



...S.I.N.E...S

The official Newsletter of
MASTERS SWIMMING - INTERNATIONAL

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Editor's Note

Hello everyone. As usual I am running late with this last issue for 1993. Running a business, a family, being National President of AUSSI Masters Swimming in Australia, as well as my involvement in MSI, can sometimes call for quite a juggling of responsibilities. However, here we are, and I hope you enjoy this issue.

Take this opportunity to wish our large band of Masters swimmers all the joys and happiness of the coming Christmas season, and wish you prosperity, fitness, health, friendship and understanding in 1994.

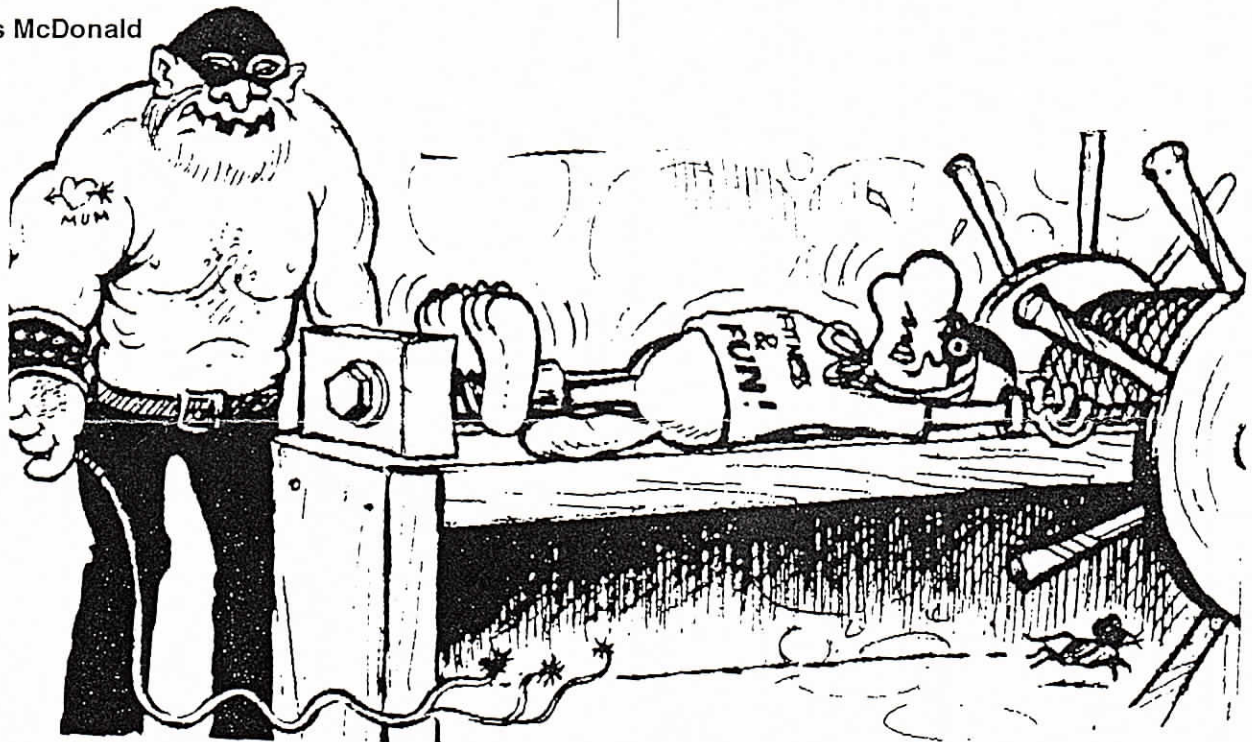
And remember all you workaholics, you could be charged with resisting a rest.

Glenys McDonald

Review of Swim Meets

The review of all our Masters Swim Meets is important, especially the larger events. We need to take stock and see what went well and what could be improved. In doing this however, we must ensure that we do not pillory our wonderful volunteers who give so much of their time and effort to ensure that we enjoy ourselves.

Don't be responsible for this happening to your Meet Director.



soothe swimmers eyes
PREFRIN DROPS

LEN Masters European Championships

Sindelfingen, Germany

With the help of 'Lenny' the unofficial newsletter of the Championships, I have been able to piece together an overview of this largest LEN European Championship ever. Held in charming Sindelfingen from 9-12 September, the Meet had 2,373 swimmers from over 534 clubs from 26 nations.

