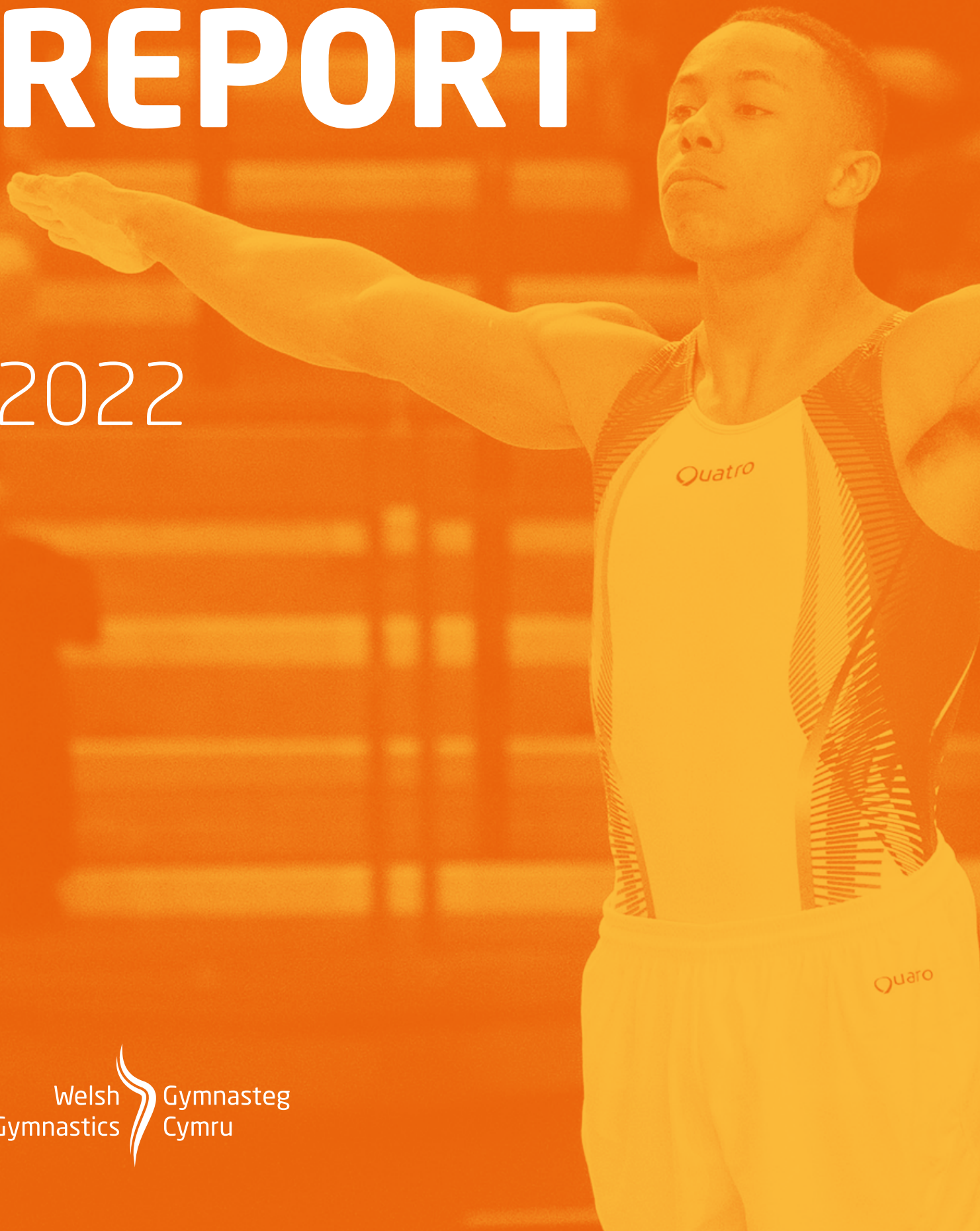


ANNUAL REPORT

2022



Our Vision

Creating great communities and champions through gymnastics.

Our Mission

Wales to be recognised as a leading gymnastics nation producing world class champions and creating vibrant, inclusive communities where every gymnast has a high quality experience.

Our Purpose

Welsh Gymnastics' purpose is to lead, develop, support and be the guardian of the sport in Wales.

Welsh Gymnastics cannot deliver its strategy and ambitions without the support of partners, funders, local and national government, leisure providers, volunteers, businesses and communities.

All have a role to play in ensuring the future sustainability, growth and success of the sport.

Facilities, great events and competitions, a strong and agile workforce and well governed clubs are essential. WG will also ensure that all its work will be delivered with effective governance and finance and with its values at the core.

This Annual Report covers the period from the end of 2019 up to the start of June 2022 with publication interrupted – along with our sport in general – throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This report takes us back through the past couple of years, from just before the pandemic struck, how the community then adapted and pulled together through some of the most testing times, to having emerged from it and now looking forward with excitement.



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Chair's Foreword

A lot has happened since our last report in 2019 with publication, much like our sport in general, heavily interrupted due to the pandemic. Firstly, I feel privileged to have been appointed as Chair of Welsh Gymnastics in January 2020.

I would like to pay particular tribute to my predecessor Helen Phillips MBE, who dedicated over 17 years to our organisation. She was an excellent leader and her work ethic was exemplary. Helen is, indeed, a very hard act to follow.

Just two months into my appointment the COVID-19 pandemic struck and the intervening years have been extremely challenging and often overwhelming. Most of our Board meetings were held virtually, and new non-executive directors and staff members were appointed virtually too.

My thoughts are with those who have suffered loss and isolation from family and friends. Despite the difficulties, it has been testament to human spirit and resilience that everyone has adapted and persevered, while the importance of community came to the fore.

I would like to recognise all my non-executive colleagues who have served on the Board, both past and present. First to those whose tenure has ended in the last two years; a heartfelt thanks for the talents and contributions of Andrew Morris, Barbara Beedham, Sally Church and Tracey Singlehurst-Ward. Our current Board has a collective wealth of experience; in gymnastics, legal & governance, project management, executive coaching, education, local government and audit and finance – which are utilised to support and advise the executive team and champion the work of our organisation.

