

Chairmans Report 2023-2024

The 2023/2024 year saw the club return to a pre covid state, running full classes with hourly start times.

It has always been and remains the ethos of the club to be open to all as a grass roots club embedded in the community. In doing this, our aims are to bring the sport of gymnastics and the associated activities of the North Devon Display Gymnastics Club to as many people of all ages and abilities as possible and to have a reputation built around Accessibility, Inclusion, Safety, Enjoyment and Aspiration.

In recognition of the ever increasing statutory requirements on the club and in particular, employers, the trustees have had to consider the financial and personnel effect that the regular increases in minimum wage, living wage and pensions has made. The club's accountants who run the payroll, along with personnel guidance and advice, also administer the workplace pension scheme.

Class fees are reviewed regularly and increased as necessary to cover the overheads of the club. During the year we have also been fortunate to attract some grant funding from various local organisations towards coaching and equipment.

The past year has been testing for everyone as our head coach went on long term sick leave, leading to her resignation in February 2024. I would like to thank everyone for their support during this time, in particular our lead coaches and club manager who have kept the club going during what has been a difficult period.

Despite this, the club has thrived, with many events taking place throughout the year.

In July 23 our display team attended the International Festival Del Sol in Riccione, Italy. The team performed to a very appreciative crowd of over 3000 spectators. The festival is an amazing experience for our gymnasts, giving them a chance to perform alongside teams from all over the world. The downtime is as much fun as the performance at these festivals, with pool time, shopping and activities creating new friendships and bonds.

Our display team also attended the London Festival of Gymnastics in October 23 with their routines receiving great credit. The team has recruited several new members this year and for many of the gymnasts this was their first time performing. The girls enjoyed performing and having fun at Puttshack, all helping to bring them together as a team.

We ran our very successful, and now annual, recreational competition in July 23 and April 24. The competition gives our rec gymnasts a chance to show off their skills in a fun and friendly competitive environment. We have used the results to create a performance pathway through the club, with high performing gymnasts being selected for the development team.

June 24 saw the junior display team being invited to perform in the half time show at the women's rugby final at Exeter Chiefs. The team enjoyed learning and performing routines to a packed stadium.

Alton Towers was the destination for our trip in July 24 with the display team performing their High School Musical routine at the Chance to Dance festival. This was a great trip with the opportunity to visit the theme park and splash pool at Alton Towers being the highlight.

Any club member of school age can join the display team regardless of ability.

There has been a proactive fundraising effort this year, with many fun events being held, including the round table Santa run, and bingo nights.

Since the resignation of the head coach we have worked together as a committee of trustees and coaches to improve the ethos of the club moving forward. Some of the changes in the process of being implemented are; a new awards scheme for the recreational classes to replace the BG badge system, termly progress reports, annual awards and celebration evening & a young leader program. We have also recruited junior and assistant coaches from within the club on the staff and this has proved very successful. It has been great to see these young people sharing their own skills and knowledge with the younger members. Our aim is to bring through well trained and qualified coaches to carry the club into the future, with investment by the club, both financially and as mentors!

None of the above would be possible without the huge commitment and hard work given by our coaches, trustees and volunteers, and my personal thanks go to everyone, especially our new head coach Vickie who works tirelessly, along with our club manager, aiming for the best future for both the club and its gymnasts. I really appreciate all your hard work and commitment to helping the club remain true to its core values.

In closing, the club is in a strong and healthy position, with an increase in membership meaning that most recreational classes are full and some even have waiting lists. The development team are working hard and training is under way for upcoming competitions.

I, and the trustees, look forward to the new gym year, as always with great optimism.

Jayne Poole

Club Chairman.