The registration day started very slowly with everyone queuing up to register. Once the programmes were in hand, everyone was checking out the competitors. Only the German friends had to suffer a little longer thanks to their federation allowing them to register without federation approval on the entry form. This meant that they had to queue again to hand in their swimming licenses. It is my understanding that some visiting overseas swimmers were not able to swim.

Each large championship has something, either good or bad (mostly bad) which sticks in our memories. As Lenny said "who could forget the midnight show at Brisbane, the sanitary chaos in Rio and the make eight lanes from six in Britain". Sindelfingen also had some problems, exacerbated by the large number of entries.

There was no complaint with the complex with four heated 50m pools, however there were insufficient lockers and people had to take their clothes poolside. In many countries the provision of lockers is of the utmost importance, whereas in my country, most of our swimmers never use them.

The running of the heats caused some disruptions, prompting some of the swimmers to ask why there was no indication as to what heat was about to be swum. To save time, others though it would have been ideal to utilise the "overhead starts" used by other major meets where large numbers of swimmers compete. One time saving method approved by the LEN Masters Committee, that of the normal practise of swimming two swimmers per lane in the 400m and 800m freestyle events, became a problem when both swimmers were started at the same time, at the same end. This system, and the lack of sufficient timekeepers made record breaking difficult. Unless of course you were

one of the lucky ones whose 'partner' did not turn up and you were able to dive from the blocks and had timekeepers to spare.

There were the usual problems with some 'officials' not recognising the differences with Masters events. The starter, from all accounts was very quick, thus not enabling some of the older, (and not so old) swimmers to take up their position on the blocks. There were our usual disqualification scenarios and complaints about the warm up facilities.

It is the warm up arrangements that are most often forgotten, brushed aside or ill-managed. However, safety aspects of a warm up facility trying to cater for all strokes and distances, dives, turns etc, should be one of the highest priorities of Meet organisers.

Ideally, the warm up pool should be marked off with lanes for slow, medium and sprint swimmers. There should be a lane for starts and turns only, and the swimmers should swim from one end in a clockwise formation or similar. A "free for all system" has gradually disappeared in the warm ups associated with previous MSI events, and one hopes that soon all Masters Swimming organisers will ensure as much planning goes into the provision of the warm up and cool down, as the main swim programme.

The provision of food is also of major importance to very ravenous Masters, and Sindelfingen provided well, although the cafeteria tent did not open early enough for one hungry swimmer. Geoff Stokes, in his 'Master Swimmer' Newsletter was impressed with the good quality food which was available throughout the Meet. Entertainment was provided in the marquee for the benefit of the competitors, and the trick to make them clear away their own plates after their meal was a DM5 refunded deposit at the washing up area. Great idea!!

The atmosphere of the Meet was fine, despite the few problems highlighted, and 'Lenny's Extra News' added icing on the cake.



ABOVE: MSI Area Director Europe - Rob Hanou
LEFT: Angelika Schluch, Monika Senptleben, Angiola Neumerkel.

Canadian National Masters Championships

Montreal, 17-20 June

This event conducted just a little over twelve months before the V World Masters Swimming Championships could have been a dress rehearsal for the big event. To give you some idea of what to expect - the good, the bad and the ugly - I have reprinted for you an article by Kay Lippold from the November UK Newsletter "Master Swimmer".

"The meet was very well organised and kept to time throughout with 810 competitors. The events were all pre-arranged and printed in the programme with names, ages, lane numbers and estimated times set out for each heat. Times were spearheaded. All one had to do was to front-up at the right time and place, which was surprisingly easy because of the enormous board showing all the times, places and names. The PA system was very clear too. All the difficulties of card posting, etc. were avoided. Occasionally lanes were empty but it did not seem to prolong the meeting or cause difficulties. Documentation and posting of results was excellent.

The pool was magnificent, having been constructed at great expense for the 1968 Olympics. The water is 3m deep for the whole of 50m length. There are 10 lanes and plenty of space poolside. Next to the main pool is an eight lane training pool, also 50m long, available for warming up all through the sessions. Additionally there is a 25m square diving pool which was also available for warming up or down.

For the starts, the procedure was, as is usual in Canada, to stand with toes on the front edge of the block and on the order "take your marks" to bend in readiness for the dive. With no need to take a forward pace, this seemed much easier and there were very few false starts. There was also few disqualifications. An 85 year old lady was using a doggie-paddle like stroke for a lot of the 100m fly race, and although the judges did discuss this, she was not penalised.

