

KELOWNA DOLPHINS ARTISTIC SWIMMING CLUB
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
THURSDAY JUNE 30, 7:00-8:00
MINUTES

In-person location at H2O.

Attendees: Coach Nasta Sizenova, Cheryl Heffernan, Sarah Verburgh, Kathleen Martin Ginis, Paige Pomeroy, Coach Julia Hansen

7:05 meeting called to order.

Kathleen acknowledged we are on the traditional, unceded territory of the Syilx Okanagan People.

1. President's Report

- Thank you to parents and athletes for trusting the club to provide a safe and supportive training environment
- This season finished with a return to relative normalcy, but didn't start that way
- We began the season with COVID protocols, sharing the dive tank with the divers (!), without parents and other spectators at practices, not knowing if we would have any in person competitions, and then we moved onto vaccine passport checks and continued competition uncertainty
- Behind the scenes, there were non-stop changes in both pool policies and BC Artistic Swimming and provincial public health regulation policies that we had to stay on top of and pass down changes to the coaches, athletes and parents
- I know communication was a challenge throughout the year, in large part because we couldn't have parents on deck. Usually there is an informal exchange of information between parents and athletes and coaches practices but we didn't have that this year.
- Communication is very, VERY difficult with the two pools -In the early spring, we turned a corner:
 - Improved communications with Coach Julia's regular newsletters
 - the Team Ware arrived! Some challenges, but overall our Club looked great.
 - we received a grant from ViaSport, which, when combined with the fundraising dollars raised through Carmen's initiatives and family support, was used to send our coaches for upgraded training certifications and the purchase of a new underwater speaker
 - Club got a boost from university students/experienced swimmers joining our team in competitive and coaching roles.
- the Coquitlam meet was in person and there was a stellar showing from the club; almost all of our athletes took home at least one ribbon
- all of our eligible athletes qualified for the BC Games (6 swimmers)

- at the Provincials in Kamloops in June, the club took home a bronze medal in Sr Competitive and our Jr Competitive team finished 3rd in the team event
- the new speaker arrived—athletes can now hear their music under water!
- We are hearing about a reduction in athletes returning to sports post Covid, particularly girls/women. Dolphins had a total of 38 swimmers this year, up from 24 the previous year. We also had 8 coaches, up from 2 last year

AS WE HEAD INTO THE SUMMER:

- we are being told that the H2O will be shut down for repairs from Sept 6 to October 14. We are waiting for more information on if/how the impact on Kelowna swim teams will be mitigated.
- the Aquatic Scheduling meeting with the City is July 14th. I will be representing the Club at that meeting. Obtaining pool time is a difficult, contentious issue. The time and space allocated to our team is insufficient and I will continue to advocate for our athletes.

Here is what the club has requested for next year:

Pool	Space	Days	Dates	Times
H2O	Dive Tank or 4 lanes	Tues, Wed, Thurs	Sept 1 - April	5:30 - 8:30
KFY	Dive Tank	Saturday	Sept 1 - April	7:30 - 9:30
KFY	Dive Tank	Sunday	Sept 1 - April	3:00 - 5:00
Parkinson Rec	3 lanes	Monday	Sept 1 - April	5:30 - 7:30

- the position of Head Coach will be advertised in July. Reposting the position provides opportunity to re-write the position with clarified roles and expectations. I will discuss with Coach Julia, which junior coaches to invite back for 2022-2023. The Club remains committed to providing financial support for continued training and mentorship for coaches.
- The Executive was disappointed with Sport Vivos, the vendor for team ware. We are looking for an alternative and the plan is to be ready so swimmers can purchase teamware at registration in the fall.
- We are looking to update pool signage with the updated name of our sport (Artistic Swimming)
- We are also strategizing to boost our social media presence

- 2. Treasurer's Report** - Cheryl reported our 2021/2022 season starting balance was \$16,298.20. We had \$700 total in fundraising, \$3000 in grants making our new balance \$14,806.71. A new speaker system was purchased for the club and this was a large expense for 2022. We need an accountant to audit (possible non profit price rate?) Had no cases of bad debit this year. Kathleen is going to talk to neighbour accountant re: audit.
- Kathleen expressed appreciation to Carmen Cocarelli for all of her fundraising efforts which are leveraged to apply for larger grants.

