

February 2024

Editor's note: Contributions to the newsletter are most welcome. This month, we have two original items – a report on a Greek Island Swimming Odyssey and a reflection on Backstroke and the Cosmos! If you would can contribute an item, however small, please send it addressed to the Newsletter Editor to adelaidemastersswimming@gmail.com.

Announcements and Reminders

Membership

If you were a member in 2023 and wish to maintain your membership, you should renew your membership via Swim Central on the [Masters Swimming SA Website](#) now if you have not already done so. You will not be eligible for Club points in the Open Water Series or for the towel for completing all open water swims unless you are a registered member.

Mega Swim

If you are interested in joining our team for the MS Mighty Swim at Unley Pool on 11 - 12 February, please register on [MS Mighty Swim \(supportms.au\)](#) and select your time slot on this [spreadsheet](#).

President's Report

The Jetty to Jetty is over for another year and, unfortunately our name is not on the trophy this year. There are many reasons why, but I am not one to dwell in the past. The key thing is that we carry on into the future with the proud name and history of our club. Our name will be back on that trophy, where it belongs.

The one thing that I did take away from the Jetty to Jetty was our lack of club identity. I could see other clubs in their club kit but not us. Kay and her team have done a wonderful job of sourcing club kit, it is now up to all of us (myself included) to ensure that we stand out as the original and best swimming club in South Australia. If you do not have your club bathers, tee-shirt, swim cap, etc, order now! If you do have them, remember to wear them.

Talking of club identity, we are starting to get the results of the recent club survey. If you are yet to fill it in, I encourage you to do so [here](#). It has already given the committee a snapshot of the views of club members and a lot to think about. We hope to publish the results soon and of course work on the numerous suggestions to keep our club the best in South Australia.

See you in the sea or the pool

Pete

Coach's Corner

For the first few weeks in January, we have been examining a few simple skills to improve your swimming.

The first was stroke counting: keeping track of the number of strokes it takes you to travel the length of the pool can give you a lot of feedback about your swimming. The number of strokes you take is personal and should not be used to compare yourself against another swimmer. You undoubtedly have a unique set of physical attributes that contribute to your count that other swimmers do not have.

Your stroke count is a proxy for your stroke length, how far you travel in the water. Everyone has an ideal stroke length. Too short a stroke length and you are putting in a lot of effort and not going anywhere, too long and you will be indulging in excessive gliding or kicking. Getting it just right is an art. The first step is knowing on average how many strokes you take to cover the length of the pool.

While you are working out your average stroke count you may notice that as you get faster or as you get tired it increases. This is usually due to your technique breaking down. One of the key factors in your stroke count increasing is your alignment in the water. Are you shaped like a speedboat or a tugboat? Are your legs dropping? A higher-than-expected stroke count is an indication that something needs correcting. Stroke counting in a pool tells you if the engine is running efficiently.

The second skill is using the pace clock. Most pools have one and they can give you a lot of interesting feedback. The key thing is to know your times. How long does it take you to do an easy lap, a moderate lap, or a hard lap? Once you know that it can help you keep to that pace. It is surprising how hard an easy pace can become if you swim it for long enough. I am sure some of you found that out in some of the sessions.

If you link the effort you are putting in with the pace you are going you may find that more effort does not always equate to going faster. I have seen swimmers think they are sprinting when all they are doing is rotating their arms faster for no advantage. Harder is sometimes not faster, only keeping a careful eye on the clock will tell you this and allow you to adjust accordingly.

The clock is not just for recording your personal best, it is your guide to applying the right amount of effort at the right time.

I hope you have enjoyed the sessions and have taken something away from them, even if it is only how to move a rubber duck up the pool without using your hands

Pete

SA Masters Open Water Championships

The Championships were held on Sunday 14 January at Somerton in fine conditions, the light breeze and comfortable water temperature making for pleasant swimming.

Adelaide Masters was represented by a strong group of 10 swimmers who performed very well, winning the Club Champion (Average Points per Swimmer) Trophy for the first time since the Championships began in 2012.

In the 1K, Emily Goldie was 1st female and 2nd overall, edging out Jo Sutcliffe and Ian Young in a very tight finish, an exceptional swim. Lee O’Connell came in as 6th female and Peter Clements, Remin Nath and Michael Harry also completed the event. In the 3K, Steph Palmer-White finished 3rd female, Scott Goldie 5th male and Sharon Beaver, Kent Nelson and Matt Lockwood also completed. Congratulations to everyone!



