

## **YORK CITY BATHS CLUB**

### **Honorary Secretary's Report For 2009/10. (combined with Swim 21 & Training Co-Ordinator)**

This is my second year as your Honorary Secretary and still the job doesn't get any easier ensuring the smooth running of the club administrative requirements are met.

My passion for the club is still as strong as ever, right from the little 5 year old purple hat swimmer just coming into the club's teaching groups, all the way through to the 80 year young lady in Masters Section. The club is not about a particular section but it is for everyone and sometimes I feel that people tend to forget this and just see their own section where their child swims.

It is my sad duty to report the passing away of Alistair Nelson last September. Alistair had just begun to help voluntarily with A Squad when he suddenly passed away.

On a happy note, Dawn Martland who became our Service Provider for Coaching last December has done a marvellous job motivating Top Squad and overseeing A squad. This was evident by taking 7 swimmers to the nationals. Dawn also took a group of 25 swimmers to Fuerteventura, for a training camp where the group jelled and became a team. It has proven to be such a success, that this year Dawn is intending to take swimmers on another training camp to Tunisia.

The contract for coaching services for 'A' Squad was advertised in January 2009, using both club and county websites and has been in The Swimming Times and Job centre plus for six months. There have been a couple of interested parties; no-one has yet come forward to take on the role.

In the meantime, we have to thank Anna Nicholson and Neil Hodgson, who are currently sharing the responsibilities of 'A' squad delivering sets that have been written by our service provider for the squad and to John Suddes who covers the Friday session.

A lot of 'A' squad swimmers had an alternative 'Home Training Camp' arranged while the majority of Top Squad and some of 'A' squad were at Fuerteventura. Again this proved to be successful and a further alternative home training camp is on the cards for this October.

Last Year I reported that covering Junior Masters section and the Teaching Section is still proving to be a challenge trying to ensure sessions are not cancelled. Due to work circumstances, Don Holmes and his family could no longer keep Junior Master Section running. Through Don's efforts and dedication to Junior Masters, he was awarded at the Presentation Day the Tiffany Trophy. I am delighted to report that this section is still running and is growing stronger. John Suddes and Martin Holderness currently take Junior Master sessions.

So to the junior sections of the training section, Silvers and Black Hats and to Lucy Stotten and Pat Baxter who have given years of Service to the Club and to Neil Hodgson who assists Pat with the Black hats I thank you.

Thanks also to Tony Dunwell, who takes the Swimfit Sessions week in week out at St Peters pool. Tony has kept Swimfit squad running solely for a number of years now. I often see

Tony and his squad to ensure they are kept in the loop as to what is happening in the club and that they feel part of the club and like all other training sessions they follow the same criteria.

This year has proven to be a difficult year for the masters, with strong competition from Health/Gym clubs with pools and free swim sessions with council. But we still have a dedicated team of Masters who remain with YCBC thanks to Duncan and Carol for all their hard work.

Thanks to Fraser Miller, our Teaching Co-ordinator who has ensured the teaching section is running smoothly.

As I mentioned in my report last year, many of the officers of YCBC have full-time occupations as well as positions within the club. Believe it or not, the club is very demanding. This last year they have had to wear many different hats to get the club to where it is at present. They all give large amounts of their “spare” time to ensure the operational running of the club remains as smooth as possible. It is not always an easy task juggling home, work and club life and this year has had its challenges financially. It hasn't been an easy year and I have the greatest admiration for what Rachel Carty, our Honorary Treasurer, has done but who is stepping down as Treasurer to concentrate on her home life.

It was touch and go this year as to whether we could continue to run the York gala in June 2009, as the club could not afford to make a loss. However, with additional sponsorship coming in at the last minute, plus the reduction in pool time required to run the galas, I am pleased to say this event went ahead with a dedicated team of helpers. However, we were unable to run a second gala in October – ‘Farewell to Edmund Wilson’ nor our York gala which was going to be held 21<sup>st</sup> February this year at Ennerdale Hull as we would have made a loss on both these accounts due to lack of entries and the cost of hiring the pool. However, I wish to record thanks to all those involved in setting up the initial programmes and for those who helped with the June 09 gala.