Sincere thanks are extended to Lisa Gannon, Chris McLarnon, Dean Williams, Mark Petherick, Melissa Anderson and Tomos Lewis for devoting their time, expertise and high energy to the work of the Board, giving strategic direction, setting overall policy and evaluating performance against agreed targets. We held a very productive strategy day in January 2021, facilitated by experts in cultural change. Two noteworthy outcomes were recognised; our Board understands what is possible through respecting and valuing individuals based on their abilities and we are committed to actively championing equality, diversity and inclusion.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to all our staff, who have worked tirelessly through these challenging times to engage our gymnastics clubs and communities in a variety of ways, giving practical support and making use of the Zoom and Teams platforms. They have worked with dedication and I consider our future to be incredibly bright in their hands.

In December 2021 we said goodbye to our CEO Michelle Fulford, while our interim CEO Siwan Davies has done an excellent job of steering our organisation in the meantime.

In July this year, we will welcome our new CEO, **Vicky Ward**.

This summer, our best artistic and rhythmic gymnasts will be representing Team Wales at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. The pandemic has had a significant impact on preparation for the Games but, over the last six months, we have seen some of our domestic and international competitions resume. We wish all our gymnasts, coaches and officials the very best of luck.

And finally, we continue to work closely with our partners; Sport Wales, British Gymnastics, the Welsh Sports Association and Welsh Government. We are grateful for the support we have received and we recognise that continued success for our clubs, coaches, gymnasts and volunteers in each of our disciplines can only be achieved by working together.



Bev. Smith.

Bev Smith
Chair, Welsh Gymnastics

Chief Executive's Report

The past two years have been unprecedented within my time at Welsh Gymnastics. Gymnastics means so much to so many people in Wales and I know for many of us, the past two years have been extremely challenging emotionally, physically and financially.

Thank you

I am immensely proud to be part of the community in Wales. I would like to celebrate our amazing community members who went above and beyond throughout the pandemic, not just in gymnastics, but with roles in the NHS and as key workers. I was amazed at how the community came together in its hour of need and looked after one another. I would also like to remember those within the community that we sadly lost and send best wishes to those who may have lost loved ones.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the following partners for their support.

Sport Wales provided invaluable funding support which was unlike any other Home Nation. Sessions were held weekly to hear our needs and act upon them, elite gymnasts and indoor activity would not have returned safely when it did without them.

Meanwhile the Welsh Sports Association provided guidance and worked closely with Welsh Government in influencing policy and guidelines for the sport sector.

Also thank you to the Step Forward team across the gymnastics Home Nations for creating countless resources and guidance specific to gymnastics environments to ensure activity, education and competition could return as quickly and safely as possible.

Finally, the Welsh Gymnastics (WG) team who came together to ensure that our sport would still inspire children across Wales and provide opportunities for all. The team more recently delivered a Ukraine Fundraiser to support children and the gymnastics community affected by the war in Ukraine.

Where are we now?

As with all clubs, the WG financial picture changed overnight.

The pandemic significantly reduced income due to usual services being unable to run. Membership reduced and services closed. WG significantly reduced expenditure in order to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the organisation.

Our plight became directing finance to clubs to ensure gymnastics would exist following the pandemic. The amount of grants and funding amassed to over £1.5 million.

With face-to-face services on hold, WG delivered services online and, although some may have been more successful than others, the sense of community remained. The time also allowed WG to reflect and commit to projects in Digital Transformation, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion and Gymnastics as One which you will read more about in the coming pages.

Gymnastics has now welcomed back over 90 per cent of the children and young people and demand for the sport grows daily.

However WG are aware that challenges lie ahead.

We remain committed to the equality standard and addressing those most affected by the pandemic and participation.

Strategy

WG delivered our first culture survey which showed an overall experience rating of 4.17/5 across Wales. This, intertwined with the customer satisfaction and annual membership surveys as well as forums held, meant that WG have collated more insight than ever before to take our sport into the future.

WG are committed to acting on the insight gained.

In partnership with the other Home Nations, WG have held Shape our Future consultations. This will create an aligned vision and values across the Home Nations for the first time. Following the completion of the Communities and Champions Strategy 2022, this will then inform our new strategy.

WG are committed to holding ongoing conversations to rebuild our sport following the pandemic, to ensure the environments and experiences are the best possible for future generations of gymnastics.

The future

In July, we will welcome our new CEO Victoria Ward, who brings a wealth of experience across the commercial and sporting landscape. Vicky led the Welsh Sports Association and became the voice of many sports during the pandemic and, without whom, indoor sport would not be where we are today.

Our elite Welsh gymnasts in Men's Artistic, Women's Artistic and Rhythmic head to Birmingham this summer to compete at the Commonwealth Games and, although their preparation hasn't been straightforward, we know that they will make the whole of Wales proud.

Our priority will remain to rebuild following the pandemic and ensuring the future of the sport is driven by the young people who experience it and also ensuring that gymnastics is a sport for all filled with positive experiences.



Siwan Davies
Interim CEO/
Head of Development



Performance Report

This cycle has been significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, limiting and disrupting any gymnastics activity for large parts of the past two years, though plenty of positive work went on behind the scenes during this period.

Year 2020 saw the initiation of the culture project, established to align all values and behaviours to ensure a positive experience for all.

An Athlete Manager was appointed to ensure gymnasts have developed the tools to continue, progress and excel throughout – and following – their gymnastics career. An athlete support services document has also been developed through identifying performance problems, tactics to overcome these and recognising the personnel required to support all individuals on a performance pathway, nurturing them as a ‘Person’, ‘Gymnast’ and ‘Champion’.

The inaugural Coach Scholarship programme was launched, which saw 17 coaches from across three disciplines selected on to the programme. This included CPD planning, formal coaching and judging qualifications, mentoring, technical support and a series of workshops focusing on developing growth mindset, supported by Sport Wales. The programme provided a springboard for the coaches involved to pursue their own development, helping them to support gymnasts within the Welsh pathway to achieve their own goals.

The Performance Bursary was introduced in 2021, created to provide support for gymnasts on a performance pathway who must travel significant distances to attend training. 22 gymnasts have received funding through the bursary to date.

On a judging front, Wales have 11 cycle 15 brevet judges across the four Olympic disciplines, three qualifying at this level for the first time.

Notable retirements over this period include women’s artistic Commonwealth medallist Latalia Bevan, along with teammates Maisie Methuen and Emily Thomas, Andreas Adams from tumbling as well as West Street British acrobatic trio Emily Stock, Hannah Jenkins and Katie Jenkins.