Steph and Lee with our Club Champion (Average Points per Swimmer) Trophy!



Steph...looking pleased to finish



Kent...3 seconds behind Mark Morelli!



Emily...winner of the female 1K



Sharon...6th female in the 3K

Jetty to Jetty Open Water Swim

Rescheduled from Australia Day due to the strong south westerly and rain, the Jetty to Jetty was held in near perfect conditions on Sunday 28 January. A strong favourable tide and gentle water conditions made for a fast swim. Adelaide had 24 swimmers competing (out of a total of 282 swimmers), not quite enough to retain the Marjory Muller Trophy for another year but a good turnout nonetheless.

There were some outstanding individual performances: Steph Palmer White 3rd female and 5th overall, Emily Goldie 6th female, Scott Goldie 7th male, and Sharon Beaver 9th female. Others to finish were Russell Anderson, Philip Behrens, Julie Bowman, Greg Cates, Christopher Charles, Peter Clements, Judith Gallasch, Pam Gunn, Michael Harry, Peter Holley, Paloma Isabel, Kay Johnston, Kim Lau, Matt Lockwood, Remin Nath, Kent Nelson, Lee O'Connell, Betty Reinboth, Mardi Webber and Roman Zaika. Congratulations to everyone, especially those swimmers doing their first Jetty to Jetty, and thank you to our volunteers who helped with setting up (at 6.30am) and packing up after the swim. It was also great to see Di Simons and Howard Muller at the presentations for another year.



Di Simons and Howard Muller



Kim Lau, Roman Zaika, Betty Reinboth,
Judith Gallasch and Michael Harry



Peter Clements and Russell Anderson

Reflections

A Greek Island Odyssey

Following our 50th birthday challenge with the Perth to Rottnest Island swim in 2012, we decided to treat ourselves for our 60th birthdays with a swim in the beautiful Greek Islands. The inspiration struck after hearing about Adelaide Masters club members Pam and Sue's reflections on their Lefkada Greek Island swim – an adventure we felt destined for.

With 12 years of planning, including a 2-year COVID delay, we were finally ready to embark on our dream journey. Our group, aptly named "The Gorgeous Girls That Swim" – Kay, Mardi, Tina, Nicole, and Elena – extended invitations to friends and family, forming a team of 16 to book out the boat "Mowgli."

Facing an ambitious schedule of a 5km swim every day for a week, our usual leisurely 2km Sunday morning swim and chat weren't going to cut it. So, our training intensified, proudly achieving 3-4km swims at least three days a week by the time departure day arrived.

Upon arrival at the fabulous accommodation in Lefkada, we gathered to meet our guides and the Captain of the Boat, toasting with a glass (or two) of champagne. With some trepidation, we set out on our first day, divided into three groups: the Pink Barbies (pink caps), The Fanta-seas (orange caps), and Shark Bait (yellow cap).

That afternoon, we were individually filmed and received valuable feedback on our stroke technique. This made a significant difference as we had 5km every day to focus on improvement, resulting in all of us becoming faster and swimming more efficiently. If you ever get the chance to be filmed while swimming, it is undoubtedly worth it.

Over the next six days, we sailed to different off-the-beaten-path locations, traversing beautiful coastlines and island crossings, all while adhering to our motto – hug the coast, love the coast. Our days consisted of a morning swim, a two-hour lunch at a different island tavern, and an afternoon swim. We fell in love with the crystal-clear blue water, the warm Mediterranean temperature, swimming with our beautiful group, and, importantly, swimming in an ocean with no man-eating sharks. It was perfect.

Initially, the prospect of seven days of swimming seemed daunting, but with no pressure to participate in every swim, we could relax and savour the experience. This 12-year dream swim far exceeded all our expectations, turning into a magical adventure. We wholeheartedly recommend "The Big Blue Swim" to swimmers of all levels.

So, for our 65th, will it be Costa Rica, the Caribbean, or the Maldives? Stay tuned for the next aquatic chapter!

Mardi Webber and Kay Johnston

The Greek Island Odyssey!



Backstroke and the Cosmos

One of the real delights of getting back to Hazelwood Park is that you don't have to stare at a boring ceiling when you are doing backstroke. Rather, you are able to see and contemplate the cosmos as it is revealed for two or three minutes in the course of 100 metres of backstroke. Well make that three minutes or more in my case.

