

EOGC Report for AGM (Annual General Meeting) 2023

Dated 24th November 2023

Membership

The membership continues to be healthy at an average of 960 paying and attending members per month. Additional to these figures are the 'drop in' participants who attend the twice weekly Baby Gym classes, and the new Adult Open Gym session.

We still have a high demand for the Girls recreational classes and the waiting list time for these sessions is at least a year, if not much longer. We have increased the maximum number in some of the classes where we have the staff to support this, however space in the small gym and time on apparatus is a major factor, along with an unwillingness to compromise on the quality of session delivery.

There are spaces in the Pre-School sessions, however inevitably some class times are more popular than others, resulting in spaces in some sessions and waiting lists for others.

We are no longer running 'Freestyle Gymnastics' classes.

The staff are currently challenged with the annual and unenviable task of trying to ensure all our members have renewed or joined the British Gymnastics membership and insurance scheme.

Communications

The squad Termly Progress Charts were released in June for the first half of the year, with the latter half due to go out in December.

We have an almost complete date sheet for 2024! We are just awaiting confirmations of dates and venues, and this will be released to members as soon as it is available.

Workforce

We currently have 35 paid members of staff.

The Head Girls Coach is Amy Finch, supported by Elicia Down, Yvonne Budd, Maddy Cull, Annabel Hall, Caitlin Greenstreet, Connie Hurrell, Verity Tapp, Jane Lewis, Rachel Genders, and Kelly Gill. Also, by Carly Cox and Rochelle Hamilton-Kendall when they are on leave from university.

The role of Head Boys Coach will be taken over by Karen Brewer as Francisco is returning to his home country. Supported by Ben Stone, Victor Yeo, Lucas Richardson, Paul Trevelyan, Brandon-Lee Rivers, Jake Perry, and Ka 'Mari-Starr Lock.

The Head Recreational Girls Coach is Suzanne Finch, supported by; Verity Tapp, Jemma Rivers, Adam Hayes, Hayley Hayes, Lucy House, Max Davies, Eliza Kekwick, Sophie Robshaw, Ella Rivers, and Ava Hawton.

The Head Recreational Boys Coach is Adam Hayes supported by Lauren Brady, Jemma Rivers, and Jake Tapp.

The Head Pre-School Coach is Elicia Down, supported by; Tanya Trafford, Emma Hutton, Jemma Rivers, and Ella-Louise Rivers.

Adult Gym is currently coached by Adam Hayes and Hayley Hayes.

The Welfare Officer is Jemma Rivers, and we are looking to add another person to this role.

We also have two University students helping this year: Annabel Hall and Max Davies.

This year we had to say goodbye to some staff members with the usual migrations to university and other career development opportunities – Francisco Azra, Maya Inman-Meron, Charlie Brooking, Niamh Fletcher, Leo Kirby, and Will Acheson. All will be sadly missed but we wish them the best in their future endeavours.

With limited opportunity for coaches to attend coaching courses, we are pleased that the following staff have successfully passed their coaching and judging exams.

Emma Hutton – Attended a WAG (Women’s Artistic Gymnastics) Level 1 Course and awaiting an exam.

Victor Yeo – Attending a MAG (Men’s Artistic Gymnastics) Level 1 Course in November.

Amy Finch – Studying for a WAG Level 4 exam.

Victor Yeo – MAG National Judging Award

Caitlin Greenstreet – WAG Club Judging Award

All coaches over 16 have successfully passed their online Safeguarding Refresher Course and all staff have valid BG Membership and Enhanced DBS’.

Gymnastics Performance

MAG (Men's Artistic Gymnastics) Squad

FA - 2023 was a great year for our boys’ program. We started the year with nine of our athletes selected for the Southwest team, namely Lucian, Max, Shay, Alex, Kosei, Ka'mari-Starr, Brandon-Lee, Lucas, and Jake. Throughout the year our athletes attended six Southwest training days alongside the region's best athletes in each age group.

In February, Kosei participated for the first time in the English Championships which was a great experience with him managing to place 18th among all gymnasts his age in England.

In March, our athletes participated in the Southwest Festival in which we obtained great results in the all-around and apparatus in all the different age groups. Still in March, Kosei competed for the first time at the British Championship, once again taking our club up among the best in Britain.

In May, Lucian, Shay, Max, Brandon, Lucas, Jake, Alex, and Kosei competed in the prestigious London Open competition in which Brandon took an incredible first place overall followed by Lucas in third place and Jake in fifth place. Our athletes also won several medals in the apparatus competition.

In August we had our Summer Camp where our athletes of all ages had a great week training together and learning many new elements. On the last day of camp, we had a great day at the beach together with the girls’ teams.

In September our boys competed in the Southwest Grades and the results were incredible. Leon Blondel took first place in the under-age category followed by Rafa in second place. On the level 1 Max was third and in level 3 Alex Tapp was fourth. At level 5, Kosei took first place overall. With these results, all our boys earned their spots on the Southwest Squad for next year and Kosei, Alex and Max got a spot to compete at the National Finals.

In October, at the National Finals, Alex won first place in teams along with his fellow Southwest athletes and Kosei became the Level 5 Club National Champion.

In November, our youngest athletes competed at the Devon Championships, once again bringing great results back to Exeter. In the Under 8 category Rafa was overall champion, followed by Leon in second place. In the Under 10 category Max was overall champion. Our Under 8 level 6 team consisting of Sunny, Archie, Reuben and Calyan placed third bringing home the bronze medal. Our County Boys squad made up of Hugo, Jonah, Elliott and Josh also competed and represented our club well. Still in November, our senior boys competed at the Horizon Cup international competition in Greece, once again achieving great results such as first place in the team and several other medals in the individual all-around and apparatus.

