

Dear Gareth, Members of the Committee , parents and swimmers,

I hope everyone has had a restful break.

I just wanted to drop you a quick note to thank you all, and in particular yourself Gareth for making a special effort for coming to see me off after my last coaching session at WSC on 16th December. Your kind words Gareth were much appreciated.

For those that weren't able to, and those that could only get onto the car park to say good bye, I just want to say that its been a privilege to have been an active member of the club over the last 11 years ; it really doesn't seem that long. Some people I have had conversations with have said how the club and its members will miss me ; the feeling is mutual. I will always be grateful to the club for supporting me though gaining my swimming teaching and coaching qualifications ; little did I know when I agreed to undertaking my level 1 qualification all those years ago how much I would get hooked into the sport and the people of WSC.

During my time I have worked with a number of different Head Coaches and Chairs, and the Club has faced a number of challenges which, through our combined efforts, our strength and resilience we have overcome. Reflecting on the current situation, I know we will overcome this together too.

If I was to use this opportunity for anything, it would be to ask everyone of you to help and support the club in any way you are able. I have seen over the years the tireless efforts of individuals to make things happen, but Ive also witnessed the combined efforts of little contributions and the great difference they make. So, if you are able to support YOUR club in any way with a little effort here, or a little input there, please make the offer and don't think its not appreciated and, as another local 'sports team' would say, *'the strength of the wolf is in the pack'* ; after all, 11 years after I helped to offer to put in a lane rope at Central Baths I have been to the British Swimming Championships at the London Aquatic Centre ! Please respond positively to any future calls for volunteers, your contribution will be welcomed.

Throughout my time, the one constant has been the swimmers, and since the announcement of my standing down I have been touched and reminded of the special bond I have developed with swimmers, their parents and wider families. I am grateful to all of you who have shared your own memories of how our lives have crossed in the world of swimming. My e mails have recently become an enjoyable trip down memory lane ! Ive been fortunate in my time coaching, to help, support and coach swimmers at all levels, from their first foray's into competitive swimming at 9years old, through County and Regional Championships, the heights of English and British Nationals and even British Championships, not to mention the regional and open water open water events at Bosworth and Rother Valley. Having tried the open water swimming with my daughter Tamara, all I can say is I'm in awe of you who have tried this discipline, and for those of you that haven't, please give it a go, its great. Its probably the event Ive enjoyed supporting swimmers at the most. Even some Head Coaches of Clubs, have not been so fortunate to have been able to experience helping and supporting swimmers at such a wide range of competitive events. I am truly grateful for the opportunities I have been able to experience.

Away from poolside I have countless memories of weekends away at swimming meets around the country, training camps in Cardiff and London and the 'Tuesday Tea Club' before coaching sessions at Central ; never again will so much tea be drunk, and problems sorted ! ; all very special memories, many that will stay with me forever. In particular I remember Dave Haller 'a renowned swimming coach', always taking time to speak with us on our trips to Cardiff camps about our swimmers, their achievements and their application ; WSC you are observed and admired from afar.

Thank you 'my swimming family', a phrase that many may use but fewer appreciate the real significance of. And whilst talking about appreciation, those of you that were able to see Gareth hand over one part of my leaving gift ; A Rams third kit shirt ; the significance, Derby County are my followed football team since childhood growing up in Uttoxeter (though I will admit to liking Wolves since Ive lived in the region over the last decade, and there has often been football banter

poolside, both at training sessions or weekend meets!) Don't worry swimmers!, I'm not going to go on about you going to watch Wolves rather than coming training, you know who you are 😊, but more importantly its PINK, the only colour to be seen in. Many close friends at the club have known this and football fans amongst you will also know we discuss our favourite strip of our club. WSC have always used the colours of black, gold and red, so it was with great appreciation my favourite strip of WSC, for me, was the one off special for the 2016 Regional Championships where I was provided with pink poolside attire. It will always hold a special place in my memories, and has certainly received many comments over the following years. I still wear it to this day.

As well as people involved directly with WSC I have received great support and friendship from coaches at fellow Clubs ; Bilston, Walsall, Burntwood, Dove Valley, Lichfield, Chase to name a few ; thank you to all poolside coaches and staff for your kindness and friendship over the years ; you've all made the hours poolside fun, enjoyable and worthwhile. I have benefitted so much from your support, advice and experience over the years. My 'Swimming Family' has been so much more than just WSC.

Finally, I want to wish every swimmer and the club the very best of luck for the future. I will look forward to seeing news of your achievements, and I will, when situation and time allows, be there to watch and support you all.

Thank you, 'my swimming family', I have been extremely fortunate, Be safe, Be kind,

Tim

