



AUSSI News

by Bob Foster

Classic Stuff

It was a privilege and a downright pleasure to compete at Ryde Masters' 1st. meet in September. It was the epitome of an AUSSI carnival. Tony Best and his team went all out to make it an afternoon and evening to remember. The bus load of Pelicans from Ettalong took out the visitor's trophy, a nice one, kindly donated by Channel 7 Sydney. Warringah were in with a chance but not quite strong enough in the age department; consolation for them by winning the 10 x 25 metre relay and a handsome Seiko stopwatch. Congratulations to Ryde for a wonderful meet. The short-course records that were broken that afternoon were overshadowed by the welcome appearance of Vera 'GRAN' Fernance from the Blacktown Beavers. Recently recovered from major eye operations, which meant missing Tokyo, Vera blitzed her age group in fine style. At age 88 what a tremendous example she is for AUSSI. I wanted to wrap up my favourite AUSSI swimmer in a blanket, take her home and make sure that she keeps going forever. For all young swimmers who may be reading this, take heart, Vera may not be the prettiest or fastest swimmer around but it is a pure delight to watch her in the water. You can bet your goggles that Vera will be in Brisbane for the 2nd. World Championships in 1988 and then we're all going to Rio in 1990.

Records Records Records ...

Here are some updated statistics from NSW recorder, Julie Byrne. In the past 12 months, to the end of August, 148 individual and 8 relay short-course National records have been broken. Prior to the World Championships in Tokyo, 36 individual and 13 relay long-course records were broken. At the Blacktown 'long-distance' carnival 39 individual

short-course, form stroke records were achieved and at the Warringah meet in May, a remarkable 36 short-course records went in the one afternoon. The general standard of performance is really getting out of hand.

NSW to Four Figures

NSW AUSSI membership has leapt by 27% in the past 12 months to 1,100 registered members from 31 clubs, a truly great step forward.

For the Birds

The NSW Pelican Point Score trophy was again very hotly contested. Results are taken from a club's best 5 performances at AUSSI meets. Last year there were 16. A winning club at a meet scores 0 points, 1 for 2nd., 2 for 3rd., etc., I'm pleased to report that Warringah have finally wrenched this handsome trophy away from Ettalong with 0 points, Ettalong 2nd. on 2 points, North Sydney on 7, Hills 10 and Coogee-Randwick 5th. on 11 points. This year's competition is already under way and again it will be a real battle for this coveted prize.

My apologies for the emphasis on NSW AUSSI News. All will change in the next issue.

Dick Campion, AUSSI National Fitness Director, has the following advice for training the over 40's swimmer.

Coaching the Over 40 Swimmer

Coaching the over 40 or any adult swimmer relies far more on two-way conversation than coaching an amateur. Youngsters are brought up to respect their elders and obey their commands, mainly without question, this applies to their training. It takes a very astute coach to pick out the unwell or unhappy squad member, who is training under duress and following orders.

The adult swimmer, however, whilst respecting the coach's orders and his knowledge, is more familiar and will query schedules and ask: is there a magic formula hidden in the session. It is this contact that the coach should foster and encourage, more in some cases and be able to tone down in others because although the adult usually communicates better than the youngster, their ego is still there pushing them on to keep up with the rest of the squad, even if they are a bit off-colour.

When coaching the over 40's it is far better to lay off the unwell swimmer, who

*Everyone's Favourite AUSSI Swimmer —
Vera 'GRAN' Fernance*



may be suffering from a cold, flu, hay fever, or worse, than try to get them to do a thorough workout. The unwell person is already in a stressful situation and to put that extra load onto the heart, could be very detrimental. On a couple of occasions I have laid off swimmers from 3-7 days to overcome colds; rather than train through because of a forthcoming event. We found that the complete break had them healthy again, very quickly and they were back into their programme with added gusto. The guilt complex was forgotten and their performances didn't suffer.

The healthy over 40 person should, depending on their desire to work, be able to cope with fairly heavy schedules. However, I must clarify that statement. My thoughts are of the ex-amateur competitor. These people were used to hard training and can return to similar distances, on a planned programme, without undue stress. Remember when swimming we are in a lying down position, which helps the blood flow and we have the cooling effect of the water.

Dr. Andre Kresch, President of the Victorian branch of Australian Sport's Medicine, offers a good safety guide to the over 40 competitive swimmer: Maximum heart rate is usually defined as 220 less your age (eg: $220 - 40 = 180$). Almost maximum benefit can be obtained by taking your pulse to your maximum, less 10%. Which from the above equation would be 162. Dr. Kresch pointedly explained the additional effort needed to take your heart to its maximum did not gain more benefit and could be taking you into a possible danger zone. Armed with this information you can now regulate your training sessions: take your pulse after each effort and see how close to maximum you can get; less 10%. If you are way off, then drastically reduce your rest periods until your heart beat gets closer to the desired rate. I have used this method with youngsters and gained spectacular results in a short space of time. With a 14 year-old we gained an 11 second improvement over 400 metres in a 2 week period with this type of training.

Tapering for a major event is always of the utmost importance and never more so than in the over 40 swimmer. Coaches, as well as swimmers, do not always allow enough time for the body to recuperate and bring out the best results of all that training.

There has been limited research in tapering for older people and therefore I can only base this on my own experience and other swimmers I'm involved with. To anybody who has completed a strenuous training season, building up to a major carnival, a minimum 3 week taper period should be employed. The last 7 days should concentrate on stroke work. Also work on your 'feel for the water'. Now that I am comfortably over 40, I have found the last 7 days of a taper very beneficial in this regard. I'll slip into the water and drift through 800 to 1000 metres. To shake



out a few kinks, I watch my stroke and miss breaths on purpose, continually feeling for the water. I concentrate on my pull and push and also my body roll. The pace I use varies but for the first 50% I travel very slow and relaxed; I build up over the next 25% and then ease off for the remainder. The AUSSI Nationals after this taper were the best for me, ever!

I'm often confronted by AUSSI swimmers who are concerned about their well being and believe that their taper is far too hard for them. They are exhausted from their sessions and can't recuperate in time for the next training confrontation. Usually after discussing their programmes with them, I find that they haven't really pursued a programme at all. They have swum regularly 2-4 times a week but have never built to a fully intensified scheme.

Dick Campion

Suddenly the Nationals are 6 weeks away and everybody is talking about tapering. It's here I ask: Tapering from what? These well meaning people now start to do a number of things; they push up their mileage and quality, maybe join a squad properly, or if already in a squad they turn up daily and try to complete the taper schedules set out for those who have been training for months. Little wonder that they are fatigued and swimming well below their best at the most important time. A taper is designed with quality efforts and long rest periods to fine tune the rest of the season's training and bring you to a desired peak ... Enjoy your swimming ... Swim for your life!