International events

Welsh gymnasts have achieved success in the limited number of international events which have taken place over the past couple of years. The women’s artistic team clinched gold at the 2019 Northern Europeans in Iceland. Emily Thomas also claimed gold in the women’s all-around competition with Poppy Stickler second. The men’s artistic team also picked up silver and then were crowned team champions when the Northern Europeans were staged in Cardiff in 2021 – postponed from 2020. Joe Cemlyn-Jones won the individual all-around competition, going one better than his silver two years prior, while Alex Niscoveanu finished in third. In the women’s artistic competition, Holly Jones picked up silver on vault matching her achievement from 2019.

In men’s artistic, Joe Cemlyn-Jones and Brinn Bevan were both selected for the 2021 World Artistic Championships in Kitakyushu, Japan. Joe also represented Great Britain at a World Challenge Cup in Croatia.

In 2021, Gemma Frizelle was selected to represent Great Britain in the European Rhythmic Championships in Bulgaria, as well as a Grand Prix in Tartu and a World Cup in Baku in 2022. Elizabeth Popova made her senior Great Britain debut competing at a 2022 Rhythmic World Cup Series competition in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Dylan Howells and partner Natasha Hutchinson were selected to compete for Great Britain in the World Acrobatic Championships in 2021 and picked up a bronze medal at the 2021 European Acrobatic Championships. The partnership continued to build on their success by scooping an impressive four medals at the 2022 World Acrobatic Championships in Baku.

There were international call-ups for aerobic gymnasts Emily James, Mia Bernardo and Molly Brown to represent Great Britain at the 2021 European Aerobic Championships. Molly took home a bronze medal in the group competition.

Tumbler Megan Surman helped her team to a bronze medal at the 2021 Trampoline, Tumbling and DMT World Championships in Baku and also earned selection for the 2022 Europeans.



British level events

The COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of all British Championships during 2020. The British Championships returned for the artistic disciplines in 2021, later in the year than originally scheduled. In the men's artistic competition, held in Cardiff, Joe Cemlyn-Jones picked up a silver medal in the senior all-around competition, whilst Brinn Bevan returned from injury to claim the parallel bars title. In the under-18 competition, Theo-Amari Ochana walked away with bronze in the all-around and Alex Niscoveanu silver in the under-16 all-around event.

In the women's artistic competition, staged in Guildford, Holly Jones bagged herself the title of senior British vault champion. In the junior competition, Ruby Evans took the all-around title, with teammates Jea Maracha and Poppy Stickler taking silver and bronze. The dominance continued with Welsh gymnasts taking a clean sweep of junior apparatus titles. In the espoir competition, Jemima Taylor impressed the judges to take the apparatus titles on beam and floor.

In the Disability British Artistic Championships, Neath's Madison Davies, St Tydfils' Mia Stockley and Fusion's Kieron Innes, were all crowned junior all-around champions in their respective categories.

The ongoing pandemic caused the cancellation of British Championships for all other disciplines in 2021.

The British Artistic Championships returned to Liverpool in March 2022. The women's artistic Long List for 2022 Commonwealth Games were all in action in their first year of senior competition, all making an apparatus final. Sofia Micallef came away with bronze in the vault final, Poppy Stickler took bronze on floor. Ruby Evans successfully defended her junior all-around title, taking home the uneven bars title and a silver medal on vault, whilst teammate Evie Flage-Donovan was crowned beam champion. At espoir level, Wales dominated with Ellie Lewis, Jemima Taylor and Ffion Burgum taking 1-2-3 in the all-around competition. Ellie picked up the uneven bars title and Jemima became floor champion.

In the senior men's artistic competition, there were top 10 all-around placings for Brinn Bevan and Joe Cemlyn-Jones, with Brinn picking up a bronze for his parallel bars routine. In the men's artistic disability masters competition, Kieron Innes bagged a gold on rings and bronze on floor.

Evolve's Level 2 Mixed and Mixed Micro Teams both took home silver medals in the 2022 TeamGym British Championships. At the British Spring Cup 1, the first outing for our elite tumblers, Ieuan Jones and Peter Goldberg took the top and second spot respectively, in the 17-21yrs age group.



Jo Coombs

Performance Director

With special thanks to Holly Broad,
Performance Pathway Manager.

Development Report

The past two years have brought with them unprecedented challenges.

The pandemic came as a shock to all – and gymnastics clubs ceased to operate overnight in March 2020. At the point of closure more people than ever were participating and part of the gymnastics community in Wales.

Indoor activity

Once confirmed that indoor activity would not be taking place or be able to resume for some time, the focus of the team became ensuring gymnastics and clubs would exist following the pandemic.

WG would like to thank those within Welsh Government, Sport Wales and Welsh Sports Association who provided guidance and advice for indoor sport across Wales to return to activity.

Welsh Government and Sport Wales also provided and enabled WG to provide clubs with grants and funding, which totalled over £1,250,000. The grants saved businesses, provided clubs at risk of closure with support towards financial deficits and enabled clubs to reopen safely.

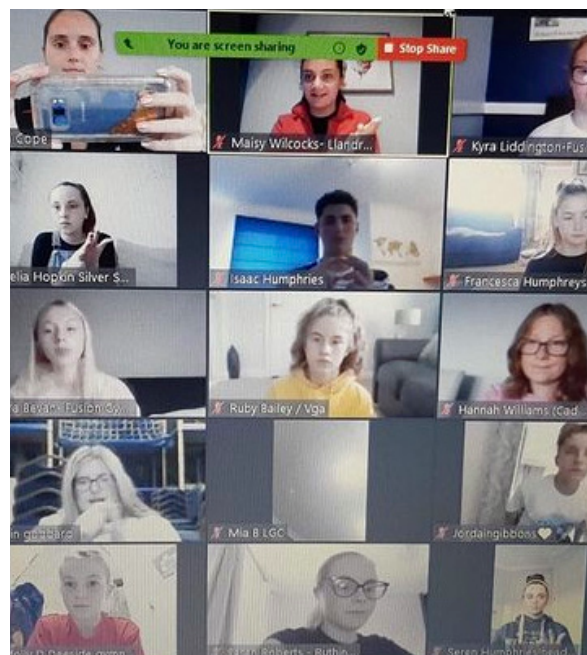
WG have then continued to invest over £30,000 into the return of education.

Stepping Forward in a new virtual world

Over 150 documents were written as part of the Step Forward Plan, which included templates for COVID-19 risk assessments, protocols for operation and changing guidelines and policy to ensure at home and outdoor activity could take place.

