

Hackney Aquatics AGM 2019 - Chair's report

2018/19 has been another strong year for Hackney Aquatics Club (HAC) both in and out of the pool.

Below are some of our in pool highlights from the 2018/19 season, Rick's report will go into in more detail.

In the pool

- Yet again we have had higher participation, more finalists and more medalists at Counties, Regionals and Nationals
- Our M11 and Arena League teams have held their own after gaining promotion in the 2017/18 season and our Arena League swimmers gained promotion to the Premier Division.
- We have increased our number of swimmers from 364 to 421, an increase of over 15%.
- Our Academy which was set up during the 2017/18 season now has over 90 swimmers feeding into our Skills Development squads.
- Our Masters program including Junior Masters has over 130 regular swimmers and includes a competitive stream.
- In 2018/19 we established our very own Para Swimming Squads.
- I am particularly proud of our newly created Para Swimming Squads that are being led brilliantly by Naomi Depeza. Welcome back to HAC Naomi. HAC were approached by London Para Swimming to set up the Para Squads because of the great work we have done elsewhere at the club and because of our growing reputation for providing excellent coaching at all levels.
- I would like to thank our superb coaching team who have made the above possible.

Club administration

With increased participation comes increased administration, increased costs and increased pool time pressure. Your committee has made the following strides in the last 12 months to keep pace with our continued expansion.

- 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 2018/19 season.
- I would also like to record a special vote of thanks to the following Committee Members who are stepping down after having served the club tirelessly. Roger Braybrooks (Workforce), Nicola Taggart (Club Secretary) and Sakina Syed (Sponsorship).
- The committee has introduced a yearly administration charge for all swimmers enabling us to pay for some of the increased admin work that arises from increased participation.
- The committee, under the guidance of Roger Braybrooks, set up a working group to discuss what our ideal pool time would look like and worked hard to come up with a set of principles to underpin any future pool time decisions.
- HAC continue to receive support from Hackney Council, in particular Ian Holland and Ladi Ajayi.
- 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.

In the community

- HAC believe that swimming should be available to everyone regardless of their socio-economic background.
- We have 55 swimmers that receive significant concessions to their monthly subscriptions and many more that we help with meet entry fees as they start to compete.
- Our concession fund is now fully self funded through running Club Championships, 2 x Development Galas, fund raising days, sponsorship deals and generous individual donations.
- Running our own Galas is vitally important to the financial health of the club and would not be possible without an army of volunteers. I would like to record a special thank you to Frauke Westgate who coordinates our officials and to Jen Dickson who makes meets possible.
- We now have 4 J2s, 8 J1s, 24 Time Keepers, 1 Disability, 1 J2S in training being assessed this weekend, 2 signed up for J2S training, 5 either on or waiting for J2 training and 4 more J1s in training waiting to be assessed. This is really amazing and I'd like to record a special thank you to all our qualified officials.
- 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.
- Last season we had 10 youngsters volunteering their time plus an additional 3 who gained coaching qualifications and are now Junior Coaches at HAC.
- With the support of London Swimming 3 of our Young Volunteers were able to complete their time keeping course.
- I would like to record a vote of thanks to all our young volunteers who give generously of their time and in doing so make a huge difference to our youngest swimmers.

Finance

Please see the accounts supplied

- The main headline in our accounts summary is that we are sailing too close to the wind. Our profit ie. Income minus Expenditure was only £2652.00 for the season. For this reason the committee felt it necessary to increase fees across all squads for the first time since the beginning of the 2016/17 season.
- We are showing reserves of £16813.00. This provides a small buffer in case of emergencies but our aim should be to reach at least 3 months running costs in reserves = £55000.00.
- To achieve this aim we need to look at additional sources of income.
- This season we hope to run a full weekend gala in March and additional swim clinics during the holidays all of which will generate additional income.
- Running our own galas requires a huge commitment from all our volunteers and the income raised benefits all the swimmers from Academy all the way up to Masters.

Plans for the coming season

- Increased depth of coaching team. We now have 3 senior coaches backed up by more junior coaches than ever. We will look to strengthen the team where necessary as we grow.
- Future Stars events for younger swimmers to gain race practice and to set times. These will be run as close as possible to real meets to give young swimmers experience of the race environment.
- We ran our first Future Stars event last weekend. It was a huge success with lots of experience gained and some very fast swimming. I would like to propose a vote of thanks to Dylan, Jo, Johanna, Frauke, Stephen and all the other parents who gave their time before, during and after the event.
- Expansion of our new Para Squad to cater for those that want to compete.
- Better governance through close adherence to Swim England's Swim Mark which recognises high standards of governance, sustainability and effectiveness.
- Through further consultation with the membership and with the help of our Head Coach we will produce a new 3 year plan for the club.
- Explore ways in which we can cooperate with our neighbouring clubs to enhance the experience for all our swimmers. This could include coach to coach mentoring, cooperation around the provision of galas and officials and joint performance level training sessions.
- Focus on additional sources of income outside subscription fees.

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, Jen Dickson our chief Gala Maker would be delighted to hear from you.
- Become a Time Keeper, a Judge, a Starter or a Referee. Speak to Frauke Westgate about how this works. If your children are competing at meets, keeping busy will stop you going mad.
- Join the Tech Team that run the starting and timing equipment at our Galas. Speak to Chuck Rohrer or Chris Ogden.
- 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.
- I would like to propose a special vote of thanks to the following people who do so much work for the club. Marian and Roberta our friendly Friday desk faces, Hester who does an amazing job with all our club kit and last but not least Ruth Girardet without whom none of us would be here.
- We do what we do for the benefit of our swimmers.