And I don't mind staring into the blue sky. On a cloudy day, you can see, or rather glimpse patches of blue and sometimes the moon is rising in the north-east, during our sessions.

But on a clear day it is wonderful to think about the fact that there is absolutely nothing between the swimmer in the pool and the edge of the cosmos. Is the universe finite, or infinite? Isaac Newton had grown up in Euclidian geometry and the idea that parallel lines could only meet at an infinite distance. So he kind of projected that into space, but he also considered that only God was infinite so there was a limit to space. But there was only one reference frame, space and time were fixed to an absolute reference based in England. Greenwich Mean Time. Mercifully, Albert Einstein and indeed Galileo before him have disabused us of the notion of an absolute and fixed reference frame. And there are ways of applying Einstein's general theory of relativity so that there was a beginning – the Big Bang. Furthermore, Einstein replaced Euclidean infinite space with a detailed account of the underlying geometric character of gravitation, what we call curved space time.

Are we looking into an infinite distance? Well, no, our eyes cannot see that far, and even the James Webb space telescope is limited by what is called the "horizon of last scattering". Better understood, or at least experienced by us, the cosmic microwave background (CMB) is the static between channels we used to get on black-and-white televisions. Microwaves that are believed to be the "red shifted" radiation of the first light emitted after the Big Bang.

And no matter how brilliant, technologically advanced or out there in the cosmos the James Webb telescope may be, it will never see the Big Bang because it is hidden by that horizon of last scattering. Still, if we accept the current paradigms of cosmology, it can find objects the light from which was emitted close to but less than 13.8 billion years ago.

But to return to Hazelwood Park pool. If we were to stay till after dark on a clear moonless night we might get to see the Pleiades, the small frying pan shaped object, also known as the seven sisters, well to the north of and a bit closer to the horizon than the saucepan of Orion.

Now it's puzzling to look at the Pleiades, because sometimes you can see five stars, sometimes six stars sometime seven, eight or even more. It is accepted that the limit of human seeing is stars of magnitude 6 or $6\frac{1}{2}$. So if we know that the Pleiades are about 439 light years away, that gives us some indication of just how far into the sky we can see with the naked eye. And remember that if light travels at 3,000,000 metres per second, the distance travelled in 439 years, as the rough limit of human seeing, is absolutely enormous. That doesn't mean we can't see objects that are further



away, particularly if they are brighter than magnitude 6; the Andromeda Galaxy is low on the northern horizon in November and December and that is 2 million light years away.

So we can see a little way into the sky doing backstroke at Hazelwood Park, but whether the “edge of the universe” is infinite and unbounded, or whether it is finite and unbounded, (imagine the surface of a sphere) we still don’t know. But it is certainly worth contemplating and it may be the reason that my backstroke is not as fast as it could be.

Christopher Charles from lane eight

Merchandise

Members wishing to order club merchandise can either see Judith Gallasch at training on Wednesday evenings to view the merchandise and place an order, or email the club at adelaidemastersswimming@gmail.com requesting a Merchandise form as soon as possible. The form provides information about available items including images and prices.

Goods must be ordered on the Merchandise form and paid for by EFT to the Club bank account (which is on the form) before they will be ordered through our supplier.

Betty and Kay
Merchandise Sub Committee

Dates for your diary

Further information on the following events (including registration details when posted) and the calendars for the Open Water series and Summer Pool series are available on the [Masters Swimming SA website](#).

February

Sunday 4 th	Brighton Jetty Classic 1.5K <i>Note: not a Masters meet</i>	From 7.30am at Brighton Jetty
Saturday 10 th	Pink and Blue Swim <i>Note: not a Masters meet</i>	From 7.30 at West Beach Surf Life Saving Club
Sunday 18 th	Henley Beach Swim 1k and 2K	From 8.30am at Henley Beach

March

Saturday

2 nd	Port Elliot Swim 900M and 1.8K	From 22.30pm at Port Elliot SLSC
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Monday 11th Noarlunga Reef Swim From 9.00am at Port Noarlunga Jetty
1.5, 2.5K and 5K

April

20th SA Masters Branch Dinner

May

3rd – 7th [MSA National Championships](#) Parap Pool, Darwin



For up to the minute news and last-minute changes.

Do you have something we can include in the newsletter? Mail it to
adelaidemastersswimming@gmail.com