



Swindon Dolphin ASC

Chief Coach's Report to the AGM 2014

Welcome to my 6th AGM report with Swindon Dolphin. Once again this year has been a very busy and productive year both in and out of the pool for all associated with the club. We have continued to be represented at all levels (County, Regional & National) with success.

The Swindon Dolphin Programme continues to show that Long Term Development is the key over Short Term success. We had 11 swimmers qualifying for the ASA National Championships, 42 swimmers qualifying for the Regional Youth and Age Group Championships and 92 for the County Youth and Age Group Championships. A fantastic achievement with every level increasing from 2013.

Some of the highlights of the past year include having 11 individual swimmers represent Swindon Dolphin at the ASA National Age and Youth Championships, a significant increase on the past 6 years, showing just what a success the programme has been during this time. A further highlight has to be winning the Swindon Advertiser Team of the Year. This is without doubt testament to the hard work and dedication of all involved with Swindon Dolphin and something that everyone should be extremely proud of.

A further highlight had to be the County Youth Championship results which saw Dolphin win 20 Senior, 60 age group titles as well as 5 of the 8 relay titles on offer, a great achievement by the team. Our age group swimmers reinforced the clubs dominance at County level by topping the medals tables for both individual and overall age group awards. Across the 9 to 14 years age groups, we won 44 individual gold, 29 silver and 23 bronze as well as 4 gold, one silver and 3 bronze in the overall BAGCAT awards.

The Masters section of the club has continued to progress rapidly over the past 12 months. This is largely down to the continued commitment, dedication and hard work of our Masters Coaching Team. I would like to see a retention of our masters swimmers with more taking up the many opportunities to compete at various levels of competitions over the next 12 months.

Swindon Dolphin were once again well represented at the County Open Water Championships with 25 swimmers taking part. We enjoyed a lot of success at this competition picking up 3 of the 4 Senior titles on offer as well as majority of the age group titles. This is a discipline that has seen a lot of development over the past 12 months including specific open water pool training sessions largely concentrating on race tactics. This is something that we will once again pick up prior to the Open Water season starting.

Although we didn't have many competitors at the ASA South West Open Water Championships the 3 swimmers that represented the club did so by booking 1 place at the ASA National Open Water Championships and also just missing out by the narrowest of margins for a further place.

As with any successful club programme it needs to be underpinned by a strong and successful Learn to Swim Programme. The further development of our LTS programme in the past 12 months has been incredible. This is undoubtedly down to sheer hard work by the team of senior and junior teachers in the small pool. To continue this we need to continue our education and mentoring programme as well as up skilling via further courses and CPD opportunities for the teachers and coaches.

The pathway of the club continues to be without doubt the strongest it has been since I started at Dolphin. I feel this is largely down to a successful workforce of Teachers and Coaches who have been developed over the past 6 years. It has been particularly pleasing for me to see so many come up through the ranks in my time here. I have no doubt that they will continue to make this club stronger in the years to come.

To support the pathway it is vital that we have the correct infrastructure in place. By this I mean both the Teachers and Coaches as well as our admin support. I cannot stress enough that we will only ever be as successful as the staff we have. To this end I am pleased to say we have helped fund 4 UKCC Level 1 Teachers, 4 UKCC Level 1 Coaches, 1 UKCC Level 2 Teacher and 4 UKCC Level 2 Coaches. The plan



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is continue with this education programme therefore broadening the base of Teachers and Coaches as well as retaining those who have already been through the qualifications.

Our Young Volunteer Programme continues to be a programme that our youngsters find very beneficial. We have retained all of our Young Volunteers from previous years who undoubtedly make our Learn to Swim Programme stronger through their dedication and commitment to see the next generation of Dolphins coming through. This is something I think we do better than I have ever seen or heard it done anywhere before.

An initiative well into its third year is our Media Team. This I feel has been a huge success in adding increased exposure for the club via radio interviews, articles in the local Advertiser as well as Twitter being a great source for information. I personally think our social media coverage went a long way to helping us winning the Swindon Advertiser Team of the Year.

Like with many clubs/organisations we face many challenges, none more so than the next 12 months. We have the uncertainty of the takeover of Milton Road and the Link Centre by GLL, my maternity leave as well as the change in competition structure from British Swimming. However, I feel if everyone works to the same common goal of making Swindon Dolphin the best it can possibly be then we can overcome any hurdle put in our way. We have a lot of knowledge and experience within the programme that can help support any necessary changes.

Another challenge that I cover every year is people volunteering. For Swindon Dolphin to continue to develop and realise its potential as a club we need more people to volunteer their time across all areas of the club. The vision is and has always been to provide a clear pathway for everyone to develop, this is something I'm very passionate about and firmly believe we can achieve, we do however need more resources to help us achieve this goal.

So whilst I'm appealing for more people to get involved I would like to personally thank each and every person who has given up their time over the last 12 months to assist the club and myself. There are far too many people to name individually, therefore a huge thanks to all coaches, teachers, committee members, volunteers, parents and lastly and by no means least swimmers for all their dedication, hard work and continued support. I am once again looking forward to working with you all over the next year.

Workforce – Team ethos “TEAM – Together Everyone Achieves More”

*Louise Clayton
Chief Coach*