Our internal Club Championships provided another challenge for us this year. Significant time and effort was spent at Swimming Committee to find ways of breathing life into these historic championships and help them pay their way. The club listened to what swimmers wanted and this year we ran 200m events which we had not done for some time. Based on feedback which we have received, the 200m events will be in for the 2010 club Champs. Skins event was put on as a showcase, and was enjoyed by all swimmers and spectators. Discussions are already under way for the 2010 club champs. We hope that they will be an even better experience this year and the new committees will no doubt keep this under regular review. Once again, my thanks to all those who contributed to the development and running of these championships.

This year we continued to build on our relationships with York City Council. As you are all aware Edmund Wilson pool closed in December with the opening of the new pool at Oaklands called Energise. Like everything new there were one or two teething problems that we fed back and have had a follow up meeting. I am pleased to report that the majority of the issues have been ironed out.

Relationships are also continuing with St Peters School. They are hoping to rebuild their pool and there is a possibility that the present pool will close later this year. The swimming

committee have already drafted contingency plans so if or when St Peters does close we will still be able to cater for all the lessons and training albeit elsewhere.

Due to the fragmented structure of the club, using various pools around the city, communication has always been an issue. However, with the website being upgraded we hope to reach out to more people and make information flow within the club an easier prospect. We have collated e-mail addresses from all swimmers in the Training Section to help in this respect. Gala Entry Secretaries and fee Secretaries have been introduced for all training sections. Every effort is being made to collect e-mail address from the teaching section. We are confident that this has improved dialogue and the rate of response to queries has improved in the training section, but we know we have now to work with the teaching section to get to the same standard.

This year the Chairman, John Suddes and I introduced Parent forums. We went to all training sections to ensure they were happy how the club was running, listened to feedback and it was a chance for them to ask us questions regarding the club. These proved to be very successful. The forums were to be held quarterly, although, unfortunately we are overdue for the next one. But I am positive that these will be up and running again after the AGM and hopefully extend these forums into the teaching section at all pools.

YCBC is designated as a Swim 21 accredited club a 'Quality mark' that is recognised nationally and regionally. Clubs are committed to providing safe, effective and quality services for the benefit of their members. Our Swim 21 'file' had to go for its revalidation and was successful in maintaining its accreditation. The next stage was to extend our accreditation to include the training and Masters Sections. The additional files went to the Regional Panel on the 8<sup>th</sup> February and have been approved. These will be forwarded to the national board for assessment in March 2010. Vicky Norman, our NEASA Regional Development officer, and her successor Jane Roach, County Swimming Co-ordinator have both been very supportive and I am recording formal thanks for their support throughout the process this year.

Last year I reported that training courses for poolside and related support have been in short supply. I am pleased to report that this situation has at last changed and there have been several courses recently all of which go to help our Swim 21 file. YCBC has put every effort into training our voluntary poolside helpers to get qualifications in teaching, coaching and lifeguarding ensuring that we are delivering a quality service to our swimmers. We have received funding from Sport England together with other sponsorship from firms to help towards the cost of getting our volunteers qualified. This year, we have had 8 poolside helpers take their level 1 teaching exams. Four level 1 teachers take their Level 2 teaching exams, 5 teachers take their level 1 Coaching, 1 fully qualified lifeguard and 3 take Pool Rescue Course as well as the teachers maintaining their knowledge by going on Continuing Professional Development courses (CPD) which are a must for all teachers/coaches to do in 2010 and to hopefully become licensed. All these newly qualified teachers will not only be able to help out within training, but in teaching as well where the cover is sparse at times.

As always, YCBC cannot function without our invaluable voluntary teachers and helpers. This voluntary support is the basis on which the club foundations are built and in an age when people are busier than ever and giving up time for the benefit of others is not as fashionable as perhaps it once was, it is important that we take time to recognise the part all these people play in the continued life of the club. We should not take them for granted and

the very least we can do is to recognise their energy and commitment at our Annual General Meeting. Whether visible through teaching groups or taking training sessions, or behind the scenes undertaking the increasing administrative burden, I cannot thank these volunteers enough - without them our club would not exist.

However, we do need more volunteers. YCBC needs your support and as the saying goes "many hands make light work." Please let me know if you can spare some time to help in any way, shape or form.

I have enjoyed my year as Secretary, although at times it has been very hectic and hairy. The Club still has a lot to do and achieve next year and I know we shall succeed with the co-operation of everyone.

I look forward to the club's continued success in 2010.

Paula Hodgson.  
Honorary Secretary