

Hackney Aquatics AGM 2021 - Chair's report

2020/21 has been a the most difficult year I can remember for all involved with Hackney Aquatics. I would like to try and make this presentation as positive as I can.

In the pool

- Unfortunately apart from couple of competitions late in the season, 2020/21 was a complete write off from a competitive point of view.
- One of the positives from the 2020/21 season was the launch of the London Roar Academy which offers our top swimmers in both RP and NP an opportunity to swim with other elite swimmers from other London clubs.
- What was originally a working partnership between HAC and C&W has now expanded to include Greenwich and Anaconda Swimming Clubs.
- Despite all the difficulties last season, I would like to record special thanks to all of the coaching team who have persevered throughout and without whom we would not be here today. Thank you all.
- I would also like to record my thanks to all our swimmers who have stuck at it. It would have been so easy for them to hang up their hats, goggles and swimming costumes and take up any of the other sports on offer. So well done to everyone who stuck with it. Don't forget, your best years as a swimmer are ahead of you.
- I think that the “in the pool” section of this report should pay the highest possible praise to all of our Covid Liaison Officers without whom non of our swimming sessions during Covid could have gone ahead. There are simply too many names for me to mention however it would be remiss of me if I did not put a special shout out to Frauke and Jerome, you are simply the best.

Out of the Pool

- Last year I said that 2020 had been the year of the volunteer. Now I can, hand on heart, say that 2020/21 has been the season of the volunteer.
- I would like to record a very special thank you to all the members of the “Fundraising Committee”. Our Crowd Funder raised in excess of £25k. Without this money HAC would not have survived for the start of the 2021/22 season. I would especially like to thank Erol and of course Hester without whom the Crowd Funding would never have happened.
- Our committee has never been fuller or more diverse. We have been able to share the increased work load across a broader range of committee members. As with any volunteer led organisation we are always on the look out for more people who are willing to take an active role.
- I would like to record a special vote of thanks to all our committee members who served during the 2019/20 season. In particular I would like to thank the committee for stepping in and keeping the club moving forward during July and August when I was away.
- A special vote of thanks also goes out to Katie Foulger at GLL who worked throughout all the lockdowns and was, and still remains, incredibly supportive of HAC helping us get our timetable back to pre Covid levels.
- It is not a given that we would get our pre Covid pool time back. There are many clubs around London that are struggling to get back to pre Covid pool time. Some of these clubs are our neighbours and we are reaching out to offer help where we can.
- HAC continue to receive support from Hackney Council, in particular Ian Holland and Ladi Ajayi both have shown great support during lock down. Ian and Ladi helped to secure the future of HAC with a £10k grant for our continued work in trying to increase diversity within our club.
- I would also like to thank GLL and in particular Clissold Centre Manager, Keith Griffiths without whom we would not be able to operate. Keith has the unenviable job of balancing our pool needs with those of the rest of the general public and his continued support of HAC cannot be underestimated. This job has become even more difficult since the re-opening of Clissold Leisure Centre.

In the community

- HAC believe that swimming should be available to everyone regardless of their socio-economic background.
- We have 50+ swimmers that receive significant concessions to their monthly subscriptions and many more that we were able to help with meet entry fees.
- Our concession fund was always fully funded through running Club Championships, 2 x Development Galas, fund raising days, sponsorship deals and generous individual donations. We hope to be able to run galas again this season which will allow us to continue to support those families who need it.
- Running our own Galas is vitally important to the financial health of the club and would not be possible without an army of volunteers. Please, if you would like to help in any way, contact Jerome who is our volunteers coordinator.
- HAC have more qualified officials than we have ever had which makes running our own meets so much easier and enables us to support other clubs run their meets.
- HAC also run a very successful Young Volunteer Program that trains our teenage swimmers to become coaches. The program not only gives our young adults the opportunity to give something back but also enables them to earn money at the club and beyond. We currently have 3 coaches who came through this program.

Finance

Please see the accounts supplied

- It is very difficult to draw any conclusions from the accounts when our season was continually interrupted by Covid. Claudia and Jo will give you a more detailed break down of the figures in their report.
- I would like to say a huge thanks to everyone who generously supported the club during lockdown. Without your support we would not have been able to continue to operate.
- Your generosity means that we will be able to continue providing you with top class coaching through until the end of 2020/21.

Conclusion

HAC is a community sports club that relies on a dedicated team of volunteers. There are countless ways in which you, the parents, can make a difference. Here are some of the ways you can help to make a difference.

- Join the committee, we still have vacant roles.
- Help run our galas when we are allowed to do so.
- Become a Time Keeper, a Judge, a Starter or a Referee. Speak to Frauke Westgate about how this works. If your children are competing a meets, keeping busy will stop you going mad.
- Join the Tech Team that run the starting and timing equipment at our Galas.
- If you enjoy fundraising or have sponsorship ideas then please speak to our Fund Raising Officer.
- Bake a cake or donate a prize to the raffle.
- I would like to propose a huge vote of thanks to every single volunteer at the club. Whether you're baking a cake or volunteering 20 hours of your time a week, we could not do what we do without you.
- We do what we do for the benefit of our swimmers.

The agenda for the evening will be as follows:

1. Approval of the 2020 AGM Minutes
2. Chair / Head Coach Reports
3. Accounts for 2020/21
4. Committee Appointments
5. A.O.B.