



# Off The Blocks

December  
2014

ROW NOT ONLY PRODUCES GREAT SWIMMERS, WE DEVELOP GREAT PEOPLE!

DIVE ON IN!

## A Note From Our Head Coach

by Mike Thompson

It's almost Christmas already! Wow time to wrap up an eventful 2014 and get ready for a 2015 that will involve the Pan Am Games coming to our province (tickets available [here](#)) and getting a year closer to World Championships being held in the Western Region in 2016. Both are great opportunities to see some world-class swimming and inspire our athletes. Very exciting things coming!

Right now, I couldn't be happier with our athletes. Stars wrapped up their first session with great success, TOP is looking fantastic and had a great ROW Series meet in November, Steel, Silver & Gold looked fantastic at the Steeltown meet in December and Bronze did very well in Guelph. We had a number of athletes have the experience of a lifetime in Australia at the International

Children's Games and ROW finished 3<sup>rd</sup> at Division 1 Ontario Team Championships. Things are going very well in the pool.

AJ mentioned to me, last week, how happy he was to see the Gold, Silver and Steel athletes so spirited and cheering so loud at the Steeltown meet and he really articulated what this team is largely about; athletes and support. I think it is very important to remember that what we do is about the athletes and the team as a whole. Being supportive of what is happening across the team is what makes sports great. Let's keep things positive and supportive across the board. A great job and a great example set by all of our athletes, whether they were at Steeltown, TAS, ICG or Team Champs; we are turning out to be the team that other teams wished they were.

Just a reminder that there are some schedule changes over the Christmas break; Please check your schedules.

On Behalf of the ROW coaching staff I want to wish everyone a Happy Holidays and great success in the coming New Year.

Let's Go ROW!

Mike Thompson

Head Coach

ROW/WLU Swimming

# A Word From Our President

The ROW AGM was held Thursday November 27 in the Hawks Lounge. Glad to see so many of our members coming out to the meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to provide a brief outline of the agenda that was covered for those who were unable to attend.

Coach Mike had invited a guest speaker to share her extensive experiences as an involved swim parent. This was followed by Coach Mike's presentation which spoke of his vision for the club and the long term athlete development program (LTAD). Here is a link to his presentation.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/ll6adzdu8rmlnim/ROW%202014%20AGM%20LTAD%20presentation.ppt?!=0J>

Club financials were discussed. Presently, we are in the strongest financial position that we have been in the last 5 years. A small surplus was realized at the completion of the 2013/14 season as stated by our Treasurer, Murray McKay, in his report. Murray predicts a small deficit at the end of this swim season; however, we are constantly assessing our budget. We have plans in place to help improve this outcome and can easily turn that deficit into a surplus.

We discussed our membership numbers. Our membership numbers have dropped this year by about 10 swimmers as compared to last year. However, we have our recruiting efforts in place and are determined to increase our membership. One of the positive changes this year has been the amount of media exposure that we have received thus far. We have been in the news several times and are expecting to continue to be. This increased exposure will attract people to our club.

A motion was put forward by a member asking that the Board review the current contractual relationship with Wilfred Laurier University (WLU) and the Region of Waterloo Swim Club (ROW), with a specific focus as to the

time commitments of the ROW Head Coach, in support of the Laurier team.

Firstly, the Board would like to recognize the member for bringing a concern forward, and proposing a possible way to address their concerns. As members of the Board of Directors, we recognize that we represent the members of the club, and take requests like this quite seriously.

As it relates to the Head Coach requirements to support the Laurier team, we would like to clarify some aspects of our agreement.

1/ The agreement between ROW and WLU has been in place for several years.

2/ The agreement is specifically between ROW and WLU, as such, when ROW hires a coach, the coach is obligated to support the agreement.

3/ While ROW does receive some financial "relief" by enabling the Head Coach to also coach WLU swimmers, this is not the main driver of the agreement.

4/ ROW also receives many other concessions that enable the team to access sufficient pool time, receive priority positions when pool time is allocated, and other such things.

5/ By having an arrangement such as this, it can be a strong enticement for a Head Coach, that other clubs are not able to offer.

6/ Many of the WLU swimmers are also ROW swimmers.

That being said, the Board will continue to follow the motion set forth when we next negotiate the contract between ROW and WLU. All aspects of our contract will be considered and we will negotiate the best possible terms that ensure we achieve our objectives to be a nationally recognized team.

There was a vote to determine the board members officiated by Darcy Drummond, Sports and Recreational Coordinator for the City of Waterloo. I

would like to introduce our new Board of Directors.

