date, who would have thought so much would have happened and the time would have flown by so quickly. Perhaps it's been a case of 'time flies by when you are having FUN!'

Change was the headline in September and we have certainly seen much in nine months, much of it centered round the growth of the club and developing things for the future, swimmers here today and ready to start on their own swimming journey.

It is the onward journey that I would like to start with by mentioning Emily Piddington. Emily moved onto pastures new a couple of months ago and was one of the few swimmers of the last generation who had spent 10 plus years at Gloucester, she was a swimmer, club captain and post swimming a coach. To reach all three was an achievement.

All the best for the future.

Coaching Team

They are an important part of our club and as we move more towards a coach led club there will be much focus on the value that each one brings to the growing numbers.

There have been changes here, Jane Seymour stepped down as Swim Skills lead early in the season leaving a legacy of new young swimmers, and many who have already moved onto achieve some very good results.

Andy as Head Coach has grown into the role, working to cover some gaps ensuring all sessions are covered. He has been looking at improvements and regularly meeting with the Executive to discuss and build on enhancements to the benefit of all the swimmers. The building of an increased volunteer coaching team has progressed well using a combination of experience and youth. Thanks must go to all who have offered help and supported session, to name a few Ian Darlow, Carolyn Bisset, great also to see swimmers Kieran Naylor, Georgia Fuller, Jodie Hatton, Lottie Hall and Lucy Robinson along with some of last years and this year's young volunteers helping on Poolside. James has found his feet and is bringing new ideas to the table although still building up his experience in a busy club. Josh continues to sole focus on Disability, with an achievement this year of finally gaining agreement of GCASA to include disability events in the County Championships. The Committee has supported the relevant coaching education that is required to help support our swimmers. We now have a good combination of Level 3, 2 and level 1 coaches supported by enthusiast poolside helpers, additionally our investment in a new Swim Skills lead will see further focus on the development of this end of the club.

The Swimmers

The heart of the club, every one having their own aspirations and goals, working hard to achieve them, this year has been no exception many exceeding expectations. You can always gauge team spirit when we get to County relay day, swimmers wanting to support and cheer for each other no matter what age.

Our Young Volunteers, another good turn out this year participating in the ASA scheme have really grown in confidence and have played a part in sharing their own swim experiences with many of the younger members. Be it at a gala, time trials working on poolside supporting the Coaching team really is an asset for the future development of the club.

I must also thank Beatrice Hatton for taking the lead in steering the swimmers through their education sessions and guidance throughout the season covering many of the skills they have developed, culminating recently with the Pyjama gala and support at several of the Four Season events.

Throughout the year, the competitive results from the young end of the club right through to the seniors has been exceptional, many PB's, goals achieved and personal targets met.

The Committee

The Committee has again worked hard on behalf of its members; it's not just about the monthly committee meeting. It is ongoing all the time, perhaps they all do too much! The work covers many areas and all work tirelessly for all the swimmers, questioning and challenging so the right outcome is achieved.

It has been good to see some new faces coming through to help, especially the Open meets, albeit there is still a need to continually having to ask for help. It would be great that people wanted to put their names down before the notices go up!

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the club. Without them, the sight of our swimmers reaching their goals would be a dream rather than a reality. To ensure the smooth delivery of our events the club relies on a vast volunteer workforce with an opportunity to suit every individual. Please let's continue to work towards sharing the workload.

A big personal thank you from me to all of the Committee.

GCSC Swim 21

The benefits of becoming a swim21 Accredited Club are mainly seen through the process itself. It aims to enhance club management, strengthens the structures for the club with a philosophy that ensures the best environment is available for our swimmers.

We made significant progress in this area and successfully met the accreditation approval for a further 2 years.

GCSC is accredited as a Competitive Development; GCSC is accredited also at Swim Skill Development.

I have referenced both of these awards for best practice to highlight that it's not just about the 'National swimmer'. Thank you to Mandy Alcock for the liaison with the committee and the ASA ensuring we keep to targets and produce the relevant evidence. The evidence that is required for Swim21 relates to all aspects of how the Club functions and what it provides to members. Very clear standards are defined and must be demonstrated consistently, and in a measurable way, throughout the whole year, we did

this very well. Thanks also to Claire Naylor who spent a lot of time improving documents and policies that got submitted. With changes due to the SWIM 21 process in December 2013, I am happy to say we are well ahead of the game; we must however stay focused on the ongoing improvements and would ask for a volunteer to come forward as Mandy steps down this year.

Trust & Respect

As parents & guardians we all try and do our best for our children, teaching them what is right from wrong and the appropriate behavior. It is, therefore, incredibly puzzling to see how parents attitudes change, towards other members of the club, when modifications take place, which they disapprove of. Any changes made will always try and benefit the swimmers so that the sessions are run more effectively for everyone. The spirit, however, that some parents possess, on these circumstances, are not ones which I and other members of the committee regard as being right. Parents should always remember that the club holds around 180 swimmers for which they have to cater for effectively.

There have been several instances that have been a concern where parents have had a 'rant' on poolside to a coach, in some instances coaches ignoring each other on poolside and creating an atmosphere that does not create the right environment. This being observed and heard by swimmers, many young and impressionable, who then believe it's the right type of behavior for them! It is not right and should be discouraged.

Personally I have been in similar circumstances; members of the Committee have also been exposed to this type of inappropriate behavior and attitude. This club is very lucky to have a committed group of individuals who are doing their best as volunteers; we should respect this as many of them also have fulltime jobs!

Our members need to trust the coaching team and respect the decisions that are being made; it's for the benefit of all swimmers.

Please, stop, think and reflect.

Achieve by Unity

As a club we are have come a long way, moving in the right direction, we have many swimmers wanting to join GCSC.

We have invested in a new swimming schedule; there is a new SSK lead due shortly, who is already working with Andy and James planning for next season. Let's tap into the merry band of enthusiastic volunteers wanting to come forward to help.

Let's remember it's about the swimmer – the heart of the swimming club, lets all continue to pull together to give us the best environment for them to train and perform.

Marcus Lee

GCSC Chairman 7/07/13