

Hello,

I would like to welcome everyone to the 2019-2020 season and our AGM.

This past season 2018-2019 was my fourth year on the board and my second year as president of the club. I was very lucky to be part of the board of executives of 10 members which included parents of both provincial and national stream athletes and a former national stream athlete who is now part of Dollard's masters team.

I would like to take a minute to introduce our board and thank them for their implication:

Annick Samure; Vice President and National stream travel

Brigitte DesRosiers: Treasurer and registrar

Julie Cote: Secretary

Donna Chapman: Provincial Travel

Micheline C: national stream Travel

Guy Lalonde

Lorie

Melanie : Meet manager and event planning

Dominic Lefevre: event planning and meet food coordinator

Johanne: meet Food coordinator

Throughout my time on the board I have seen a very positive transformation in the club...a club that is striving to create a place for all kids at all levels...an environment that strives to create an environment to succeed at an athletic level but also an environment that is conducive to helping kids become strong confident, healthy young adults.

To give a little background information on the structure of the club. We have a head coach which oversees all the activities of the club. Our head coach is Laura Swift.

We are extremely lucky to have Laura as our head coach as she has a vision of excellence for our athletes and our club, but also strives to ensure a positive and fun environment for all our athletes at all levels. When I say excellence, I am not just talking about athletic performance, I am also talking about how Laura strives to ensure that our children learn important life lessons and skills through sport.

Laura took over the position of head coach in 2014. In 2014, our club was struggling, we barely had enough athletes to fill both provincial and National stream teams. I believe around this time (2014), we only had 16 athletes in the National stream...we did not even have enough athletes to make up a Junior team. This year we have 32 National Stream athletes and enough athletes to fill completely 2 Junior teams. I have watched Laura work tirelessly to build our club. She has devoted endless amount of hours to our athletes, to parents and to both the Provincial and National federations and teams. She has worked to find coaches and hire coaches that have the same passion as she does for Synchro and the athletes. All of this work and dedication has led to parents and athletes having confidence in our club and coming from all over the country near and far to come and swim at Dollard. I think the growth of our club over the last 5 years is a huge accomplishment and I think we should take a moment to congratulate Laura on this.

Laura is also the head Coach of the National Stream. She works very closely with our Head of Provincial Stream Coach, Christiane Callery and I think she would agree that, the club runs as well as it does because of their close collaboration and teamwork.

Christiane has been extremely instrumental in re building our provincial Stream. The provincial stream is extremely important in the club as it is our athletes first initiation to the sport of artistic swimming...Christiane has worked hard creates a wonderful environment for kids to

explore the sport, have fun and make friends. The provincial stream is the base of the club, it develops our athletes and creates the stepping stone for the national stream . Without our base there is no National stream. But also just as important, the Provincial stream is also an amazing place for kids that love the sport of artistic swimming and want to compete and have fun and learn but do not wish to go to the National level. She works endless hours and tirelessly throughout the summer months (and the season) recruiting new athletes to our club. So thank you Christiane for so generously sharing your passion and love of the sport and your time and energy you give to re build our provincial stream. Again, if we look back to 2014, the Provincial stream had 20-13 athletes, and this year we have 76 athletes registered in the provincial stream..congratulations Christiane!

During the 2018-2019 season we had many athletic successes at all levels...both the provincial and National Streams. Several athletes were placed on National and provincial team. I will let Laura and Christiane elaborate on the 2018-2019 season. However, as a president, how I saw success, was not measured in medals and podiums, it was in the smiles I saw on the athletes and coaches faces, it was in the messages I received from parents and in the high number of athletes we have returning to our club!

I would however like to mention that:

1. At the provincial level, Dollard Synchro won Club of the Year
2. At the National level, Katie Macleod won 13-15 yrs Coach of the year and Laura Swift won Junior coach of the year
3. Laura Swift was named to coach the 2018 13-15 yrs National Team, Coach to Canada Games Junior Team (once every 4 years), coach to Quebec Junior Team for UANA

In the 2018-2019 season, Dollard Synchro was selected to host the Figure Competition of the National Stream and the Figure Competition of Provincial Stream div west Quebec. These competitions were held together over the same weekend. We were successfully able to run this competition due to all the wonderful parent volunteers. I would like to say a special thank you to Melanie, our meet manager and to Dominic and Johanne uncharge of hospitality for the meet.

We had a 99% of our families fulfilling their volunteer responsibilities. AMAZING and thank you!

Natation Artistique Quebec was extremely happy with how this competition ran and we received very positive feedback. Again this event could not have been a success without the your dedication and involvement.