The warm up was at 7.00am and the programme began at 8.00am. It finished early in the afternoon. There was a really splendid banquet on the Saturday night, hosted by the montreal Athletic Association.

There were two slight problems. Swimmers were bumping into the lane ropes on the back stroke because of the pattern on the ceiling, and the instructions, in French about the rules for swimming two to a lane for the 400m were confusing. To assist the judges and timekeepers, swimmers were asked to wear either red or yellow hats for this event. Some ladies refused to wear a hat at all which made it rather difficult for the officials.

The only specific complaint heard was that the temperature of the surroundings were very high. The water itself was fine. In the changing rooms a small padlock is necessary for the lockers. Between showering and dressing one has to cross a sort of corridor in full view of anyone pass-

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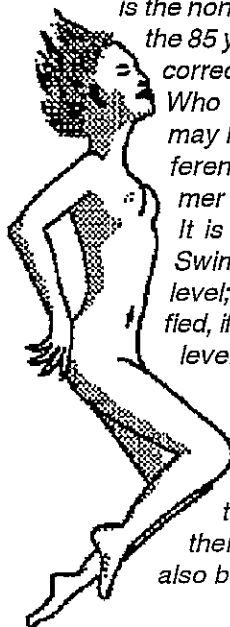
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ing, so a big towel or gown might be useful.

The food in the self-service cafe was rather rudimentary, however there is a good hotel five or six minutes from the pool and there is an impressive underground car park costing only \$2.50 for the whole day. Montreal is a beautiful city, there is lots to see and do apart from the swimming."

Thank you Kay, I am sure the Montreal World Swim Organisers will be interested in your comments. Of concern

is the non adherence to the rules of swimming. If the 85 year old (or anyone else) could not swim correct butterfly, they should be disqualified. Who is to say whether another 85 year old may have been swimming correctly in a different heat, and was beaten by the swimmer who was advantaged by the officials? It is unlikely, but it can and does happen. Swimmers should be encouraged at club level; warned at interclub level; and disqualified, if necessary at National and International level.



The pattern on the ceiling mystifies me. I have heard this before from back-stroke swimmers in Montreal. One of the first things I plan to do when I get there next july is to sus out the ceiling. I also be taking a big towel.

ATTENTION, ATTENTION

FINA NEWS

At the FINA Bureau Meeting held in Taipei September/October 1993 it was decided that Masters Swimmers must be members of a swimming club. Unattached swimmers will not be allowed to participate at Masters competition.

Also for those who have not heard - the VI World Masters Championships in 1996 have been approved to be awarded to the City of Sheffield (GBR) when the contract for the event is signed. All Masters Swimmers participating in Masters competitions must be members of a swimming club, affiliated to a FINA National Federation. (FINA News, 25 October 1993). Congratulations Sheffield.

With this announcement, the spotlight will be on Sheffield. Comments on the running of the National Masters at Sheffield this October had the usual Meet problems, including the on going warm up problems. Let us hope that all our warm up concerns will be resolved soon.

One item I have found of interest in reports of recent large swim meets, is the lack of mention, medical facilities and backup, receives. One hopes that this is because such a high standard of medical cover is available, and that we are all super fit, and train, warm up and cool down correctly, and have not had the need for such attention. I wonder!!!

FINA Masters Committee

I believe there was some discussion at the last FINA Masters Committee about those countries who were not conforming to the FINA Masters age determination date, and the ramifications this might have on World Records. Also discussed was that some countries were continuing with drug testing of Masters, even though the FINA Masters Committee has stated that this should not be done until the FINA Medical Committee has investigated this more thoroughly. A comment was made that some countries funding to sport necessitated drug testing, to ensure continued funding. This is a very short sighted stance by the country, especially when the well being of the competitor might be at risk, not to mention the disruption to the swimmers programme. This is another glaring example of how Masters is different, and cannot always be shoved into the 'elite' mould.

A drug testing story of concern was reported by Geoff Stokes in his 'Masters Swimmer' Newsletter. At the National Championships, Sheffield "Drug testing was continued at these championships. Tom Sweeting missed one of his heats because of an extended test due to his inability to readily produce a sample, but he was allowed to swim in a spare lane in a later heat, contrary to the rules of the competition."

