

The Early History of Masters Swimming

The balance between catering for competitive swimming and swimming for fitness and fun is a regular discussion point of the current National Board and Branch Committees.

To put it in context, and by going back to the origins, Masters swimming started nearly forty years ago by a group of adult swimmers who wanted to organise competitive swimming events for men and women. The founding members were mainly members of the A.I.F, Winter Swimming Associations and the NSW Leagues Swim Clubs; and they were predominantly male only organisations.



The Masters association was modelled on the US Masters, but was modified to suit local conditions and the easy going attitude of Australian people. It was based on a foundation of swimming clubs on which is layered interclub competitions at local, state and national levels. These events provided the opportunity for group training and travel, competition and camaraderie.



Organising and participating in meets was the driving force in establishing the original Branches and Clubs and the association's motto of "fitness and fun" was born.

The common incentive for clubs was to motivate swimmers to be active all year round, swimming at least three times a week to condition themselves. But it was not all about exercise, as the other reason for becoming a member has always been to access coaching and swim with like minded people who are interested in socialising.

Forty years later, the majority of MSA members don't compete, but the other reasons for joining a masters club haven't changed. They are members because they enjoy the Fitness though swimming, Friendship and Fun that their club provides for them. Lots of them are summer open water swimming enthusiasts. The other third of the membership still use the incentive of competing to keep them motivated, active and enjoying the group camaraderie of travelling to Meets.

Masters Swimming Australia is approaching its Fortieth anniversary and there will be recognition and a few celebrations across 2015. If you would like to contribute in some way, do not hesitate in letting us know, via your branch or direct to the MSA Office.

[CLICK HERE](#) to contact Emma and Jane at the MSA Office.

