

SAMS NEWSLETTER



The Official Newsletter of South African Masters Swimming



Spring
Edition
2015



IN THIS ISSUE

- Editor's Note
- Message from the President
- Open Water Report
- Special Feature T.D.
- Durban 2016
- Kazan 2015
- Regional Reports

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Editor's Note

Owen

Hello Everyone

At last Spring has arrived. I'm a bit like a Grizzly coming out of hibernation, with an insatiable desire to start swimming again. To start, from my side. We had some fantastic results from the World Transplant Games, The World Deaf Swimming Championships and the World Masters Championships. South Africa is truly on the International Swimming Map. I have summarised these in the news letter.

A huge congratulations to all who competed at Kazan last month. The results from just everyone has made us very proud of you all. From Open Water, individual performances and relay quads, just awesome results. The full results summary has been posted by John Petersen (As usual doing a sterling job) on the South African Masters Swimming website. www.samastersswimming.com You will find the results tab on the leader page on the left hand side.

More congratulations must go to all swimmers, families and friends that supported the Winter Challenge 2015. These selfless actions really assist the needy. I will be posting the results when all final audits and reports are in.

By now many meet schedules have been finalised so please check with your region and clubs for upcoming events, both in the pool and open water. There is an updated schedule for Open Water Swims and I have been informed (by the Open Water Guru-Ann) that this will be continuously updated as the season progresses.

The build up to Nationals for Durban 2016 is in full swing and the organising committee are doing excellent work in making sure that the event is going to be a Nationals not to miss or forget. Go Durbs! Updates will be sent out regularly to all clubs and posted in the newsletters. Check out the update in this issue. Durban has been awarded the Commonwealth Games 2022, so it is now the buzz destination. Book your accommodation now or you could be sleeping in your car.

We are so fortunate to have so many wonderful members in Masters swimming so once again there are some wonderful well deserved profiles to read. We all make a difference.

Get fit, have fun and make a zillion new friends.

Happy splashing!



Message from the President

Anton

Let me first and foremost, echo the voice of others and express my heartiest congratulations to all SA swimmers that participated in the recent world masters champs in Kazan and of course, not the least of which, our own Master Swimmers. You guys did us proud! A big thank you goes to John Petersen for the summary sheets provided on SAMS' website and keeping us all informed of your achievements.

With the arrival of Spring and the enthusiasm for swimming engendered by Kazan, I notice that many swimmers are shaking off the winter doldrums and getting geared up with increased gusto for another fantastic season of swimming.

Everyone loves Durban, so KZN Masters; get ready with your 2016 Durban Nationals as we will be descending on you in full force! But before then of course, there are a number of exciting events on the cards, and specifically, in the near term, the SAMS SC champs that will take place in October at various venues across the country – be there!

Last month, I arranged a one-on-one meeting with SASCOC's president, Gideon Sam where I made no bones about SAMS' plight with SSA and consequent impact of SSA's actions on Master Swimming (MS) in SA. From my perception, the meeting went very well and Mr. Sam undertook to mediate at a meeting between SAMS and SSA and as a consequence, I remain optimistic about the future of MS in this fantastic land of ours.

Now that winter is behind us, I look forward to meeting you all again on the pool deck or at an open water swim so that we can catch up on old times.

Keep well Anton

A BIG REDUCTION IN MS (MASTERS SWIMMING) MEMBERSHIP IS EXPECTED FOR THE 15/16 SEASON

At the close of last season more than 770 master swimmers were registered with SSA. Unless and until there is a radical shift in the thinking and attitude of SSA and some of its affiliates it is unlikely that MS registrations will exceed the 400 mark for the 15/16 season. This represents a loss of some 370 members and R120 250 in SSA revenue! Heck, it is 20 years or more that MS in SA had that sort of membership! A dismal state of affairs for those who love MS and those in government with a quest for a fit and healthy nation!

Unfortunately, there are many issues that SSA and SAMS cannot see eye to eye on and to make matters worse, SSA continues to avoid consulting its own Masters Technical Committee – that committee which is supposed to replace SAMS and is the only voice MS currently has with SSA (notwithstanding that the term “Technical” is included in its name). As a consequence of that, MS gets a rule book thrown at it which may have value in terms of senior/elite swimming but has no meaning in the context of MS. Add to that mix, a pile of money that has to be thrown into a seemingly bottomless pit with little or nothing of value returned, what do you get? Masters turning their backs on the pool deck and walking away in droves!

According to SSA directives, master swimmers and MS clubs are required to register with and become members of the affiliates (the local aquatic associations). No action plans or guidelines are however, provided as to how this will be implemented. That is, who will do what and when and who will pay for what! One has to bear in mind that up until now, and excluding MS in the Eastern Cape, SAMS and its regional associations have been organizing, managing and paying for all its own local galas without any assistance from affiliates. Also some affiliates now request fees which are not affordable and/or which are unrealistic in terms of services the affiliates intend offering – previously close to zero!

Apart from the above, SSA has issued directives that SAMS may not hold a data base, may not raise fees or hold a bank account. However, unless and until SSA provides details as to how it intends to manage Masters Swimming in SA with specifics, SAMS unfortunately, cannot see its way clear to acceding to these directives. In fact, it would be irresponsible of SAMS to do so at this juncture as this will result in the complete annihilation of MS in SA and nobody wants that!

Over the years, SAMS has developed its own awards, records and colours processes and systems all of which depend on a properly managed data base geared for MS. These MS systems are owned by SAMS not SSA or anyone else. The MS information to be found on SAMS' website compared to that of SSA gives an indication of the hill that has to be climbed if SSA hopes to manage MS effectively within its integrated structures!

It is of interest to note that at the recent Kazan World Masters Champs, 8 SA MS clubs were represented, covering a total of 39 entrants and 5 different nationalities – SA, UK, USA, Germany and Russia! All these swimmers entered and registered with the Kazan organisers on a DIY basis and just representing their clubs. There was no selection process and the entry times the swimmers submitted were not sanctioned by anyone. At FINA World Masters, it is not about being the best but the opportunity to meet and compete against others from across the planet and all sharing a common interest – the love of MS. This is a far cry from senior/elite swimmers and for that matter, other adult age-group sports, which all involve a rigorous selection process and sanctioned times to compete at international level. According to FINA, since a master swimmer is not representing a nation, the nationality of the master swimmer representing a club is of no concern. It follows then, that when a master swimmer at SA Masters Nationals represents a club and not a province, the residential address of the master swimmer is likewise of no concern!

SAMS has been fortunate in being able to have a warm and friendly dialogue with NTS (Northern Tigers Swimming – the aquatic association north of the Orange, the Vaal and the Jukskei). NTS has a generous, realistic and progressive approach to MS. It is a huge pity that SSA and certain other affiliates could not take a leaf out of NTS' swim book, since then MS would not disintegrate but on the contrary, grow by leaps and bounds.

Finally, there are those in the legal profession who will argue that this forced (and one could add *clumsy* and *ill conceived*) integration of MS in SSA affiliate structures is both illegal and unconstitutional. As SAMS and SSA remain at loggerheads SAMS has referred the matter to SASCOC for mediation. One would think that with just a little bit of finesse and professionalism (a' la NTS), there is no reasons why elegant solutions cannot be found to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Derek Fyfe

SAMS (SSA-MTC?!) Registrations

PS: A comprehensive paper trail of all SAMS' dealings with SSA is documented in the 2015 edition of SAMS' Integrated Handbook (Chapter 16, paragraph 10) to be found on SAMS' website under the heading “Structures.” It may make interesting reading!