3. Head Coach's Report:

Introduction: Hello everyone, it has been a fantastic year for the Dolphins! While the club faced some challenges during the year I think we have really pulled together and produced some amazing results for our first year back at in-person competitions. Before I begin with my report I would like to thank all the parents for the support they give to the athletes, the board for all the hard work they have done & the hours they volunteered, the coaching team for an outstanding job this season, and last but not least our athletes for the crazy amount of effort they put in this season and their amazing achievements at competition!

Challenges: The biggest challenge I saw within the club this year was definitely communication. Based on the feedback I have received this was also the biggest thing many of the parents noticed as well. Starting the monthly newsletters during the competitive season seemed to help break the communication barrier between coaches/parents/board. From a head coach perspective, it was a really good way to share information and important dates with the entire club. Additionally, I noticed that the intro to comp team started using a whatsapp chat for the parents which aided in them feeling more involved in the sport. It also made communication between athlete families easier for them. This may be another way to increase communication amongst teams going forwards.

The other challenge that was brought to my attention was the lack of communication that occurred on some of the teams where they had two coaches. I think this was exacerbated by the changes in coaching staff we had this year and the overall communication challenges we had within the coaching team. While there are plans in place to attempt to ensure collaboration on the team (shared google docs for practice planning, whatsapp chats, etc..) they are only effective when both of the coaches involved put equal efforts into it. As an example, I noticed on the Intro to Comp team that there was one coach who was always being very actively involved with the athletes and the other put minimal effort in. This created differences in expectations for the athletes and was noticed by the parents. To rectify this I would suggest that in the future, any two coaches collaborating on coaching a routine have regular communication (encouraged by the head coach through check-ins) and a monthly in person meeting to outline plans and discuss/create goals together.

A big challenge to our athletes is of course the amount of pool space we practice in. Three lanes is too small of a space to train as our sport requires (and is scored on) the athletes ability to cover the pool area in an 8 lane competition pool. This did affect us at competition as we got a lot of judge comments mentioning that we did not adequately cover the pool during our routines. More importantly this is a safety hazard. As our club is growing and we have a large number of routines training at the same time, we find that our athletes often run into each other or the lane ropes which can cause injuries. I am very committed to working with the board to help us get more pool space for the upcoming year. I know the city is very difficult to book pool space with and that the club has been trying for some time to get more space for our athletes.

What our club does well:

I think we have shown amazing club spirit and sportsmanship this season. I really noticed that our girls cheered for every club's routines at competitions, and the cheering sections were extra loud for our girls. This is a fantastic display of sportsmanship and True Sport behavior and I am very proud of all of them for it!

Another thing our club did well this year was responding to feedback. I think the communication barrier was addressed well and showed improvement throughout the season. Continued work on this will help the club run smoothly and keep everyone well informed of events during the year.

Intro to comp: Coached by Nasta and by Jill (until March)

This team had some amazing achievements this year! Being the first time doing synchro for all of these girls, I thought they did an outstanding job in practices and in competition this season. Nasta did an excellent job leading this team to their 2nd place routine and 4th place championship result.

What the Intro to Comp program did well:

1. Developed fundamental skills required for artistic swimming
2. Encouraged improvement and support for team members
3. Had a fun and positive introduction to the sport

What the Intro to Comp program needs work on:

1. More dedicated land skill (especially flexibility)
2. Increase work on figure skills, can do this by including them into warm-up more
3. Structured coaching, in the sense whoever is the coach needs to have this team very well planned out and have spare plans, while the program should be fun, the athletes should always be active in the pool (Nasta did a great job at keeping them organized and busy, this comment is not for her)

Masters Rec: Coached by Zuleida

WOW! You ladies killed it this year! The spirit and effort shown by the masters rec group this year was outstanding. I think Zuleida did the best job at coaching these ladies all the way to being provincial champions!

