**Head Coach’s Report 2022/23 Season**

It is an honour to finally be able to produce my first report as Head Coach of a club that I am extremely proud to be a part of. For those of you who don’t know, becoming Head Coach of a swimming club has been a goal of mine for quite a few years. To be able to fulfil that dream in an environment where I feel appreciated and accepted means the world to me. I would like to say a huge thank you to the chairman and committee for providing me the opportunity to take on the role as Head Coach, and I express my gratitude to all members of staff that have helped me settle into my new role. Your support and guidance is hugely appreciated.

It has been thoroughly enjoyable getting to share the pool deck with new faces. Thank you to all teachers and coaches that have helped and continue to help to produce very capable swimmers for us to work with. Every success story would not be possible without your expertise!

Before arriving at the beginning of December, I was informed about the family values and togetherness within the club by a number of people. Although I didn’t underestimate it, I have been blown away by just how welcoming and cohesive the club has been towards myself and all of our members.

In my opinion, there have been many positives, so I will aim to keep this as brief as possible!

So far in 2023, a number of talented swimmers have progressed into the next squads within our performance pathway, we have welcomed many new young swimmers into transition squads, and the club has taken positive steps forward with the addition of masters swimmers - who have integrated into SwimFit+ nicely.

Starting off my new chapter so close to leading 22 swimmers into the Suffolk County Championships was a perfect way to kickstart my role. Getting thrown straight into the deep end by having to prepare a group of new swimmers for Counties halfway through the season was a blessing in disguise that educated me for following meets. Personally, I wanted to hit the ground running, and I think the performances from our swimmers reflected that. We had some awesome results at the County Championships, placing 6th overall and 3rd in the relay standings - which I consider a great achievement and the perfect base to build upon!

It was an honour to witness Deben Swimming Clubs 50th Anniversary Meet at the end of March. There were an array of fast swims from almost 50 members of our club, where a staggering 147 best times were achieved from 217 individual swims. Notably, the club received positive feedback by many parents and coaches of other clubs.

Across April and May, Deben was represented by 6 of our swimmers for the East Regional Longcourse Championships that were held in Norwich and Luton. Again, there were some really big steps forward from swimmers.

At the time of writing this, an exciting County League Final awaits on June 24th, with our girls team currently leading the standings, our boys team sitting in third, and Deben placed third in the overall standings.

There are still more meets between now and the end of the season, before some of our members get to meet Adam Peaty MBE at one of his AP Race Clinics in August at Ipswich High School! I’m sure this day could act as a catalyst to take improved mindsets into the new season that will follow!

From my current position, it is very clear that we have a lot of talented individuals across every level of the Performance Pathway who do not yet realise the potential they have. The same can be said for coaches and young teachers. I see a lot of knowledge, passion and talent. I hope with time, I can motivate, inspire, and help as many people within the club to reach a level of ability and competitiveness they never thought was possible. Every so often, I believe in taking time to reflect how far we’ve come in such a short space of time. Whether you are a swimmer, teacher, coach, or fulfil another role within the club, I urge you to reflect in the realisation with pride of what you have achieved to date, and what can be achieved moving forward. Let’s all continue to strive towards continued improvement and success.

I am genuinely excited about our future together and I’m confident that we can grow to a new sustained level in results and finance, whilst still maintaining the core principles of being the friendliest club in Suffolk! Some of my biggest focuses are to produce a higher number of swimmers qualifying for the Suffolk County Championships and the East Regional Longcourse Championships in 2024, get a higher number of swimmer competing regular at Novice Galas and targeted meets, and to help everybody reach towards their true potential whilst having fun!

I hope we can all share some memorable positive experiences together…