It has intrigued me for some time how the LEN system of age determination, can continue in direct conflict to the FINA Masters Rule for age determination which is the LAST DAY OF THE SWIM MEET. Records which are set by European swimmers, and there are many, some 215

records approved since March, how then are these records transposed into the FINA World Record system, where some swimmers will be in a different age category.

At the next FINA Masters Congress this rule might well be overturned. Will we then see the non European countries doing their own thing and retaining the age at the last day of the meet? Let us all have one system. No one likes to change what we are comfortable with, but it does not take long to get used to new ways of doing things. I support the current FINA Rule MSW2.

Age Determination Date

by Gary Stutsel

"Last day of the meet" or "31 December" which is the fairer choice?

The 31 December Rule contradicts itself when it states as in FINA Rule MGR3 "Age shall be determined as of December of the year of the competition..." which implies that a swimmer who turns 25 on or before 31 December would be eligible to compete in the 20 to 25 age group and any relay team.

The contradiction is with the preamble to the FINA Masters Rules on Page 292 of the 1992-94 FINA Handbook, which states:

"The Masters program shall promote fitness, friendship and understanding through Swimming, Diving, Synchronised Swimming, Water Polo and Open Water Swimming among those competitors with a minimum age limit of 25 years."

One must ask the question: "If a 29 year old can be said to be 30 when he/she may only be a few days over 29 (if birthday was at end of December then from 1 January this swimmer is considered to be 30) how then can a 24 year old be considered to be 25 but not be allowed to compete because he/she has not actually attained minimum age of 25?"

On the other hand the "age at last day of the meet" (see FINA Rule MSW2) means that no swimmer ever ages up more than five or six days before actually attaining the minimum age for the next group, that is a 29 year old would have to be 29 years plus 360 days before being able to compete in the 30-34 age group rather than 29 years and one day if his/her birthday is the 31 December.

It would appear that the 31 December Rule may be easier to administer and whilst competitors and administrators need each other to function, surely what is fairest to the swimmers should take precedence over what is easier for the administrators, especially now that computers make it very easy to track when a registered competitor ages up to a new age group.

In Australia all race horses have a common birthday, "the 1 August", so they are bred to be born as near as possible to that day. Will we see the parents of potential Masters

Swimmers planning to have their babies before the end of January so they can have a full eleven months as 80 years olds when they are still only 79?

MSW 2 has worked well since the introduction of both World Records and World Championships. Will we alter it to suit those who are still living in the pencil and paper era, or would it not be better if they invested in a National computer system?

Who is a Masters Official?

The FINA News Vol XX No 7 called for recognised Masters Officials to submit applications to be officials at the World Masters Championships in Montreal. This begs the question - just who or what is a Masters Official.

Is it a FINA Official primarily used to conducting National and International or Olympic events? Is it a recognised Master Swimmer who has officiated poolside for many years in many Masters events? Are we to lose that precious gift we had when we were Masters competitors, organised by and for Masters.

Granted, we need trained officials. Many of our members have received official training by their Federation, and some over to Masters, where they have learned the Masters rules, the Masters differences, and the problems associated in swim meets for 2000, 3000 and 4000 competitors.

Others come from Federations who have evolved their own technical officials courses and credentials for Masters, and surely, these should be the only recognised Masters officials?

It would be interesting to get an official interpretation of a Masters Official from FINA so that we know who is included and who is excluded.

Whilst we all agree that we should have a high standard of officials at our World Championships, and we welcome all those hard working elite officials who give up their time for us, we should never exclude our own people, or the experience and expertise they bring to a Meet.

The answer is that we must have only FINA qualified elite officials, because of their experience one must ask, how, under this system, could FINA Masters Committee members, be given the responsibility of officiating in past years in disciplines that they were completely unfamiliar with, eg Synchronised Swimming, Water Polo etc at the World (Elite) Swimming Championships in 1991.

Will it be the FINA Masters Committee's responsibility to brief these 'elite' officials on the Masters Rules; the need to have a starter give the 'oldies' time to get up on the blocks; the false start rules for Masters; and the need to disqualify anyone gaining an unfair advantage, even if they look like your great grandmother?

Sharing and Caring

Last issue MSI News talked about all the other activities that Masters Swimmers were interested in besides competition. In fact a survey of Canadian Masters swimmers recently came up with similar results to surveys conducted in both Australia and New Zealand. Masters reasons for swimming were - top of the list - FITNESS, next was - SOCIAL, and COMPETITION was at the bottom of the list.

