

Coaches report 2022

I would like to start by thanking the coaching team, in particularly Tony, Madison and Dhaval who over the last 12-months have worked incredibly hard to cover a number of sessions especially when we were low on coaches.

I would also like to thank the committee who have supported me throughout the season, especially in the running of our club championships and the open meet that took place in July. The support of the committee is vital to keep the club going and is always greatly appreciated by the coaching team.

We have got a larger coaching team going into this season with Can taking over some of the Masters sessions the last few months and more recently welcoming Ash, Jago and Mohammed to the coaching team who will be coaching throughout this season. This should allow us to provide more support for all swimmers in the club.

Pool success:

This season was the first time since the 2018/19 season that a full swim season was able to take place. It was great just to be back, but on top of that Hackney had a brilliant season of success in the pool. I will run through the key moments in the season, but certainly on the performance side what stands out is:

- Highest number of Winter National Qualifiers (6) and most finals at the Winter Nationals (4)
- Highest number of British Champs Qualifiers (3) (first time Hackney swimmers have ever competed at British Champs) and most finals at British Champs (3)
- Highest number of British Summer National Qualifiers (5) and most finals at British Nationals (5)
- Highest number of English National Qualifiers (8) and joint most finals (6)

We fell just short of the medal tally achieved at the 2019 English Summer Nationals. The great thing was that walking away from the summer meets I felt that even more could be achieved, and I believe the club will continue to achieve record breaking seasons with the swimmers coming through the club.

Below is a breakdown of the season just gone, recognising some of the achievements of the whole club not just those in the National Performance Squad.

Masters Nationals medal:

At the end of October 2021, Tom Hargreaves won a silver medal in the 200m Breaststroke at the Masters Nationals held in Sheffield.

Short Course Regional success:

Short Course Regionals in November was a brilliant meet for the club with many swimmers recording PB's throughout. The final stats from the meet included:

- 22 Club records
- 25 Finals
- 4 Medals
- 7 Winter National Qualifying times

Mika Ogden took the only Gold for Hackney at the meet as she became London Regional Champion in the Junior 200m Backstroke.

Winter Nationals:

Another successful meet saw Hackney take a record number of swimmers to the Winter Nationals in Sheffield, with 80% of the swims resulting in PB's. The 6 Qualifiers for Winter Nationals were: Aoife Brooks, Isabel Iley, Ley Ito, Mika Ogden, Kai Ogden and Marco Roberts.

- 19 Races
- 14 PB's
- 12 Club Records
- 4 Finals

Arena League:

Throughout the short course season Hackney competed in 3 rounds of the National Arena League, where we take part in the London Premier division which sees the top teams in London compete against each other in a league format.

The Arena League to me demonstrated how far our swimmers came on in the matter of months from the first round in October to the final in December.

After finishing 5th out of 8 in the first round, we managed to comeback stronger in round 2 and finish 4th to secure the final spot in the A-Final for round 3. Although we ended up finishing last in the A-Final (8th out of 16 in the League overall), there were only 8-points separating 5th and 8th place.

To demonstrate the improvement the team made in this short space of time, in Round 1 we finished 86 points behind Hillingdon, 9-weeks later in the final we were only 5 points behind.

The majority of this improvement came from the youngest age group (10/11 years) who in Round 1 finished 8th in the majority of their races, but by the final (when they were racing against all the best teams) were finishing as high as 3rd or 4th in the majority of swims.

Those same swimmers have continued their progress over the last 9-months and I look forward to the start of the Arena League next week where we can look to hopefully start strong and improve on last seasons 8th place finish.

County Championships:

The Middlesex County Championships held in January / February saw Hackney come away with a large haul of 39 medals:

- 5 Gold
- 17 Silver
- 17 Bronze

With swimmers from AD1, RP and NP all coming away with medals.

This season the focus for our younger squads is to get many more qualifiers for the County Championships, and we believe with a stronger start to the season we will achieve this goal.

British Championships:

This was the first time in Hackney's history that swimmers competed at the British Championships. This is the premier domestic meet of the season which is used as a qualification meet for that summer's international meets. The times from this meet were used to select teams for:

- European Junior Championships
- European Youth Olympic Festival
- European Championships
- World Championships
- Commonwealth Games

It was a great experience for our swimmers to see some of the best swimmers in the world competing at their best, and even witness a couple of British records being broken.

Not only did our swimmers enjoy the experience, but they also competed phenomenally well with multiple PB's and Club records set over the week in Sheffield.

Most notably Isabel Iley qualified for 3 junior finals (50 Fly, 100 Back, 200 Back) finishing with two 2nd places and a 3rd in her finals.

London Regional Championships:

The Summer Regional Championships saw Hackney come away with 9 medals:

- 2 Gold
- 5 Silver
- 2 Bronze

Our 2 Regional Champions were:

- Ivy Hernandez Taylor – Girls 13 Years 50 Back
- Isabel Iley – Girl's 17+ 100 Back

The meet once again saw many PB's, club records and finals. It also demonstrated the improvement the swimmers had made since the Winter Regionals in November.