Alex Berton President

Heather Stone Secretary and Vice President

Brian Elliot Treasurer

Lynda Wormald Membership/Retention

Dave Freisen Communications

John Hayward Fundraising

Yvonne Goodwin Director at Large

Chris Bender Swimmer Services and Recruitment

Tina Lorentz Sponsorship

Tracy Bennett Past President

We are in the process of updating the website with this new information. We are also going to provide a brief description of each role.

I would also like to thank the outgoing members of our board, Doug Mackenzie, Murray McKay, Trina Fauteux and Doug Dawdy. Your hard work and commitment to the club has been invaluable and I hope that we can still call upon you for assistance.

I would like to remind membership that we are constantly looking for volunteers to assist throughout the year. There are many jobs that need to be done running a swim club, and many hands make light work. Please consider helping out in any way you can.

I am very excited about the future of the club, the vision that Coach Mike has brought forward and our new board of directors. We have all the pieces in place and are working together making strides to be a nationally recognized team. Let's go have a great rest of season. GO ROW!!!!

Have a safe and happy holiday season,

Alex Berton

# Gold & Silver Report

By: Brian Lindsay

Congratulations to the following swimmers on achieving 90% attendance for the month of November, 2014;

## Gold

Aidan Elliot, Amy Hayward, Chloe Hughes, Emily Masters, and Sarah Shearer.

## Silver

Alina Armbruster, Tyler Bell, Matthew Berton, Hannah Cressman, Emma Darrigan, Thinula De Silva, Ian Friesen, Andrew Kuiper, Kelton Langman, Andres Paz, Prewitte, Ranasinghe, Sophie Richard, Jose Santoya-Orozco, Kieran Stone, Mannat Sukhija, Luka Tomic, and Avery Willis.

When registering in the fall, parents and swimmers become part of the ROW family. Being part of a successful family, means everyone has to chip in, be dependable for one another and be loyal to each other. Dependability and loyalty, what is the difference and how important are they to the success of our team, in and out of the water?

Dependability - is doing what one says he/she will do - keeping commitments and being reliable

Loyalty - is being dependable and implies support, service and contribution to the Team or organization to which loyalty is given.

In team sports both dependability and loyalty are two ingredients that will advance the individual as well as the Team.

As a coach, why do I feel that loyalty and dependability are two key ingredients to a successful team and all of its members?

First of all - dependability - Can I depend on a swimmer to be present at every practice and meet, prepared to give their best effort and performance to achieve their goals? The traits demonstrated by a dependable swimmer will lead them to success, not only in swimming, but in school, and later on as they move into the business world.

Loyal swimmers are those who are committed to improving themselves and achieving their goals, while also assisting in the progress of their team-mates through encouragement, offering words of wisdom and advice in order to achieve the Team's goals. These people become Team Leaders and will become successful in life and business. These are life skills learned from the sport of swimming that don't often get reinforced in other aspects of swimmers lives. A sense of "me" often permeates a team because of conflicts within the organization, the coaching staff or other outside influences. When this happens it often leaves a mark on the organization and the individual swimmer. Swimmers who decide that loyalty to their team takes a back seat to their own individual wishes and desires will soon find themselves on the outside looking in. They become a liability to the team and not a very dependable team player. A team is only as strong as its weakest link. Swimmers who are dependable and loyal, and encourage each other to do their best, are truly an asset to any team.

Finally, I want to reflect on the recent success of our swimmers at

meets in Barrie and London and on the improvement of all swimmers. Winning is not the criterion of success. It is the striving to win or to do your best. Parents, please continue to support coaches efforts to encourage our swimmers to face their fears and challenges. It is the process, not the product, that stimulates growth. Swimmers, it is important not to focus on the time that you achieved but on the effort that you put into achieving that time. So how can swimmers improve their swimming skills and technique and win in swimming? Following these five guidelines, I believe, will help all our swimmers become winners in the pool and in life:

- 1) improve your effort
- 2) improve your health (getting adequate sleep and rest and eating and drinking proper amounts)
- 3) improve your fitness (doing exercises - flexibility and strength training at home)
- 4) improve your technique on a daily basis in all your strokes
- 5) improve your times (bringing the right attitude to the pool on race day)

Following these five guidelines will help increase the net worth of the swimmer and help their confidence grow. As their confidence grows, so does their chance of success and winning in the pool!

On behalf of my family I hope everyone has a safe and joyous Christmas Holiday season with family and friends.

Brian

# Steel, TOPS & Stars

Hello ROW Families,

We have had a fantastic start to the season and I look forward to creating more great memories. With Christmas break fast approaching I have a couple notes for Steel, TOPs, and Stars groups:

## Steel:

Quick reminder that we have our last meet before the break this Saturday, December 20<sup>th</sup>. Unless explicitly told otherwise, your child has been entered in the meet. I hope to see them all there as it is a great final opportunity to race before the new year! That being said following the meet the group will be on break until December 28<sup>th</sup> in which we will begin "Christmas Training". This is a great opportunity for swimmers to make huge improvements as we will cover more distance and quality in far less time. Following Christmas break we will be jumping right into our first meet January 9<sup>th</sup>-January 11<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to be scratched from this meet please let us know asap, as scratching the day of meet looks bad upon both our club and our group.

