



### Message from the Head Coach

It's been an extremely busy, and turbulent year at Dingwall ASC. We've travelled the length and breadth of the country competing at seven different competitions from as far north as Thurso and all the way down to Dyce. We have also had to deal with the unfortunate closure of Dingwall Swimming Pool for essential maintenance. It has not been without its struggles but I have done my very best to ensure that the disruption to training has been minimal and tried to accommodate all squads as best as I could. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all swimmers, parents and committee members, as well as Jordan and Rachel for their patience and understanding. Now, onto the positives!



This year has seen us compete in a number of different meets throughout the North District, with my favourite of these meets being the Dyce Mini Meet and the Ythan Graded Meet. Both of these meets are now target meets for me for the following 2019-20 Season as they were so well organised and extremely fun for the swimmers! We've also ushered in our two new Club Captains, Brandon Fenwick and Kirsty Johnston who have already done some incredible work with our youngest, developing athletes. The Club has also welcomed **16** new swimmers to the team and look forward being a part of their swimming journey with Dingwall ASC.

As is the norm, a DASC newsletter wouldn't be complete if I didn't gush about how proud I am of this Club and its swimmers and this newsletter won't be any different. Their hard work, resilience and team spirit are second to none and it continues to be my profound honour to work with such talented, fun (even if slightly loopy) young athletes. I would also like to extend my thanks to Nicola and the Committee for all their support, encouragement and wisdom over the last year. I've said it before and I'll say it again, this isn't just swimming club, this is a family.

Here's to 2020! I don't know about you, but I am very excited to see where it takes us!

*Andrew Clark*



## Club Captains 2019 – 2020

When the coaches sit down to discuss who should be the Club Captain's there's always a dozen names that get thrown in the hat, and then they have the extremely difficult task of choosing two names.

This year was different, it was a very straight forward and easy decision to make, with all three coaches naming the same two swimmers for their nomination for Club Captain.



It was an honour to announce that Brandon Fenwick and Kirsty Johnston would lead Dingwall ASC as Club Captains for the 2019-2020 Season.

Brandon and Kirsty have been superb role models for the Club and our young athletes and have been instrumental in developing our Development Squad and C Squad Swimmers, volunteering their time to assist on poolside and pass on their wealth of knowledge and a unique swimmer's perspective/insight to training. They are both extremely hard working and committed athletes that represent the very best the Club has to offer with their unwavering dedication, work ethic and passion.

Brandon and Kirsty will play an important role in the Club over the coming season and will be a source of support and inspiration and provide a vital link between the Coaching Staff, Committee and our Swimmers to ensure that the Club continues to improve, develop and progress.



### Club Awards Night (November 2019)

Following our extremely successful inaugural Club Party and Awards Night in March, the Committee, led by newly appointed Social Events Coordinator, Julie Duff, started planning for our 2<sup>nd</sup> Club Awards Night which was held in November 2019. This fantastic event allows swimmers to unwind, change fins and swimsuits for dancing shoes and celebrate the success of the Club and it's members over the year.



In a night filled with music, dancing and sweeties (and an exceptionally competitive game of Musical Chairs... no comment!) there were 17 trophies awarded for performances at Club Championships and work ethic, attitude and performances across all Squads throughout 2019. The Club also recognised the improvements of all swimmers in the Club by awarding all swimmers a Certificate of Improvement and also awarded swimmers for the best attendance in each Squad. The Coaching Staff and Club Captains nominated several swimmers to receive a Special Recognition Award.

Our Trophy Winners were as follows:

- Girls 100m Freestyle and Girls 100m Backstroke: **Hannah Mitchell**
- Boys 100m Freestyle and Boys 100m Backstroke: **Lewis-Mosey Lyall**
- The Mitchell Shield for Boys 100m Breaststroke: **Euan Harrison**
- The Wyvis Cup for Girls 50m Fly: **Katie Forth**
- The Duff Cup for Boys 50m Fly: **Euan Harrison**
- 12y/o Girls 100m Individual Medley Shield: **Holly MacDonald**
- Girls 100m Individual Medley Cup: **Grace Ewing**
- Most Improved Development Squad Boy: **Fraser Swaffield**
- Most Improved Development Squad Girl: **Megan Forth**
- 11&U Girls Champion: **Flora Sutherland**
- 13y/o Girls McCall Trophy: **Katie Forth**
- Girls Junior Champion: **Holly MacDonald**
- Senior Boy Champion: **Brandon Fenwick**
- Senior Girl Champion: **Amber Cumming**
- Male Swimmer of the Year: **Euan Harrison**
- Female Swimmer of the Year: **Flora Sutherland**