WG held eight club and welfare forums with our member clubs to navigate through the pandemic and the development officers and WG team members became a support for clubs and individuals through the challenging period.

The effort of clubs and coaches to delivering everything online and remotely was astounding. People became Zoom experts and delivered thousands of hours of gymnastics into people's homes. Even during the toughest times, thousands of gymnasts were partaking in the sport either at home or outside weekly. For many families, clubs became an integral part of the support system during the pandemic.



The team delivered over 100 online participation sessions with over 2,700 attendees from pre-school to family fitness. The WG talent show had entries and representatives from 40 different WG affiliated clubs and it was fantastic to learn of the many talents across our community outside of gymnastics.

Inspire panels with elite gymnasts and key people from the community were presented and the performance team delivered sessions to over 300 children and coaches across the pathway. Over 1,000 young leaders attended the online leaders programme learning Makaton, Welsh language, warm-up games, strength and conditioning.

The new digital learning platform has delivered or assessed Level 1 education to over 185 coaches.

Throughout the pandemic, WG continued the Healthy and Active Fund partnership with Early Years Wales. The activity was delivered online and the Active Baby and You training was developed.

Love to Move was delivered virtually as part of a Sport Cardiff partnership. Schools received monthly activity packs to encourage gymnastics participation and the Rotary disability schools competition was held virtually, with over 300 attendees across Wales. The virtual competition leagues also reached over 1,000 participants throughout the pandemic.

Current provision

WG are pleased to say currently 95 per cent of clubs have returned following the pandemic. This is an outstanding achievement with so many displaced, restricted or utilised as mass vaccination centres. Many clubs have endured increasing costs and some are still affected by availability restrictions. Within those clubs 90 per cent of membership has returned and new members join daily.

This is truly testament to the dedication of club managers, directors, coaches, leaders and all personnel across the community.

Community development and the demand for gymnastics does not stop. During the pandemic we have seen five facility developments and welcomed five newly registered clubs. WG also launched the new participation resource Rise Gymnastics in partnership with British and Scottish Gymnastics and the much anticipated Activity Instructor course became available for clubs.

Key focuses across the next year will be expanding accessible provision, developing new and positive participation opportunities and coach development.

It will also focus on ensuring our sport remains person-centred and that the voice of the participants remains at the heart of everything we do to ensure a positive experience for all.



Siwan Davies

Interim CEO/
Head of Development





People Services Report

The time period of the past couple of years has seen the formal creation of the People Services Department within Welsh Gymnastics, to strategically lead on the Governance and Safe Sport functions within the organisation.

The responsibilities of the People Services strategy include championing and developing the role of safe sport and equality, diversity and inclusion, as well as the internal functions of policy development and governance, HR and data protection – of which some of the key highlights are captured below.

Safe sport

We have taken the time to consult and listen to our clubs, coaches, parents and gymnasts through surveys, forums and discussion groups to understand worries, concerns and key areas to enhance the rules and regulations already in place and to ensure that we are providing a safe sport for all our members.

Having the opportunity to review our plans and what is in place has led to a closer working relationship across the Home Countries to look at learning and development that can be shared to work towards our safe sport plan.

To further develop the work that Welsh Gymnastics has been doing to expand our reach to the community and support the role of the welfare officers within our clubs, a new safeguarding officer has been appointed. This role will focus on providing support to the welfare officers and clubs as well as identify training and support need moving forward.

Welsh Gymnastics have also been successful in maintaining our Level 3 safeguarding standard awarded by the CPSU during this time period.

EDI

The last two years has provided the opportunity to review the vision for gymnastics in Wales and reflect on what the priorities are for gymnastics in increasing the diversity of our sport.

Within our current diversity plan, we will be focusing on achieving the aims of increasing the diversity within our workforce and creating more opportunities for people to participate in our sport where there are barriers to participation.



Welsh Gymnastics' Access Gymnastics fund has paid out over £8,000 to support our members who have been impacted by the pandemic, to continue to be able to access our sport. We would also like to thank the clubs who have also been running initiatives during this time to continue to support their gymnasts to access opportunities.

The impact of the pandemic has also allowed opportunities for new ways of thinking which has had a positive impact for some of our members, such as moving the rotary competition online – which has still allowed gymnasts in schools that couldn't travel the opportunity to participate.

During this time we have also been successful in achieving the requirement set by Sport Wales of gender parity on our Board and the Board have also released their action plan in this area.

Welsh Gymnastics remains committed to achieving the Disability Sport Wales insport Gold accreditation and Advanced Equality standard.

Governance

Welsh Gymnastics adheres to the Governance and Leadership Framework for Wales (GLFW) which has supported us in the creation of our governance documents, as well as a full review of our risk management controls and processes.

We have said thank you and farewell to a number of our board members during this time and would like to thank them for their support and direction during their tenure and would also like to welcome our new board members who bring with them different skills and experience to help lead the sport moving forward.

During this time we also said a sad goodbye and thank you to Annette Brown, a long-standing member of staff within Welsh Gymnastics – and we wish her every future enjoyment in her retirement.

We continue to foster a good working relationship with Sport Wales and the other gymnastics Home Countries to deliver on our current strategy.

The focus for this time period has been to listen and respond to our members to support the work that we are doing on creating our new strategy for the future.



Carys Kizito
Head of People Services



Area Highlights

SOUTH EAST

Number of clubs – 30

Current membership – 4,692

Clubs in the area are continuing to rebuild after the pandemic. The area has retained 28 clubs along with an additional two newly opened clubs. Since re-opening in August 2020, clubs have successfully reached 73 per cent of members accessing gymnastics post-Covid.

A majority of clubs have received financial support from the Sport Wales Be Active Grants, Business Relief Funding and Welsh Gymnastics Support Funding. This funding has been imperative in ensuring clubs were able to reopen their doors and provide gymnastics provision within their communities.

Welsh Gymnastics has committed or invested £11,637 into the area to strengthen clubs' workforce which will increase sustainability as a result.

Members returned to competitions in October 2020 – with over 491 entries combined at the 2021 Regional Gymspire and the 2022 Regional Preliminary Championships from across 10 clubs.

Over Easter 2022, Welsh Gymnastics partnered with Aneurin Leisure, with support from South East coaches, to deliver gymnastics sessions as part of the Play Scheme offer. These sessions provided opportunity for those who may not be able to access gymnastics to experience a physical literacy focused session as part of an introduction to the sport.