## TOPs:

With some hard work and organization the TOPs swimmers are looking fantastic! Through a combination of listening and perseverance many swimmers are

making huge improvements. The last practice prior to Christmas break is December 20<sup>th</sup> and we will start up again on the week of January 5<sup>th</sup>. For those of you that we have spoken to about changing groups, this will also occur on the week of January 5<sup>th</sup> which should allow you to enjoy the holidays.

## Stars:

I have heard a lot of great feedback from the stars coaches about the abilities of our litter swimmers. We see a bright swimming career ahead of them and look forward to the beginning of a new session of the week of January 5<sup>th</sup>. Pay attention to the schedule online as there may be a slight change in the new session in order to provide them with more space and resources. If we have spoken to your family about moving up and you have not yet responded please let us know where you stand on the topic. For the families that have accepted this move, the change will take place on the week of January 5<sup>th</sup>. Enjoy your Christmas holidays.

Thanks to all ROW families for making me feel welcome during my first couple months with the club. Developing relationships is the hardest part of joining a new club and appreciate every "Hello", "Hey" and "Goodbye" that comes my way.

Just keep swimming,

## IMPORTANT DATES

**Dec 20**, Santa Sprint Meet @ WLU  
**Dec 22**, Entry Deadline for Ontario Launch into LC  
**Dec 22-27**, No Training  
**Jan 9-11**, Ontario Launch into LC  
**Jan 16-18**, U of T Meet  
**Jan 17/18**, ROW Winter Invitational  
**Jan 24**, Evening in Brantford

## SWIMMERS OF THE MONTH

**Senior 1:** Jenny Zhang  
**Senior 2:** Teddy Koelev  
**Athletic Swim:** Kate Fitzpatrick  
**Steel:** Jack Cui  
**Gold:** Chloe Hughes  
**Silver:** Sophie Richards  
**Bronze:** Alex Rus  
**TOP 1:** Alan Stas  
**TOP 2:** Anastasija Kovacevic  
**Stars:** Zoe Tracy-Bacon

## ROW BIRTHDAYS

Lukas Wormwald  
Andrew Kuiper  
Hannah Gallagher  
John Fauteux  
Madison Friesen  
Charlotte Reid  
Jack Cui  
Cameron Maclachlan  
Braeden Redlich-Stowe  
Mackenzie Leu  
Erik Lungulescu  
Claire Lorentz  
Anastasija Kovacevic  
Tyler Bell  
Katherine Kowalczyk  
Broedan Marnier

# Bronze & Athletic Swim

by Kaitlyn Mains

Hello parents and swimmers,

Is it really Christmas already? I cannot believe it! I have had so much fun working with both groups that the time has flown by.

As many of my bronze parents may have noticed we still spend the majority of our practices reviewing and practicing technique, but we have also begun to introduce sprinting to the program. The goal is to focus on one specific skill during the practice, and then try and maintain the correction during sprints! Please encourage your athletes to take the time to slow down during the drill and technical area of the practice, and save the racing for the sprints.

At the time this article is published Bronze has competed in two swim meets, and its been so exciting to see the changes between those two meets. I have seen massive drops in times, huge improvements in technique, and a massive increase in confidence, and that's over only two meets. I cannot wait to see what the new year brings. Congratulations to Bronze's newest regional qualifier Filip Ardelean.

I'd like to take a moment to quickly discuss attendance, and illness. We have hit flu and cold season, and with it comes fevers, coughs, and runny noses. If your athlete has a persistent cough, or fever please keep them home until they are well. I'd rather see my athletes get well quickly, then have a slow recovery and make their teammate ill. If this is the case and your athlete will be missing practice please send me a quick email so I am kept in the loop.

As many of you are aware I am currently awaiting the arrival of my second son. I will be off between December 21<sup>st</sup> and January 5<sup>th</sup>. During the Christmas break bronze will be swimming with the Steel group under coach AJ. The bronze group has had the opportunity to meet AJ on a few occasions. I will still be available via email over the break but if you have any questions about the practices over the break I encourage you to email coach AJ.

Please remember the bronze will be off from December 22<sup>nd</sup>-December 27<sup>th</sup>. The Christmas training schedule can be found [here](#). Athletic Swim will be off from December 21<sup>st</sup> to January 5<sup>th</sup>.

As usual if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to email me or track me down following practice!

Have a safe and happy holidays,

Kaitlyn