In December, head coach Francisco Azra is leaving, and we will have coach Karen Brewer taking over the boy’s program. Karen is a coach with extensive experience in gymnastics and we are excited to have her on board. 2024 has everything set to be another great year.

WAG (Women's Artistic Gymnastics) Squad

AF – Our aims for this year were to slowly start to rebuild the squad numbers and increase competition confidence, which we are starting to see in the competition environment, particularly amongst the younger girls.

We have welcomed Rachel and Kelly into our coaching team, former gymnasts now parents who contribute one day a week to support the system.

For the first time, we took a team of girls to the Horizon Cup competition in Thessaloniki, Greece. The girls thoroughly enjoyed their experience, and we hope to keep this tradition going for many years to come.

Special mentions go to Erin and Betsie who attended Devon Squad this year. Also, to Scarlett who was crowned Regional Champion, and Betsie and Lissie who were both Devon Champion in their respective categories.

Pre-Squad

AF - There are currently eight gymnasts on the girl's side of pre-squad born in 2018.

Throughout the year, there has been lots of improvement and progression, with lots of new skills achieved, and the dedication and passion for the sport. All seven gymnasts competed in their first ever competition at the Halloween Spooktacular at Falcons Gymnastics Academy. The girls performed brilliantly and enjoyed their first competitive experience. We are very excited to see these gymnasts move forward in the future.

We will be trialling the next age band of pre squad gymnasts at the end of the year, ready to start in January 2023. This is for girls born in 2019. This is an exciting time to see what talent we have and to find the next generation of gymnasts.

FA - Our pre-squad group continues to select new athletes and provide the opportunity to enter competitive gymnastics for our recreation children. Every year 5 boys from recreation begin their journey in competitive gymnastics.

Pre-School

ED- Within parent and toddler sessions, parents are still engaged and involved in the class, creating a more positive and productive environment. We are still maintaining the structured warm up and take the children around a circuit, which allows coaches to build rapport with the children.

We are changing the circuit every month which allows the children to learn new skills and have at least 4 sessions of repetition and consistency to achieve these skills.

Throughout half terms we still have "air track week". This has really benefitted the children and the whole family enjoy these sessions and look forward to it! These sessions are also lovely for the coaches as it helps build different relationships with the children - coaches play with the children more throughout this week rather than doing the usual 'circuits'.

Throughout the 'gym tots' class, they work towards a specific badge, whereby each badge is a different fundamental skill in gymnastics. The 'Exeter Gymnastics Club' certificates and badges have been a great addition to the sessions, and all have benefitted from this. We have recently made a real emphasis on these certificates and children are excited to tell their parents/ guardians about their sessions! We're also giving out a 'bring a friend to gym tots' voucher to all 'gym tots' members to try and increase the membership numbers in this department.

Soon we'll be advertising the Exeter gym club pre-school t shirt to be bought at the club. We've noticed recently there isn't much of uniform within the classes due to parents having to buy the kit online. Therefore, we'll be trialling the T-shirts soon to see if more members buy it, which will also be a bonus in advertising the club outside in the public.

Recreational

SF- We have had a very settled team on the recreational side for some time now, with a crossover of staff between the girls, boys, mixed and advanced sessions. This has resulted in a very consistent coaching level and experience for the participants throughout all classes.

The same team will be delivering sessions to groups of 40 plus children, visiting from schools in Morchard Bishop, Tedburn St Mary, Otterton, Cheriton Bishop and St Leonards for two weeks in November and December.

The Club Competition, Exeter Challenge and English Riviera Competitions continue to be on the curriculum each year, providing competition opportunities for the recreational children.

Adult Gym

SF- Following requests from the regular members of our Adult Gymnastics class, we have added an Adult Open Gym session on Friday evenings to the timetable. These sessions are not structured but are supervised by a qualified coach, currently Adam Hayes, and are being used both as a stand-alone class and to complement the weekly coach led sessions.

Improver Courses, Badge Testing, and Camps

AF – The Improver Courses and Badge Testing session run every half term and are always fully booked averaging at around 40 children per day for Improver Courses and 90 participants for Badge Testing. We continue to run the 'Exeter Gymnastics Club Badges' which allows the children to be tested on elements more specific to what they learn with us in the classes.

The Easter and Summer Camps for the competitive squads were great fun, with lots of new skills being achieved. We celebrated the end of the Summer Camp with a 'Beach Day' at Exmouth, and it was so great to see so many of you attending.

Premises

SF – Major Improvements were made to the premises this year with the fitting of the new windows to the small gym. This project has made a substantial contribution already to the comfort levels of operating in the small gym during the summer months with the use of functioning windows, and we hope the same benefits will be felt over the winter with the additional insulation of the double-glazed windows which should also impact on the running costs of the premises. The new windows have of course also greatly enhanced the appearance of the premises.

The faulty small gym floor has been replaced by the manufacturers, and we have had no issues with the replacement.

The stairway and upper landing carpets have also been replaced with anti-slip hard flooring in the last month.

Miscellaneous

As always, we welcome any ideas and volunteers to help support us in the organising and running of fundraising events, so please let us know if this is something you would be interested in!

We continue to regularly hire out to the Exeter Starlites Cheerleaders and Exeter University Gymnastics Society. We have also resumed our sessions on Mondays and Fridays with The Maynard School this term, and the girls are really enjoying their time with us.

The tuck shop continues to operate on the days were there are volunteers to open. We encourage all parents/guardians to help where they can. A big thank you to Jemma and Lola for their time and efforts into keeping the tuck shop going.