Priorities for the South East Area will be to continue to strengthen and develop the workforce. The ambition is to strengthen clubs' sustainability and to ensure clubs remain visible and vibrant community settings for their local areas.

Georgia Thomas

SOUTH CENTRAL

Number of clubs- 19

Current membership – 7,523

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a difficult time for all, with many clubs receiving financial support from European Relief Funding, Welsh Gymnastics Support Funding and Sport Wales Be Active Grants.

Since returning to competitions after the pandemic, members were excited to return to Welsh Gymnastics competitions with over 800 entries combined at the 2021 Regional Gymspire and the 2022 Regional Preliminary Championships from 10 clubs. This included more than 10 individual disability gymnasts.

Gymnastics in the South Central Area continues to grow with three clubs moving into new facilities. Planet Gymnastics has moved to a new home in The Vale of Glamorgan from Cardiff where the club are now able to provide more opportunities for more members.

All Stars Gymnastics Club have also moved into a new, bigger facility in Treforest, where they can provide more quality opportunities for more members to do gymnastics. The club will grow the tumbling discipline and host competitions.

Finally, St Tydfils Gymnastics Club has moved to a brand new facility in Merthyr Tydfil and have built two gymnastics facilities inside; one dedicated for competitive gymnastics while the other is for Gymnastics for All. This facility already caters for more than 700 members and is continuing to grow.

The focus for the South Central Area will be to continue to provide high quality gymnastics opportunities by developing and strengthening the opportunities for its members and the workforce.

Kathryn Cope

NORTH

Number of clubs – 18

Current membership – 4,272

Through the pandemic to date, the 18 clubs in the North have been awarded £84,454 in grants collectively. Every penny being put to good use for the gymnasts of North Wales.

11 clubs out of the 18 have their own facilities, five operate from Leisure Centres and two from school gyms. Each one of them doing great work and developing their gymnasts in the various disciplines. We are eventually getting back to some sort of normal with our gymnasts competing again. We have accommodated North Area and Welsh Championship competitions having children from all over Wales coming to the North.

Courses are back, coaches have been on Sport Leaders, Activity Instructors, UKCC L1 L2 L3 and L4. We have a Tutor programme set up to introduce new tutors for Welsh Gymnastics to enable the continuation, development and future of our sport. We have gymnasts in the North Area and Welsh Squad systems with their coaches doing a fabulous job with these very talented children.

The personnel in gymnastics still continue to give up many hours voluntarily to keep our sport running so professionally. So a big thank you to coaches, judges and volunteers who continue to give up their time for the gymnasts.

We have successful gymnasts competing at regional, national and international events and finishing this year's competition programme with the Commonwealth Games. Wishing Jacob Edwards the very best of luck after all the hard work he has put in.

Overall, the North Area is in a great place and are continuing the great work we have always done.

Joy Sumner

WEST

Number of clubs – 23

Current membership – 3,592

Clubs in the area are continuing to rebuild after the pandemic. The area has retained 23 clubs with an additional two that have transitioned to satellite clubs. Since re-opening in August 2020, clubs have successfully reached 82 per cent of members accessing gymnastics post-Covid.

The majority of clubs have received financial support from Sport Wales Be Active Grants, Business Relief Funding and Welsh Gymnastics Support Funding. This funding has been imperative in ensuring clubs were able to reopen their doors and provide gymnastics provision within their communities.

Welsh Gymnastics has invested £7,500 into the area to strengthen clubs' workforce which will increase sustainability as a result.

Members returned to competitions in October 2020. With over 280 entries combined at the 2021 Regional Gymspire and the 2022 Regional Preliminary Championships from six clubs. This included 12 individual disability gymnasts.

Over Easter 2022, Welsh Gymnastics in partnership with Neath Afan Gymnastics Club delivered new gymnastics sessions in Cymmer, Neath Port Talbot. Three sessions were offered on two separate days. This enabled 34 participants to participate in gymnastics that have never previously participated. Priorities for West Area will be to continue to strengthen workforce. The ambition is to strengthen clubs' sustainability and to look for new provision where there is currently no gymnastics provision.

Joanne Gould



Project Prospectus - what we're currently working on

A major positive of the past couple of years is that it has allowed Welsh Gymnastics time to reflect and commit to projects in Digital Transformation, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Gymnastics as One.

Gymnastics As One

The programme focusses on providing positive environments for all. There are four areas: performance environments, community environments, policies and procedures and coach development.

Over the past year performance athletes, practitioners, coaches and staff have been working towards a cultural blueprint to understand the values and behaviours expected within performance environments.

Shape our Future has also consulted with members of the community. WG have increased its support services within the performance environments. The Athlete Manager has worked with the elite athletes to ensure their voice is heard and the Gymnastics Ambassador programme was launched.

WG have reviewed all policies and procedures, appointed a new safeguarding officer and re-engaged the welfare forums. Coach the Coach was developed to support coaches with their communication and confidence. WG have entered our second-year partnership with UK Coaching where 600 coaches can access the UK Coaching subscription and developed the Working with Teenagers workshop together.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The WG EDI plan will focus on four areas: organisation, workforce, communication and pathways.

WG have closely reviewed the data for participation during and following the pandemic and it has highlighted participation by characteristics that have been more affected than others.

The plan moving forward will address the growing inequalities and encourage diversity within the sport.

Digital Transformation

To improve customer experience and interaction, WG have invested in developing our digital platforms. WG now have a digital learning platform with Kaltura, will shortly launch our new website to improve communication and functions and launched Rise Gymnastics, a digital participation resource.

The resource will be available bilingually to provide high quality recreational gymnastics across school, leisure and club environments.

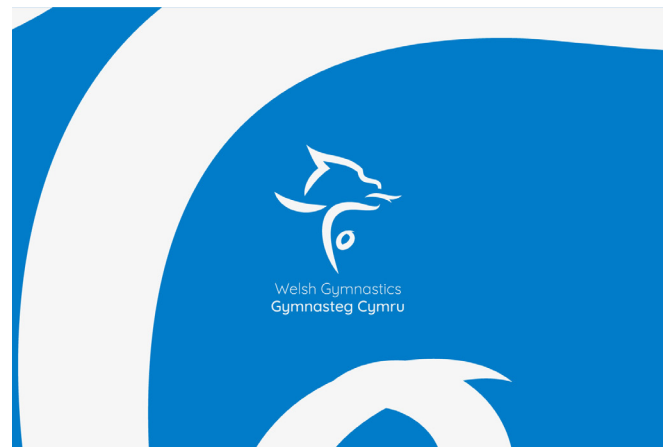
The WG logo and brand was reviewed as part of the Digital Transformation Programme. The developers were provided with insight from staff, community and engagement sessions to evolve the logo concepts.

