

Coaches Report

I hope this report finds all the swimmers and their families keeping safe and well.

Well, that is another year passed where unfortunately swimming has taken a bit of a blow. I can only hope that this new Omicron variant does not scupper all our wishes to return to a normal routine next year. We are hoping to get the Championships in and a Training weekend later in the year too.

Unfortunately swimming was a sport which was badly affected by the government's plans to keep leisure centres closed for most of the lockdown period. Some swimming pools did not reopen due to the councils and the layouts of the pools which could not meet the Covid-19 requirements. Hopefully now, most of the swimmers are all back into the swimming pool/competition routine.

I have been at various meetings this year with UK Deaf Sports to discuss various things including what they can do to help swimming as well as other sports. As everyone knows, the Deaflympics will be held in May 2022 in Brazil. UKDS have still to confirm and advise if they have any issues with the organisation of the games. I do know that there are some sports who have already decided not to risk this and have stated they will not participate in the Games. Some countries have also confirmed that they will not participate in the games either.

Part of the requirement from UK Deaf sport was that we find out swimmers thoughts and feelings regarding the lockdown and mental health. I created a simply survey last year which was sent to all swimmers but was disappointed to find that on 12 people took time to fill out this survey. What I have been trying to do lately is find out from swimmers how they feel about their swimming and if they are still swimming at present. I also created a new email address so that swimmers or their parents could contact me if you have any issues or questions as Dave stated. This email address is gbdeafswimming.headcoach@gmail.com

The lack of feedback made it difficult to know which swimmers are still swimming it gets very difficult to consider swimmers or select a team of individuals for a competition without this information. As Dave said in his report that some of the older swimmers will have moved on and have different hobbies or jobs now and are no longer swimming.

This means now that we have a very young group of swimmers who will need to step up a gear and take the places of the older elite swimmers.

The competitions opportunities over the next few years are as follows.

May 2022 – 24th Summer Deaflympics – Brazil - Confirmed

August 2023 – 6th WDSC Long Course – Argentina – Confirmed

August 2024 – 2nd WDSC Short course – Japan – TBC

2025 – 25th Summer Deaflympics – Japan – TBC

July 2026 – 3rd WDSC Short Course – Belarus – TBC

January 2027 – 7th WDSC Long Course – Australia – TBC

This list does not include the European Championships as the EDSO have not updated the diary over the last year.

As you can see this consist of a lot of competitions being held further away meaning more expensive trips for swimmers.

Up until now we have operated a policy whereby we set a selection criterion for an A and B qualifying time. For people who do not know the selection criteria it is normally set at the 3rd place time at the World Championship or Deaflympics plus 10% and the B time is 8th place in the final. The A time is what we call the selection time and the B is the consideration time depending on the swimmers selected. As this is a selection for swimming for Great Britain the swimmers are selected based on this criteria and unlike local swimming clubs where they can chose what competitions they want to enter.

As Dave has mentioned, Nathan Young attended the 1st World Deaf Short Course championships as a lone competitor and this was also his choice. Other swimmers were selected but declined their selection. He did well and made the finals, broke some records but was unfortunately unable to bring back some medal ware. This calibre of this level of competition is very high.

I would finally like to thank the committee and volunteers in the club for all their hard work throughout this year. A special mention has to go to Dave Carrington for his support and attending UKDS meetings with myself, and also to committee members for all their work in keeping the club going. I hope that we will continue the hard work to keep this club in the successful position we are in at the moment for our Swimmers. As you know we have several members stepping down from their roles but really need to find new members to replace them. Please volunteer if you can assist in any role in the running of the club as this will help secure Deaf swimming for the future generations of Deaflympians to enjoy.

I hope everyone has a Merry and safe Christmas and a Happy New Year. Best wishes for 2022 and hope to see you all then.

Thank you,

Martin Lee

(GB Deaf Swimming Head Coach)