M11 League:

This was another competition which demonstrated the improvements the younger swimmers had made over the last season. In September of 2021 a delayed M11 league saw Hackney finish last in the League by a long way.

Less than 12-months later in May and June 2022 (and despite missing the first round due to Holidays), Hackney managed to finish 2nd in the B-Final and 10th in the league (out of 16) overall. If we had swum the first round we would have almost certainly finished in the top half.

This was a huge improvement on September 2021, especially when you consider our highest scoring age group in 2021 was the older swimmers who could no longer compete in 2022.

I would like to say a big well done to our coaches of the AD squads:

- Madison Taylor
- Dhaval Gajre

Who helped the swimmers to achieve this huge improvement last season, and I look forward to seeing what the new performance squads can do under their leadership.

British / English and Welsh Nationals:

The season ending meets saw swimmers compete in a mix of the British, English and Welsh Nationals.

A record number of Qualifiers and Finals at the British Summer Nationals was backed up by a record equalling 6 finals at the English Nationals, as well as 2 Bronze medals.

Congratulations to the following swimmers who did an incredible job to win medals at the prestigious English Summer Nationals:

- Isla Roberts – Girl's 14 Years 1500m Freestyle (Bronze)
- Marco Roberts – Boy's 17 Years 200 Fly (Bronze)

The Welsh Nationals was another hugely successful meet, and it was great to watch the races on the live stream and see swimmers swim lifetime best after lifetime best.

The meet saw Hackney swimmers record an impressive 21 Finals, and 8 medals with a number of club records being set in the process.

Congratulations to our Medal winners from the Welsh Summer Nationals:

- Ivy Hernandez Taylor (2 Bronze, 1 Silver)
- Enzo Shearman (3 Bronze, 1 Silver)
- Lucas Malcev (1 Silver)

Summary:

Overall, the year was a success, but there are still many things that can be worked on to improve the swimmers further.

The club recorded 145 Club records last season, with 44 of these being Open records (fastest times a Hackney swimmer has ever swum regardless of age). To put this into perspective, over 50% of all club records were set in the 2021/22 season which is an outstanding achievement.

We also finished the season with 7 swimmers ranked inside the top 10 in Britain for their age, and one swimmer ranked inside the top 30 Juniors in Europe in 2 separate events.

I hope the introduction of the new performance squads will encourage higher and more consistent attendances from our performance swimmers, as this to me is the major limiting factor preventing us from taking that next big step forwards.

The talent in the club, the young / ambitious coaching team and the support we receive from Chelsea and Westminster are a great base to push on further and have more swimmers competing at the very top level.

Support from Volunteers:

I couldn't write a report without thanking the volunteers for all their support throughout the season. It has been mentioned before, but without the volunteers the club simply could not run.

The way the team of volunteers pulled together to run the Hackney Open meet in July was brilliant to see, and in my opinion, it paid off with a well-run meet and plenty of positive feedback from visiting clubs.

I am grateful to anyone who has helped out this season, even if just for a day or two at galas and the more volunteers we have the easier the workload is on everyone. But I would like to say a special thank you to the following who have helped me out over the last 12 months.

- Chris Ogden
- Stephen Roberts
- Nicola Taylor
- Hester Hettinga
- Claudia Lipsey
- Jo Phillimore
- Sylvie Lachmann
- Jerome Lessard

I apologise if I have missed you.

Vision for the future:

As you will all know, Monday is the start of our new timetable and new squad structure. I am excited to get it up and running and I know the coaching team are too.

This new structure I hope will provide the following for Hackney swimmers:

- Clear squads where swimmers can train in a setting that suits them with likeminded swimmers and coaches.
- A place for competitive swimmers to go if they wish to compete but no longer wish to take the sport as seriously as they did before.
- Improve the standard of our Competitive Masters by offering them the chance to be part of a new 'Performance Youth' set up, aimed at providing the best quality training around work for adult competitive swimmers.
- Make swimming more enjoyable for those who do not wish to compete but enjoy swimming for the fitness and social element.

- Improve the performance of the club to levels it hasn't reached before, giving talented and dedicated swimmers the best opportunity to reach their full potential.

I would love Hackney to push on and become one of the best performing clubs in the Region. I believe this new structure mixed with the talent we have in swimmers and coaches can help Hackney to continue to raise performance levels.

Each year the goal is to outperform the year before, and this season is no different. I look forward to watching the swimmer's growth over the coming season.

We would also like to grow the club in size, particularly at Academy level and the next few months we will be working on initiatives to bring more swimmers (age 7-9) into the club to feed the bottom end.

Parting message:

The last 12 months, whilst challenging, have been an enjoyable experience. I love coaching for the moments you see swimmers achieve something special to them, whether that be a first ever county time or a National medal.

There were certainly many of those moments to look back on last season, and after almost 8-weeks away from competitions I am looking forward to getting back on poolside for a meet this weekend.

Kind regards,

David Broadbent

Head Coach