### Club Awards Night (November 2019) – continued

The final awards of the night, and by far the most coveted, were our Female and Male Swimmer of The Year. The coaches begin discussing potential nominees as early as August, taking into account a huge array of factors including behaviour, work ethic, attitude and performances in training and at competition. The Swimmer of the Year is also awarded to those swimmers who represent the very best of the Club. This year, it was a bit of a no brainer and one of the easiest decisions the coaching staff have made, read about our winners below.

#### Female Swimmer of the Year

The 2019 Female Swimmer of the Year was awarded to Flora Sutherland who has blossomed since joining B Squad shortly after the summer holidays. Flora is an exceptionally talented and hard working young athlete who consistently goes the extra mile in training to better herself and her swimming. Flora is definitely one to watch in the coming years... a star in the making!



#### Male Swimmer of the Year

Euan Harrison was crowned our Male Swimmer of the Year for 2019 (his second time winning this award!). Euan is proving himself to be a force to be reckoned with and is an extremely versatile athlete. Euan has work ethic, commitment and dedication in bucket loads and is another swimmer to watch as he continues to grow and develop... another star in the making!

Massive congratulations to all trophy winners for 2019! Plans are already being made to make next years Club Awards Night even better. The Club would also like to thank Angus Mitchell of Angus' Discos for his lighting and sound system and also thank you to all parents who made food or donated to our raffle!



## Highland Schools (November 2019)

Dingwall ASC always has a strong team entered into the Highland Schools Swimming Competition in November and this year, was our busiest entry yet! We had a massive team of **22** swimmers representing **7** different schools, competing in more than **30** events ranging from 50m Fly to 200m Freestyle.



This was the first Highland Schools for more than half of our team: Flora Sutherland, Isla Sutherland, Jamie MacGruer, Amber Cumming, Hannah Mitchell, Euan Harrison, Anna Beveridge, Katie Forth, Maddie Laing, Matthew Scott-Emuakpor and Aaron Fraser, massive congratulations to them all! All Club swimmers performed exceptionally on the day and swam their hearts out for their Club and their School, but most importantly they all had fun! There were so many amazing races, massive PB's and records smashed but below are just a few highlights from the day.

Amber Cumming, Isla Sutherland, Evie Richardson and Iona MacLennan all competed in the 200m Freestyle. This was a first for the Club as we historically haven't entered many swimmers into mid-distance events at competitions, so it was a learning curve not for the swimmers but also for the coaches. Before their race the girls had a chat with Head Coach Andrew to calm their nerves and go over their race plans/strategies before heading off the marshalling. All girls had a phenomenal swim and raced precisely as planned however Amber Cumming's 200m Freestyle was one of the most remarkable races of the day.

Perfectly paced and controlled, Amber executed her race plan to the letter and held her own against a strong team of swimmers from across the Highlands to finish with an enormous 8 second personal best. Just amazing!



### Highland Schools (November 2019) – continued

Rona Robinson has been competing at Highlands Schools since 2014 and always puts in some astounding performances. After an incredible 5 years of competing at this event, this years Highland Schools would be her last and she did not disappoint. There is no denying that Rona is the strongest and most versatile Breaststroke swimmer (female) that the Club has seen, and she certainly put on a show at this years Highland Schools.

Rona has been hundredths of a second away from her PB every time she has competed in this event, always .01 or .02 seconds shy of a new personal best. As Rona made her way to marshalling, Andrew and Jordan discussed her recent form at training and in competition and kept their fingers crossed that with this being her final Highland Schools she would finally smash her PB which stood since April 2016 and... **SHE DID!** Rona had an impressive start and maintained her speed and rhythm off every wall, winding through the gears into her final 25m, as the coaches and swimmers cheered on from the side Rona surged into the finish. All eyes shot towards the scoreboard to see the time and waited with bated breath to see if she had cracked her PB. An eye watering time of 01:33.84! Smashing her PB and setting a new Club and Age Group Records in the process!!

