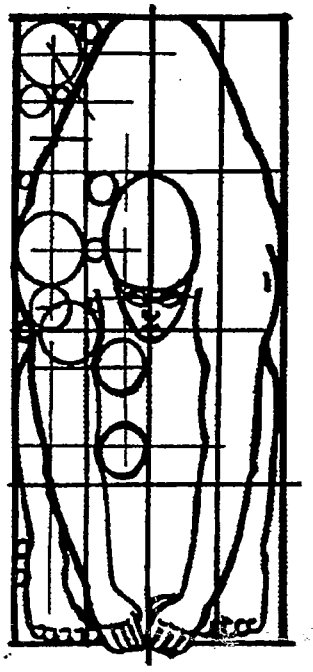

AUSTRALIAN MASTERS SWIMMING COACHES NEWSLETTER

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Editorial

Hello to all our Readers

Well the first issue for 1998 was a little slow in getting out, but hopefully we've done better with the second issue.

Subscriptions to this publication are handled by the National Office. Please double check your subscription and if you feel it is incorrect notify Ivan Wingate at the address to the left of this page. As with all handovers, sometimes the information gets a little lost or different programs are used and it takes some sorting out. Bear with us while we go through this transitional period.

We are always looking for articles of interest from coaches and swimmers. If there is a topic you would like to share with others, please send it to us. The address is to the left of this page

Many thanks to the contributors this issue. Mal Innes reports on a study of one of his swimmers. Russell Ogden explains the role of the National Technical Committee. Gordon Medcalf is the subject of our Coaches Profile and has also written an interesting article on 'sprinting for older athletes' which will appear in the next issue. Sue Needham in her letter to the Editor has responded to Gary Knights article on Backstroke which appeared in the previous issue. This is the type of correspondence we would like to see happening in this newsletter. Kay Cox has written an article on the neck to knee bathers, and Judy Bonning gives us some hints on motivating masters swimmers. I hope you enjoy this issue. Thank you again to all the State Coaching Directors for their reports and efforts organising the many coaching courses.

From Around the Branches

(Reports from State Coaching Directors)

National Coaching and Education

Changes and Updates to Courses in 1998

This year seems to be a year of updating and review for both coaching and teaching of swimming courses. Whilst we are still putting the final touches to the Level 1M course that has been accepted for national re-accreditation we have to review the Level 2M course by October this year. All Branch Coaching Directors and members of the coaching Panel will have received request for assistance however, if any other coaches or members have any suggestions about the structure and content of this course I would be pleased to hear form them.

The new Austswim Qualification Scheme has included in its general Certificate the specialists area of Adult, Competitive strokes and Open Water Swimming (ie teaching in open water environments). So anyone wanting qualifications for teaching adults to swim should look into doing this course.

For those who are planning ahead the Annual ASCTA Convention will be conducted on the Gold Coast form 27 April until 4th May 1999. This is a very informative and well attended convention for all coaches and teachers of swimming. If you want to catch up with the latest in swimming and high profile personalities from all areas of the sport, this is the place to do it. AUSSI participates in the Masters stream and is interested to hear suggestions for the programme for next year as soon as possible. If you have an area of need or interest please let us know.

Kay Cox
Director of Coaching
8 Syree Crt Marmion WA 6020

Northern Territory

Northern Territory Masters swimmers have been fortunate enough to experience one of the warmest dry seasons in a long time. This means no excuses for not training as there have been very few days where the temperature has been below 30 degrees during the day. Southerners have obviously heard of our utopia, with the Commonwealth Games IM team currently spending a week here in Darwin for a training and acclimatisation camp as part of their lead up to Kuala Lumpur in September/October. Several Masters swimmers have been seen fraternising with the likes of Daniel Kowalski, Matthew Dunn, Petria Thomas and Don Talbot observing strokes and gaining tips on technique. Hope it all pays off!

Three Darwin Stingers attended the World Masters Swim in Casablanca in June, returning home with medals and extremely creditable placings. We congratulate Chris Jeffs, Lores Worman, Bobby Lea (who won several 2nds and 3rds, including a 2nd in the Open Water swim) and thank them for putting Darwin on the map. Hopefully we will have increased interest in next year's National Swim to be held here in Darwin. Darwin Stinger, Gerda Williams has been setting more national records in the 55-59 age group, this time in short course events when she recently attended a Masters meet in Townsville, catching up with her former clubmates. (Guess she did more than just 'catch up' with some of the times she produced. Well done.)

Next month will see more enthusiastic Stingers, Bill Trigg, Joan Curtain and Sally Thomas competing overseas in the World Masters Games in Portland, Oregon. With the 7th Honda Central Australian Masters Games on again this year in Alice Springs in October preparations are fully underway by the Branch to once again make the swimming a memorable time. We are all looking forward to renewing friendships, having fun and swimming well in the now heated pool. If you want to experience a good time then this is the place to be in mid-October.

Jacinta Stirrat
Fitness/Coaching Director
AUSSI NT Branch

ACT

Through their participation at last years Masters Games David Mortlock Secretary of Tuggeranong AUSSI Swimming Club and his wife Jill gained a reputation at their over 50's circuit class for fitness through swimming. Realising that there could be an opportunity to start a daytime swim session for the more elderly they addressed a meeting of the Pensioners and Retirees Society.

Encouraged by the response an appointment was made with the Grants Manager of the Department of Sport and Recreation with the view of obtaining some assistance in setting up a program. The response from the Department was encouraging and a formal application for financial assistance to purchase finds, pull buoys, pool/lane hire, admin. expenses and expenses for coaches was submitted.

Continued on page 2

From around the Branches cont'd

The program was launched on the 14 May and now regularly has up to ten swimmers at the weekly session on Thursdays from 11am to 12noon.

News of the program is slowly spreading basically by word of mouth, and also the presence of a regular structured swim program has attracted interest from other swimmers at the pool which has broadened both the age and ability range requiring the use of two lanes for training. During Seniors Week at the end of September a special session will be run every day in which senior citizens will be invited to come and try Masters swimming.

Through a request made by David to the ACT Branch a letter has been sent to ACT Sports House requesting a financial grant of $2500.00 for 10,000 full colour promotional pamphlets to be distributed by members to such places as physio and medical centres, sports gyms and chiropractic centres. Also available through the National Office is a 30 second promotional video, in Beta format which could be used in TV promotions.

David and Jill have set a goal of sixty or more people who are currently not swimming at all to be doing so regularly by the end of the year.

"Backstroke a different view" certainly encouraged me to continue with the regular inclusion of the stroke in training sessions, despite resistance from some swimmers. Backstroke is highly recommended as the preferred stroke for swimmers with lower back problems and asthmatics especially when under stress. Backstroke also enables the coach to attract the swimmers attention much more easily for stroke correction.

Les Worthington

Western Australia

Western Australia's coaching and education team is fully operational again after several months of not having a Branch Technical officer Peter Maloney (WA's 1997 Coach of the Year) has taken on the task. State Coach Sue Pow has visited 7 clubs this year conducting talks and stroke workshops during club night. A Level 2M coaching course I being planned by Kay Cox Director of Fitness and Education for September and October and Peter Maloney is looking at a timetable of technical courses.

