

Coaches Report 2020/21 Season

First of all, I would like to say a huge thank you to every member of the club for supporting me through what has been a very challenging year, that at times didn't feel like getting much better.

I would like to say a special thank you to all the committee, but particularly Chris and Stephen who have been incredibly supportive of me throughout the year and helped me with many jobs throughout the season.

The last year has felt like a constant battle to get pool time, but I now feel we have the right pool time in place for this club to hit its goals, both in performance and provision and this is in no small part down to the work Chris has done.

We are gradually building up our coaching team once again with new Coaches Kai (who is also a National Performance Swimmer) and Samir who have started recently, as well as looking to restart our Young Volunteers programme with Ronni who has started volunteering on a Monday and Sunday. I would like to build on this Young Volunteers programme which has proved to be very successful for the club, with Tony, Madison and Dhaval all coming through the programme and also Harry who left midway through last season to start a full-time coaching role elsewhere. If anyone you know may be interested in our young volunteer's programme then please do get in touch, as the more helpers the better.

Pool success:

Unfortunately, this section is a lot smaller this year than I would have liked, but despite the difficult season we do still have success to celebrate.

We had 6 swimmers qualify for the Olympic Trials in April. However, due to Isolation rules they were unable to compete, but I would still like to recognise the following for qualifying:

Ilyas Ahmed

Jude Costley

Emily Iley

Isabel Iley

Kai Ogden

Mika Ogden

The first competition of the year saw Isabel and Emily Iley take part in the British Selection trials in Glasgow, which was a selection meet for both the Olympic Games and European Juniors. At the meet Emily took 3rd place in the Juniors 100m Backstroke, with Isabel just behind in 5th.

Next up was the MCASA Invitational meet, which saw our 9–14-year-olds take home an impressive 20 Medals including 5 Gold, 7 Silver and 8 Bronze.

The final meet of the season saw our swimmers take part in the 'London Festival of Swimming' which acted as this years Regional Championships. Ley Ito won the Open 200m Breast, whilst Isla Roberts won the Girls 13 years 100m Breast in what was a nice way to end a broken season.

This year I hope for many more success stories from all squads, and already we have 6 swimmers qualified for the Swim England Winter Nationals to be held in Sheffield in December. Congratulations to:

Emily Iley

Isabel Iley

Ley Ito

Kai Ogden

Mika Ogden

Marco Roberts

Who have all qualified for the premier Short Course event, and I hope to see more qualifiers over the next couple of months.

I would also like to mention the swimmers who have been selected for Swim England National Development and event camps:

Isabel Iley

Gael Lessard

Lucas Malcev

Isla Roberts

And Ley Ito who has been selected for the 2-year Diploma in Sporting Excellence that will run alongside his training and A-Level studies.

Fundraising:

I couldn't write a report of the season without recognising the incredible efforts of Hester and the fundraising team who worked tirelessly throughout lockdown to ensure we all had a club to come back to and enjoy.

Without the work of the fundraising team, and of course all the members who got involved, we may not have been in a position to return to a full timetable. They kept me working hard at times when it felt like we were never getting back in the water, and the money raised was truly amazing. I hope we can continue to work together as club members, to make this swimming club an enjoyable space for everyone in the area.

Vision for the future:

I would like this club to expand and grow to the size it was pre-lockdown, this is in all aspects of the club whether it be Masters, Academy, Performance, competitive or social, I want to see as many people as possible in Hackney enjoying the sport I love at whatever level suits them.

In order to grow, we are going to need more volunteers and coaches, so if you can help (however often you can), please make yourself known, as the more volunteers we have the less work it is for the current volunteers. All clubs rely on their volunteers, and I would like to thank all of you that have helped this year, whether you did one session as a Covid Liaison or were volunteering throughout the season your help is always appreciated.

I would like to particularly focus on expanding our Academy, Gold, Silver and Bronze squads. I believe we have a good core group of coaches who can support all swimmers regardless of whether they wish to compete or not. The aim of the gold, silver and bronze squads is to provide training for swimmers who wish to compete but cannot commit to the sessions required from our performance squads. As well as offering a training space for swimmers who enjoy fitness and socialising but are not interested in competition. I will be looking at working with the coaches of these squads to provide the best quality sessions we can and make Hackney Aquatics an enjoyable place to swim. I also want to bring more young children into our Academy to help bolster both our performance pathway and competitive / social pathway.

On the performance side I would like Hackney Aquatics to continue to be a club that produces National level swimmers, as well as National medallists and hopefully international representation. I believe that being part of the London Roar Academy is not only a great step for Hackney Aquatics, but also for performance swimming in London as a whole. Having a 2020 Tokyo Olympic coach oversee the programme and development of swimmers in London certainly puts us in a great position to keep producing talented swimmers. I have been lucky enough to swim and coach at clubs that have produced international swimmers, and with our partnership with the London Roar Academy and the pool time on offer I see no reason why Hackney cannot strive to do the same.

For those of you that can I encourage you to commit to as many sessions per week as possible, as regardless of what level you swim at in my opinion there is no greater feeling than achieving a goal you thought was impossible after weeks, months or even years of consistent hard work and dedication.

Parting message:

I am confident that this season will be a much more successful year both in and out the pool. I hope to be able to offer members more social opportunities throughout the season and make this club a tight knit community. I look forward to sharing the journey over the next 12 months with everyone, and please always feel free to email me if you have any concerns or would like to discuss something.

Finally, I couldn't do what I do without the amazing coaching team behind me. I have thrown a lot at them last minute this year, and they have always responded well and in the best

interests of the club. We are a young coaching team but seeing everyone's passion for the sport in their day-to-day coaching is very refreshing and I hope our energy brushes off on the swimmers. I look forward to seeing all the squads improve this season under the leadership of our coaches and thank them for all their hard work over the last 12 months and the year to come.

Kind regards,

David Broadbent

Head Coach