What the masters rec program did well:

1. Had a fun team environment
2. Pushed themselves in routine
3. Established good warm-up practices and standards

What the masters rec program could improve on:

1. Offering additional training time for those who would like to be in the pool more (could be independently led by the athletes)

Competitive: 13-15 Coached by Alyssa (Sept-Jan) and Julia (Jan-June)

Our 13-15 competitive team stepped up this year and entered a new category of competition so to speak. This group was very directly impacted by the coaching changes this year. The switch from having a coach to temporary coach to the temporary coach being set as their coach had a big impact on this team. There was a change in mindset around February from 'middle of the pack' to actively working towards being top 3. While the changes/uncertainty in coaching was far from ideal, it seemed to overall push this team more than they had been in the past. They achieved 5th in routine and championships at Provincial Qualifiers. At Provincials they achieved 3rd place in routine and a 6th place championship result.

What our 13-15 comp program did well:

1. Adapting to changes and becoming more self-directed
2. Strived towards a higher level of competition, pushed themselves & each other
3. Developed more advanced skills for artistic swimming

What our 13-15 comp program could improve on:

1. Need dedicated strength and flexibility training
2. Overall execution of routine, compared to other clubs we sometimes appear sloppy
3. Figures need to be stronger, with the coaching changes this year and unexpected absences before competitions, the emphasis in training was placed unevenly on the team routine as it required a lot of work due to communication and expectation difference between the coaches.

16-20 Solos: coached by Nasta, Jill (until end of Marchish), and Julia (helped)

Our solos did an amazing job this past season. Both showed some fantastic improvements between their competition swims! We saw some very high results achieved by these ladies, with Izzy finishing 1st in routine and 3rd in Championship at Provincials.

What our 16-20 solo program did well:

1. Developed artistic skills and movements in the athletes
2. Challenged them with a different style of routine
3. Encouraged a high level of competition

What our 16-20 solo program could improve:

1. Figure skills were lacking in comparison to the routine, need more dedicated figure training time
2. More engagement with the judges during routines (based on judge comments from competition)
3. More consistent level of coaching across the solos, coaches must be at minimum trained to coach this level

Masters Comp: Coached by Julia

Having our competitive masters program really pushed and inspired the other athletes in the club towards a new level of excellence. This was also one of the groups that was directly affected by the coaching changes/issues we had this year. They did an excellent job at becoming very self-directed in the pool and still demonstrated great club spirit and encouragement despite the coaching challenges they faced. It was a pleasure to coach these athletes and to see them swim throughout the year; they achieved excellent results of 2nd and 3rd place at the masters provincials!

What our Masters comp program did well:

1. Demonstrated a high level of athlete achievement
2. Developed technical skills in routines and challenged the athletes
3. Encouraged self-motivation and self-directed growth

What our masters comp program could improve on:

1. More training time where they do not have to share a coach
2. Routines were very difficult, would tone down the difficulty in favor of some more creative elements
3. Encourage further competition: attend Masters Canadian Championships

Program alignment with LTAD (Long-Term Athlete Development Framework):

A brief overview of LTAD or Long Term Athlete Development. It is a framework set by Canada Artistic Swimming to ensure consistent and appropriate development of skills for athletes in artistic swimming based on their developmental stage (developmental stage and age are different in sport). It is based on sport research and identifies 10 key factors in athlete development:

1. Physical literacy
2. Specialization
3. Developmental age
4. Sensitive periods
5. Mental, Cognitive, and Emotional Development
6. Periodization
7. Competition
8. Excellence takes time
9. System alignment & integration
10. Continuous Improvement

This is taught in coaching courses and as part of coaching evaluations you are required to calculate training to competition ratios and evaluate how well your training aligns with the LTAD framework for the teams developmental stage. Going through my evaluation, it was very clear that our competitive groups training does not align with the LTAD.

