

Swimming Report (June 2023)

A successful year, but not without challenges!

At the top end of the club we had District finalists and medalists and National finalists (alas, just outside medals, but encouraging nonetheless). Harris was the swimmer on fire, but we had strong representation with 9 at Districts and 4 at Nationals.

Like many clubs around the country, we are rebuilding after the pandemic and I foresee a few years of adjustments as that lean spell filters through the age groups.

However, it has been fantastic to see so many come into the club and already taking to the delights of the Coverdale and other meets, not least our own Mad March Meet. I recall some of the older (newer) ones feel a bit daunted at their first competitive 200m race, but a word, a reassurance and in the end “it wasn’t as bad as I thought!”

This is the legacy of the pandemic. All swimmers eventually face learning to swim a 200m (and further), but many around this age group have been later in gaining the initial experience as a result of Covid and the interruption of “normal” progression.

We have had a busy end to the season as we sought to enter as wide a variety of competition for all sections of the club. Some swimmers were cut due to over-subscription at events, but the competition calendar is beginning to settle down and we hope to get larger groups to more events over the next year and begin registering more times on the board!

Then, the challenges! It goes without saying pool closures have been top of the list! My thanks to so many Committee members who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to retain a healthy training schedule and obtain times at other pools. Lesley, Liz, Rosy, Isla, Alan, Ali and many others who all chipped in. We are not completely sorted yet, but training times are back up and with a bit of creative re-shuffling of training location, no squad suffered a huge loss of training time.

My thanks then, obviously, to the parents and swimmers for their understanding and willingness to adapt. We have our routines and other activities, but my thanks to all for rolling with it.

Looking ahead, we have a healthy crop of seniors qualifying for the Scottish Summer meet in a month’s time.

We have several coaches in training – one already qualified (and again, I welcome Scott Quin to the club! A multiple para-Olympian and still aiming for Paris 2024) and two are part way through the process.

The club could perhaps do with more officials. We have a good number of timekeepers, but we might be seeking volunteers to undertake judging, refereeing, etc. But, that’s just a warning shot! I’ll let others follow that one up!

Something else to look forward to:

**Club La Santa!**

Lanzarote training camp.

Great training opportunity and something we look to undertake every other year.

Current availability is looking at Thursday 10th October 2024 to Thursday 17th October 2024, flying from Edinburgh. Costs are a little up on previous years (as with everywhere else and we are maybe looking at £1,750-£1,800 per person, depending on overall numbers. Fundraising will help!

This cost includes all flights, transfers, full board, etc.

Schools don’t break up until Friday 11th, so if you are happy taking your swimmer out a couple days early…?!

Might be beneficial to start thinking putting money aside from now and/or having circa £200 available soon for deposit.

**Club Captains**

Over the years the Club Captain roll has had varying degrees of responsibility and obviously since the pandemic there has been less requirement (other than the trophy presentation in our head-to-head with Morpeth!)

The Committee and I are keen to grow these roles a bit more again and with so many new members in the lower squads, are obviously keen for a bit more visibility with Development swimmers, so there is more cross-over amongst age groups.

Appointment for these positions will be a combination of input from senior swimmers for their peers and some input from coaches, though this a year was more the latter as we grow the position.

I have great delight in announcing Blair Woodward and Anna Campbell as the respective male and female Captain. Both are long-standing members of the club, dedicated in their training and good role models as a result.

They are willing drop by an occasional Development training session, have their ears blown out at Coverdale events and perhaps sacrifice the occasional training session as a result (as they are doing this evening to be here with us and not up at RCP!).

Skivers!!

Both are also keen to boost interaction amongst all ages at team events, such as Morpeth.

Finally.

(She’ll hate reading this out!) Can I extend my thanks and gratitude to Lesley Scott for her time as President. She has shouldered an incredibly busy period (while holding down a full-time job) and been so diligent and unwavering. She leaves the position in such a healthy condition with so many volunteers (thank you!) covering various roles and easing the running of the club and allowing swimmers to do what they love.

She has been incredibly supportive towards the coaches and we have been able to push on.

Thank you, Lesley! Enjoy the peace!

I look forward to working with Liz Henderson in similar vein, who I have worked with on Committee for many years as Membership Secretary and as a result, already have excellent comms lines with.

Regards,

Andy May

Head Coach

Portobello ASC