Kay Cox Director of Fitness and Education

Queensland

South

Director of Coaching South, Queensland Masters Swimming, Graham Mason advises a Masters Level 1 Accreditation, Re-accredication and Bridging course will be held at Sports House, Milton on 22/23 August 1998.

Masters Level 11 Accreditation, Re-accreditation and Bridging course will be held at Sports House on 26/27 September. A Stroke Correction Course will be held in conjunction with the Level 11 course on Sunday 27 September.

Interested persons please contact Graham on 07 38090808.

North

A Level 1M Coaching Course will be held on the 10th and 11th October. For more details please contact Rod Porteous on 07 49782907

Tasmania

The 23rd AUSSI Masters National Swim was held in Hobart 12th–14th March. The venue was the newly built Tattersall's Hobart Aquatic Centre built on the site of the original Olympic Pool. This facility features an 8 lane 50m pool, a 6 lane 25m pool and a diving pool.

This event attracted 435 competitors from all over Australia and some from overseas. The last time the National Swim was held in Tasmania was in Devonport at an outdoor venue, however with the temperatures ranging from 37°C to 15°C over the three days, the indoor pool was a guarantee for comfortable swimming.

The event was officially opened by the Governor of Tasmania, Sir Guy Green and he also presented the individual 200m Butterfly medals.

The youngest swimmer was 22 and the oldest swimmer 91. There were 29 individual and 1 relay national record either broken or established.

During a break in the competition, members of a local Fin Swimming club demonstrated 2 events, swimming on the surface and then totally submerged for 50m using a snorkel and a mono–fin.

The three days of competition concluded with a Presentation Dinner where individual aggregate medals were presented. The winning club was Hobart Masters (Tas) and North Lodge Neptunes (Vic) as runners up.

The Swimmers of the Meet were Jen Thommason (Brisbane Southside) and Dieter Loeliger (Adelaide Masters).

Other presentations at the dinner included: The National Heart Foundation Award to John Pugh (Launceston AUSSI) The Visitors Trophy to North Lodge Neptunes; The National Aerobic Trophy to Ettalong (NSW); Coach of the Year to Rod Porteous (Gladstone Gropers, Qld)

Pauline Samson

Victoria

A Level 1M coaching course and supplementary course is planned for October

Continued on page 5

Letters to the Editor

Dear Peter and Claire

Congratulations on the production of the AMSCN, and your stated aim of publishing new material. If every Masters coach in Australia submitted a short statement, program or article you would fill publications years ahead!

I particularly appreciated the article Backstroke....A Different View by Gary Knight. He noted two reasons why backstroke is difficult/disliked.

A third one is the fact, particularly in Queensland, of accumulated skin damage to ladies' skin on the face and neck by lying face up into the burning sunshine.

You might say ... I swim at 7am, so its' immaterial. However, in midsummer when the sun rises at 5am or (before) you can easily burn at that time of day.

We're fortunate that our local council has recently shaded our 25m pool, so that by selecting times to swim I am now able to **practice backstroke in shade.**

Last year, for the first time for years I was able to practice backstroke in comfort, and was regarded with several Australian best ever top ten times for my efforts. (1 hr back shortcourse 3450m 45-49years age group)

Practice backstroke is the key to this improvement and Gary has recommended between 20% and 50% in training. Another point I'd wholeheartedly support is using the exercise bike to enhance kick training. After reading Gary's article I checked my logbook for the amount of stationary cycling training I undertook last year. Being a distance performer I had varied this work to graduate up to 20 mins anaerobic threshold continuous at average HR of 160BPM. Of course this was preceded by a warmup and followed by stretch and cool down.

Gary's comments on **kick** I'd like to expand on by saying that I consider that the depth of the kick is likely to be related to the speed of arm rotation and is therefore not necessarily shallow (Gary talks of the kick as being 'small' which I read as shallow). From my own personal experience I feel that a deep kick is OK, but have been told that mine is too deep! However, my 200m sc kick time is 3min 44 secs, compared to 3min 12 sec swim. Also, while suffering a shoulder problem I have kicked 1500m sc in 28.56, so I'm confident that in my case a deep kick is good. What do others think? Maybe other coaches will add to my comments ... please.

Another aspect I found useful was the emphasis on stretching. Recently, I'd mentioned to a gentleman squad member that 3 x 1 hr stretching sessions per week would be of incredible benefit to his overall swimming improvement, as **flexibility is one of the five components of fitness.**

Well, he is hard to convince, but I maintain that stretching and the resultant improvement in flexibility is the **easiest method to both improve swimming and prevent injury.** Rod and Michael's articles were therefore great reinforcement to knowledge.

I'm about to embark on an off season training program on a 33 foot yacht along the Qld. Coast and Whitsunday Islands which should provide me with opportunities to invent new training methods, like snorkelling across coral island lagoons and climbing Whitsunday Peak. Hopefully Graham and I will return a lot fitter and with some constructive of season training ideas to submit. All the best for the publication and we look forward to reading the next issue.

Keeping Masters Swimmers Motivated

By Judy Bonning (Masters Coach, Mission Bay Aquatic Training Centre Boca Raton, Florida)

Not unlike children, most adults need a little entertainment, some inspiration and lots of encouragement to keep themselves motivated to stay fit year after year after year. I strongly feel that social as well as goal-oriented activities are a vital part of any successful Masters program.

The following are a list of ideas and suggestions that I have found useful in motivating both fitness and competitive swimmers.

Newsletters

Monthly newsletters help keep communication lines open. Adults are not children that you can sit down all at one time and tell them what is going on. Items to include in the newsletter are:

- Swimmer and/or triathlete of the month. We are now awarding a dinner for two donated by a sponsoring restaurant.
- Schedule of events including video-taping schedule, meets, socials, speakers, etc.
- Reports of meets and triathlons to recognise time improvements as well as awards.
- Advertisements from sponsors or special contributors to programs. Our business card size ads are sold for $10.00 per month.
- Networking - an idea taken from Omaha Masters Coach Todd Samland. We list the businesses, names and telephone number of swimmers who would like to do business with other swimmers.
- Educational articles on stretching, nutrition, biomechanics, etc. Masters swimmers are always hungry for knowledge.
- Cartoons and quotes taken from newspapers, swimming magazines and other newsletters (be sure to cite sources).

The feedback that I have received indicates that swimmers like newsletters that are personable. The important thing is to get it out on a regular basis. Don't worry if it's not perfect or super-professional. My worst subject in college was English composition!

Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards are useful for making special announcements, displaying entry forms and listing upcoming events. We like to put up pictures from parties, meets, etc of team members having a good time.

