



ATLANTIS SWIMMING CLUB, HORSHAM

(Affiliated to South East Region A.S.A.)

3rd January 2010

Dear Member

A Great 2009, An Even Better 2010 In Prospect

I hope you all had a great Christmas and New Year and are all raring to go for what promises to be a very busy 2010 swimming year. We can look forward to 2010 with a great deal of anticipation and optimism, given some fantastic performances over the last four months since the start of the 2009/10 swimming season.

Looking Back

The Club has enjoyed a full and successful autumn term:

- * A best-ever haul of 1 gold, 2 silvers and 1 bronze at the Sussex Relays;
- * A record number of swimmers selected for the County Squads, with three swimmers helping Sussex to a highest ever finish at the Inter-Counties' Championships in Sheffield;
- * 2 swimmers representing Division 12, who finished runners-up in the English Schools Swimming Association finals at Crystal Palace;
- * Cameron Lambourne securing the Club's first South East Regional record at the Crawley Long Course Meet;
- * Winning 58 medals and the Top Team at our own Christmas Cracker Open meet;
- * Breaking 74 club records at our Club Championships;
- * Securing a very creditable 8th place out of 18 clubs in the Division 1 East of the South Region of in the National Arena Swimming League;
- * More swimmers than ever before achieving County qualifying times.

2009 was topped off with the fantastic news that Cameron Lambourne has been selected to swim for England in the Home Nations Schools Swimming International in Glasgow in March. This is another first for Atlantis - our first international swimmer. Congratulations to Cam, who is already part of the England Talent Squad set-up, and who receives well deserved recognition for some wonderfully mature performances over the last 12 months.

The Club has also been making steady progress outside the regular competitions:

- * The website has been completely overhauled and updated - with further improvements planned for early 2010;
- * The club's first video has been produced and is now available on the website;
- * Regular race nights for our Penguin and Seal squads have commenced;

- * Regular Long Course Training is now taking place in the 50m pool at K2;
- * A new kit is gradually being introduced;
- * We have secured thanks to Nicki Kane our first major sponsorship with the link-up with Home Counties Pools and Hot Tubs;
- * The Club has enjoyed regular coverage in the County Times and the Resident, all helping to raise our profile with local stakeholders and prospective members;
- * Our squads have been structured with their own lead coaches and squad links;
- * Our coaching team continues to develop; Paul Blyth was one of ten coaches chosen to join an advanced coaching programme and this year will be embarking on his Level 3 coaching badge; Andy Lobley and Hilding Kallman have completed the Level 2 coaching course, while Robyn Lambourne has done the Level 2 Teaching Course ; and Matt Cumber and Rod Winter will be commencing the Level 1 Teaching Course this month;
- * On the social side around 200 people enjoyed a great night at the Annual Club Disco and Awards Ceremony, brilliantly organised at the Holbrook Club by Sue Reay, to bring to a fitting end our 30th Anniversary Year.
- * The Christmas Cracker Gala expertly organised by Roy Pennington and his team was a super advert for the club, running without a hitch and a financial success.
- * Swim21 accreditation was successfully renewed following some hard work led by Brian Elkins.
- * Membership numbers continue to grow currently increasing at an annualised rate of over 15%.
- * The Club is financially solvent and generating a surplus.

Looking Ahead

Over the last 5 years the Club has taken great strides forward. As Bill says on the new club video, Atlantis can stake a strong claim to be the most improved club in Sussex over recent years. Over the coming years we would like to bid to be the best. In Bill we have a Chief Coach who knows what it takes to achieve success at the highest levels. I think Bill would be the first to admit that he is energised by the potential he sees within our Club. I certainly feel there is a buzz and momentum in the Club at the present that the Committee is determined to build on. In 2010 we therefore intend to take additional significant steps forward. In taking these steps we are very mindful that successful clubs need both a strong base and a strong apex to the membership pyramid.

We have identified two main priorities for 2010, which both entail additional pool time.

National Development Programme

Currently the top “performance” competitive swimming clubs typically offer their leading swimmers a minimum of 20 hours pool time a week. At present Atlantis is offering our national and regional swimmers a maximum of just over 10 hours pool time per week. Atlantis, at its current stage of development, could not sustain a swim training programme of 20 hours. However, the time is ripe to start to move in this direction, to ensure that our best swimmers feel that they can continue to fulfil their potential at our club.

We have secured additional pool time to trial for an initial 3-month period a higher intensity training programme of up to 15.5 hours pool time per week, supported by up to 3 hours land training.

