



M.S.I. NEWS

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The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the writers and not necessarily those of the members of Masters Swimming International Inc.

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Gary's Gazings

In this issue we look at the venue for the 1998 World Masters Championships, Training Fins by Dr Phil Whitten, the impact of Masters Games, new rules introduced for USMS in January 1995, Qualifying times the Aquatic Exercise Association 1995 Conference, recent awards, Safety Issues, and my favourite area, Letters to the Editor.

1998

Casablanca or Perth?

Immediately my mind turns to when we had to choose between Rio de Janeiro and Indianapolis for the 1990 World Championships. As Chairman of both the FINA Masters Committee Meeting and the MSI Meeting which made that decision I can tell you the USA was the only vote for Indianapolis. Perth? For 1998 Australia didn't even have a vote of its own so:

The 28-30 March meeting of the FINA Bureau in Bangkok decided:

Casablanca will be the venue for the 7th World Masters Championships in 1998.

Casablanca conjours up thoughts of famous movies and past events. Humphrey Bogart is well remembered for his role in the movie 'Casablanca' made in 1943.

In the same year two of the giants of the 20th Century Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill met in Casablanca to chart the course of World War 2.

Largest city in Morocco the land of the Moors who ruled Spain, Portugal and parts of France plus much of North Africa through the years 700AD to 1400AD, Casablanca was founded by the Portugese as a trading port in 1515AD.

Start packing your bags:

"We're off on the Road to Morocco!"

Next issue we will look at the aquatic centre and the allure of the Casablanca of today. GS

Training Fins

by Dr Phil Whitten author of the "Complete Book of Swimming", courtesy of MSC News Fall 1994

Since 1990 increasing numbers of swimmers have been using a new generation of training fins. The most popular are called Zoomers, a sort of super fin created for the serious swimmer. Zoomers are performance fins, shorter than regular fins. They were invented by Marty Hull, a former California dentist who is now a full-time inventor and designer of exercise equipment. He is also one of the top Masters swimmers in the world.

Zoomers provide an effective, specific weight workout in the water. The idea behind them is simple: they allow you to employ the full range of motion you use when racing, at the same or slightly higher speeds, and with significantly greater force. The result is muscles built in the precise proportions needed for a particular swimming movement.

The highly successful Stanford University men's and women's teams use Zoomers during 40 percent or more of their workouts. Basically the fins are used two ways: during regular interval training and for high-speed sprinting. When worn during normal sets, Zoomers provide high-level cardiovascular conditioning but because you go faster when wearing them, the rest intervals are a little longer than usual to allow for sufficient recovery.

Kicking sprints, called shooters, are done underwater without breathing. Swimmers use either a freestyle kick or a reverse dolphin kick (underwater). A set of shooters consists of ten to twenty one lap sprints swum all-out. Between sprints, swimmers either rest or swim an easy length or two. Swimming sprints consist of a set of 25-, 50-, or 100-metre high-speed swims with sufficient rest between each sprint to recover.

Other manufacturers, including Barracuda, Force Fin, Hyperfin, and Speedo, have introduced their own training fins to compete with Zoomers.

Masters Games Yes or No?

Masters Games are multiplying. World Masters Games (WMG) are now well entrenched.

There is obviously money in Masters Games or they would have died years ago. But money for whom?

Certainly not governments. The Canadian governments reputedly lost USD4.5 million in 1985. The Danes lost money in 1989. Minneapolis backed out of its bid and although there are no figures available Brisbane and Queensland lost (invested?) money in 1994.

Who is getting the money?

The financial backers see these events as attracting tourists. The impact of the WMG on Brisbane's economy was guesstimated to be a USD36 million injection of funds into the economy.

Glenys McDonald (AUSSI Masters President) has written "governments see Masters Games as a means to complete their funding responsibilities to Masters sport" The danger in this practice is that funds are diverted from basic programs such as coaching, technical development, and support administration.

The professional organisers give loud support for them but one should remember that it is their full time job. Maureen O'Brien was said to have been paid \$70,000 per year for the Toronto WMG in 1985. After circling for some years she has now settled into running the World Corporate Games, a good steady living.