The logo concepts were put to the wider community for input. This has seen significant engagement with community members. All insight showed a clear preference that Welsh Gymnastics should represent the passion of the Welsh dragon with the artistry of gymnastics. Accessibility and inclusion have been considered throughout the process with colours utilised and wording associated.

Our new logo and branding is set to launch in early June, and the intention is to launch the new website this summer.



New logo ready to launch June 2022



Honours

Julie Phillips MBE



Welsh Gymnastics would like to once again congratulate Julie Phillips who, after 48 years volunteering in the sport, was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2020 for services to gymnastics in Merthyr Tydfil. It was a journey that began back in 1972 when, after taking her daughter Alison to St Tydfils Gymnastics Club, she began volunteering there.

Julie went on to become synonymous with the club in the years that followed.

She retired as head coach at St Tydfils in 2018 and worked with Valleys Gymnastics Academy on a succession plan to ensure the ongoing success of the club – one of the oldest sports clubs in Merthyr Tydfil.

Prior to the Covid-19 shutdown, Julie was still attending weekly sessions to guide and encourage coaches and leaders and help at some parent and toddler classes.

Julie was presented with her MBE by Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, at Buckingham Palace in May 2022.

Craiger Solomons MBE

Welsh Gymnastics would also like to congratulate Craiger Solomons for being named in the Queen's New Year Honours List at the beginning of 2022.

Craiger, who is head coach at Caerau Vale Trampoline Club as well as being strategy lead on the Welsh trampoline technical panel, was awarded the MBE for public service in recognition of his work as lead analyst in the technical advisory cell for the Welsh Government.





Women's Artistic Gymnastics

Following a long, difficult period of interrupted training, our Welsh performance gymnasts returned with aplomb to the 2021 British Championships, winning a clean sweep in the junior section and seven medals being won by four Commonwealth Games Long List gymnasts.

The Women's Technical Panel (WTP) would like to pay gratitude to all those who have worked so hard during a difficult period to continue to deliver a quality programme for Welsh WA gymnasts of all levels – to ensure that we could return with such strength and passion.

Club/domestic

At club level, the community and WTP have worked together to run successful (new) Classic Challenge and Club, Regional and National Grades with very good numbers of participants – and as a Region we really welcome the opportunity for these gymnasts to compete at a National Finals twice each year with the new Classic Challenge competition structure.

Our Brevet level Welsh judges have worked really hard to upskill and qualify on the new FIG Code of Points and have delivered online workshops alongside our National Coaches to disseminate information to clubs relating to the new Code.

The WTP and Welsh Gymnastics were delighted to run a great first Grades championships to be held in Deeside (North Area) and Wales has a full complement of teams attending the grades National Finals in June.

It has been fantastic to see the return of all Area, Development and Regional squads in the latter half of 2021 – typically delivered by the National Coaches and supported by a range of younger coaches, all keen to gain vital experience and mentoring.

Performance

Following a long, difficult period of interrupted training, our Welsh performance gymnasts really stepped up with great results at the 2021 British Championships, including a clean sweep in the junior section and seven medals being won by four Commonwealth Games Long List gymnasts.

At the end of 2021, we were also delighted to host a fantastic home Northern Europeans in Cardiff – which were a great success for Holly Jones from Swansea, while others Commonwealth Games Long List female gymnasts were representing GB in France.

We have seen a successful start to 2022, with the Welsh Artistic Championship and first Commonwealth Games trial providing great preparation for the 2022 British Championships where, once again, Welsh gymnasts achieved great results in all age groups. As a result this saw eight girls selected across the three British squads.

The Women's Technical Panel would like to thank our National Coaches, judges, coaches and volunteers for their ongoing hard work to provide a strong domestic programme of competitions and events.

Melissa Anderson

Men's Artistic Gymnastics

The MAG programme has seen some significant changes over the last two years, mainly due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Currently, the programme is in a phase of rebuilding, with gymnasts recently selected for the newly rebranded squad structure (Foundation, Development and Performance squads).

The MAG national coaching team has recently expanded, which includes Pete Haysham, Chris Jones and Anthony Wise – with Chris Jones leading on the planning and management of the programme.

Currently, four Welsh gymnasts have been selected for various British Squads:

- Jamie Tran (BG Foundation Squad)
- Sammy Cotter (BG Development Squad)
- Alex Niscoveanu (BG TOP Junior Squad)
- Joe Cemlyn-Jones (BG TOP Senior Squad)

Coach development is a priority for the programme over the next 12 months, with a variety of coaching workshops and clinics planned for delivery during national squad sessions throughout the year – part of this is in partnership with British Gymnastics, as part of their regional support programme.

The programme now has three Welsh based Brevet level judges, who will be able to provide valuable support and guidance to the athletes, National Coaches and personal coaches on the new FIG code of points.

Preparations for the 2022 Commonwealth Games continue to advance, with Pete Haysham leading on the planning, coordination and implementation of training programmes. In what has been a challenging two years of preparation, it has been fantastic to see the nominated Long List gymnasts train alongside each other, and support one another, over the past six months.

As we move into a new cycle, I'm looking forward to seeing the programme move forwards and build on the successes seen in previous years.

With a passionate and skilled National Coaching team, underpinned by dedicated clubs and personal coaches, I'm confident MAG in Wales will continue to develop and achieve further competition success on the domestic and international stages.

Aled Jones



Rhythmic Gymnastics

The Rhythmic Technical Panel (RTP) would like to start by thanking Jo Coombs (Performance Director), Nia Evans (Head National Coach), Laura Halford (National Coach) and the staff at Welsh Gymnastics.

Since our last report in 2019, we've had the COVID-19 pandemic to contend with. While the lockdowns resulted in the closure of all our rhythmic clubs in person, all continued to plan and execute their training sessions online and keep the gymnasts motivated and involved.

A big thank you must go out to all the clubs and coaches for ensuring rhythmic in the community was still a part of the gymnasts' lives and provided them with some sense of normality over the period.

At present we are in the process of trying to build our numbers, starting so far with recreational classes in and around Cardiff.