OPEN WATER SWIMMING

Ann Gray

Polar Bear Swim Challenge

At the end of June many Masters Swimmers from Coelacanth, Wahoo, East Coast and Highway Masters Swimming braved the icy water at the Dragon Peaks Dam in the Central Drakensberg. The funds raised went to the Estcourt Animal Shelter and Khetani Dog Project. Most of the swimmers went away with wonderful prizes. Masters Swimmers before the Start.



Dolphin Mile Surf Swims

The Dolphin Mile Surf Swims organised by Heather Campbell continue to be extremely popular. The swim on the 9th August was held in ideal conditions and being in the middle of a long weekend attracted many Masters Swimmers from outside KZN, namely Terry-Anne Matley from Cape Dolphins, Guy Harker and Michaela Curzi from Wahoo, Clare Davie, Liz Bronkhorst from Phoenix and numerous swimmers from Coelacanth including Annemarie Dressler, Ingrid Landman, Denise Colignon and Monica Hefer.

Next year's SA Masters Open Water Swim will take place at the same venue as the Dolphin Mile swim. Registration will be at the Marine Surf Lifesaving Club and the event will be organised by Heather Campbell.

(See photo above- Di Hughes (East Coast) Ann Gray and Dawn Rode (both Highway) Liz Bronkhorst (Phoenix) and Terry- Anne Matley (Cape Dolphins)



24 Oct: Sun City	Swim Sun City	3km, 1500m, and 500m	www.suncityswim.co.za
8 Nov: Heia Safari Challenge 1	H S	3km, 1000m, 400m	0333410790
15 Nov: WPA Open Water	Grabouw	10km, 5km 3km, 1km	WP Aquatics
21 Nov: Capital K	Midmar Dam	5km and 10km	0333410790
22 Nov Capital K	Midmar Dam	3km, 1000m and 500m.	0333410790
29 Nov Heia Safari Challenge 2	H S	9km, 1000m, 500m	0333410790
13 Dec WPA Open Water	Grabouw	10km, 5km, 3km and 1km	WP Aquatics
17 Jan WPA Open Water	Grabouw	10km, 5km, 3km and 1km	WP Aquatics
23 Jan Lake Heritage Festival	H S	5km and 3km	0333410790
24 Jan Lake Heritage Festival	HS	1200m and 600m	0333410790
7 Feb: WPA Open Water	Grabouw	10km, 5km, 3km and 1km	WP Aquatics
13 Feb Sanlam Cape Mile	Grabouw	1600m	Stillwater Sports
13 February: Midmar Mile Team	Midmar	1600m	0333410790
14 February: Midmar Mile Individual	Midmar	1600m	0333410790
20 March: SAMS Champs Durban	Marine	3km and 1km	SAMS Champs

Great advice on Open Water Surf Swims. By Rachel Cosgrove

At the start of every [triathlon](#) or [open water race](#), certain people hesitate—intimidated by the crashing surf. Waves continuously hit them, their energy wanes. By the time they find the courage to dive through the waves, they're exhausted. Follow the tips below to conquer your open water entrances and exits.

Acquaint Yourself with Waves

It all starts with practice. Plan some open water training before the race to get used to possible conditions you'll experience in competition. If possible, train at the event's location to acclimate yourself with that environment. Always swim with others and make sure a lifeguard is on duty before heading out. Tell the lifeguard your plans so they'll keep an eye on you. Ask if there are any conditions—such as [rip currents](#) or other hazards—that you should be aware of before swimming in the open ocean. If you're at a beach with a buoy or other marker to swim to, let the lifeguard know your route.

Scout the Surf

Whether training or racing, start your swim by standing on the beach and observing the surf. Study any noticeable currents. Rip currents will appear as a smooth section in the water. To spot a current, note which way other swimmers or surfers are getting pulled or floating.

Once you have looked at the conditions, you'll want to make sure there are no surprises on your route into the ocean. Wade in thigh-deep water to see what the ocean floor is like, or if there is a drop off or any holes or rocks to be aware of. Sometimes, standing in the water can tell you when a strong current is present. Now you're ready to start your swim. Ask yourself: does your race begin with a running start from the beach? Or do you begin already in the water? You'll prepare yourself and gain confidence by practicing your entrances as you'll do them in competition.

Go for it

Move continuously forward past the breakwater and to the first buoy to ensure a fast swim. Remember—*never stop*.

If you start on the beach, run through the water until it reaches about knee-height. At that point, do a high-knee run, lifting your legs out of the water. When the water is above knee-height, it's time to start dolphin diving. A dolphin dive is a shallow dive where you push forward off the ground with your legs and dive just under the surface of the water. When dolphin diving, keep your head tucked between your outstretched arms with your biceps squeezing your ears. Do not look up. This is important for both speed and safety. Start with shallow dolphin dives and push off the ground each time to propel yourself forward. Dive under the waves breaking in front of you. As soon as the wave starts to form, dive deep enough to touch the sand with your fingertips. Find the calm spot under every wave and let the wave go over your head. Push forward off the ground so, rather than coming straight up, you continue to move forward the entire time. If another wave is crashing, take a deep breath and repeat the dive and forward push-off. Usually, waves crash in water that is shallow enough for you to touch the ground. The worst thing you can do is run out to knee-height water and stand there as waves crash on you—knocking you backwards and using up energy. Never stand upright once past knee-height water. Keep your head down and dive forward.

The correct sequence is: Run—high knees—dolphin dives—swim straight through. Once you start running, stick to this pattern and you'll be at the first buoy in no time. Avoid a sequence of: Run—stop and turn your back on the waves--wander out a little farther until the waves come again—stop and turn your back again and get knocked toward the shore.

How Do I Get Back to Shore?

When you've made it to the home stretch, pick a spot on shore near the finish and use it to swim toward. As you reach the area where waves are forming, use their momentum to help push you forward. Instead of a slight turn to the side to breathe, turn your head a little more and peek behind you to see what's coming. If a wave is nearing, swim harder and try to gain momentum from it. Above all, stay calm. Continue to swim once the waves are crashing. If one is about to crash on you, take a deep breath, put your hands over your head in the dolphin-diving position and bodysurf back to shore. Continue to hold your breath and maintain a streamlined position with your arms outstretched in front of you.

If you don't catch a wave, still try to use their momentum to push you forward. When you can touch the ground, begin dolphin diving. Swim until your belly is on the sand. The waves and white water will continue to push you to the shore, eliminating the need to expend energy running through the water. The more practice you have with open water, the calmer and more confident you'll be during competition, helping to ensure a strong start to your race. Check with a local triathlon or masters swimming club to see if they have organized open water swims. Be safe and have fun.

Rachel Cosgrove is a USAT Level 1 certified triathlon coach. She owns and operates Results Fitness in Santa Clarita, Calif. She is also a coach for the Greater Los Angeles Team in Training Triathlon team. Check out her website at www.rachelcosgrove.com and her [blog](#).