Socials

Oh, do Masters love socials. The list for ideas in unlimited. Be creative or use creative members of your team. "Pot Luck" suppers are often the easiest, cheapest and best way to go. We always have a ready supply of paper goods and utensils so we're ready for our next one and nothing is ever wasted. The nice thing about pot lucks is that they are easy to plan and no one person is "stuck' with the planning. Some of our successful socials have included hat parties, Halloween parties, barbecues, birthday celebrations at restaurants or on the pool deck, wine and cheese parties, baby showers, and singles-only Valentine parties (they bring a friend that is not a date). Socials after meets are almost always a must! Other "team builders" include a canoe trip/river rafting weekend, a roller skating or ice skating party. Women swimmers may even enjoy a "slumber party".

> "I STRONGLY FEEL THAT SOCIAL AS WELL AS GOAL-ORIENTED ACTIVITIES ARE A VITAL PART OF ANY SUCCESSFUL MASTERS PROGRAM."

Team Trips

Team trips to local, statewide, national and international meets have always been a big reason for many Masters to compete. Competitive and social needs are both satisfied and new friendships are made with people of similar interests. The nicest part for a Masters coach is that the coach doesn't have to worry about discipline. They are adults (most of them are, anyway!) and other than assisting in some of the planning and team logistics, the coaches can enjoy themselves too.

Monthly Activities

Each month I like to have at least one local meet or some activity that motivates the swimmers to keep swimming on a regular basis. For example, a monthly half-hour swim for distance. Other ideas that have worked for us include:

January: Gear everyone up for the One Hour Swim for Distance (a postal event) to be held at the end of the month. Some will go for national Top Ten rankings and others will be overjoyed if they complete the hour.

February: Go to Dick Bower's Mardi Gras meet in New Orleans. The host team finds housing and makes sure everyone has a good time. Several parades are observed, many beads are caught and a great social is enjoyed by all. Highly recommended.

March: good month for a softball game and a barbecue.

April: This is the month that Mission Bay has a two-day short course yard meet. All abilities are encouraged to participate. Last year, we had a small group of triathletes take a week to visit and train with other triathletes in the California hills.

May: Short Course Nationals always falls into this month. This is a popular team trip.

June: We host another two day meet, a long course this time. Once again, everyone gets involved. The non-competitors help time, give out awards, organise the hospitality and social and work the computers.

July: Open water swimming is a challenge for everyone. Lake and ocean swims are definitely a must!

August: Age group versus the Masters meet. Seeding all age groups and sexes together makes it a great way to build respect and rapport in both directions. Long Course Nationals is another team trip this month.

September: North/South Dual Meet and Swim for Distance Month. Swim for Distance was an idea taken from the Lone Star Masters and coach Jim Montgomery. Swimmers strive to reach one of the five different levels during the month. Yardage swum during the month is totalled and awards given. The State of Florida is now hosting a North/South dual meet. Local teams are combined, which gives everyone a better chance to make new friends and build team spirit.

October: Ghoul Meet. If you have a real fun and crazy group, make them wear costumes. We hold a pentathlon (50 of each stroke and a 100IM) Fun awards (big cookies, little plastic pumpkins with goodies, or a trophy with a pumpkin on top) are given to everyone who finishes all five events. You may want to score and give awards to the swimmers with the least total time in their age group.

November: Turkey Shoot Meet. A "fun meet". In California, this meet had a turkey donated from a local store. A timer was set and when it went off, the winner of the heat that was in the water won a turkey.

December: Holiday Classic Swim Meet. A two day short course meter meet. This meet is turning out to be very popular. We schedule it early in the month to avoid holiday conflicts.

From the Ed - although Judy wrote this article for the American reader, the information is very relevant. The same yearly program of activities could be drawn up following the Australian masters swim calendar.

Judy and John Bonning now live in Australia and are managers of the Forbes Carlile Swim School in Sydney.

> "GROW OLD ALONG WITH ME!
> THE BEST IS YET TO BE."
>
> ROBERT BROWNING

Eight Week Case Study on a Masters Swimmer

by Mal Innes - Level 2M Candidate Coach, Talays AUSSI, Tasmania

Susan Williams (39 year old female)

Susan had been swimming for seven years when she joined my squad two years ago. She also has a big commitment to her running, which she has been doing six days per week for most of the past ten years. Her swimming has become her primary interest with competition growing in importance as her ability improves.

Her health status is excellent. She is an extremely fit woman of normal blood pressure 145/95, no heart murmurs and normal resting E.C.G. When exercise tested in October 1997 at 92% maximum over 17 minutes she had no heart arrhythmia. Her decision to seriously approach her exercise/sporting regime came from experiencing ill health during her pregnancies, motivating her towards good health and fitness achievable from running and swimming.

Susan has a high level of aerobic capacity and is capable of a high standard of application to training and competition. She takes direction well and accepts correction without complaint. Her aerobic base has been built over many years of active exercise. When tested at 10am in the morning her resting heart rate was 72BPM.

Following are the results achieved on EX 80 Combie Cycle.

Results of Aerobic Capacity Test

Work Load/H/R	1	300/87
	2	420/86
	3	660/100
	4	780/110
	5	900/114
	6	1080/126
Mean 5 and 6		120
Recovery Heart Rate BPM		1min 81
VO2 Max (Ml/Kg/min)		87

Susan has the ability to compete successfully in swim meets of her choice. A full training schedule for each meet has been met with vigour e.g. Canberra in October 1997, Susan had PBs in all five events she entered, after successfully fulfilling the 10 week macrocycle. This culminated in two bronze medals from the meet.

Susan improved her 200F/S with a PB of 2:48 from 2:53 in spite of badly pacing the third leg and unnecessary drop off in last 100.

- 100 fly PB 1:46 from 1:53 (2nd lap drop off)
- 400 free PB 6:08 from 6:18 (well paced but with 3 poor turns)
- 800 free PB 12:36 from 12:48 (turns and breakout need more work)
- 50 fly PB improved to :47 from :50

Susan is a slim fit young woman 169 cm tall and 61.5 kg in weight and 21.5% body fat averaged from skinfold test.

Skinfold Test

Upper arm flexed	5.6/27.5
Chest expanded	9.8/89
Waist	8.1/69.5
Hip	5.6/94
Mid Thigh	54.5
Total	**29.1 = 21.5%**

She has intermittent set backs with asthma. There is a threat to her bronchial condition from pollution when running, but probably no greater than that of injury, current to all athletes. Flexibility is average. Sit and reach test = 20cm

Susan is reasonably efficient in all four strokes. We are currently concentrating on some small biomechanic problems.

1. Freestyle

On entry she has an over reach which causes her arms to slap, creating turbulence and decelerating forward speed. The drill we are using is high elbow position throughout the first half of the recovery and hand entry before the arm is completely extended.

2. Butterfly

She glides after her arms enter and executes both kicks before starting the underwater arm stroke. There is no counterbalance of the upsweep of her armstroke and her hips sink during the phases of the stroke. We are improving this with a lot of 1 arm fly and also fly pulling. She swims down the pool using a continuous armstroke allowing her legs to wave behind her. She has found that her legs naturally make two small downward thrusts during each stroke cycle and that those thrusts occur in proper sequence with her arms.