Work areas (2021-22)

- Two sessions in the South and one in North for anyone wanting to give Rhythmic a try.
- Two talent ID sessions – one in Cardiff and one in Llanelli to try to identify up and coming gymnasts.
- Created a six-week Rhythmic recreational programme that was used by six Artistic and Rhythmic clubs over the 2021 school summer holidays. Also included were week-by-week resources to include games, pictures, videos and club visits.
- Started weekly recreational classes + talent ID sessions in Trade Street that are ongoing.
- School visits in and around Cardiff to promote Rhythmic and the recreational classes.

A restructure of the Welsh Squads has taken place, aiming to provide consistency and understanding across Wales and the British Gymnastics squad pathway. The changes also enabled the necessary structure relevant to the gymnast's age and stage of the pathway and allows for more input from the national coaching team, whilst supporting those clubs with gymnasts in the programme.

The Welsh Squads are as follows: Commonwealth (four gymnasts); National (four gymnasts); Development (three gymnasts); Foundation (four gymnasts).



All of these gymnasts have been identified as potential British medallists and their club coaches are working together with the National Coaches to try and achieve this.

Standout achievements

Gemma Frizelle (Commonwealth Squad) was selected to compete for the Great Britain in the 2021 European Rhythmic Championships in Bulgaria, as well as a World Cup event in Baku and a Grand Prix event in Estonia in 2022 – where she also won the title of 'Miss Valentine'.

Elizabeth Popova (Commonwealth Squad) made her senior Great Britain debut competing at a 2022 Rhythmic World Cup Series competition in Sofia, Bulgaria.

The pair have also attended training camps across the continent including Greece and Gibraltar over the past couple of years, along with other Commonwealth Squad members Lauryn Carpenter and Emily Cullen.

At the British Open Apparatus Championships, Gemma Frizelle won silver with the ball and Eirlys Jones (National Squad) silver with clubs.

Meanwhile Llanelli RGA had 11 gymnasts qualify for 2022 British Championships, which was more than any other club in Britain.

The RTP would like to wish all our gymnasts from all disciplines the very best of luck at the upcoming Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

Linda Thomas

Trampoline & Double Mini Trampoline

COVID-19 caused a massive disruption to most aspects of all sports over the past couple of years.

For Trampoline and Double Mini Trampoline this was even more challenging, as many of the workforce in Wales are volunteers. However, our volunteer workforce is truly one of a kind.

I am delighted to be able to pay tribute to our amazing community. It's a community that has come together to support Wales in one of the most difficult times some of us have experienced.

Whether it was virtual conditioning sessions for our gymnasts, creating scrubs for the NHS or even supporting the front line of our NHS and care services, the Trampoline and DMT community have truly gone the extra mile to ensure that Wales is kept safe.

Thank you all for your incredible efforts.

Returning to training has been a varied experience across Wales, with some clubs only recently being allowed access to the venues. We are delighted to have held our first two Welsh region competitions of this year's series and for Welsh gymnasts to have represented at British Gymnastics competitions.

Moving forward, our focus is to recover and restart. We are soon to publish plans for the Welsh Trampoline and DMT squads, and we continue to facilitate additional coaching courses and opportunities across both disciplines working with British Gymnastics.

Craig Solomons MBE



Acrobatic Gymnastics

2019 saw Welsh Acrobatic Gymnastics continue its growth from 2018, with the Women's trio from West Street (Hannah Jenkins, Emily Stock and Katie Jenkins) continuing their impact on the British scene with international call-ups for the girls.

Welsh clubs had some superb results in the NDP Regional Finals, bringing medals home in five separate categories. At British Championships that same Welsh trio showed their dominance taking gold in the Women's Senior Group category.

In April 2019 Welsh Acro took part in the inaugural Home Nations Competition in Scotland, where they had a fabulous competition, taking overall team second place – and provided a huge learning opportunity for the discipline to take forward.

COVID-19 then hit Acrobatic Gymnastics really hard. As a contact sport it was really very difficult for them to continue to train at the level they would need to be able to compete at competition. That said, the clubs and coaches did a sterling job, keeping their classes going once lockdown and restrictions were lifted.

In a return to Acrobatic Gymnastics, our Regional Welsh Team competed at the Regional Finals in late October 2021. A good all-round competition for the

region of Wales with podium places for three West Street Partnerships: Gold medals for IDP2 Women's Pairs, Jessica McNulty and Lowri Clarke, bronze medals for Isabella Hall and Ella Mai Davies and gold medals in the IDP2 Women's Group Aimee Griffiths, Alexia Pope and Lily Thornhill.

Year 2022 kicked off with the Pat Wade and saw Welsh clubs compete for the first time this year, with fantastic results from the gymnasts and testament to the coaches' dedication and the gymnasts' love of the discipline.

The start of 2022 has also seen Welsh Gymnastics invest heavily in Acrobatic Gymnastics by employing Ian Said as our National Lead Coach for the discipline. A comprehensive workplan has started with a Welsh Championships and Squad trial planned for all clubs in July and Ian starting his club visits in May.

We look forward to watching the discipline develop and grow.

Maria Gaynor



Aerobic Gymnastics

Aerobic Gymnastics has definitely seen an upturn in members since 2018, with our Welsh Aerobic Open in 2019 being one of the busiest Aerobic competitions on the British competition calendar.

2020 saw COVID-19 hit our aerobic clubs hard with gymnasts being coached online for the first time. Throughout lockdown our Lead Aerobic Coach Laura Morgan, along with some of our senior gymnasts, put on taster sessions which were extremely well attended and gave more options to gymnasts returning to their clubs late into 2021.

2021 European selection saw Emily James and Mia Bernardo getting their international call up to represent Great Britain at their first senior competition.

During lockdown Welsh Gymnastics met with our aerobic coaches and decided upon a squad structure. Completely pulling together an Aerobic Squad virtually via Zoom or Teams was something never done before so, in a ground-breaking move, three separate squads were set up with gymnasts from across the country and beyond (those with Welsh heritage) attending a monthly session.

The squad was a huge session and has now developed and evolved to two individual squads, a development and a Home Nation Squad, meeting regularly to develop our Aerobic gymnasts across Wales and outside clubs.

Our Lead Coach Laura Morgan takes responsibility for the squad and we are now looking forward to the Welsh Aerobic Open later this year.

