



Dear Membership,

It gives me great pleasure to be able to present this Chair's report actually having something to speak about. The last few years have not been kind to GB Deaf Swimming, not allowing any Competitions or Training Weekends, so managing to have both this year feels like a success, and I hope that all Pandemics are well behind us now and allow for weekends like this to be regular events in the calendar.

As I said the last few years has taken its toll and this is reflected in the current membership numbers. We are currently at Circa 34 Swimmers which is down on previous years. This is accounted for by the Senior swimmers leaving the Club either by natural process or as they made the tough decision to stop swimming having missed so much training and knowing what it would take to get back to the levels required to be truly competitive again. This is accompanied by low numbers of younger swimmers also coming to GB Deaf which was evident at our Championships held earlier this year. Both of these trends have been experienced by swim clubs all over the UK, so hopefully now as local clubs start to get themselves back to normal we will also see the benefits but we all must do our part in promoting GB Deaf Swimming in any way we can.

Back in April as just mentioned we were finally able to hold our first Championships since 2019 and it has to be said that it was everything we had hoped it would be after such a long wait. All of the swimmers treated us to some fantastic racing, and it was conducted in such a friendly environment with newcomers welcomed into the fold. A personal highlight for myself was watching them all get back together the evening prior to the Championships like they had only seen each other the week before with no awkwardness despite it being a few years, and many of them being an awful lot bigger than they were the last time they were together!! Thanks as always has to be given to our Coaches Martin & Gina for their part in everything as well as all those that volunteered to help during the day. But Special thanks goes to Lisa Young who took on the role as Gala Coordinator despite no previous experience and pulled everything together brilliantly.

In June this year I was lucky enough to be on Poolside for the National Junior Para Swimming Championships held in Coventry. GB Deaf swimming were represented by 5 swimmers, those been Abby White, Katy Wun, Nathan Carrington, Thomas Harvey & Martynas Kazakevicius. They were all superstars amassing approx. 20 medals between them for there efforts and more importantly conducted themselves extremely well throughout the day. I believe that Coventry may become a regular venue for these Championships, and it would be great if we are able to have more of our S15 swimmers entered for the weekend in future years to come.

I briefly mentioned our Headcoach earlier, but I honestly think that our swimmers are missing a trick in not engaging more with Martin other than at our organised weekends. He is one of the UK's most decorated Deaf Swimmers who has been, seen and done it all before and knows exactly what it takes to be successful but also knows how tough it can be along the way. Swimming is an extremely tough sport and our children need great support from us, their Coaches back home and their swimming friends. I know I am not speaking out of turn when I say that Martin would like to be part of that extended network and is keen to receive more feedback from all of them so he can both be available for advice and to allow him to better prepare for our Training events and tailor the sessions with better content for them all to enjoy. So, take the opportunity to speak with him or get in touch with him at on his e-mail address. gbdeafswimming.headcoach@gmail.com

My final words of this report are aimed at hopefully drumming some additional support from you all with regards to being more active and taking on roles within the club. We are all volunteers that work hard for the club when we need too and in most cases we are not trained for the roles we do. But what we do is what we think is best for GB Deaf Swimming and its members and we certainly could do with a few more bodies on the committee taking on roles to help us to continue to not only get back to where we were a few years ago but push further and be able to provide everyone with better support and a better membership experience.

Unfortunately, this weekend see's the stepping down from the Committee of Lucy Milton who has been our Treasurer for the last few years but in all honesty what she has done for the club is far more. She shared the Secretary role with myself when we needed too, I smiled nicely and responded to e-mails whilst Lucy did the complicated bits, Lucy has also worked hard in putting processes into place for future Committee members creating items such as Google Sheets to help support the roles and the hardest job of all keeping an eye on the Chair to make sure he is doing his part!!

I can honestly say that Lucy has been fantastic over the last few years but I also know that whoever takes on the role of Treasurer will have things easier than she did with so many things now in a better place and I would like to say a personal THANK YOU to Lucy for all she has done for GB Deaf Swimming over the last few years.

So, on that note, thank you all again for attending this AGM and enjoy the rest of the Autumn Training Weekend!!

Kind Regards

Dave Carrington



GBDSC Chairman