

Coaches Report

April 13, 2004

Competitive

I am please to report that the competitive team of Kevin Geyson, Cam McLean, Lauren Penko, Kristin Davies and Jill Gudmandson has just finished the best overall Senior Nationals performance by the Pan Am Diving Club since 1992.

Bearing in mind that the club did not even have a presence at the Senior National from 1993-1999 we are now established as one of the top 6 senior clubs in the country.

This Nationals was highlighted with two silver medals (Jill Gudmandson and Kristin Davies in Synchronized three meters and Kevin Geyson for Artistic Platform), two bronze medals (Kevin Geyson on 1 meter and Platform) and a qualification to participate in the Olympic Trials by Lauren Penko as a finalist in women's platform. Cam McLean only missed one dive on one meter which dropped him from top 8 to out of the finals. An incredible performance by Cam and he has certainly established himself as a talent of the future. All of our athletes attending this championship will be eligible for membership in the high performance program at the U of M and should result in athlete assistance grants for the 2004-2005 season. We have moved from two to six members in this program over the past year.

This is a particularly amazing performance in an Olympic year when almost all of the events are heavily competed in and everyone is in fantastic shape.

Kevin missed the Beverley Boys award for diver of the meet by only one point. Jill and Kristin did an outstanding job in the Synchronized event and this will bode well for them for some provincial funding next season. Lauren did a great job on platform in one of the toughest and deepest fields of women I have seen in a long time. This will be good for us with both a girl and a boy in the Olympic Trials.

Kevin and I will be traveling to Victoria for Canada Cup on April 26th. Since it is an Olympic year this should be the toughest meet Kevin may have ever competed in. Kevin will carry on to Woodlands, Texas for the U.S. Grand Prix.

I feel that the lead up and development to the Championship was perfect and the trip to Banff to get everyone functioning together and maybe taking some of the stress off was the best thing we could have done. A couple of our athletes were not totally ready from a morale point of view and this trip seemed to bring them up to new levels. Early arrival at these kinds of championships is critical since there were lots of injuries and wipe outs by divers arriving late in the week. Lighting etc. in new pools can have a profound affect on divers at this level.

We decided to cancel the Saskatoon trip this coming weekend due to financial considerations and also that we have a number of events occurring this weekend.

Cam McLean is up for Manitoba Junior Athlete of the year which will be held on Friday night. I am up for Manitoba Professional High Performance coach of the year which is Saturday morning and the Sports Expo is all day Sunday at the Winnipeg Arena. Needless to say we have a very busy schedule.

Our junior athletes need to compete soon though so I am hoping that most will attend the Thunder Bay meet and the candidates for Junior Nationals will also travel to

Calgary as the final Level 1 qualifying opportunity. Thunder Bay is from May 7-9 and Alberta Provincials is from May 21-23. I am also looking at the International Invitational competition in Woodlands, Texas for our Olympic Trials athletes and possibly our Canada Games athletes at the end of May right before the Trials. This was one of the meets we identified as important in our Canada Games funding proposal, I think a high quality meet right before trials for Kevin and Lauren is critical in their preparation. Jayne and I are working at getting a lot of the coaching costs covered for this event. I am also meeting with Randy Anderson next week at the high performance institute in an effort to get some traveling money for our high performance athletes.

Learn to Dive

Our registration for this session of LTD looks better than expected. Last year we had 53 divers in this session and currently we have 64 registered and 21 of these are advanced which means that many of them should re register after 5 weeks. We also have some adult divers due to register. With luck we might get up to 90 divers for this session which would make it one of the best Spring sessions to date.

The summer program took a blow with a late announcement by the pool that swimming is holding their Nationals August 2-11. This runs right into our summer camps. Jayne is looking into the scheduling of the event to see if we can still get in for part of it. Otherwise we will try and move to Sergeant Park.

In regards to the mobile signs I think we should use them for the Summer program since our Spring program seemed to be doing well on it own. My feeling is that the beginning of May these signs should go up on both Grant and Taylor avenues. I don't want to do them early in case we get more snow. Its hard to pump summer programs if our signs are covered in snow. I am also looking into the costs of Boulevard signs which we can put up in strategic locations.

Grants

I am currently working on three grants which may come to fruition. Based on our performance at this past nationals we will get some high performance coaching support from National which is estimated at \$2500.00 - \$3200.00. Depending on how we do at the Grand Prix events and at Age Groups this number may rise slightly. Coaching has \$2000.00 in a special Initiative Grant that I put an application in for at the beginning of the year. The original proposal was in conjunction with a program that I though National was developing relating to Safety. Unfortunately National dropped their participation and to get this grant I need to come up with something creative. I am also applying for a grant to cover coaches travel (most of it anyway) for one or more of the meets coming up. I am also hoping to get about 50% of the coaches travel paid for at Age Groups in Victoria in the summer.

Misc.

Depending on the numbers that request to go to Thunder Bay we may not be able to take a bus. If we take Van(s) I will need to have some volunteer drivers. My experience is that this is a very long haul after 3 days on the deck and coming home can be very tough on the coaches. Hopefully we will have 20+ athletes and coaches which will make the bus feasible.

Summary:

From a competitive standpoint the club is healthy and we are producing some great athletes who are competitive at all levels of diving both Nationally and Internationally. We need to be very careful with our junior divers as they are not getting to many events and this will most likely serve to discourage them and we might find the registration of our pre competitive and competitive foundations group fall off next season. The trips and competitions are what these kids work for. While I am trying to cut back on club expenses by cutting down travel costs I am worried that we may cause more damage in the long run. During the competitive season Jan. – July athletes should ideally be competing once per month. Once I have the costs in for Thunder Bay I will look at how to pick up some of the coaches divided over the traveling athletes. I don't think this needs to be addressed at the board level and if it is feasible without too much change in the costs it should just be done.

Jayne has thrown our name out for any extra bingos available but she is concerned that we will have trouble staffing them. Linda, Dallas and I worked the extra one we got on Saturday since we couldn't get enough people. I think that our fundraising commitments should be looked at and or maybe the people who work these extra events over and above their commitments should receive a portion into a travel fund. It is a real danger if we opt into these extra bingos and cannot produce the workers, we only get one chance.

Coaching Manitoba recently suspended Athletics for two years working Coaching bingos due to no shows.

We should be promoting our Olympic Trial competitors as much as possible for the next few weeks leading up to the trials. This will be great exposure for both the club and diving.

Respectfully submitted, Jim Lambie (Head Coach)

The Faces of Nationals2004