3. Backstroke

We have to eliminate should drag caused by swimming too flat without rotation. We practice drill of entering arms and rolling body toward it until the opposite shoulder pops out of the water. She then rolls towards the opposite side during the second downsweep and second upsweep until the shoulder of the stroking arm breaks the surface. We practice it as pulling drill or full drill stroke drill. This is helping to keep Susan on her side with less resistance.

4. Breaststroke

We have had a problem with rotational flexibility at the knee and ankle joints preventing her feet from turning out sufficiently for an effective outsweep. We are improving flexibility with knee pushes, standing leg flexors, cross legged sitting ankle stretches for breaststroke, straight leg sitting ankle stretches for breaststrokers, toe pushes etc.

Susan has a positive mental approach. She reacts well in the squad and responds well to approval. She has been advised to keep progress charts as a means to motivation. Her intrinsic motivation is very strong. Her personal successes are maintaining her interval times while swimming to the clock, improving distances and turns. She is able to accept imagery of her self in perfect race rehearsal and execution. Specific goals are to improve technique and skill and be fit and slim for life. Performance goals are structured with reassurance of her ability and reminders of the preparation we have done to date to condition herself. She responds to the excitement of the meet and must be reminded to think logically throughout the race. Stress outside her pool hours does carry over to training occasionally. We acknowledge this and try to complete the program in spite of this or on rare occasions adapt to a moderate program.

Susan is generally able to plan and execute her skills adequately. Most of her training and competing is done in a closed environment, with occasional open water swims where her endurance becomes obvious and planning skill is adequately carried out with appropriate wet suit etc. Her learning method is a mixture of observation and practice and correction. She works hard on improving her stroke skills by diligently applying drills on program as per previously mentioned. Distance swimming in open water swims gives her variety and a sense of fun with the companionship of other club members while calling on and enhancing her endurance skills which are already excellent (VO2 Max 87). Stroke rate and count requires more pool work, as do her skills in turning and diving, breakouts, wall approaches and pacing which are not as developed as her other skills. This is obvious to her when we compare her open water swim times to pool swims.

The eight week case study that Susan Williams will participate in with me will run from 1.12.97 until 26.1.98. It will fall in a macrocycle that runs from 17.11.97 until 11.3.98 for the AUSSI Nationals to fulfil her aims to improve on last year's performance. She will also compete in the State Long Course Championships 31. 1.98 in:

- Event 1 400 free
- Event 5 100 free
- Event 8 200 IM
- Event 1 200 free
- Event 15 100fly

The case study picks up in the second of six mesocycles and completes with the third mesocycle. Following are planner and evaluations charts on Step tests 5 x 200 and T 2000. Other tests on planner are 400 free done for race pace tests, 100 fly to im-

Continued on page 5

Case Study continued from page 4

prove split and turn, 200IM for pacing and stroke transition, 100/200 kick for leg power in events. 75 fly is a lactate tolerance test. HR will be evaluated in step tests.

Evaluation Chart

Step test 5 x 200 Current best time 2:48 H/R max 180 BPM

1.12.97

Target Swims	Actual	Final 100m / HR		Stoke Count
75% 3:30	3:11:34	1:33	135	
80% 3:21	3:09:32	1:36	143	
85% 3:13	3:04	1:34	142	54
90% 3:04	3:02	1:33	157	51
95% 2.56	2:5	1:31	157	49

Comments
Pacing not good in early set.
Last set held back, need to give more mentally.

18.12.97

Target Swims	Actual	Comments
75% 3:11	3:19	Rough water affected times.
80% 3:09	3.18	Shoulder blade and neck sensitivity
85% 3:04	3:12	reported. Decision to reduce intensity for
90% 3:02	3:10	next 3 sessions.
95% 2:59	3:09	

20.1.98

Target Swims	Actual	Comments
75% 3:11	3:21	Christmas break has not recovered as yet.
80% 3:09	3:18	Pool overload did not help on turns, walls
90% 3:02	3:11	congested, some slower swimmers in lane.
85% 3:04	3:14	
95% 2:59	3:09	

Note: Mal has produced a 'Planner Chart' which I have left out due to space availability and reproduction time. If you want a copy contact Mal at Talays AUSSI, Tasmania.

From Around the Branches cont'd from page 2

1998. Congratulations to Dr Kay Cox (National Director of Coaching) who successfully gained reaccreditation for the Level 1M course earlier this year. The course helps to give participants a foundation to successfully coach adults at club level. More qualified coaches means better programs which leads to better performances by our club swimmers. Interested persons including from interstate, are more than welcome to take part. Enquiries can be made to Jodi-Ann Beard at the Vic. Branch Office, phone (03) 98092588.

Also fast approaching is the Victorian Short Course Meet to be held at the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre on August 16. If past meets at the year-old centre are anything to go on, this one will provide great enjoyment and competitive opportunities.

Remember to look out for our new web site www.vicnet.net.au/vaussi/ and e-mail address mastswim@jeaek.com.au

David Poulton

FINA Masters Rules

- relays will also be swum in gender and age group, you cannot swim 'down' an age group
- on the Referee's long whistle you *may* take your position at the front of the platform(not mandatory)
- feet *must* turn outwards in breaststroke kick and all movements of the legs shall be simultaneous

Coaches Profile

Name: Gordon Medcalf
Age: 69 yrs
Club: Melville W.A. AUSSI -19 years Life member. Cottesloe Crabs Winter Swimming Club - 19 years. W.A. Vet. Athletic Club - 8 years
Coaching: ASA level 1 1984 -15 years. Masters level 1 1986 -13 years. Masters level 2 1992 -7 years.
Memorable Moments: The many times when a swimmer achieves a goal that I've helped with, like the first 50m, the first 400m, the first ocean swim, a P.B., or a time goal.
Favourite Session:
1. With school squad.
Warm up 400 (50 easy 50 drill) x 4
20 x 25m on 1min. starts
8 x (10m dash with relay change)
200 easy
2. Self
200 warm up
4 x (3 x 50 explode, build, easy) back, free
4 x 25, 2 free, 1 fly, 1 back
200 cool down - including 50 fly very easy
Benefits for Me: The social benefits interacting with people who have similar interests and being able to help some of them; watching the group develop; opportunity to mix with other coaches and learn more; opportunity to make new friends by helping newcomers to settle in and set goals etc.
Own Highlights: back to back National Titles at the Australian Winter Swimming championships in 1994 and 1995.
Food: Eat most - Summer: Lots of meat and salad rolls, pastas, cereals, fruit and vegies. Winter - (In Broome) mud crabs and fish
Favourite snacks: Fruit - but also ice cream and chocolate!
Worst Vices: Ice cream and chocolate as above
Coaching: School - Help with pre-competition sprint training at my old school.
AUSSI - As Club Fitness Director, overview of coaching within the Club (we have 5 coaches) and promotion of extension activities such as strength training.
As State Coach for the past couple of years, visiting the Clubs.
How Do you Stay in Touch with Coaching Information? Read everything I can find, attend seminars. Member of Australian Public Health Association and Australian Nutrition Foundation. Read The Masters Athlete
Future Plans: Just stay with it and enjoy it. Look forward to attending a couple of major events every year.
What Keeps you Motivated?: Knowing that if I don't stay fit it's a lot of hard work getting back again. The excitement of competition, particularly with the Cottesloe Crabs in the Winter Swimming Association.
What do you Enjoy about Masters Sport?: The camaraderie. During the past 15 years my wife and I have entered athletic and swimming events at many Masters Games etc in Australia and elsewhere. The highlights are: meeting old friends, the opening and closing ceremonies, the medal presentations, the Masters Mile for everyone, watching other masters sports, team triathlons and touring.
Favourite Events: Sprints and throws and pentathlons
Occupations: Past - State Health Department Present - enjoying retirement
Persons Most Admired: Percy Oliver - who used to coach us when we were kids David Neesham - who helped me become a competitor again about 20 years ago.
Philosophy: Coaching masters swimming is not just pool work. they are interested in a fitness lifestyle, so we need to give accurate information about exercise physiology, expectations from training, food and nutrition and so on, to help them manage their lifestyles.
Advice to Masters Swimmers who want to Improve: Supplement your pool work with strength training and seek expert advice about it. Swim 3 or 4 times a week. Learn to use the pool clock. Set achievable short term goals within a yearly programme and enjoy it.

