



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2023

Dear Membership,

It gives me great pleasure to once again be able to provide a Chair's Report for the GB Deaf Swimming Club, following what has been an eventful and busy year in the pool for our Swimmers.

Club Membership has pretty much remained the same with some more of the older swimmers saying goodbye, but this is offset with some new younger swimmers who we look forward to getting to know over the coming years. The official number is currently 32, which is made up of 24 Category B (S15) and 8 Category A swimmers. Hopefully over the coming years we can now start to grow the membership and introduce competitive swimming to more Deaf children who maybe believe that this is not for them.

Back in April we hosted our Annual Championship & Training weekend, once again choosing Loughborough University for the event as we know it provides everything we need to make the weekend a success, as it is a friendly and familiar venue. The Competition on the Saturday was well run with all the swimmers providing excellent entertainment with their efforts in the water. Congratulations to those who were successful during the meet.

We as always were extremely grateful to all the Volunteers that provided their support from parents to external help, particularly those who officiated as without this the event wouldn't be possible. I am pleased to say that the feedback from the external volunteers was excellent, commending both the swimmers and us all on the organisation. A special mention has to go to Kris Harvey who took on the role as Gala Coordinator with no previous experience. Thanks again Kris – you absolutely smashed it! Thankyou also to Lisa Young for providing details from her experience the year before which I know was a great help to Kris. Over the weekend we also had a film crew present from Bournemouth Film School who were filming a Documentary on the use of the Secondary Strobe and the issues Deaf Swimmers have to face. They were a pleasure to have shadow us all for the weekend and blended perfectly into the background. One thing to add however is that we would like to see more attendees for the Sunday morning Training. Our Headcoach Martin along with Gina work hard to organise a training schedule and I feel that as members we need to maximise their time so hopefully next year we will see a better turn out for the whole weekend.

June once again gave our S15 swimmers the chance to represent GB Deaf Swimming at the National Junior Para Swimming Championships at the Alan Higgs Centre in Coventry. As a club we decided to subsidise the fees for those entering to help raise the numbers in attendance for the weekend. This worked and our representation was an improvement on the previous year, something that was recognised by Swim England. Those in attendance were excellent both on Poolside & in Competition and it was a personal please to be part of it with them, and yes they collected a heap of Medals. Next years event will once again be in Coventry on the weekend of 8th & 9th June with the entry

packs being released after Christmas. Hopefully we can be well represented again and continue to raise the awareness of GB Deaf Swimming on the Para stage.

In August the World Championships were held in Argentina, and GB Deaf were represented by Lucy Jordan-Caws and Nathan Young. Both swam multiple events and were excellent reaching finals along the way in what was, as expected a highly competitive competition. I would like to say a massive well done to both of them for on competing at the highest level and both can be proud of their performances. Also thank you for providing inspiration to the younger swimmers who are looking to emulate them in years to come. I must also Thank Pauline Jordan who took on the role of Team manager and travelled with the pair. She was invaluable and we look forward to her working with future Teams at International Competition. Long term the next Deaflympics in Tokyo 2025 have been identified as an event we would like to take a larger team to, and Martin has already begun the process of identifying the swimmers who may have what it takes to compete alongside Lucy & Nathan.

I would like to thank Martin for his work not only as Headcoach but for his time spent in meetings with UK Deaf Sport and Swim England. We both attend meetings across the year as we continue to look and raise awareness for GB Deaf Swimming. Recent meetings have centred around how Swim England can assist in making the swimming pathway easier for Deaf swimmers in what is fundamentally a hearing sport. Part of this is to work with Coaches and help them understand the requirements of a Deaf Swimmer and the importance of making the sessions equally engaging for them alongside their hearing teammates. Swim England have stated they can send new Deaf swimmers a welcome pack similar to what Para Swimmers receive which would highlight what is available to them including ourselves as an organisation. Our goal is for all local clubs to help promote inclusivity for Deaf swimmers as we look to continually highlight that GB Deaf swimming exists and ultimately grow our membership over the years to come.

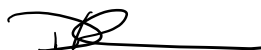
I would like to thank Ashleigh Scott who after many years will be stepping down as Welfare Officer for the Club. Ashleigh has done a great job of keeping us all in check and up to date as well as just been available for any advice should we require it. We wish Ashleigh well as she embarks on her new adventure of being a mum with the baby due anytime now.

Finally, I would like to finish on a reminder that GB Deaf Swimming is a Volunteer based club and cannot exist without the help of these volunteers, and in particular the families of its members. I would like to personally thank all the committee members and coaches for their time over the last year but for us to continue we still need the extra help of everyone else. Please continue to promote GB Deaf Swimming and come forward with any suggestions as the club is as much a support network for us all as it is a secondary club for the swimmers.

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