

To all squad swimmers and parents

Most of you will be aware that the club despite a number of huge challenges over the last few years has continued to improve its level of performance. We have produced National Youth Level swimmers and this year our first ever Senior National swimmer. Both at county and regional level we are producing record numbers of qualifiers and finalists. Last year we broke 177 club records and this year we are already in excess of 100.

But this is not the limit of the clubs ambitions, nor should it be. Because to do the right thing by our swimmers now, and in the future, the club should always be looking forwards and planning to improve. In order to continue this evolution we must raise the expectations of the club itself, the coaches and the swimmers. Part of this will be to move towards a more professional ethos. One which will see us act and perform like a big club.

We are now on the verge of a return to Park Road and find ourselves in a position where we have to rebuild the programme there. Because of this it would seem a very natural point at which to begin to lay the foundations for this new chapter in the clubs development. I see the first part of this as being a reorganization of the clubs senior performance group, making sure that we have the swimmers in it who have the right positive attitude, a desire to be the best they can be and the ability train and compete hard.

The first part of this process was to speak to the swimmers currently in it to explain the vision, the reasons behind the change and the expectations we have of them. Next to speak to the swimmers outside the group so that they would also know and make them aware of how this could involve them. Next is this letter to flesh it out a little to you parents too.

For the club to continue its rise we now have to find the swimmers who want to “be the best they can be” and are willing to make the sacrifices and commitment to that end and then put them all together. As you can imagine a group of like minded, highly motivated swimmers with a common goal can be a very powerful mix and an environment that would breed success.

The next part of this process is to set clear requirements for the swimmers who want to be considered for this group. The following are in no particular order, but if I was asked what I consider the most important it would be “positive attitude”. Being at training is not enough! Having a positive attitude to training and with those around you is the thing that can really ignite the imagination and with it peoples ambitions. Below are the Key Requirements for this new group. I have purposely kept it simple and brief in order to focus on the most important things.

- A minimum of 6 sessions a week.
- A positive attitude to training and competing.
- A commitment to galas as directed by the head coach
- Full participation in the land training programme.

Now at this point I would like every swimmer and parent who is thinking they want to be part of this to take a deep breath. Once you've done that ask yourself the following questions

1. Do I really want to do it?
2. Can I make the training sessions required?
3. Do I have the strength of character to be positive all the time?
4. As a family are you willing to give your time to supporting a competitive swimmer?

The schedule for this group will be as follows:-

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
PR	8 – 10 am		6 – 7.30am		6 – 7.30am	*LT 7 -8pm 8 – 9.30pm	8 – 10 am
TG	5.45 - 7.15pm	7 – 9pm	7 – 9pm	7 – 9pm	7 – 9pm		

*LT = Land Training

Also swimmers will be expected to **arrive 20 minutes** before water sessions start (am sessions excluded) to do a 15 minute land based activity prior to water sessions.

If you have got this far and are still interested here is a head's up on the next step. At the outset of this group in order to give everyone an opportunity the offer is for any swimmer in the competitive squads (this excludes club and development squad) who feels they can make the requirements above.

If you would like to be considered for this new squad and are up for the challenge then email me at p.doyle@abercornschoo.com by Friday 5th June 2015.

Once I have a definitive list I will have a meeting of all those swimmers and parents interested to set out the vision and to answer any questions you may have.

Regards

Paul Doyle

Head Coach