Overtraining in the Older Athlete - Causes, Prevention and Symptoms

by Dr David Jenkins

We can safely estimate that 10% of all athletes are overtrained at any one time and that 60% of elite athletes will show symptoms of overtraining at some stage of their careers. Not surprisingly, those athletes most susceptible to the problem are those who are highly motivated and dedicated to training.

Technically, overtraining can lead to what is known as 'staleness' which normally coincides with partial, if not a substantial loss of fitness. Staleness is characterised by a 'negative training effect' and excessive fatigue. In other words, athletes feel continually tired and performance starts getting worse, often despite (or in spite of) increased training. A vicious cycle then begins. To stop the slide in performance, we'll train harder and in doing so only dig ourselves into a deeper hole.

Overtraining is often accompanied by feelings of apathy, depression, anxiety, boredom, poor sleeping patterns, low motivation and lack of confidence. For good measure, throw in illness and injury too! Given these hallmarks which I'm sure many of us are familiar with, it is easy to agree that prevention is better than cure. A big reduction in training load for months and sometimes years might be required to fully recover from staleness.

So, how can we maximise our training load to remain competitive while at the same time avoiding staleness? Thankfully, there are several precautions we can take. Firstly, be sure to train specifically for your event or sport and try not to waste energy on unnecessary, peripheral activities (unless your training plan warrants it!). Secondly, try to periodize (plan) your training schedule well in advance in order to gradually increase overload (i.e., the stress needed to cause improvements). That is, avoid combining periods of high volume (high mileage) with high intensity (high heart rate) - unless it is only for a few days. Thus, when volume is high, intensity should be low (and visa versa). When both components are high, the demands on the muscles and nervous system are excessively high and additional recovery between training sessions will be necessary. Similarly, abrupt increases in training load need to be avoided; thus, planning in advance is again important. Thirdly, make every effort to insert recovery days into your training schedule (and stick to them!). Recovery days, when combined with a balanced, high carbohydrate diet, will help ensure you top up those muscle glycogen (carbohydrate) reserves and allow repair of muscle fibres. Remember that we need to ensure quality in our training - insufficient recovery between sessions will simply reduce quality and impair improvements. From a psychological perspective, rest days are also essential for mental recovery. These preventative strategies can certainly guard against losing our hard-earned fitness.

However, suppose we want to push ourselves to the edge in the lead-up to an important competition? What danger signs of overtraining can we look for in order to modify our training before it is too late? It seems that the best predictors of overtraining are the subjective feelings of fatigue, stress, sleep abnormalities and muscle soreness that we get. Drs Mackinnon and Hooper have recently explained in *Sports Coach* how log books allow an athlete to record daily ratings in each of these variables which then allows the coach and/or athlete to recognise a general deterioration in mood and implement the necessary changes in training to prevent long-term complications.

It looks fairly easy on paper to prevent overtraining, but in practice a number of difficulties arise. Firstly, planning a long-term training program is not easy. You need to identify competition dates well in advance and schedule specific phases of your training around key periods. Secondly, you need to recognise and accept the importance of scheduled recovery days and have the self-discipline to rest. Finally, you must try and keep an accurate, daily record of your stress, fatigue, sleep patterns and muscle soreness to gauge your physical well-being. Then be flexible. Use these strategies to manipulate your training program in accordance with your changing domestic, professional and physiological environments. Listen to your body!

'Neck to Knees' Bathers

by Dr Kay Cox

During the Atlanta Olympic games we witnessed the use of a different style of swimsuit, the fuller half leg suit worn by swimmers such as Michelle Smith. In another time these would have probably been called 'Neck to Knees'. .

At the recent World Swimming Championships in Perth the use of these bathers was more prevalent with several Australian swimmers wearing them. Since several of these swimmers won medals it raises the question 'did this swimsuit have any advantages over the conventional swims suits worn by the other women or the bikini brief style worn by the men?' Are we likely to see these swim suits or bathers in AUSSI Masters Swimming? At the recent National Swim in Hobart a high profile visiting male swimmer from the US wore one of these longer style suits. What advantage does this form of swimwear offer over the more traditional attire.

'Shaving down' or the removal of body hair has been shown to reduce the amount of active drag and hence the energy demands of competitive swimming (Sharp et al. 1989, Maglischo 1993). The style of swimsuit for both men and women has changed over the years with them becoming more streamline, sleeker and made of material designed to reduce drag. However, few tests have been carried out to assess the effectiveness of these swimsuits. One particular swimsuit designed for men in the United States to minimize resistance the 'torso suit' (trunk suit) has been evaluated. The suit covers the upper body and is cut away at the shoulders similar to a woman's suit. It is made from 80% polyester and 20% polyerethane. In a study by Starling et al. (1995) this suit was compared to a standard men's' swimsuit, (78% Antron nylon and 22% woven lycra). The investigators conducted 2 trials. The first one took 8 competitive male swimmers, average age 30 years and had them swim in both suits, on different occasions. The swimmers were asked to swim 365.8 metres (400 yards - this study was conducted in the US) freestyle at a set pace of approximately 90% of their maximal effort on each test. Heart rate was measured while swimming and the time for the total swim was recorded. They also recorded the time taken for 4 complete stroke cycles every 91.6 metres (100 yards), in order to calculate swimming speed (metres per second) and the average time for each stroke. From this they calculated the distance covered for each stroke over the 365.8 m (400 yards). The oxygen consumed

Continued on page 12

Maintaining Your Fitness through the Off Season

by Anita Killmier

Masters swimmers seem to fall into two distinct categories. Those who are primarily swimming for fitness with little or no emphasis on competition, and those competitive "beasts" seeking improvements against the clock.