By Terry Downes

small
things
BIG
DIFFERENCE

Small Things, Big Difference

The better you get, at anything, the harder it becomes to improve. When you get really as good as you can at something it is the small things that start to become important. In sport the small things often have to do with *technique* and very often it is the little changes, adjustments perhaps, that are incredibly significant. At this stage, some months before Nationals, if you want to be at your best, you need to raise your level of awareness in the details of what you are doing. *It is the small things that differentiate the Master from the apprentice, and we are Masters.* Improvement is no longer easily achieved simply by repeating the same things over and over again. More isn't more, more is LESS.

Further improvement requires you that reflect on what you are doing in the water and, perhaps more importantly, WHY you are doing it. Progress becomes more mental than physical. Thinking becomes as important as doing, in fact, thinking becomes essential *before* doing. In sport, after you have mastered the basic skills (which nevertheless need constant practice) and fitness, which also needs to be maintained, (you can always get a little fitter, no matter how fit you are), technique becomes the area where improvement can still be achieved. You need to "feel" your body and how it moves in, and interacts with its environment, the water.

When two athletes are equally fit, equally matched in many of the measurable aspects of their sport, there are two factors that determine the winner and the one who comes second. (I deliberately do not use the term "loser" because at any level the one who comes second, or wherever, is never a loser. The loser is the one who gave up or the one who did not even try.) The first factor that gives the winner the edge is mental, embodied in attitude, the second is in attention to the detail, or the small things.

Swimming is a sport where technique is almost as important as fitness. (Perhaps it is more important?) A fit swimmer with poor technique is almost certain to be beaten by one less fit but with great technique. There are very many factors that affect efficiency in swimming, and they are never isolated because a change in one thing affects another, so that it becomes difficult firstly to identify what it is that needs to be "corrected" and secondly to correct it.

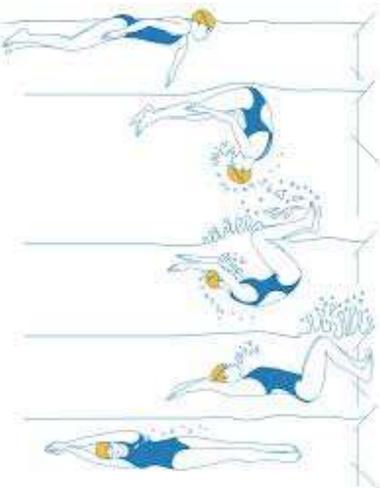


The position of the head: It is so important in all strokes for the head to be not too high but also not too deep in the water. Changing the position of the head affects the pattern of breathing, it affects the posture of the body as it floats in the water, it affects the depth of the legs (drag) and the pattern of the kick, to name but some of the associated elements. Your head can be positioned to look up/forward or downward and the angle is very important, too much forward lifts the head too much and your body must drop slightly, presenting a greater resistance to the water, resulting in more drag, a most undesirable thing in swimming, yet if you look too far down you "dig" into the water and, besides increasing drag, your body position becomes less effective for propulsive power. Experiment a little and feel what is

good for you.

Furthermore the head position changes depending on the distance you are swimming. In a 50m freestyle sprint a higher head position is usually assumed because, despite a change in body position it enables the swimmer to exert force more effectively, which lifts the body higher, which reduces the drag. It is not necessary, in a race, for some 50m swimmers to breathe, in fact it is desirable not to breathe because turning and lifting the head disturbs your timing and balance. In the 100m it is impossible not to breathe, so everything changes, including head position. In the 200m the head position changes again, just slightly, but this small thing changes many factors and makes a big difference. And so on until one considers long distance swimming and then open water swimming, *which is so totally different from pool swimming that it should be considered another stroke.*

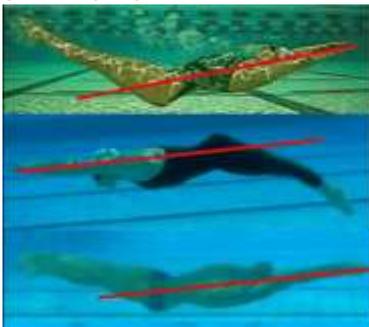
Consider some other small things that can have a significant effect on your swimming time.



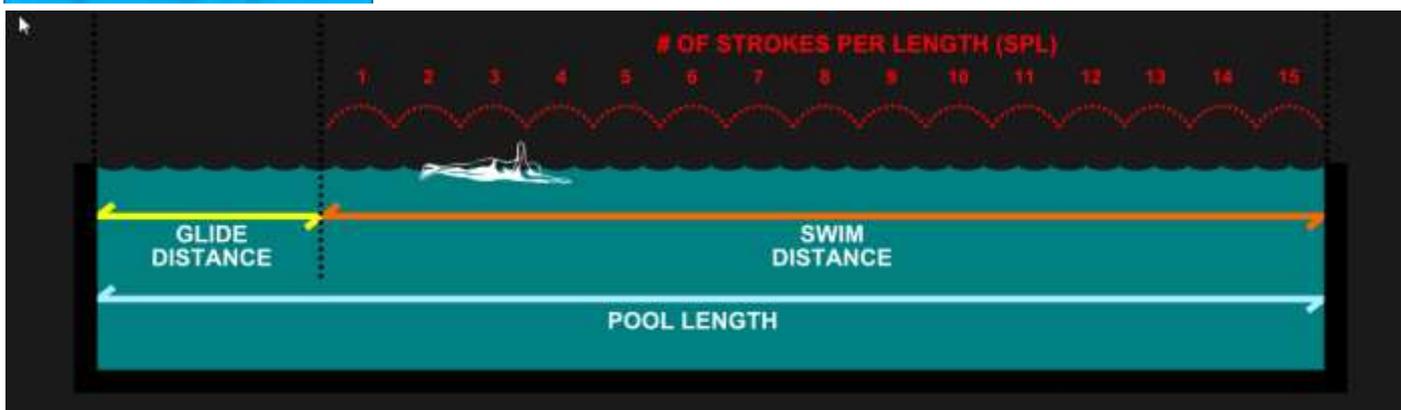
The turn: There are so many elements of the turn that can be improved. As you approach the wall you have to judge the distance so that your stroke is just right. Too close, in FS and Back, and you lose time because your legs hit the wall all bunched up and your push-off is less effective, too far and you also lose time – we all know that terrible feeling! Too close in Fly and Breast and you lose the pull that brings you into the wall really fast. Now is the time to work on those small adjustments in stroke as you approach the T, which should be two metres from the wall. (Make a point of doing some warm up swimming in the competition pool just to familiarise yourself with everything, not all pools are the same). I find that I am often lazy in the turns when training, actually slowing down and gliding into the wall. Bad habit! Get used to a strong pull that gets you to the wall fast and then don't let your feet linger in the air or on the wall, get away fast. Getting off the wall effectively requires that

your feet are placed just right, not too high, not too low, not rotated too much one way or another. Now is the time, during training, to think *and feel* what is happening, so that it just happens “right” in the race.

I see so many swimmers lifting the head to look forward during the glide after a dive or push-off. It is like pulling up the hand-brake as you pull away in your car! Do this little exercise: Push off the wall with head tucked in neatly like Chad, then, just before you surface lift it to see where you are going. Feel the hand-brake. If you listen carefully you can also *hear* the turbulence increase. By feeling and thinking you can turn your turn into a good habit.