A typical Games office employs up to a dozen full time staff who promote the event in Rolls Royce style. Ivan Wingate (AUSSI's Executive Director) talks of excessive travel, TV promotion, tailored uniforms, glossy publications, and cocktail parties, none of which can be indulged in by Sports who run their own events. But then 80% of the entry fees are retained by the central administration to cover these costs.

Such events attract members away from the Sports own events which they rely on for funding. For example twice as many members of Australian Masters competed in the 1994 WMG as in the National Swim Meet.

One of the problems for Masters organisations is that a swimmer does not have to be registered to compete in a Masters Games. 45% of the Australians in the 1994 WMG were not members of AUSSI. Why join? There is a steady stream of State and regional events available to swimmers registered or not.

Regular correspondent Keith Wake suggests that all of the FINA Rules be enforced at Masters Games. He sees non-registered swimmers having to register as a pre-requisite for entry. What a good idea!

Beth Whittall (Wave Lengths Magazine, Canada) wrote after the 1985 WMG, "Who needs the Masters Games? Not Masters Swimming! Masters swimmers don't need other sports to make up the numbers to make a meet exciting, fun and profitable!! Profitable for Masters not just others".

After investing thousands of hours over two years in the 1994 WMG the Queensland Masters Swimming Association made a surplus of USD12,000. Without sponsorships, commissions on goods and services, raffles, selling daily results and programs they would have lost USD2250.

Yet these Games are not about to go away. (I am not too sure about this statement because two government sporting bodies spoken to recently are well aware of the problems and are looking for alternatives) so what must we do?

Masters' Sporting associations need to become more proactive.

If Veterans Athletics and Masters Swimming get together than can negotiate better terms.

Masters Sports bodies need to be involved in the drafting of contracts which provide for a minimum of:

- * marketing of their organisations with the marketing of the events to create awareness of their activities in the general community

- * clearly defined and open channels of communication between the Games Office and Sports

- * an independent arbitrator for settling disputes between the Games Office and Sports

- * adequate funding to run the events

- * an acceptable reward for having run them; and

- * mandatory registration of entrants

Please send your thoughts and ideas about Masters Games. Will they help us or destroy us? GS

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Douglas Scales** (GBR) and to **Tom Logan** (NZL) who have both been awarded a FINA SILVER PIN for outstanding service on the FINA Masters Committee for three terms. Congratulations also to **Peter Gillett**, long time World Recorder. Peter has been awarded the Confederation of Australian Sport Award of Distinction in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the development of Masters Swimming over many years as the Australian and World Recorder.

USMS Rule Changes

The following rule changes were adopted by USMS effective January 1, 1995:

1) *Relay lead-off split times will be considered for all USMS purposes, provided the relay team is not disqualified and automatic timing is used.*

This is a step in the right direction for the swimmer but does not go far enough. If the lead-off swimmer is not disqualified then the time should be allowed to stand as in FINA Rule SW12.9 which states:

The first swimmer in a relay may apply for a World Record. Should the first swimmer in a relay team complete his distance in a record time in accordance with the provisions of this subsection, his performance shall not be nullified by any subsequent disqualification of his relay team for violations occurring after his distance has been completed.

This amendment should be brought before the next USMS Convention by the appropriate people and they should also look at the provisions of notification in FINA Rules SW 12.10 plus the requirements of FINA Masters Rule MSW 6 to then include the use of manual timing.

2. *For a swimmer's initial split time for a longer swim to be considered for official purposes, the swimmer must comply with all relevant finish rules for that stroke.*

This is a rule which no one can disagree with, however in this instance it is the FINA Rule SW 12.10 which discriminates against the individual swimmer. It says:

A swimmer in an individual event may apply for a World Record at an intermediate distance if he or his coach or manager specifically requests the referee that his performance be especially timed or if the time at the intermediate distance is recorded by Automatic Officiating Equipment. Such swimmer must complete the scheduled distance of the event to apply for a record at the intermediate distance.

To me if a record has been broken at the 400m mark of an 800m swim it should stand as the record regardless of whether the swimmer completes the 800m or not because the 400m time is clearly a new record which has been swum.