Often there is a cross over from one category to another as interests wax and wane according to work schedules and family demands. Some swimmers will remain with the sport for the rest of their lives; but even some of the "beasts" are unlikely to maintain interest or enthusiasm to train hard for competition indefinitely.

What should we do then when the last race of the season is over and we hang up our togs for the last time? Is it better to swim all year round? Or should we walk away from the pool and take a complete physical and mental break?

The answer is either, or both; but only you can decide. Before you do however, let's look at the different phases of the season as this might influence your decision. Each year is divided into one or more seasons. Most Masters will have two seasons per year, (Summer Long Course, Winter Short Course) but in some cases three or four major meets per year could warrant breaking the annual plan into three or four smaller seasons.

Once you have decided on the number of seasons, work on the upcoming season (which will culminate in your most important event) and divide it into five phases. The phases are called various names depending on what books you read, and differ in the frequency, duration, volume and intensity of work performed.

Phase 1

* Phase 1 is usually called the **Pre Season** or build-up phase lasting two to four weeks. This is when you are either returning from a complete break, or are increasing the number and duration of sessions ready for the next phase. Typical sets are aerobic with low heart rates, short rest and an emphasis on stroke technique.

Phase 2

* Phase 2 is commonly called the **Endurance or Conditioning phase.** It is characterised by a higher volume of work than any other time of the year. Sets are still relatively easy, but some slightly harder overdistance sets at moderate intensities and short rest intervals (Anaerobic Threshold) are introduced (see previous issue of TMA). Some short speed sets with long rest will also be added. This phase may last anywhere from four to ten weeks.

Phase 3

* Phase 3 is the **Quality or Competition phase** lasting four to eight weeks. This is the most intense time of the season as the volume decreases but intensity of swims increases. Broken swims (eg 4X50m for a 200 swimmer) over your race distance at, or faster than race pace must be interspersed with slow recovery swims to avoid injury and overtraining. Due to the potential danger of these types of sets they should only be performed by fit swimmers who have had a sufficient lead up, and with your GP's consent.

Phase 4

* Phase 4 is the **Taper phase** lasting one to four weeks. The swimmer is brought to a peak performance by reducing volume and intensity down to at least half in the final week prior to the main competition. As the taper is a complex subject I will go into greater detail in a future issue. However, for the time being just bear in mind that "You can't taper a toothpick" and some swimmers may not do enough mileage to even justify a taper in the true sense. A couple of days of easy swimming may be all that is required if you don't have a big base.

Phase 5

* Phase 5 is commonly called the **Off Season or Maintenance phase** which can last for as long as you want it to as long as you give yourself sufficient time to work through all the phases before your next major meet.

I recommend to my competitive swimmers that if they are going to take a complete break from swimming, to only take two weeks. After this time they will start to lose any fitness gains that they have made during the previous season. If you want to improve from one season to the next, you really need to capitalise on these gains. This will mean training at least two to three times a week for at least a half hour at a time, with the majority of work being performed in the Anaerobic Threshold range, or 30 to 40 beats per minute below your maximum heart rate (Approximately 220-age). Depending on how much you do in the main part of the season, 1500m to 2000m is all that you should need each session. Medley work is ideal for over all fitness, as are mixed sets that incorporate pulling and kicking. The following examples are for a maintenance programme totalling around 2000m. It should take a reasonable swimmer about 45 minutes to swim. If you can't make the time intervals given, time your first swim at the speed that elicits the given heart rate mentioned below, add 15 seconds and that becomes your time interval for the remainder of the set. See table below.

If you are a swimmer who doesn't mind if times do not improve from one season to the next, you may like to take a complete break from swimming over the winter months. Often a complete break is best to maintain your enthusiasm.

Now might be the time to take up other forms of aerobic activity such as brisk walking, circuit training in a gym, cycling or jogging. If you completely cease exercise though, you run the risks of stiffening joints and perhaps an added centimetre or two to the waist line. The longer your take a break, the greater the de-training effect and the longer your build up phase will have to be.

If you want to maximise your training this season make sure you have sketched out your phases. Remember "Failing to plan is planning to fail".

MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY
• 200m mix strokes • 10-15 x 100m F/S Odds-swim on 1.45, Evens as 75m pull, 25m kick on 2.00 (aim to have approx. 15 secs rest each 100m). HR 30-40 bpm below max. • 1 x 400m Medley as 25m swim, 25ml easy swim for technique. • 200m F/S count strokes. Aim <22/25m	• 200m swim F/S, 200m pull, 100m kick • 6-8 x (50mFly-Back, 50m Back-Breast, 50m Breast-F/S) on 1.00 (aim for 10-15 secs rest per 50m) • 8 x 25m main stroke fast on .40secs • 100m easy drill	• 4-6 x 75m Medleys, no fly. 10secs rest • 3 x 400m F/S timed with 1.30 rest. Number 1-easy fpr tecjmoqie JR 50-60 bpm below max. Number 2-moderate, HR 30-40 bpm below max. Number 3-fast, HR 20-30 bpm below max. • 5 x 50m main stroke kick 20secs rest. • 100m loosen up

Weight Training for the Masters Swimmer

by Dr Peter Reaburn and Dr Brendan Humphries.

The older an athlete becomes, the more important weight training becomes. The shorter the distance a swimmer races, the more important weight training becomes. For the older masters swimmer who sprints, weights become essential.

Why weights?

There are a number of reasons older sprint swimmers need weights:

1) Sprinters need strength and power
2) Strength and power drop with age
3) Weight training improves strength and power
3) Sprinters need large fast twitch muscle fibres
4) Age leads to decreases in the size of the fast twitch muscle fibre
5) Weight training stimulates increases in fast twitch fibre size

In most of the previous issues of TMA, we have emphasised how important weight training is for the older athlete who wants to hold on to past performances as they age. Weights can offer the "edge" over other competitors who aren't doing anything to hold on to muscle size and strength.

What exercises should I do?

The program below assumes little or no experience with weight training and is designed to develop general body strength but with an emphasis on swim-specific strength development. For more advanced programs that are periodised and individualised, you must see someone *with Australian Strength and Conditioning Association* qualifications or someone recommended by your local swim coach.

A Gym-Based Program (exercises to be done in order)

- Bench Press
- Lat Pulldowns
- Seated Leg Press
- Leg Curls
- Upright Rows
- Bicep Curls
- Tricep kickbacks
- Abdominal Crunches

A Home-Based Program

- Chin-ups for men (use a table, beam or under stairs)
- Dumbell (brick) pullovers lying on your back
- Dumbell flyes (arms at right angles to the body) using bricks
- Push ups
- Half-squats holding bricks/blocks/dumbells
- Dips between chairs or tables
- Sit-ups or crunches

How often, how many and when?

