

## VORGEE MILLION METRES MILESTONE JOHN PUGH – TEN MILLION METRES

John Pugh started competitive swimming in 1949 at the age of 11, in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia and is still at it. Joining Masters Swimming in South Africa, John competed in the inaugural Masters Swimming Championships in Durban, Natal Province in 1984. In 1987 he emigrated to Launceston, Tasmania, and joined the Lemmings Masters Club, of which he is now a Life Member.

Aerobic swims, as they were then called (now 'Enduro'), were a regular monthly feature in the club programme and these encouraged John to try for the Vorgee Million Metres milestones, with his first swim for towards the program on May 15, 1990. It seemed a good challenge at the time, although he hadn't yet thought about 10 million metres. By 30 December 1990, John had completed 231,550 metres and was hooked! Some 24 years later, in January 2014 John reached the Vorgee 10 Million Metres milestone. There were a few forced interruptions towards the end in the form of two rotator cuff repairs in 2012 and 2013, but finally he made it.

Generally John has trained four to five times a week covering between 2000 and 4000 metres per session. Add to this specific long distance 'Enduro' swims and distances covered in competitions and the total climbed. In some years the total distance was about 350,000 metres or more. Sessions were typical interval training sets, usually set by himself as the coach of the Lemmings for 18 years.

"How did I feel when achieving 10 million metres?" John asked. "Relieved and very satisfied, but at age 76 I decided that was enough!" John thinks that 10 million metres is an achievable target nationally and that the dedicated (?) few wanting to go for 15 million or more should get special awards from their Branches – He is trying hard NOT to record my training distances now!