This year, Natation Artistique Quebec, has selected Dollard Synchro to host this figure competition - both National and Provincial streams again this November. And possibly the Masters Provincials in April. Although we realize by accepting to host a competition of this caliber, it does require parent involvement, but I would like to explain why we choose to take on these competitions. By hosting a completion at our pool, it helps to decrease our fees as our athletes do not need to pay to go to a a competition, ...no transportation fees, no hotel costs etc and this all directly translates to fees that parents save. We also receive a grant from Natation Artistique Quebec for hosting this and any other competition ( although we never know the exact amount before hand...but it can be significant). Any money we receives goes directly back into the club and directly to the athletes.

This year the Board of Directors worked very hard to help support our coaches and the club on many different levels.

Our board works very hard to keep costs as low as possible....i would like to point out the financial support for all our members is always at the forefront of decisions made by the board and we try to reduce cost at every opportunity possible.

1. This Year, the board worked very hard to update our Chaperone Policy. There is now verifications and background checks for all potential chaperones. We as a board, felt it important to do our best and put in place rules to ensure background checks by the appropriate authorities, are completed on all chaperones, ignorer to ensure the safety of our athletes as much that is in our control.
2. The Parent Handbook underwent and extensive review and update. The New Parent Handbook is currently posted on our website. It is currently only available in English but we are working very hard on translating it to French. The French version will be made available on the website as soon as it is completed. Please note, each team will have a coaches meeting, and it would be extremely helpful if you could read this before your meeting. If you have already had this meeting, please refer to the handbook for extra information about the club.
3. Board members were responsible for all organizational requirements in order to host a competition to the required standards of Natation Artistique Quebec.
4. Board members were responsible for organizing our wonderful holiday and year end shows and our amazing closing Banquet...best one I have seen!
5. We have board members who work closely with our 2 head coaches on all aspects of travel related to competitions.
6. Board members are responsible for club registrations, and finances
7. New Uniforms : This year we will have new and updated uniforms
8. This time last year, we were in a very precarious position, with the threat of losing PDS pool and hours/pool space at civic center. I worked very hard with the City of Dollard Des Ormeaux, Departement of Sports and Leisure and the Aquatic Center - meetings and telephone conversations, to explain the needs of our growing club and to learn how the city can support us and also their limitations. In the end, we have increased hours and support from the city and aquatic centre. We have acquired increased pool space and time both at the Civic Center and at PDS. This past season, we have very much improved relations and communications with the city and the aquatic center. I think this is the first year we have had such good cooperation from all parties involved and I am super pleased about this.

This past season, we did not have a board member responsible for fundraising. In the past, we dedicated a lot of time to these activities but we had very low athlete participation. However if parents within teams want to do different fundraising activities, they are welcome to take that on, however we will just ask that the activity be approved by the board in the end. Any money raised will go directly to that team/or athletes that participated in the fundraising....can raise money for suits etc.

It is possible, with a new board, that a member may take on this function.

We will also be looking for a board member or just a parent member ( if you do not want to be on the board) to take over the responsibilities of Website.

I would like to take a moment to explain the roles of both the Aquatic Center and the City of DDO. They work hand and hand to be able to help us to be able to run our club. I think it is important to understand that the city works hard to provide us with pool space ( although we would always like more..), they do have to take into consideration other clubs and the aquatic activities it provides for its citizens and the taxpayer. It must think and cater to the tax paying citizens of DDO and ensure that everyone has access to the aquatic centre...fine balance between elite clubs/sports and the citizens. Pool maintenance - pool maintenance ie water

temperature, clarity, change room cleanliness etc is the responsibility of the Aquatic Center and Dollard Synchro does not have control over this. However, we work much closer with the administration to have improved communication and resolutions of problems and issues. PDS is the responsibility of the Commission Scolaire...which rents its pool to the city of DDO. Again, when there are issues ( as in the beginning of 2018 and this year), the Aquatic centre and the city have to go through the commission scolaire to fix them...it can be a longer process but I am working with the aquatic management and the city to improve how these situations can be dealt with.

I would really like to thank all of those who have taken the time to be a member of the board... for their contributions of an enormous amount of time and dedication . I feel the place of the board is to do everything possible to support our coaches to create the best possible club. I would really like to encourage all parents to become involved whether it be at the board level or in any other capacity. The more people we have contributing, the less work for everyone. This is a wonderful place or our kids to grow and develop....i am passionate about what sport can give to our kids..it teaches so many life lessons...lessons in sport that transfer into their everyday lives...perseverence ,success, failure, dedication, communication skills, how to live a healthy lifestyle...In order to support this environment, we need parents to be involved..no experience necessary...english or French.!