

INVESTIGATION INTO NATIONAL SWIM MEDAL SYSTEM

BACKGROUND.

An agenda item by the Victorian Branch was discussed at the 1987 National Council Meeting in Perth, that the maximum number of events swum at the National Swim be reduced from seven to five and the existing overall system be retained.

After a great deal of varied discussion and the premis that 5 swims from a possible 13 would lead to ties for 1st place in most age groups, it was decided that the National Recorder be directed to prepare statistics on the proposal for consideration at the Mid Year Conference.

RESEARCH.

With the change to the points system at the 1986 National Meet and the situation, shown by a previous report, that the placegetters can be affected by the 10 point system compared to the 4 point, it was obvious that both systems would have to be compared.

The 1986 and 1987 National Meets are the only ones using the 10 point system, therefore the 1984 and 1985 were used as comparisons.

Once the basis for the investigation had been established, lists were prepared for each of the meets showing the first 4 placegetters in each event. From these the placegetters based on 5 swims only could be worked out. Which events to discard, particularly if the swimmer had won all 7 events, had to be a qualified judgement on my part. This did not prove to be a problem, a) because not too many swimmers won all 7 of their events, and b) it was quite apparent in the majority of swimmers.

The placegetters based on 5 swims was compared to the official 7 swim results and the differences categorised as follows:-

1. The total number of age groups affected.
2. The number of ties for first place.
3. The number of changes to positions only, 2nd ties for 1st, 3rd becomes 2nd etc.
4. The number of changes to personnel swimmers gaining medals that hadn't previously and vice-versa.

RESULTS.

There is always a danger when analysing statistics that they can be manipulated to suit the users purpose, however, I have attempted to report the facts in an unbiased manner.

Looking at the figures shown in Appendix 1 it is clear that the changes to both 4 point Nationals are the same. The pronounced difference between the two 10 point Nationals may be answered by the increase in numbers of competitors, 850 in Perth to 650 in Adelaide. The more people, the closer the competition and the more likely the chance of changes.

The 10 point system does lend itself to change. This is best shown by the following examples:-

Swimmer 1 has 2 - 1st places, 5 - 4th places  
 Swimmer 2 has 5 - 1st places, 2 - 10th places

	10 POINT SYSTEM				4 POINT SYSTEM			
	7swims	Place	5swims	Place	7swims	Place	5swims	Place
Swimmer 1	2x10=20, 5x 7=35)55	1st	2x10=20, 3x 7=21)41	4th	2x4=8, 5x1=5)13	4th	2x4=9, 3x1=3)11	4th
Swimmer 2	5x10=50, 2x 1=2)52	4th	5x10 = 50	1st	5x4=20, 2x1= 2)22	1st	5x4 = 20	1st

Obviously the 4th placing is hypothetical, what I have tried to show is that 4th place meant out of the medals.

There is no doubt that 5 swims instead of 7 does change the results, 75% of the age groups are affected one way or the other. There are not the ties for 1st place that I certainly predicted. The changes to positions are quite marked, the most significant change however, is the one to the personnel.

SUMMARY.

There is no doubt that the 7 swim system finds the best overall swimmer, however, whether 7 swims, plus a possible 4 relays in 3½ days is too demanding physically, or how much longer the number of competitors attending the National Meet will allow it, are questions that will have to be answered.

It is my belief that the question of 5 or 7 swims is only part of a larger question, that is the future of our National Swim. I put forward the following questions which I see as most important for future planning

1. Number of individual swims, 5 or 7?
2. Individual events swum
  - a) do we reduce, if so what events?
  - or b) increase - add longer distances?
3. Retain or scrap present overall medal system?
4. Duration of Meet. At the present we hold the swim over 3½ days, if as seems probable we get 1,000 competitors at Sydney in 1989, it does not seem possible that 3½ days will be sufficient, particularly at 7 swims.

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# APPENDIX 1

YEAR	POINTS SYSTEM	No. OF comp.	AGE GROUPS AFFECTED	No OF AGE GROUPS	%	TIES FOR 1ST. PLACE	%	CHANGES TO POSITIONS	%	CHANGES IN PERSONNEL	%
1984	4	510	16	23	70%	4	17%	20	28%	9	13%
			9 MEN 7 WOMEN	12 MEN 11 WOMEN		2 MEN 2 WOMEN		12 MEN 8 WOMEN		7 MEN 2 WOMEN	
1985	4	520	15	22	68%	4	18%	20	28%	7	10%
			9 MEN 6 WOMEN	11 MEN 11 WOMEN		3 MEN 1 WOMEN		10 MEN 10 WOMEN		4 MEN 3 WOMEN	
1986	10	650	15	21	71%	5	24%	34	46%	14	19%
			7 MEN 8 WOMEN	11 MEN 10 WOMEN		3 MEN 2 WOMEN		22 MEN 12 WOMEN		9 MEN 5 WOMEN	
1987	10	850	20	24	83%	12	50%	50	68%	25	34%
			9 MEN 11 WOMEN	12 MEN 12 WOMEN		7 MEN 5 WOMEN		27 MEN 23 WOMEN		13 MEN 12 WOMEN	