3) *During warm-ups at swim meets, a swimmer must enter the pool feet first in a cautious manner.*

A very sensible rule which should be adopted by all countries, providing of course that provision is made for supervised sprint lanes where swimmers can practice starts from the blocks. GS

Qualifying Times

USMS also announced that National Qualifying Times (NQTs) will be used at both the 1995 short course and long course championship meets. The NQTs are determined by adding 10 percent to the prior year's tenth place time from the USMS Top Ten. In events with fewer than ten swimmers in the Top Ten, there will

be no NQT. This new method for determining NQTs is said to generally ease the times in the younger age groups and to create NQTs for more events for older swimmers. With Germany also using qualifying times how long will it be before they are introduced for all events at the World Championships?

I have made some very brief calculations of the effect of adopting the 1993 World Top 10 tenth best time plus 10% formula on the entries for Montreal 1994 and found the following reductions in entries would have occurred:

Men 25-29 50m free drop from 68 entries to 25
 Women 35-39 50m breaststroke from 41 to 21
 Men 50-54 200m individual medley from 31 to 13, and
 Women 60-64 200m backstroke from 25 to 11.

As you can see the number of entries would have been reduced to less than half.

Perhaps this is the way to limit the event? Very strong arguments can be made for adopting qualifying times, particularly if the World Championships are to become more credible. GS

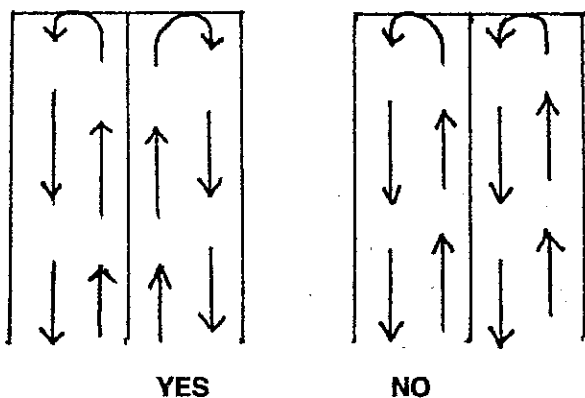
Safety Issues

See page 3 for new USMS Rule re meet warm-ups.

For all swimmers and pools a rule which should be adopted is one that has existed for over 10 years in Ontario, Canada.

It is the practice of swimming laps in opposite circle directions in adjoining lanes as shown below. This practice would:

eliminate arm locking and eye poking of swimmers in adjoining lanes and greatly reduce the severity of collisions involving swimmers in adjoining lanes.



Aquatic Exercise Assoc'n

The Aquatic Exercise Association is to hold the 1995 International Aquatic Fitness Conference in Coral Gables, Florida on May 16-21. For information fax USA 813 486 8820.

The Conference offers sessions on

management: developing, managing and promoting quality fitness programs

aquatic fitness leadership: exploring a myriad of methods to improve teaching and leadership skills and

HYDRO-FIT Education: reach new limits in professional development, teaching skills and exercise design.

Letters to the Editor

on 4 April 1995 I sent the following letter to Doug Scales, Chairman of the FINA Masters Committee.

Dear Doug

The MSI members have directed that I write to FI to express our concerns regarding the conduct of the Montreal World Masters Championships.

As you are no doubt aware there is now considerable discontent with the changes which have been adopted for the 1996 Sheffield Championships.

Rather than add to the debate I would like to suggest that your Committee organises an open forum to be held in Sheffield towards the last day of the swimming program. Each federation could be invited to send one or two representatives to this meeting to discuss suggestions for changes to the format for the 1998 Championships.

This would give the federations a level of ownership, the suggestions which would then be considered by your Committee at a subsequent meeting and where appropriate adopted.

As for Sheffield we are most concerned that:

- 1. medical cover shall be more evident and appropriate than that provided in Montreal*
- 2. events will be started from both ends of the pool to save as much time as possible.*

If we can be of any assistance please contact me at the above.

Yours sincerely

Gary Stutsel

Doug replied

Dear Gary

Many thanks for your letter re the World Masters Championships at both Montreal and Sheffield, may I answer as follows:-

1. The medical cover at Sheffield will be of the highest level as required by the United Kingdom Health and Safety Act, plus any additional requirements by the FINA Medical Committee.