The Club also came home with some medals! Aeryn Cleary won a silver medal in the 17-19 year old Girls 100m Butterfly, after very nearly missing out on the meet altogether due to an error at Alness Academy, however she had an exceptional swim to secure a silver medal for the Club and for her School. Newly elected Club Captain Kirsty Johnston also came home with a bronze medal in the 17-19 year old Girls 100m Backstroke, much to Kirsty's surprise! Kirsty was a fantastic role model on the day and helped massively with our younger swimmers, especially those of whom were competing for the first time!

All in all a fantastic event with superb performances from all! Looking forward to Highland Schools 2020!







### **Club Championships (September 2019)**

Our 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Club Championships took place on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> of September, in Alness Swimming Pool, due to the closure of Dingwall Swimming Pool. Forty-three swimmers from the Club took part in the annual event, competing in sixty-eight different events ranging from 50m Free to 200m Individual Medley.



The day was a resounding success despite the change to location and a massive thanks is owed to all parents, swimmers and volunteers who helped to support our most popular Club. There were more than 100 new Personal Bests and an incredible 11 new Club and Age Group Records in a fun-filled, fast and exciting day. All swimmers excelled themselves and their behaviour was exemplary. Some highlights of the day include:

#### **Girls 50m Butterfly Final**

In one of our tightest heats of the day, with only 1.37 separating all swimmers. Laci Innes, Evie Richardson, Iona MacLennan and Hannah Mitchell faced off against one another in one of the days most exciting events. Down the first 25m Evie led the race by half a body length with Hannah in a close second and Laci and Iona tying for 3<sup>rd</sup> place. After the turn Evie kicked into gear and extended her lead by one and a half body lengths while Iona chased down Hannah in the battle for 2<sup>nd</sup> place. The noise of cheering teammates (and coaches) was deafening and the race finished with Evie in 1<sup>st</sup>, Hannah in 2<sup>nd</sup>, Iona in 3<sup>rd</sup> and Laci in 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Mixed 14&O 100m Freestyle (Heat 2)**

One of the biggest wins of the day came from the Mixed 14&O 100m Freestyle with Euan Harrison, Aeryn Cleary, Blythe Wilson and Beth Mackay. Undeterred by swimming against three swimmers from A-Squad, Euan Harrison showcased his talents in an extremely fast race. Down the 3<sup>rd</sup> length Aeryn and Euan were in a tie for 2<sup>nd</sup> place, but Euan dug deep and mustered up all of his energy to overtake Aeryn with 15m to go and held onto his lead to the finish, touching in a time of 01:20.81.



## Club Championships (September 2019) – continued

### Mixed 14&O 100m Individual Medley Final

Club Championships are a fantastic event for our swimmers to showcase their talents and put all of their hard work in training into practice. Amber Cumming certainly showed off her skills in one of the most exciting races of 2019. Laura Beveridge held onto the lead into the first 25m with Amber Cumming, Beth Mackay and Meg Morrison fighting it out for 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Backstroke leg. Laura



extended her lead to two body lengths in the Breaststroke leg with Amber nipping at her heels in 2<sup>nd</sup> place with Beth in a close 3<sup>rd</sup>. Laura touched into the final 25m of Freestyle by at least two body lengths and this is when Amber kicked it into high gear, quite literally. The water behind Amber was white with bubbles and the noise in the pool hall was cacophonous as everyone cheered Amber on! Into the final 5m Amber and Laura were neck and neck but Amber managed to out touch Laura by **0.02** seconds to finish in 1<sup>st</sup> place with a PB of 7.28s!







## Dyce Mini Meet / Ythan Graded Meet

The Club has competed in more than seven meets over the last year: Ullapool, Ross Shire Schools, Highland Schools, Nairn IM Challenge, Ythan Graded Meet, Dyce Mini Meet and Thurso Mini Meet (but we don't talk about Thurso...!)

Two of the best meets we attended this year were the Dyce

Mini Meet in March and the Ythan Graded Meet in May. A strong team of 12&U swimmers travelled down the road to the Dyce Mini Meet which was our Club's very first meet. The whole event was extremely well organised and a massive learning curve for our swimmers, technical officials and coaches. Thirteen of our talented young swimmers travelled down the A96 to Westhill Swimming Pool and everyone performed exceptionally on the day. The Club also entered our first competitive relay team in the Girls 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay and we also won our first medals with Laci Innes finishing 1<sup>st</sup> in her 11 y/o Girls 50m Fly and Tayler Barlow finishing in 1<sup>st</sup> place in the 11y/o Girls 50m Butterfly and 50m Freestyle!