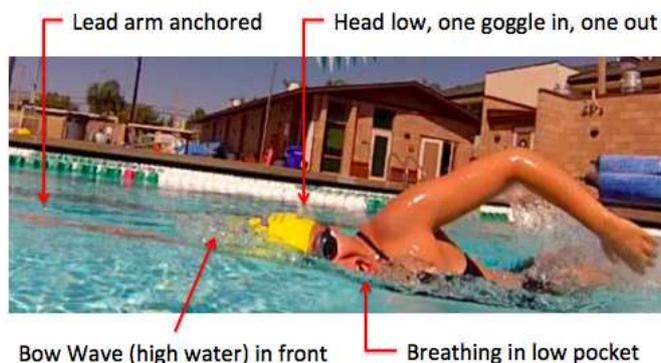


Underwater technique: It is good to go far under the water, but only if you do it effectively. How do you know how far is effective for you? You need to do this with a partner. Dive off the blocks and have your partner record your time at 15 metres. Repeat, going different distances under water and find the distance that results in your best time. Bear in mind that you cannot breathe until you surface, so there is a cost. The more often you do it in training the better it will work for you in the race.



Backstrokers: Backstrokers need to practice at race speed to get the number of strokes from the flag to the turn just right. What happens if you pass under the flags in the middle of a stroke? Work it out in practice – at race pace! Same for Breaststroke and Fly. You can see the end of the pool, you may need to make a small stroke adjustment three or four metres from the wall so that the last stroke is just right.

When I get tired in training my stroke goes awry. When my stroke goes awry, even just a little, my body position changes, my head has to lift higher to get oxygen and not only do I swim slower but the slower swimming takes more effort! This is the time to think of stroke length. What is the hand doing at the end of the stroke? Is the wrist flopping back so that pulling through the water is not so difficult? Of course it is. Of course you also swim slower. Fix it now.

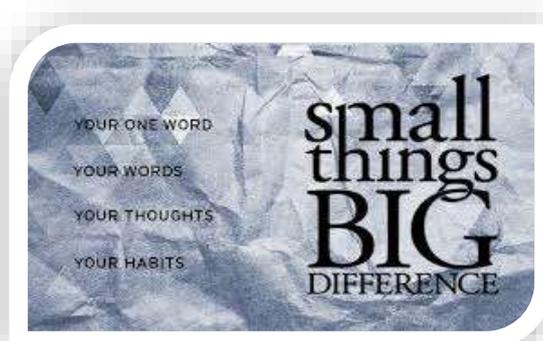


Breathing: Remember that article on buoyancy some months ago? When you breathe in you become more buoyant, when you exhale your body sinks. Try consciously inhaling just a little more air with every breath. That small increase in buoyancy, stroke after stroke, will decrease your swimming time.

In swimming, if a small change gives you just 1 millimetre advantage per stroke you gain about 100 mm or 10 cm over 100 m. This is a huge gain in swimming and a clear advantage over the next swimmer as well as a significant improvement in time. Even a gain of 0,2 mm per stroke, (the thickness of a sheet of paper) will give you an advantage of 2 cm over the

100 m, which relates to about one hundredth of a second for the very top swimmers. A win is a win. There is a big difference between third place and fourth. There is a big difference between ten place and eleventh.

For each of us there are many other small things that can make a big difference, can you find them?





Durban March 2016

September 2015

3rd Update



NB.NB.NB
Book your
accommodation NOW.
Nationals run into a
Long Weekend
(Monday 21st) and
Durban is filling up fast.
Accommodation lists
included in 1st Flyer

Some dates to diarise.
At the Kings Park pool

Wednesday 16:

Opening Ceremony.
10 and 20 year
awards.

Thursday 17th

Team Photographs
Between 12 and 1.30

Friday 18th

SAMS AGM



Other important events;

Friday 18th

Happy Hour. Venue to be announced.

Saturday 19th

Awards Dinner/Dance Evening: Theme:

"Ascot in March"

Sunday 20th

Open Water Swim. Marine Life Saving Club.
Addington Beach. Details to follow.



**SAMS National Championships to be held at
Kings Park Pool 16th – 20th March 2016**

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

Wednesday 16th March – Session 1 **Start: 10h00**

800 Freestyle Mixed
200 Backstroke
Mixed 4 x 50 Medley Relay
Session time 7 hr 30
Opening Ceremony

Finish 17h30
18h00 – 20h00

Thursday 17th March – Session 2 **Start: 08h00**

400 Freestyle Mixed
50 Backstroke
200 Individual Medley
Session time 3 hr 50
Team Photos

Finish: 12h00
12h00 – 13h30

Thursday 17th March – Session 3 **Start: 13h30**

100 Breaststroke
50 Freestyle
100 Butterfly
Men's 4 x 50 Freestyle Relay
Women's 4 x 50 Freestyle Relay
Session time 3 hr 00

Finish: 06h30

Friday 18th March - Session 4 **Start: 08h00**

50 Butterfly
100 Backstroke
400 Individual Medley
Men's 4 x 100 Freestyle Relay
Women's 4 x 100 Freestyle Relay
Session Time 4 hr 00
SAMS AGM

Finish: 12h00
12h15- 13h50

Friday 18th March - Session 5 **Start: 14h00**

100 Freestyle
200 Breaststroke
Mixed 4 x 50 Freestyle Relay
Session time 2 hr 55
Happy Hour

Finish: 17h00
18h00 -

Saturday 19th March Session 6 **Start: 08h30**

200 Butterfly
50 Breaststroke
200 Freestyle
Men's 4 x 50 Medley Relay
Women's 4 x 50 medley Relay

Finish: 12h40

20 Min Break
Dash for Cash 50 + M/W **Start: 13h00**
Dash for Cash M/W **Finish: 13h30**
Session time 5 hr 00

Awards Dinner Dance **18h30 – 24h00**

Sunday 20th – Surf Swim **Marine Life Saving Club**

Official Entry Forms to be distributed shortly

DURBAN BEACHES

Are characterised by soft, golden sand, palm trees and the warm waters of the Indian Ocean. The main beaches are shark netted and patrolled from sunrise to sunset by trained lifeguards who have an impressive track record in beach safety. The main beaches also have change rooms and shower facilities, as well as an array of fast-food outlets, restaurants and bars. Those who crave seclusion can find many remote beaches along the coast which are not patrolled. Durban's beaches stretch in a long line from Addington Beach to Country Club Beach. The Bay of Plenty is especially popular among surfers. Even in winter, the sea temperature rarely drops below 17°C. We have two beaches with full Blue Flag status - South Beach and Umhlanga Rocks beach, and six pilot Blue Flag beaches - Bronze Beach, Country Club, Bay of Plenty, Ansteys Beach, Addington Beach and Battery Beach. The Blue Flag is an exclusive international annual eco-award given only to those beaches that meet excellence in safety, amenities, cleanliness and environmental standards.



SEE YOU IN DURBS 2016



We are exceptionally proud of all our swimmers that took part in the World Masters 2015 in Kazan. We proudly saw so many swimmers, representing clubs from South Africa, up on the podium. There were those who did not make the podium but finished in remarkable placings that they can proudly puff out their chests and say "I competed against the best in the world and I am right up there with the best. The stats prove this. Sanderina broke 4 x World and 1 x Championship record. Incredible. There is a full analysis on the South African Masters Website. Check out all the incredible performances. It's a good read. Herewith is a summary of some of the exceptional performances.