The maximum amount of weight we can lift once and only once is called a repetition maximum or 1RM. To do 8RM is the maximum weight you can lift 8 times and only eight times. To develop strength, we need to *overload* the muscles. For the fit and healthy masters swimmer, 8-12RM is recommended which will be about 65-70% of your 1RM. For the very old or the novice, lifting up to 12-15RM, a lighter weight, is the go. In the gym, these weights are easily adjusted using the pins in the machines or adding weights to the bars.

A *set* is a group of repetitions. In the above case, 8RM is one set. To develop strength in the novice weight trainer, three sets is recommended with 2-3 minutes between sets. Once you've finished doing three sets of one exercise, move onto the next exercise and do three sets of that exercise and so on.

For the home-based exercises above, do 10-15 repetitions of each exercise, take a minutes rest, then do the next exercise so that you have a circuit - three circuits and you're finished.

> "WHILE RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT OLDER PEOPLE TAKE LONGER TO DEVELOP STRENGTH GAINS, IF YOU'VE NEVER DONE WEIGHTS, THE INCREASES IN STRENGTH CAN BE DRAMATIC, EVEN IN THE VERY OLD. "

If you are swimming as well, you'll only need the weights twice a week. If you aren't swimming, then get to the gym 3-4 times a week and watch that strength develop very quickly. While research has shown that older people take longer to develop strength gains, if you've never done weights, the increases in strength can be dramatic, even in the very old.

The weights sessions should be at least 48 hours apart to allow recovery. Recovery can be enhanced by light exercise in the cooldown, part of which could be easy swimming or water exercises.

I'd suggest the weights be done on non-swimming days so that you aren't tired for or from the swim session.

Words of Caution

Weight training raises blood pressure. See your sports physician if you have concerns. Limiting above the head work helps keep the blood pressure under control. Breathing out on the lift or push/press phase and in on the recovery phase of any of the exercises also helps control blood pressure. Getting up slowly from lying or sitting positions is also suggested.

Warming up with stretching and 10 light repetitions is also recommended to prevent injuries or cardiac events. The cool down should include light repetitions and stretching.

Conclusion

Weight training for older sprint swimmers is critical for performance gains and getting the edge over the opposition. Use a strength specialist if you've got access to one since this area is a science unto itself and is filled with misinformation and mythology.

This article is written in response to a request from Peter Jackson (AUSSI Masters Coaching Panel and Coach of the Year) and Peter McMahon who chatted me up during the warm-up at Noosa.

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Dates to Remember

9 - 14 August 1998
World Masters Games Swimming
Portland, Oregon, USA

31 Oct - 1 Nov 1998
Asia Pacific Masters Games Swim.
Gold Coast, Queensland

18 - 23 October 1998
Honda Masters Games Swim.
Alice Springs, N.T.

6 - 14 February 1999
New Zealand Masters Games
Wanganui, New Zealand

11 - 15 May 1999
AUSSI National Swim
Darwin, N.T.

16 - 24 October 1999
Pan Pacific Masters Swim Champ.
Perth, Western Australia

25 Sept - 3 Oct 1999
Australian Msters Games
Adelaide, S.A.

March/April 2000
AUSSI National Swim
Gladstone, Queensland

The New Developments in Breaststroke

by Pic Parkhouse

Anyone who has spent time watching world class Breaststrokers at such competitions as the Olympics and World Short Course Championships would soon become aware of the dramatic changes which have been made in the stroke in the last few years. There is really no comparison with the technique which was used years ago.

The new "wave Breaststroke" has brought about dramatic improvements in the world records for this stroke. At the Barcelona Olympics, Mike Barrowman set a new world record of 02.10.16 for the 200 metres.

Due to the fact that breaststroke is the slowest of the four strokes, there has been constant experimentation by coaches in an attempt to make the stroke faster. It is because of this experimenting, that the stroke has developed more than the other strokes. Recently there have been many ideas put forward to improve Freestyle technique with such things as "swim like a fish", "pressing the T" etc. These teaching suggestions are very sound for people learning the stroke and specially for adult swimmers with poor technique. However these things are not new but simply a way of helping swimmers to do what most better than average Freestylers have been doing for the last forty years. If you ever take time to analyse the Freestyle technique of Olympic swimmers you will notice very clearly the full extension on the entry combined with the body rotation. These observations have prompted such phrases as "swim like a fish", "slippery swimming" etc. There has however been no new stroke invented. Such is not the case with Breaststroke.

The "wave Breaststroke" was developed by the Hungarian coach Jozsef Nagy and was perfected by Mike Barrowman who used the stroke to set the world record at Barcelona in 1992. It is the style used by all top level Breaststrokers today. Nagy first conceived the idea of the wave method by noticing how most swimmers seemed to lift their shoulders high out of the water just before they lunged to the wall for the turn. He then went about experimenting with applying the same principle to the whole stroke.

Learning the Pull

Most Masters swimmers, particularly older ones, are reluctant to try to learn this new technique. However it is not all that difficult to learn. Firstly it is important to understand what happens in the old type of Breaststroke. In this stroke the arm pull is flatter with the main emphasis being on the outsweep and it was at this point that the arms were moving the fastest. In the wave stroke the timing is different, with the fastest part of the arm movement occurring during the insweep. A good drill is to stand on the floor of the pool facing the side of the pool, stretch your arms out and rest over the lane line with the line under the arm pits. Now perform the pull by accelerating the movement so that the hands are moving fastest during the inward sweep. The movement is continued until the hands are extended out front again. The important thing is finish the insweep in front of the lane line not allowing the hands to come any further back than the shoulders. Keep the head above water so you can watch the arms. In the old style the hands stopped under the chest with the palms facing each other in a praying position. This caused a dead spot and delayed the start of the kick. At the end of each arm stroke pause for a couple of seconds and then repeat remembering that once the pull starts it continues with an accelerating movement, finishing with a lunge to full extension. Remember, no hesitation or praying. Slowing down to pray will not help.

> "DUE TO THE FACT THAT BREASTSTROKE IS THE SLOWEST OF THE FOUR STROKES, THERE HAS BEEN CONSTANT EXPERIMENTATION BY COACHES IN AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE THE STROKE FASTER. IT IS BECAUSE OF THIS EXPERIMENTING, THAT THE STROKE HAS DEVELOPED MORE THAN THE OTHER STROKES."

The next stage is to practice the pull by swimming with a dolphin kick which will help to achieve the correct shoulder lift as the hands accelerate inwards. At this point the back is arched up so as to lift the shoulders. Also due to the fast inward sculling movement the elbows will be near the surface with the forearms parallel to the surface. It is important not to lift the head up and back, the shoulders move up and forward so the back is at about 35 degree angle to the surface. This gives the effect of the shoulders moving forward and up with the water flowing down the back.

During the pull, from the start of the outward sweep to the finish of the inward sweep, the legs remain stretched out behind the body. From here they begin to recover so the kick can start as you get into the full extension on the arm movement. This is one of the main differences. In the old stroke there was pull, kick then reach forward. In the wave stroke you have pull, lunge and kick so that the kick has to fall in at the end of the lunge. The head falls forward as an extension of the spine during the lunge. At full extension with the back flat along the surface the face should be in a position where you are looking at the bottom. As this happens the kick finishes with the heels snapping together and the hips rising to the surface. This creates a dolphin like movement. In regards to the legs the kick is not as wide as in the old stroke. This is specially important with regard to the knees. The knees must not separate too much and the feet turn well out and sweep around and back with most of the emphasis on the backward movement. On recovery, an effort should be made to bring the heels right up to the buttocks.