Our second most favourite meet was the Ythan Graded Meet held in May at the Ellon Community Campus. This meet was also exceptionally well organised and run like clockwork. A massive thank you to Ythan ASC who made our swimmers and coaches feel so welcome, we'll definitely be back! One of the best swims of the day came in Grace's 100m Butterfly. Grace was very nervous in the run up to the race, having only competed once in 100m Butterfly. Grace got a quick start and finished the first 50m leading by a body length, her lead quickly got eaten up by a competitor in Lane 3 at the end of 75m turning into the final length. With each stroke in the final 25m, Grace edged further and further in front of the pack and finished in first place by at least 10m. Not only did Grace finish first in her heat but she also took an enormous 15.24 seconds off of her PB and solidified herself as one of the best female swimmer the Club has ever had!



**Both of these events are definitely ones that we will be targeting in future so keep your eyes peeled in early 2020 for meet information**



### Parental Involvement

For our Club to continue to flourish and progress we are always looking for parent helpers to assist with the daily running of the Club and to help with the running and organisation of Club events/competitions. If you are interested in helping us out in any way shape or form, please forward your name to the committee/coaches who will gladly give you more information!



### Timekeepers Course

The Club will be organising a timekeeper course sometime towards the beginning of 2020. If you would like to put your name forward to be put on the next course please email: [dingwall\\_asc@outlook.com](mailto:dingwall_asc@outlook.com)

### Time Dropped and Biggest Improvers

Over the course of 2019, through hard work, grit and determination, swimmers have taken an impressive

**26:18.01** off their Personal Bests.

The ten swimmers who have dropped the most time are as follows:



- |                                       |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. <b>Flora Sutherland</b> – 01:40.33 | 6. <b>Holly MacDonald</b> – 01:08.79  |
| 2. <b>Amber Cumming</b> – 01:35.85    | 7. <b>Zoe Thomson</b> – 01:01.21      |
| 3. <b>Euan Harrison</b> – 01:19.86    | 8. <b>Kirsty Johnston</b> – 00:52.16  |
| 4. <b>Ellie MacDonald</b> – 01:10.11  | 9. <b>Beth MacKay</b> – 00:49.25      |
| 5. <b>Eva Morrison</b> – 01:09.69     | 10. <b>Hannah Mitchell</b> – 00:46.09 |

This massive time improvement, broken down by Squad is as follows:

- **A Squad** – dropped 05:05.46
- **B Squad** – dropped 13:17.08
- **C Squad** – dropped 04:45.06
- **Development Squad** – dropped 03:10.41



## Thank You

Normally I only open our Club Newsletters, but it felt right to give some final words in this year's newsletter given all the disruption that the Club has faced with the prolonged (seemingly never ending) closure of Dingwall Swimming Pool.

I know that it's not been easy, and I appreciate that there has been a significant change to training times/days for all Squads however I just want to take this opportunity to thank each and every swimmer and most importantly, **you** the parents for continuing to support the Club even as we relocated to Alness Swimming Pool. This Club has continued to exceed all my wildest expectations and has gone above and beyond over the last few years, we've been training harder than ever before and even though we might not have the same training time as other Club's we certainly give them a run for their money! Hopefully we will be back in Dingwall Swimming Pool soon however I just want to give me heartfelt thanks to you all for helping ensure that our swimmers continue to train hard to reach their goals and push this magnificent Club forward! This year might have been tough, but it's been one of my favourite years since joining the Club in 2013. I would also like to extend a profound thank you to all of the staff at Alness Swimming Pool who have helped keep this Club going over the last 6 months, particularly Leisure Centre Manager Kensa Robertson, who's support has been a godsend!

On the next page, I have asked swimmers in A Squad and B Squad to sum up 2019 in three words, and it makes for some really heart-warming reading!



*Thank You*





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## 2019 in Three Words





### Dates for your Diary

The final day of training before the Winter Break will be:

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

Training will resume the week the schools return on:

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020 – more information will follow closer to the time to let parents/swimmers know if we are back in Dingwall or not. Fingers crossed!**

**SAVE  
THE DATES!**

### Meet Deadlines

**Peterhead Graded Meet**

**Deadline:** Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December

**BODASC Time Banded:**

**Deadline:** Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January