World Records Individual

Sanderina Kruger (65-69) x3
 100 Freestyle 1:09:23
 200 Freestyle 2:37:63
 50 Freestyle 31.28

World Record Relay

Mixed 4x50 Medley (240-279)
 1:55:19
 Tim Shead
 Sanderina Kruger
 Di Coetzee
 Calvin Maughan



On the left
 Sanderina Kruger

Below
 Cape Town Ladies Gold and silver relays squads

Unbelievable Stats.

29 Gold

19 Silver

15 Bronze

Individual Placings in the top 10 - **115**

Relay Placings in the top 10 - **16**

Open Water in the top 10 - **4**



Championship Records

Calvin Maughan (50-54)
 100 Freestyle 54:86

Cape Town Mixed Medley (240-279)
 Mike Winfield
 Tim Shead
 Cecelia Stanford
 Sanderina Kruger

On the right
 The amazing Kascha Kloos
 4 x Gold Medals in the 90-94 age group



FINA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS
 MASTERS
 KAZAN 2015

Fina
 WORLD MASTERS
 CHAMPIONSHIPS

Regional and Club News

Tshwane

OUR Spring PROFILE IS SAREL THERON



Sarel has been an amazing dedicated member of Coelacanth and will always be seen participating in every arranged gala no matter where, in and around Gauteng. He attends Nationals regularly and is a serious contributor of points for Coelacanth.

The following was issued in the Beeld Koerant, Wednesday 24th June, 2015.

Headed: "SPORT het Sarel se beroep geword"

Translated by the Fyfe's. "Sport was Sarel's passion".

He wrote:

Sarel Theron resides in the north of Pretoria, in Karenpark. He is now 81 years of age.

I was born and grew up in Pretoria. In 1954 I moved to Johannesburg and that is where I became involved and active in different sports. In 1955 I joined Ellis Park Swimming Club and participated

in galas. This is where my success began! I also played tennis, squash, boxing, cycling and athletics, BUT my favourite sport was swimming. In 1994 I returned to Pretoria and joined Coelacanth Masters Swimming Club and Northern Transvaal Athletic Club. In 1999 I played at Wimbledon, on the centre court, in a friendly tennis tournament. This was a real highlight for me!

Then I did the following: I played squash twice a week in Waverley and was a member of Pikkewyne Club for the veterans. Twice a year I was active with vintage cars and went all over South Africa for the exhibitions. I swim regularly to prepare for the winter galas. Friday morning is ballroom dancing at a club in town. As a member of the then, Northern Transvaal Athletic Club, I participated in javelin, discus, shot-put and athletics. I practice all those sports as long as I stay fit and healthy and also to enjoy the relaxation and social side with friends and old acquaintances.

I chose swimming because it is the cheapest sport – all you need is a costume and a towel and you are ready. I am blessed to be so healthy and am seldom sick. I am sure it is because I am so active. To remain active and to take part in all the different competitions, planning, sorting accommodation, what routes to take etc. Keeps my brain nice and busy!

In 1994 I went on pension, sport became my fulltime passion and I was privileged to be able to go overseas in 1999 for athletics and swimming.



N.B. Important dates which will all take place at Hillcrest Pool.

- 3rd October 2015** – Coelacanths 1500 swim. All welcome, medals for all.
14th November 2015 – 1st Leg of the Inter-Regional LC Gala, 13h00-17h00. Braai after swim.
9th January 2016 – Eastern's 6 hour Endurance event LC 8h00 to 14h00. Braai after swim
18th February 2016 – Tshwane Championships 18h00 Long distance LC
20th February 2016 – Tshwane Championships 13h00 to 16h00 Short Distances LC

THSWANE/COELACANTH MASTERS SPRING NEWS. (From Craig Stanton)

As you may or may not know, over the last two years, Tshwane Masters Swimming (TMS) has been accepted as part of the Northern Tigers Swimming (NTS) Aquatics Club, involving our Masters at their Championships at the end of 2013 and again at the end of 2014, where there is a ladies and a men's heat on each evening of their Championships to give us some exposure.

TMS also forms part of the NTS Executive and meet once a month where Masters are made to feel part of the local Aquatics Body.

On Saturday 15 August, NTS invited our top Swimmers from the 2014/5 Season to a NTS Awards Evening where swimmers, divers, open water swimming, etc. are recognised for their achievements during the Season. Our four Top swimmers (Victor's- and Victrix- Ludorum winners, both under and over 49) were invited. Terry Downes, Derek Fyfe, Annemarie Dressler, Gary Albertyn and Barbara Fraatz, were awarded Gold Achievement Medals from NTS for their brilliant swims at Nationals 2015.

There were Certificates handed out to members from Tshwane (Coelacanths) for Open Water Swimming as well and these went to Gary Albertyn, Megan Albertyn, Kim Foster, Claire Rolt and Johan Pretorius.

There was an Annual Achievement Award for Meritorious Service presented as well, to a member of our Province (Club) who had really excelled in the promotion of Swimming, whether it be in or out of the water or both. In this instance, it was both and especially for the tremendous amount of work that this member puts together into correspondence and arguments, backed by factual information, on behalf of and for SA Masters Swimming, to SSA. This was awarded to Derek Fyfe, who was unfortunately away that weekend, but will receive it at an appropriate occasion.

Congratulations to these members of TMS on their achievements and also a huge Thank You to NTS, who from the start of having to affiliate to the Local Aquatics Club, have accepted us into their organisation and made us feel at home and part of a much bigger team. They need to be commended for this as it promotes relationships and helps grow Swimming, bridging the gap between younger, more competitive Swimmers and the slightly older (some very fast) Master's Swimmers.

At the end of the day, all swimmers are involved due to their love for the sport, regardless of the level on which they partake and if more Aquatics Clubs around the Country could adopt the same approach and accommodate Masters as Northern Tigers have, we would have a great swimming fraternity. As Masters Swimmers, we should not be forced to pay astronomical prices to partake in a Sport we love, just to satisfy SSA, but should be granted the opportunity to take part for fun, fitness and health (and obviously the top Masters Swimmers are on a different level), but still, adopt a simple, positive attitude and enjoy the Sport with the respective, local Aquatics Clubs.

Some social activities Coelacanths had during the winter months. They had a dinner in June (to celebrate winning the club trophy at Nationals) and a braai at Rietvlei Game Reserve in July. It was chilly but it was great to see everyone that came along. We all spotted the rhinos and their babies at the Rietvlei Game Reserve, plus buck and zebras. A great day out. Remember next year, anyone, from any club, from any region, is most welcome to come along and enjoy the get together.

Our Superstar: Travis Van Rensburg

Travis was recently picked to represent South Africa at the World Transplant Games 2015, in Argentina. Making a Proteas team is a great achievement, and just to top that, Travis came home with

3 Gold Medals

3 World Records

We are so extremely proud of you Travis and look forward to seeing many more outstanding performances in the future. All the very best from all of us.



Our very own “President Kennedy”.....Karen.

Karen, a woman most of us have no doubt met, but probably know very little about. This month, Phoenix Members decided to highlight this iconic lady from our club and provide a brief insight into the person she really is behind the scenes.

Karen was born in the South of Johannesburg and from a very early age became an avid swimmer. She was competitive from the outset, winning many awards throughout her school career one of these being the Victrix Ludorum prize in her junior years at the High School for Girls, Potchefstroom.