The additional hours will be open to all those in Gold and Silver squads, and Bill will be inviting a group of swimmers who satisfy appropriate objective criteria (e.g. physical development and levels of commitment and attainment) to commit to participate in a National Development Programme aimed at increasing the Club’s competitiveness at regional and national levels. Younger swimmers in Gold and Silver squads for whom this

amount of training would not yet be appropriate will nevertheless still be able to benefit from aspects of the programme. Other older swimmers who do not yet fulfil all of the criteria will continue to be assessed for potential inclusion.

The Pavilions Bronze Squads will also benefit from the additional pool time by being able to participate in at least one weekday morning session. We will also look at the feasibility of introducing 1 hour of land training per week for the bronze squad.

The new training times for all squads have been published on the website.

Billingshurst Bronze Squad

The Penguins and Seals squads at Billingshurst have proved to be a great success and a wonderful addition to the Club. As the swimmers in these squads progress, we need to establish a clear pathway to enable their development to continue. It is therefore our intention to establish in 2010 a Billingshurst bronze squad. This is dependent on securing additional pool time at Billingshurst that would give us three two-hour slots on a Monday, Wednesday and a Friday. We are currently in discussion with Horsham District Council and DC Leisure, the pool managers, about securing this additional time. We hope to be able to launch the new squad by Easter at the latest. This will then free up space to proactively recruit more Penguins and Seals at Billingshurst and further broaden and strengthen the base of the Club.

Other plans for 2010 include:

Competition Programme

The coaches have put together a very full and exciting competition programme for 2010. This is published on the website. This programme will be regularly updated as new information on galas becomes available. The key features of the programme are:

- * ensuring that there are galas in the programme to cater for all levels in the club;
- * dovetailing the competition programme with our squad training programmes to make certain that swimmers don't over-compete and do peak for competition at the right times;
- * providing our most experienced swimmers with a more varied competitive calendar that will provide a better preparation for the top championships e.g. it is our intention to send a team for the first time to the Scottish National Long Course Championships in Glasgow in June.

We have also decided in future to apply for an ASA Licence for our Club Championships in November and our 200m Club Champs in July. This means that times achieved can be used for ASA rankings. We also intend to include for the first time 400m freestyle and individual medley events at our 200m Champs, as part of developing a middle distance tradition within the Club.

The regular Race Nights for Penguins and Seals will continue to be a major feature of our programme in 2010 to give our younger swimmers a taste of competitive swimming.

Given the fullness of the programme, we have put on hold for now the introduction of a third Atlantis Open Gala (which was planned for September). We will aim for 2011 instead.

Technique Clinics and Weekend Camp

Swimmers in the Gold and Silver squads will have the opportunity to attend the week-long training camp in Italy in April. For the bronze squads a technique clinic is planned for the end of the month. In addition, our intention is to hold during the course of 2010 a weekend camp (probably during the Autumn half-term) for the bronze squads. Paul Blyth is investigating dates and possible venues, so watch this space!

Communication

Key plans include:

- * Website: I hope that Phase 2 will be finally completed during January. The remaining elements to be completed are the Members Only section that will enable swimmers to create their own profiles, to access data on times and rankings etc and to blog and chat with each other in a secure environment. Recent additions over the last month have been the video, and new picture gallery and a link to new online membership form;
- * Starter pack: the introduction of the new pack of information that the Club gives to potential new members has been delayed. We hope that this new folder of information will be available for use in January;
- * Parents' Evenings: We plan to hold on a squad by squad basis a series of parents' evenings, where parents can meet squad coaches and links and the executive officers of the club. This will provide a good opportunity to get to know other people in the club, find out more about the club and to raise questions. Again we will notify you of dates and details for these events during January;
- * Club AGM: We would like to make better use of the Club's AGM in May and to encourage a larger turn-out of members. We intend therefore to hire the Holbrook Club (where the Christmas Disco was held) and to add after the formal part of the proceedings a more social event. Current thinking is to hold a Quiz Night.

2009 provided some unforgettable moments (who can forget the memorable night at the Pavilions for the second National Arena Swimming League Gala?) 2010 is a year full of promise. Turning that promise into real achievements will require lots of hard work and commitment from swimmers, coaches, parents and helpers alike. Since I first became involved with the Club, I have been struck by the team spirit that exists within Atlantis. I believe this is one of our secret weapons! Long may it continue. Thanks for all your support and here's to a highly successful year ahead.

Kind regards

Andrew Dunlop

Chairman