

National Championship report- Sydney 2022.

We started the organisation of the National Championships in 2018 and were all ready to go in March 2020 and we all know what happened after that!

Even though we rescheduled twice- once for the end of 2020 and then again for April 2022, we never really got excited about the event until February 2022 when it appeared it “may” go ahead.

We had lost sponsors, we had lost committee members, we had lost swimmers but we picked ourselves up and decided to run an event to get everyone back in the water and make sure it was fun- as this is part of our motto.

Fortunately SOPAC was available (even if half of it was still closed), and most of the restrictions had been lifted but we were still able to be careful and socially distance if we needed. It was more low-key than originally planned and there were less swimmers than we originally targeted but the entire 4 days was full of smiles and happiness and fun.

We had 567 swimmers from 83 clubs, 70% from NSW, 13% from Queensland, 12% from Victoria and a few swimmers from SA, Tasmania and the northern Territory and 1 from the west. Totally understandable as some states had only just opened their borders and many swimmers still uncertain about travelling, but we managed to run the event and get swimmers back in the water .

We had around 60 officials – mainly from NSW but one from Victoria- thankyou Neil it was wonderful to work with you, and we had the same number of volunteers who helped out with timekeeping, the medals desk, the welcome desk, registration and merchandise.

Unfortunately the Open Water swim had to be cancelled at the last minute due to an algae bloom in the lake after the heavy rain, so more refunds were due (we got very good at refunding after cancelling in 2020 and illness prior to entries closing in 2022).

The swimming was fantastic with 4 world records and 109 National records and many many branch records broken in the 4 days. Congratulations to our WA swimmer who broke 10 branch records during the meet. The most popular event for entries was the 50m freestyle, followed by the 100m freestyle, 25m freestyle, 200m freestyle and 100m IM. All 25m events were popular- maybe due to lack of training time, maybe that our swimmers enjoy short course meets!

Thanks to our wonderful meet recorder Mark Hepple (and to the many hours of lockdown time he used for inventions) we introduced a number of innovations to this National meet

- Late entry closing time- reduced from 4-6 weeks to 15 days
- Closing time for Relay entry details- reduced from 4-6 weeks to 2 hours
- Programme split into 2 sections
- Personalised event seeding document for each entrant
- Dedicated MSA Live Results app
- Entry and editing of relay team details by nominated team captains through the app until 2 hours before the event each day
- Online protest form
- Progressive totals for all Championships awards available in real time. In addition to the user experience, this meant reduced work for the Recorder

- Online allocation , distribution and recording of medals through the app, reducing work for the recorder
- Printout of details of each medal for swimmer and engraver
- Networked digital Check Starting system

As part of our Covid safety measures, and to avoid groups of people gathering, no printed results were posted at the meet.

A MSA National Championships dedicated mobile 'web app' was created to display live results to competitors, and others, in real time – within moments of the completion of each event.

The MSA Live Results app also provided:

- General meet & venue details
- Personalised entry details for each entrant (individual & relay)
- Full heat details for each event (individual & relay)
- Personalised results for each entrant
- Full results for each event
- Posting time of results for each event
- Notification of when medals were released for collection for each event
- An online Protest form
- Progressive totals for each of the Championship Awards (Swimmers of the Meet, Founder's Trophy, Visitor's Trophy, etc.)

A big thankyou to the many people who helped make this a special National championships and thankyou to all the swimmers for being part of the 2022 Masters National Championships, an event we thought would never happen.

Jane Noake