According to Masters Swimming Canada President, Dr Alex Herman, of the 6,000 swimmers registered in Canada, 60% attend only one to two meets per year; 20% attend no meets at all, and the remaining 20% attend more than two meets.

It is the large proportion of 'fitness' swimmers that MSI wish to cater for, and I would be pleased if you could share with us your federation/countries programs in this vein.



Scott Rabalais has shared with us his February Fitness Challenge. This is a successful postal event, which in its inaugural year in the United States had 606 participating swimmers covering in excess of 18,000 miles. Beginning on 1 February, 1994 you record your distance per day. At month's end your tally is sent to Scott and must be received by 21 March, 1994. All participants receive final results and certificate. The first three males/females in each age group will receive medals. For entry forms write to Scott Rabalais, 950 South Foster Drive, #29 Baton Rouge, LA 70806 USA. Phone (504) 928 5596.



Congratulations to the Australian Government for their interest in Masters Sport. In November this year I attended a forum on Sport for the Mature Aged, jointly hosted by the Australian Sports Commission and the Confederation of Australia Sports.

Invitations went to all National Sports Federations; Masters Sports and Government bodies with an involvement in sport. By participating in the Forum we had the opportunity to play an integral part in the development of one of the fastest growing areas of Australian sport. It was also gratifying to see AUSSI Masters Swimming held up as an exemplary example and to see years of work in gaining acceptance, finally coming to fruition.

The format of the forum was for Sessions morning and afternoon, with three speakers each, followed by workshop groups. Some of the topics discussed were:

"Participation or competition - What is mature aged sport?"

"Expectations and motivations of Masters Games competitors"

Modifying Sport for the Mature Aged"

"Advantages and disadvantages for sport from involvement in mature aged sport"

"The place of events in the development for the mature aged"

"Economic impact of Masters Games"
 "The place of mature aged sport in the overall development of sport in Australia"
 "Women in mature aged sport"
 "Government's role in the development of mature aged sport"
 "Mature aged sport and the media"
 "Sports Medicine aspects of mature aged sport"
 "Coaching and mature aged sport".

Well done Australian sport.



Congratulations to Canada and David Tree, Editor, on their brand new MSC News. This official newsletter of Masters Swimming Canada is going to each registered member. With Beth Whittall's wonderful Wave Lengths, Canadian Masters are going to be served well in the communication stakes.

Calendar of Events

1994

FEBRUARY

5th Finnish Super Masters International Meet
 B. Kivela, Radiokatu 20, SF-00240 Helsinki

11th-13th New Zealand North Island LC Championships, Cambridge NZ
 Eileen Rimine, 6 Wilson St., Cambridge, NZ

MARCH

17th-19th SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIPS.
 Note date brought forward
 Shand, Capetown. PO Box 277, Bellville 7535 South Africa

22nd-26th 19th AUSSI Masters CHAMPIONSHIPS, Adelaide, South Australia
 Florence Walker, P.O. Box 418, Elizabeth SA 5112

APRIL

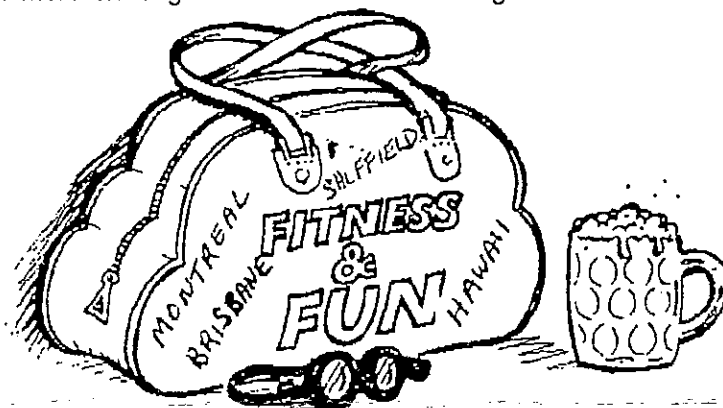
22nd-24th NEW ZEALAND MASTERS LC CHAMPIONSHIPS, Christchurch

JULY

2nd-10th V WORLD MASTERS SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS, Montreal, Canada

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

26th-28th WORLD MASTERS GAMES, BRISBANE, Australia
 Watch this space for more exciting news about more exciting events.



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