Karen went on from Potch to matriculate in Johannesburg, all the while maintaining her swimming at a competitive level. After school she took an extended leave of absence from South Africa and chose to travel the world on a “working holiday”. This provided her with a wealth of irreplaceable life experiences. During her time abroad she hung her hat to sleep on the beaches of Greece, the steps of train stations in Italy and Venice in particular, the camping grounds of Britain as well as numerous other European destinations. Her means of support whilst abroad varied from that of live-in nanny and au pair to the children of the aristocracy to caregiver and companion to the aged members of some of the richest and most famous families in the UK.

Upon her return to South Africa Karen started a business called AMA Aluminium specialising in the manufacturing of glass and aluminium windows and doors. Pursuing a career in the building industry from the age of 21 is definitely not easy but Karen dug her heels in and persevered. Over the years she has completed many bespoke residences and businesses in and around Gauteng as well as some significantly larger projects like the recent Houghton on 7th and the Houghton on 11th plus the residential block for the University of Johannesburg. Karen is well known and respected within the industry both for her knowledge and integrity as well as the quality of work that her 28 year-strong company produces.

Having taken a very long break from swimming after school, Karen eventually resurrected her passion for the sport at the interesting age of 42. Initially this was under the guidance of Dean Price during which time she accepted an invitation to join Phoenix. Unfortunately, within the first two years of her joining Phoenix the club experienced a bout of leadership challenges that left it somewhat floundering. A speedy and encouragingly unanimous proposal was made by the members to appoint Karen as President - and so it was.

Five years later Karen is still our “President Kennedy” and Phoenix has grown both in strength and stature from a dwindling pool of members into a club with a membership of over 60. Observing her leadership over the past 5 years has been an enlightening testament to her dedication and encouragement of Masters Swimming in the broadest sense. Karen's love of the

sport has seen her taking on additional roles on various committees, always happily giving of her time and knowledge. She is the current President of Gauteng Masters Swimming and has been for the past 3 years. She served on the Organising Committee of the most recent Nationals held at Ellis Park and made a sizable contribution to the funding of the event. Her portfolio entailed managing everything pertaining to the pool and the pool deck for Masters Nationals 2015. And the undisputed consensus afterwards was that she did a flawless job yielding magnificent results. Even the somewhat impossible was achieved on her watch. The Johannesburg Council agreed to repair the timing board which had been dysfunctional for countless years, specifically for our event!

It is worth mentioning that a major contributing factor in Karen managing her Nationals portfolio with such aplomb was her relentless efforts at relationship-building with all the relevant parties over a period of two years leading up to the event. It did not simply happen overnight. In the process of this she made many friends and also encouraged most of the Ellis Park staff to participate in the tournament. For many of them it was their first time ever off the starting block.



The one thing that has always stood out for us with Karen, is her willingness to step up to the plate and accept responsibility for whatever is placed on her shoulders. Very often this has come at the cost of her own participation in an event or the pursuits of her own personal goals. She is always willing to share her time and her knowledge of swimming and experiences genuine joy in the achievement of others and thus always encourages fellow swimmers to indulge themselves in their passion for the water.

Karen has achieved in both the open water and the pool arena nationwide. Despite only reviving her swimming career at age 42 she qualified for and participated in 2 Masters World Championships. Regrettably she did not go to this year's Worlds in Russia as planned due to unforeseen business obligations.

We wish her many more years of participation and enjoyment in the sport she so obviously loves.

Karen not only is an incredible motivator and mentor but she has become a true friend to many of us. She is always willing to listen and is always ready to impart some advice. We speak with one voice when we say, "thank you President Kennedy for your contribution to Masters Swimming! Your thoughts and gestures go a long way to keeping us all going."

Every ounce of her swimming-being echoes the FINA principals of Fun Fitness and Fellowship.

"When I go out and race, I'm not trying to beat opponents, I'm trying to beat what I have done ... to beat myself, basically. People find that hard to believe because we've had such a bias to always strive to win things. If you win something and you haven't put everything into it, you haven't actually achieved anything at all. When you've had to work hard for something and you've got the best you can out of yourself on that given day, that's where you get satisfaction from. "Ian Thorp"

Lady Liberty Swim June 2015

Whilst crammed next to a malodorous man to my right and the unforgiving rigid plastic window of an airplane to my left, on a 14 hour flight to JFK, unable to sleep, I thought about what had brought me to this particular place and time.

Yes, I was going to visit family but I was also going to swim the iconic Lady Liberty from Liberty Island, up the Hudson river, past Ellis Island, the Colgate Clock Tower and into the city harbour and that is what I had been obsessing about and training for since Masters in March. But how did I get here?

Swimming, as we know, is an individual sport, but each swimmer has a support team that adds inestimable value to each of us, some hands on and present, others who do not even realise the value they bring us. I thought of all the people who touched my swimming life and was humbled.

1998 and chronic injury and health issues had pushed me off the road of race walking and into the pool – doing my own thing, just content to move in the water, pain free. Until one morning I got to the pool to find it inundated with kids, and a strange man. He saw my dismay and with gestures understood that I wanted a lane, which he duly provided by shunting kids into the other lanes. After a short while this man indicated that my free style was so-so, and breaststroke a disaster. So I asked if he could help and he was delighted to. He was only the Hungarian Olympic Coach!! Sandor Bam changed my life – not only did he get into the pool with me to show me what to do, but he taught me that we get through challenges “one stroke at a time” – that simple, but so effective. His English improved at a faster rate than my swimming style!! Sandor’s daughter Annemarie took charge after Sandor moved to Pretoria and it is thanks to her that I swim butterfly – she deconstructed the stroke to its elements and then put it back together for me and the first time I got it right, albeit for 10 meters- it was amazing!! Warren Verkuil then took charge (the local swimming club had a rapid turnover of coaches and I piggybacked on that) and Warren taught me to tumble turn – what a gift that was. The other gift was Carolyn – she joined Warren’s squad and completed our ladies troika, one that will endure beyond the pool, across distance and time- Shaan, Carolyn and I. Damian Marshall followed Warren and he gave me courage to try the unthinkable – Robben Island? We can train for that. 200m Fly – of course you can do it. Tragically, Damian died aged 30, but when I swam my first ever 200 fly in Oudtshoorn I heard him in my head, felt him next to me and knew that I would finish that race, so too with Robben Island.

Coaches are one element, but friends and team mates are the glue that binds us – that same 200 fly in Oudtshoorn: the entire Free State Team (12 of them) lined up on the pool deck, a solid orange wall of support and encouragement. I had to finish that race so as not to disappoint them as much as myself. I certainly was not fast and not entirely elegant either, but I finished and the team celebrated as if I had won Olympic Gold – that is what makes Free State such a special team. Each swimmer counts, each victory is celebrated. Victory does not necessarily equate

to a medal – victory might be getting to the starting blocks or finishing a race – open water or at a gala – unconditional support of each other keeps us all coming back for more. The Free State app group keeps us connected and supportive through all our life events, even if we only see each other once or twice a year.

Shani Loxton introduced me to Midmar Mile and open water by commenting that if I could do 60 laps of the pool in less than 40 minutes I could swim Midmar – I was clueless as to what that meant. But 17 years and 27 miles later I now know what Midmar is!!