2. The question of any discontent with the changes made by the Masters Committee in the programme will be discussed at our next meeting. The changes have now been made and will of course be in operation in Sheffield, I can assure you however, that there has not been the amount of discontent you imply.

3. Your suggestions with regard to starting and a meeting will also be discussed, although I must point out that starting from both ends increases the number of officials required and that can be a problem, however as I say it will be discussed by both my committee and the organising committee in Sheffield. I trust you are well and look forward to seeing you in Sheffield.

Editor's note: As you can see if you do not like the changes made to the program in Sheffield there is no point in telling me, you must write to:

Douglas Scales, Chairman FINA Masters Committee,
2 Denmark Road, Southport, PR9 7LP U.K.

On Arthur Knudsen, of Norway, who is a member of the FINA Masters Committee and Chairman of the LEN Masters Committee comes the following:

Dear Gary

In the December/ January issue of MSI News, the Editor, in an effort to brief Masters swimmers on FINA Rules, gives a listing of FINA Rules applicable to Masters swimmers. The list is followed by some comments and what he calls clarifications.

In my opinion some of his comments are valid and I concur 100% with his recommendation that if you find rules which are not suitable for Masters then you should seek to change them. The proper procedure for this is through your National Federation to FINA or to the Masters Committee.

Then to his "clarifications". MGR 4 is not in conflict with the introduction to the Masters Rules which is general information and only states that the entry age to Masters is 25, that is not 30 or 35 years or any other age. MGR 4 is specific and gives the age definition for Masters and governs the entry and exit for all age-groups.

I agree that MSW 2 is superfluous. It was accepted by the last (Masters) Congress against the recommendation of the FINA Bureau.

SWAG 1 has nothing to do with Masters. Anybody with a minimum of background in swimming will know that this rule relates to teenagers and younger. Up to 1986 FINA had a special chapter in its Rule Book called "Age Group Rules". It governed competitions for the young in swimming, diving, and synchronised swimming and 18 years for water polo. During the 1986 Congress the Age Group Chapter was discontinued and the Age Group Rules were included in the rules for each discipline. Domestic Masters competitions are not exempt from the age determination date according to MGR 4.

MSW 5 does not contradict GR 5.1 which states that you may be a member of many clubs, but you can only represent one at a time. MSW 5 is for regulating relays in Masters competitions and states that you cannot represent two or more clubs in a relay competition.

I recommend that you do not rely on MSI interpretation of FINA Rules, but that you contact your National Federation or FINA if you are in doubt.

Regarding the comments on judging, I will just remark that judging is done from the pool deck, and disqualifications are made for infringement of the rules and not for poor swimming technique.

Regards Arthur

Editor's note: I am pleased that Arthur and I are in agreement that your Federation should be your contact for clarification and changing of Rules. He must have missed reading the top line on page 1 of issue 20 which states "The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the writers and not necessarily those of the members of Masters Swimming International Inc." nor will I add those of MSI which is the concensus of the members.

Regarding MGR 4 and the Introduction to Masters, Arthur has missed my suggested rewording which would clarify that you are not 25 until you have been here for 25 years. For the currently accepted principle of Masters being those who have a minimum age of 25 years to be true my suggestions in Issue 20 needs to be discussed.

To say that domestic Masters competitions are not exempt from the age determination date according to MGR 4 is hypocritical. The members of LEN chose to ignore the previous age determination date for domestic competition so there is no reason why other Federations should not do so now. SWAG 1 specifically allows it.

It is okay for Arthur and I to know that SWAG 1 was intended for youngsters but there is nothing in the Rule book to clarify this for newcomers and after all Masters are age group swimmers not Open.

In my previous article I set out to arouse awareness, discussion and ultimately understanding of the Rules which govern us all. Arthur has joined in the discussion, let us hope that he takes up my suggestion of a Masters Handbook with the Masters Committee so that we can also increase understanding. GS

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But words once spoken can never be recall'd.

- Wentworth Dillon Roscommon