The important thing to remember is that most of the attention should be paid to developing an accelerating continuous arm movement from forward stretch and back to forward stretch with no hesitation. At the point where the hands are together at the end of the inward sweep, the head and shoulder should be well above the surface. As the lunge is made the head and shoulders press into the water as one unit. It is important that the head does not drop down before the hands reach full extension as this will tend to force the hips down.

Most top Breaststrokers spend a great amount of time "training the stroke". When they do their repeats they may do a set of 75s going 25 kick, 25 pull, 25 swim. In 200 repeats it can be 50 swim, 50 kick, 50 pull, 50 swim. The idea here is to be constantly practising the arm pull and the kick without being concerned with the whole stroke. Mike barrowman trained this way and on some days did not do any straight Breaststroke repeats.

As regards the higher shoulder lift this depends on the flexibility of the individual and it is noticeable that women generally get a higher lift than men. However, regardless of age, it is possible to develop this new technique which, once mastered, will enable you to swim the stroke faster than you did with the older style.

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> "SUCCESS IS A PRODUCT OF UNREMITTING ATTENTION TO PURPOSE."
>
> BENJAMIN DISRAELI

Getting Technical About Swimming

by Russell Ogden
Level 1M Coach

No! I don't mean the scientific stuff coaches have us doing to improve our fitness and speed, I mean the Rules. Boring! Did I hear you say? Who needs to know about that? We all do if we intend to swim competitively, and not just at swim meets either but during aerobic and postal swims.

I'm not going to bore you with an in depth blow by blow study of the rules, you can do that to yourself, by reading the AUSSI Masters Swimming in Australia handbook, which all club secretaries should have. What I want to do is enlighten you about the management of those rules and associated infrastructure.

National Technical Committee

Like coaching development, which has a National Coaching Panel with a National Coaching Director and State Coaching Directors to manage the training and accreditation of coaches and updating of new coaching methods, there is also a National Technical Committee. The National and State Directors of Technical Development manage the implementation of the rules but more importantly provide an educational and support base for members inquires as well as training facilities for officials.

Let's deal with the rules aspect first. When AUSSI Masters Swimming in Australia first considered conducting swim meets in this country it quickly became apparent that a set of rules that catered for a wide variety of swimmers was needed and so the National Technical Committee was formed to achieve this goal. Their objective was to produce a set of rules that encouraged and gave everyone the same chance of success in the events that swimmers elect to compete in. They also saw a need to have age groupings of five year spans for parity of performance and the masters ages ranged from twenty five years upwards to over one hundred years. The Technical Committee then produced the AUSSI handbook for all clubs to use. Thus ensuring that everyone had access to the rules and therefore a level playing field. These rules proved so successful that FINA, the world governing body for swimming used them for the basis of their own FINA Masters Rules which govern International Swim Meets.

The National Technical Committee of AUSSI continues to review and update the rules as necessary from time to time. Some of the updated changes are, AUSSI recognises that some swimmers under twenty five would still like to swim but don't feel up to open age group competition, and so we now have a twenty to twenty four year age group. We also recognise that with advancing age comes a loss of flexibility and maybe a disability, (Artificial Joints and Injury related disabilities) that prevent swimmers completing a stroke correctly and so the Medical Disability Register was introduced to allow these swimmers to still enjoy competing. Spina Bifida and other spinal injury sufferers who cannot dive start or deep water start can now do sit starts, so allowing them to experience the FUN of competing. These rule changes are unfortunately not allowed at International swim meets and by reading the AUSSI handbook the AUSSI rules that differ to the FINA rules are marked with an asterisk.

The Technical and Coaching Directors work hand in hand on the technical aspects of stroke correction and swim rules to encourage coaches and swimmers to teach and do the strokes correctly and efficiently, thereby increasing the swimmers success and enjoyment of the sport.

Now the officials.

Without officials it is impossible to successfully run any sort of swim meet. From the timekeepers to the referee these people are the engine room of swim meets, they keep the meet ticking over, the records of who swum what and beat whom. They turn unorganised chaos into efficient, enjoyable meets. Unfortunately it always seems to fall to the faithful few to work at these meets and what should be enjoyable generally turns out to be a chore. So why not give some thought to becoming an accredited official (timekeeper, chief timekeeper, marshal, check starter, starter or referee) it's a great way to meet old friends and ones you don't even know yet. As long as you don't compromise the job at hand you can generally have a chat and the gossip that is overheard can be unbelievable and all the time you're having FUN. The more accredited officials there are to do the jobs, the less the workload is and the more enjoyable the swim meets. A simple formula to an annoying problem.

How to become an Accredited Official

What's involved in becoming an accredited official? Get your club to contact the Technical Director and the Director will arrange a training lecture for the level of official you wish to become. You will be required to pass an exam on the official's role and fulfil the required pool deck hours. On completion of the requirements you will receive your accreditation at no cost to you. Reaccreditation is not required after a given period at this stage but requirements may alter in the future.

Officials are not the ogres they are often portrayed as; they are just AUSSI Masters Swimmers the same as you and I, trying to do a job so everyone benefits. Sure the referees are there to police the rules but the majority don't go to swim meets to disqualify swimmers, they go along to educate the swimmer who does some thing wrong and most will point out swimmers errors and give a caution. Marshals don't call swimmers absent for the fun of it they try to keep the meet flowing and make the meet more enjoyable and the party time closer.

So get involved in another facet of AUSSI, make your swimming Technical, I know you will enjoy it.

THE START SW7.1

"ON THE LONG WHISTLE FROM THE REFEREE (SW5.2.6), SWIMMERS SHALL TAKE UP THEIR POSITION WITH AT LEAST ONE FOOT AT THE FRONT OF THE STARTING PLATFORM OR IMMEDIATELY ENTER THE WATER. THE FORWARD START MAY BE TAKEN FROM THE FRONT OF THE STARTING BLOCK, THE POOL DECK OR A PUSH FROM THE WALL BELOW THE ALLOCATED STARTING BLOCK WITH ONE HAND HAVING CONTACT WITH THE STARTING WALL. ON THE STARTER'S COMMAND "TAKE YOUR MARKS", THEY SHALL IMMEDIATELY TAKE UP A STARTING POSITION. WHEN ALL SWIMMERS ARE STATIONARY, THE STARTER SHALL GIVE THE STARTING SIGNAL (SHORT, HORN, WHISTLE OR COMMAND).

CLARIFICATION: WHERE POSSIBLE A VISUAL SIGNAL SHOULD BE USED (EG AN ELECTRONIC FLASH) IN ADDITION TO THE AUDITORY SIGNAL AT HE START.