



Chief Operating Officer Report October 2021

Introduction

Firstly, I would like to thank the Scottish Waterski and Wakeboard community, and in particular the staff and board of Waterski and Wakeboard Scotland, for the warm welcome I have received since coming into post in early August. I am fortunate to have joined the organisation at a time where restrictions have allowed me to get out and about and meet much of the community in person. Since coming into post my main focus has been on getting up to speed on the different aspects of the sport, understanding its structures, and meeting as many people as possible.

I got off to a flying start when, on day 3, I was lucky enough to tag along with Ali Brotherton, our Development Coach, on a trip up to Aboyne. Ali was delivering a Coaching Clinic for the Aberdeen Waterski and Wakeboard members and I was able to spend time chatting to members, volunteers and of course John and Katrina who run the club. Since then, I have also been able to visit Loch Earn Wake School and Glasgow Wake Park and enjoyed a day at Kyle Waterski and Wakeboard for their backyard competition in September.

I have visits planned to a number of other clubs and operators in the coming weeks and I look forward to finding out more about what they do and continuing the open and honest conversations about what the future of our sport can and should look like. Over the course of the off-season, I plan to re-start the monthly opportunity for clubs and centres to come together and will be in regular contact as we look ahead to next season.

Another aspect of my role which I have also enjoyed getting to grips with has been overseeing the operation of the Town Loch National Training Site and home to Waterski and Wakeboard Scotland. The Town Loch seasonal team lead ably by Simon Fairbank as Head Coach have made this very easy for me and have been a real asset to our sport this season. They have also been a big help in my own waterskiing journey.

It is an exciting time for Waterski and Wakeboard Scotland. Although the end of the season is fast approaching, it has been a much more 'normal' season than last year with much more activity able to take place and many new faces looking to get involved in our sport. We are also in the throws of developing our strategy for the next three years which we will shortly be given the opportunity to present to **sportscotland**. There is still time to contribute to this and in addition to the consultation session which will take place after the AGM we welcome input from any and all.

While we continue to welcome input from the wider community the staff and board have already been working hard on the strategy, based on the feedback received over the past twelve to eighteen months, and have a clear vision for the future. It is key that over the coming years Waterski and Wakeboard Scotland is focused on building the community and adding value for our members. How we do this is the focus of our discussions over the coming weeks although it is clear that developing our communications and continuing to invest in high quality coaching will play significant roles.

Another area that will support this is the development of our relationship with British Water Ski and Wakeboard. We want to work together with them, to support one another and ensure that our members in Scotland receive quality support that is relevant to them. We must first build strong relationships at all levels and the next step in this process is that I will travel down to their office later this month to spend some time with staff across their organisation.

Over the past year there have been a number of other developments with Louise Gillespie joining the organisation in January 2021, taking up the Development Officer role. Louise took on a number of projects including launching the E-Membership scheme earlier this year. Louise has recently left us to re-join Scottish Disability Sport and I am sure the whole community will join me in thanking her for her service of Waterski and Wakeboard Scotland.

In summary, it has been another challenging year for sport - and there will be more challenges for this sport and our clubs/venues to come. I do, however, believe the work that has taken place over the past couple of COVID-19 impacted years has put the sport in a strong position and that if we all get behind our new strategy and work together then big things are on the horizon for waterskiing and wakeboarding in Scotland.

Calum Reid – Chief Operating Officer