For example, the training ratio for a team in the developmental stage that our 13-15 team was in should have closer to a 1:1 ratio of land:pool training. We also lack training hours in the pool for their developmental stage.

To change this I propose we look into setting up dedicated training time for both strength and flexibility for all competitive athletes and dedicated flexibility training times for the Intro to Comp athletes. Based on feedback I have received from the surveys, most athletes/parents want to see this dedicated strength & flexibility time. Additionally, the competitive athletes should be training closer to 12 hours a week in the pool to better align with the LTAD framework. I do recognize that it is a large commitment and that we may not be able to get such time next year but the goal would be to increase pool time for the competitive teams. Our recreational teams training time in the pool aligns with the LTAD framework, the rec program is lacking only in land training time.

Future Directions: Going forwards I would love to see more club events that bring athletes from all teams and age-groups together. I believe this will help create a more welcoming club environment and help foster more interaction and support amongst the athletes, parents, and coaches. Maintaining communication standards during the competitive season is a must for the club going forwards. Keeping the club monthly newsletter going seems to be a great way to achieve this. I would like to see more direct communication between the coaches and parents of the team (could be through a parents whatsapp chat where the coach can directly send reminders or answer questions, etc..).

Overall the club lacks the hours we train for all age groups. We need to be training more both in and out of the pool for our competitive groups, and more land training for our limited competitive (Intro) group. This will ensure our athletes have better development in the sport and increase our competitiveness in provincial competitions.

Based on the feedback I've gotten from the athletes at practices, the overwhelming want is to be at a higher level of training and competition. I think this is well within the reach of the club to implement for future seasons. My goal for the club would be to see routines achieving top 3 in the championship (routine+figure scores combined) results. We can accomplish this through increasing our train time in and out of the pool.

4. Executive Board Vacancies to be Filled:

- Treasurer
 - Information Officer (non-voting member)
 - Registrar (non-voting member)
- [see next page for description of duties]**

5. Call for Volunteers

- Teamwear orders
- Fundraising - BIG Thanks to Carmen for raising money so that we have a min balance to apply to for grants.
- Advertising/Promotion

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

TREASURER

Manage Receivables:

- accept monthly dues/etransfers, deposit cheques
- collection of non-payments
- answer questions regarding payments - fees, bills
- fund raising/ grants

Manage Payables:

- issue monthly cheques for pool payments and deliver cheques to pool
 - etransfer or issue cheques for other bills/invoices
 - etransfer monthly payroll to coaches
- + General book-keeping

INFORMATION OFFICER

Email:

- Monitor the club info email and respond to inquiries about current and future programs
- Archive emails from people looking to start next season and add them to the "registration is open" email for the next season start (fall, winter).
- Forward emails to appropriate recipients (e.g., coaches, president, treasurer).

Facebook/Instagram

- Keep track of swimmers/parents who consent to be in posted photos
- Post to Instagram (automatically posts to FB)
- Post synchro news on FB.
- interact (like, comment etc) with other swim clubs

REGISTRAR

- Register all members with BCAS and CAS
- Submit the Annual Club Registration Form
- Obtain releases from members transferring from other clubs
- Register athletes in CAS e-registration system
- Ensure all applicable registration fees have been paid
- Maintain up-to-date lists of athletes and their contact information

6. Other Business - Julia needs to send her survey feedback to Kathleen. Kathleen expressed gratitude to Heather Gardiner for providing mentorship in her role as past-president and to Sarah for ongoing support in her role as vice-president.
7. Plans for next season – discussed in Presidents Report

Meeting adjourned at 7:47 pm.