My experience is that with swimming we do not only “take” from others but we “give” as well – with grace and generosity of spirit. A very dear friend of mine was horrified when the doctor gave him a message “exercise or die” and my reply was “so swim”! From not being able to swim 25m without stopping, he has gone on to be an accomplished swimmer, tallying up medals at Masters, completing open water swims and influencing others to become more. Watching him thrive is the gift but many times we give without realising or seeing the results of the gift. Knowing that I made a difference comforts me enormously. Many swimmers remain unaware of their influence.



So as I flew on into the night I did not notice “malodorous” next to me, nor the aching joints and muscles that had been contorted to fit a mean and nasty airline seat in cattle class, I felt surrounded by “my people” – Amelia, Gwynn, Barbs, Antoinette, Derek, Shaan, Carolyn and Damian and was humbled – I needed to swim for them as well as for me, fly the Free State Flag, validate all the faith placed in me or die!

As it turned out G-d, the Universe and the City of NY sanitation decided otherwise! Race day was the Sunday. Friday my son and I went on a recce to see the start and the finish so I would know where to go, got all hyped up by that Lady on Liberty Island, started to hyperventilate just looking at that huge river and then, as per norm, quietly withdrew into myself to contemplate it all. The weather was ominous and blustery and the whole week I had been obsessively checking the weather forecast to see if “rain” had miraculously

changed to ‘sunshine’ – summer in NY for goodness sake – should be hot and humid. Saturday morning, back on the weather which showed 100% thunderstorms for Saturday and Sunday, then to the race website where in bold red letters “cancelled” was spread across the page. Cancelled!!! Yes- due to the 100% thunderstorms and a resultant surge of sewage into the Hudson, cancelled. Not postponed, but cancelled, just so.

Naturally I was disappointed, but pragmatic – you can’t fight with the weather and rather than have E.coli for breakfast and G-d knows what else in that water (imagine the effluence of 15 million people????) I was quite happy to not swim and live to swim another day.

Swimming has taken me to places, physically and emotionally, that I never even knew existed. Swimming has put me in touch with the most wonderful people on the planet and each time I swim, whether training, open water, both fresh and salt water or a gala I am filled with gratitude to be alive and able and realise that it is not water that surrounds me, but love

KZN MASTERS

The 2015/2016 season literally 'kicked' off to a fantastic start on the 30th August with our Winter Charity Relay event at the Gordon Road School Pool. We had four one hour sessions planned with 21 relay teams and 3 individuals swimming the one hour challenge.

The total distance swum was 100.5 kilometres, which was way beyond what we estimated. Even more than a Comrades Marathon! Congratulations to all who participated, and THANKYOU for making the morning such a great success!

The two Flying Fish men's teams both swam the greatest distance of 6.05 kms in the allocated hour whilst 'The Flying Fish Glenashley Ladies', took the ladies honours.

Jenny Ireland went the most distance in the individual swim doing 3.1kms. However the distance was not a requirement as there were no prizes for these capable winners. On the day everyone was a winner, no matter how far you went, as all were swimming for a reason, to support our chosen charity The Open Door Crisis Centre.

It was a pleasure to welcome the Founder & Director of the Open Door Crisis Centre, Thora Mansfield and her sister Thelma to the pool to show their support to all the swimmers. A very BIG thank you goes to all of those who swam, as well as those who supplied 'Goodies' from the centres 'wish list'. Both ladies were overjoyed by your generosity. Generosity was certainly the honour of the day and with all the entry money and the raffle takings we will be purchasing a new printer for the centre and the balance of the funds will purchase printing paper etc.

Thank you to all the families who supported swimmers and did the lap counting, as well as the KZN Masters Committee who assisted with many different tasks during the morning. Thank you to Ann Gray, who obtained the raffle hamper prize as well as Lucky Dip prizes of Drakensburg Canopy Tour tickets. The morning ended with many people staying to enjoy the braai. What a wonderful, friendly start to our very busy season in the true Masters spirit of FUN, FITNESS and FELLOWSHIP!

Our next gala is on the 20th September at Gordon Rd school pool and we are hoping to see all our 'old' swimmers plus many 'new' swimmers taking part.



Our Spring profile is Wendy Saunders

On the 13th September Wendy Saunders will turn 80 years old – a valued member of East Coast Masters and the oldest swimmer at the moment in KZN Masters Swimming. This swimmer of ours goes from strength to strength each season and at KZN Masters prize giving in May she received the Victrix Ludorum trophy for the 2014/2015 season.

At the Nationals in March this year at Ellis Park Wendy obtained gold medals for the 50m, 100m and 200m Breaststroke and also the 50m and 100m freestyle events whilst she also got silver medals for the 50m backstroke as well as for her swims in two 280+relays.

When asked about her swimming career Wendy said "While growing up we had a pool but I preferred to spend time on the tennis, badminton and squash courts. I married a champion swimmer Jim but even that didn't get me interested. While supporting Jim at the Durban SAMS Nationals the other swimmers asked me why I wasn't



swimming. I replied by saying that "I don't fancy cold water, goggles or a cap and I had neuropathy". But eventually Wendy was persuaded to join and she trained at home for a year before competing in her first SAMS Nationals in Pretoria at the age of 75 years. Since then she has swum each year. Now she trains each day and loves it! As she says "There is hope for everyone. Now I look back and wonder about why more people don't swim. It is such a fun activity and everyone is very supportive". She is hoping that with nationals in Durban in 2016 more people will join and participate in this exciting sport.

Happy Birthday for the 13th Wendy and may you still have many years ahead in your swimming career!

AMAKHOSI MASTERS SWIMMING

2015 SPRING EDITION

As always winter training is difficult at the best of times and for the first time ever the Joan Harrison swimming complex remained open during the winter months. However with the heaters not working fully and confusion regarding ticket prices, very few people used the complex!

This is such a pity as our winter days can mostly be pleasant and outdoor swimming would be welcome if the water temperature was above 21'. We have however now officially moved into spring and as the water and day temperatures improve, I believe all of our members will return to the pool to shed their winter flab and prepare for our October short course gala, which we have preliminary planned for the 17th October 2015.

Our winter swimming might have been dull, but we were fortunate to watch the Kazan World championships as well as the

recent Paris leg of the Fina Swimming world cup. Chad Le Clos, Cameron Van Der Burgh, Myles Brown and Chad Ho, have all become house hold names and represented South Africa proudly.

In conclusion, I leave you with this quote from Henry Ford, "Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at 20 or 80, anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young".

So to all our masters' swimmers out there "keep on learning!"
See you in the water.

Kerry Skidmore

PRESIDENT AMAKHOSI MASTERS SWIMMING CLUB

We are so proud of Vi Skinner who has recently returned from San Antonio – Texas, as the South African coach of the 2015 world Deaf Swimming Championships. Together the *South African Team* came home with a total of eight medals (3 Gold, 2 Silver and 3 Bronze) As a Amakhosi masters swimmer, she helps train many of our members and her experience is invaluable to our club.



EASTERN PROVINCE MASTERS SWIMMING

We had our prize giving which was the best yet. The pictures are from the prize giving function that took place on the 17th May, 2015. The first is of Denise Bosman and Ralph West - they received certificates for getting medals at the Senior Open Water Champs in Grabouw. The middle one is of Elsa Craig who received the trophy for accumulating the most points at Masters Nationals Ellis Park and the last one is of Erika Scheepers receiving the trophy for the best performance in the Open Water swim at Nationals. Cheers for now and have a great season. From Elsa Craig



FISH EAGLES MASTERS SWIMMING



The start of the Madswimmer swim.