The Welsh Open in 2021 was another huge success, with reduced clubs entered due to COVID we managed to maintain relatively good numbers and the competition received great feedback.

The news that Emily James had maintained her place in British Squad added to the already buoyant feel for Aerobic Gymnastics throughout Wales.

Maria Gaynor



Disability - community

2019 saw over 100 young people take part in our annual Disability Schools Rotary competition. The Rotary gives gymnasts the opportunity to represent their school at local and then latterly at the finals in both North and South Wales.

Welsh Gymnastics played host for the 21 plus Down Syndrome gymnastics camp. The association works alongside Welsh Gymnastics every year to help offer a gymnastics element to the sibling camp. Over 40 young people and their siblings attended the camp which produced some fabulous smiles and lots of laughter and learning.

The 2020 competition gave the Rotary Schools organiser some issues, with lockdown and restrictions slowly starting to come our way, the competitions had to be re-organised to allow for as many young people as possible the opportunity to compete and enjoy our sport.

The pandemic striking meant that the normal finals in 2020 had to be cancelled, with the results of the regional competitions, that had fortunately already taken place before Covid hit, used instead to determine the overall winners.

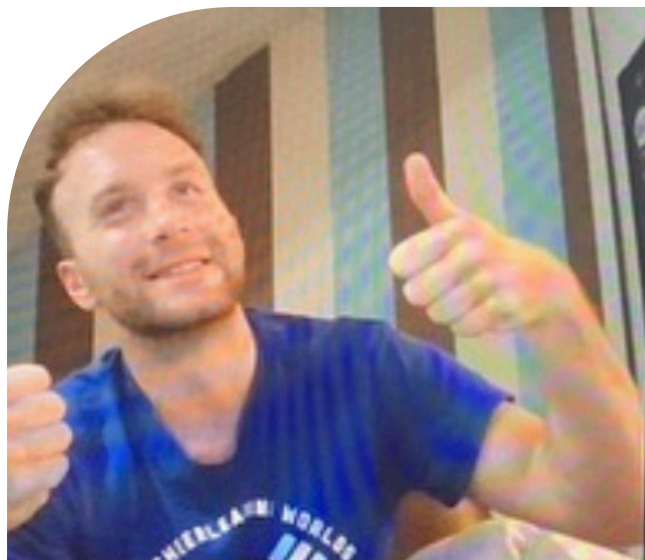
In 2021 rather than miss out on a year of competing, the Rotary Schools competition moved online with 150 young people competing their floor exercise via Zoom.

Welsh Gymnastics and teachers liaised to allow as many young people to compete as possible, a huge success with a lot of smiles and learning taken to grow the online opportunity in 2022.

In 2022, Welsh Gymnastics decided to expand the offer for the Rotary Schools competition – providing young people with the opportunity to take part in local schools competitions and online apparatus finals.

With over 300 young people attending their respective schools competitions and 80 young people attending finals, online competing seems to suit many schools who often find travelling to a location a problem when attending out of area competitions.

Maria Gaynor



TeamGym

2019 saw a growth in TeamGym in Wales, with more clubs than ever taking part in this team-based discipline. The British Championships saw Planet GC take L3 Micro Team Challenge gold.

2020 saw our first Welsh gymnasts being selected for the European Championships but unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the competition was cancelled and Olivia Gauregui then had to withdraw through injury.

TeamGym, like Acro, found the lockdown particularly difficult, as a discipline that relies on teamwork; training together became difficult. Coaches moved sessions online, adapting how the sessions looked whilst maintaining gymnasts' fitness and flexibility for a return to training later in 2021.

A return to training found gymnasts having to learn new skills and adapt to time away from hard training.

In 2022 with gymnasts training hard on their execution and building back up to skills, clubs were eager for competitions to restart. With the British qualifiers taking place, gymnasts and coaches were vying for those precious points to gain qualification to the annual championships. Evolve qualified a number of gymnasts, taking silver medals for team members in two separate categories.

Welsh Gymnastics has also launched its first ever multi-discipline competition being held in North Wales later this year. A combination of Acro and TeamGym, it will give both disciplines the opportunity to showcase what they can do, hopefully introducing the disciplines to additional clubs.

Maria Gaynor



Tumbling Gymnastics

Tumbling continued its growth with a great NDP finals for Welsh clubs and gymnasts in 2019.

The system introduced a new level of competition – FIG Development – which gave gymnasts room to breathe before taking the leap into elite level gymnastics. It offers the option to compete a compulsory routine and two voluntary routines made up of skills that were within a set parameter of upper and lower tariff scores.

The competition was a huge success with Welsh gymnasts medalling in two FIG Development categories.

2019 also saw our newly formed Welsh Tumble Squad grow, with more clubs and gymnasts being selected. Training went well, with gymnasts and coaches both benefitting from the input, insight and knowledge of our lead coaches, Rob Owen and Joshua Hunter.

The start of 2020 saw Welsh tumblers compete in their NDP finals, which took place over two days in March at Haverfordwest Leisure Centre. Unfortunately, a week after the competition, the whole country went into lockdown and all subsequent competitions were cancelled.

During lockdown the coaches and clubs worked hard with our tumblers, meeting weekly to do conditioning sessions and social events.

Our tumble squad met once a week, every week for over 13 months, doing an hour conditioning on different body sections, taking part in cookery sessions, Q&As and joining in with cross discipline training and social events. All hugely admirable and all squad members showed huge dedication to their discipline and our sport.

Welsh Gymnastics invested time into an online range and conditioning league, with Carmarthenshire School of Gymnastics coming away as overall lockdown club winners.

The start of 2022 saw the introduction of a new Regional Challenge Cup competition structure to replace the old National Development Plan, a new code of points and a new competition age format in Britain.

In Wales a return to the track competition at Carmarthenshire School of Gymnastics saw gymnasts from all over Wales coming together for the first time since 2020, to trial the new competition structure and get used to training.

Welsh tumblers and coaches have been extremely busy so far this year with three separate competitions, two trials of the new structure and a massively successfully Open Welsh Championships, held at the newly opened All Stars facility.

We have also seen the introduction of a new South Area Squad, which gives gymnasts and coaches the opportunity to meet once monthly to develop skills and coaching approaches by sharing ideas, with the squad led by Shelley Pace.

Our Welsh Squads have been split with the National Development Squad now being led by Josh Hunter and our top Home Squad being led by Rob Owen. We are also looking to enter our first International event later in the year.

Maria Gaynor







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