Several Knysna masters attended a clinic by Ryk Neethling in Knysna. Thank you Ryk.

Madswimmer (www.madswimmer.com) is a South African non-profit company that organises daring swims to raise money for charity. On 11 July 25 madswimmers including Carol Hampshire (Fish Eagles) took part in the 14.5 km swim from the Red Bridge to Knysna Heads. You could swim individually or as a relay-Carol did 2 legs of a relay team. R5000 was raised for Sinethemba Youth Centre in Knysna and an up and coming development swimmer.



Western Province Masters

Wow, we are so proud of our WP Masters swimmers who competed at the World Masters Champs in Kazan, Russia. The team returned with a truckload of medals, both individual and in the relay teams, plus personal bests across the board. Special mention must be made (again) of Sanderina Kruger who broke three world records, Di Coetzee, who won gold for all her individual events, and was also part of the 240+ 4x50 Freestyle relay team (Calvin Maughan, Sanderina Kruger, Di Coetzee and Tim Shead) which broke the world record, Calvin Maughan, Championship record in the 100m Freestyle. Kascha Kloos was the oldest competitor, and first in all her events. Tim Shead, Mike Winfield, Gail McCarney and Kath Nurse all on the podium in the coveted 1st spot. What an exciting week it was, for some the experience of competing in an international event for the first time and having their appetites whetted for the next champs in Budapest in 2017.

Huge congratulations to all our WP swimmers, you did us proud!

The team that won the theoretical club competition in Kazan was Poseidon with 54 members (I told everyone 95 on Sunday, but that was another Russian club "Kasatka". We had 24 participating members. 1 and 3 were Russian teams.

Our ladies swept the floor with everyone. If you split the scores up between men and women (relays excluded), the men came 9th with 191 points, and first place was Poseidon with 488.

Now... the ladies scored a whopping 466, came in at first place. Second place was Tsunami (a Russian team) on 266!!! Poseidon scored 181.

So, for us men to save some face... we were 10 points stronger than Poseidon's ladies!!!! But our women scored 20 points less than Poseidon's men.... see the gap here? Our ladies are tops.



OUR Spring PROFILE IS JEAN DEGENAAR

JEAN DEGENAAR



My masters swimming career began quite by chance 17 years ago. I have always loved to be in the water. At school I trained twice a week and swam in school galas. After school I studied Phys Ed at Stellenbosch and went to SAU as part of a synchro duet. The motivation was purely to meet the water polo crowd and go on a road trip to Wits and be part of the inter-varsity vibe. My next encounter with competition of any kind was at the age of 38 when I attended a local master's gala at Newlands. I overheard someone saying that there was a world masters championships in Morocco later that year. Marc and I had always wanted to go to Morocco so it seemed like the perfect opportunity to combine a bit of swimming with travel to an exotic destination. I got medals for all 5 events so I thought: "This is easy!"

Since that first fun-filled World Masters Swimming tour shared with a few Cape Town Masters nutters and some others from further afield I haven't looked back. I went on to participate in 2000 at the Olympic pool in Munich which was far more competitive, but somehow managing to medal in the 400IM.

I also got to see fascinating places like Prague, Northern Italy and Switzerland.

In 2002 I adventured down to Christchurch and stopped over in Sydney on the way home.

2004 took me to Riccione in Italy – but only after a boat trip down the coast of Croatia so that I was nicely tapered .

In 2006 it was quite an undertaking to get to San Francisco! I Stopped off in New York to meet up with my travelling companion, Claire, coming from London, and together we did a "Thelma and Louise" to the edge of the Grand Canyon. We also road-tripped to Yosemite National Park in the footsteps of Ansel Adams in search of Mirror Lake. We found fellow South Africans, Morag, Heather and Peta in a nearby cabin at Camp Curry and after that chance encounter, life became extremely funny.

My next trip was to Goteborg, Sweden in 2010. I was over the moon when I unexpectedly got my first real medal....a bronze in the 200IM. I also tried herring which was awesome! After the stress of competing, Claire and I ventured down to France for some R&R, winding our way through the Loire Valley on rustic rural backroads. Definitely more relaxing for my dozy navigator than for me, the designated driver.

And then came Kazan which was memorable in that we had no idea of what to expect. Security was paramount and once we got over the initial shock of having ourselves and our backpacks (and even our water bottles) scanned 17 times a day we felt very safe.

Despite the tummy bug (first) and respiratory infection (next) I surprised myself with good times getting 2 silvers and 2 bronze medals.

So what is Masters swimming all about? For me it's about the daily swimming training routine. I find it a wonderful start to my day as it's de-stressing, meditative and helps me to keep the balance. I don't enjoy the competition that much. Being able to travel and swim is the ultimate for me. It's actually more about being with a group of fun-loving people, seeing and capturing new and diverse places and experiencing different cultures. I try not to let my times and achievements or disappointments define me and the ongoing challenge is to keep that balance.

Heyo!

A new season is starting up in the coming weeks and months.

(Yes, it feels surreal to be typing that... Where did last year go?)

With the little bit of a break that most of you are enjoying, here are a few rules to dive into the new season with in order to make it your best yet.

1. Be a little better each day.

It's natural to want to make the big, drastic improvements. In reality, dropping big chunks of time off your best time doesn't come from doing something right once, it comes from doing a whole bunch of little things right consistently.

2. Speaking of little, the details matter...

It's crazy to think how often races end up coming down to who kept their head down at the finish, or who had a slightly tighter streamline off that last wall. The way that you perform these seemingly innocuous aspects of your swimming in practice is the way you do them in competition, so don't neglect them.

3. Practice good swimming and gratitude.

Yes, getting up at 5am for morning workouts isn't the greatest. Nor is Hell Week or spending yet another weekend away from your friends from school. But swimming— and the myriad of benefits it will provide you from building character, consistency and toughness— is worth being grateful for.

4. Set a goal to master the grind, the process, and the day-to-day.

Big goals are great and necessary—they give us motivation and something to strive for. But a championship swimmer isn't made on race day. They are forged in the day-to-day grind of falling in love with the process.

5. Be the teammate you want to have.

Some of my best memories from my age group swimming days aren't necessarily the best times and records (though those were nice), it was the moments where an older swimmer lent a word of encouragement. Or when the team all got up to cheer for me. Those moments matter a lot more than you realize, so take the steps to be that teammate regularly.

6. Keep your word.

Top level swimmers have insane levels of personal integrity. When they say that they are going to do something, that they are going to commit to a specific goal, they do it. A funny thing happens when you fully commit to something—your world seems to bend around it in order to make it come to fruition.

7. Track your performance.

Consistency over the course of a full swimming season is tough. There will always be distractions, setbacks, injuries and illness. Write out your workouts on a daily basis to keep yourself accountable and keep your intensity in practice elevated.

Will you dive into the new season at full speed with even just a couple of these simple rules?

**If You Refuse To Give Up Today
You Will Become An Inspiration
To Many Tomorrow**

So till next time, whenever, wherever

"JUST KEEP SWIMMING."
— DORY, FINDING NEMO

