

2009 -10 President's Report

The past year has been one full of challenges and success.

It has been arguably the club's most successful year with outstanding achievement at an individual level as demonstrated by the number of swimmers achieving qualifying times at State, National and International level; and at the team level with success at the A grade Championships in February.

These successes have continued with the club achieving second place at this year's State SC Championships held over the past two weekends.

Club Membership

Club membership and swimmer participation have increased significantly compared to previous years. Competitive membership grew by 28% in comparison to 2009.

Participation by non-competitive members also grew by 100 with the coaching program being opened to non-members as a means of introducing more swimmers from the Learn-To-Swim program to competitive swimming; and ultimately competitive membership.

Arena Swim Club hosted two swim meets. The annual LC meet was hosted on 5 November with approximately 200 swimmers participating with clubs travelling from as far a-field as Geraldton. In early January, at the invitation of SWA, the club hosted the Platypus Junior Grand Prix. This was an outstanding success and demonstrated the demand for 'junior only' competition. Participation was in the order of 240 swimmers with clubs travelling from Albany and Mt Barker whilst also attracting smaller metropolitan clubs that are not regular participants such as Tuart Hill and Mirrabooka.

Feedback from participants was excellent. The success of both meets is testament to the many hours of planning and work undertaken by the race meet organising group. Regrettably, recent changes to hosting arrangements means that each club can only host one long course meet per year and we will be unable to run a similar program in 210/11.

Swim Camps

In October 2010, the club hosted two swim club camps. The Geraldton swim camp was targeted at Junior and Development swimmers up to the age of 12 years. Once again, this camp was enjoyed by all with a good mix of swim training and non-swim activities including sand-boarding, ten pin bowling and movies. Swimmers were also fortunate to be invited to participate in an inter club race session hosted by the Geraldton Swim Club.

An Adventure camp was also hosted for swimmers in the National level training groups. This camp focussed on team work and developing individual's leadership awareness through activities including cycling, canoeing, orienteering, archery, sharing two small bathrooms with limited access to hair driers; and other challenges designed to promote an understanding of team membership and team work. This camp also proved successful although some feedback indicated that there is scope to make the activities more challenging.

Challenges

Theft from Club Safe & Meet Entry Box

Regrettably, the club once again suffered from theft of money from the club rooms and the meet entry box. Total losses are estimated to be in the vicinity of \$6,500.

The club has taken further steps to make storage of club equipment and money more secure including;

- upgrading the club safe which is now firmly fixed in place and cannot be removed with removing the entire cupboard.
- Improved process for clearance and banking of money.

- Introduction and encouragement of the use of Electronic Funds Transfer as a means of payment to reduce the risk of theft.
- Increased insurance cover to include loss of cash

The club has also requested improvements to be made to the meet entry box to provide improved short term security for cash deposits; and to resolve the ongoing issue of meet entries becoming accidentally lodged in the top of the box. The club continues to raise concerns over the lack of security provided by VenuesWest for all of its equipment during school holiday learn to swim programs and school swim carnival season.

Office of Share Services – Venues West

Venues West commenced its participation in the governments Office of Shares Services for administration in 2010. Prior to this, VenuesWest was able to collect club membership fees as part of the registration process and provide the club with timely and meaningful reports, funds transfer and invoicing if that was to occur. The Office of Shared Services is unable to provide the same level of detail required by the club to administer the fees collected with delays funds transfer to the club in early January of up to 3 months.

The club has chosen to collect membership fees independent of Venues West and provides the option of payment by cash, cheque, EFT and EFTPOS. Coaching fees will continue to be collected by Venues West.

Time Keeping

Time Keeping obligations continued to be a challenge for the club and have contributed to considerable angst for those volunteers who regularly fulfil their obligation; volunteer to fill others obligations only to see the nominated person still sitting in the grandstand or to have them refuse to time keep as they wish to watch their child swim.

The reality is that each family will be required to undertake some form of volunteer role at 65% of all swim meets including club race sessions. The introduction of a time keeping agreement as part of this year's registration is intended to remind parents that they have an obligation to time keep.

The development of the time keeping roster is a complex process and includes consideration of the number and order of events being swum by individual swimmers. The aim is to minimise the amount of time that parents are required to time keep; and more importantly remain at the pool once their child has finished racing at the meet.

Consideration has been given to providing members the opportunity to nominate for time keeping spots, however as there will always be a requirement for club members to be rostered to the end of a meet, even when all club swimmers have finished for the day, the committee does not wish to take on the responsibility for selecting those parents who will be allocated their preferred time slot and resolving the conflict that will arise between the time slot nominated and the final allocation where they are not the same.

The committee has considered many alternative ways of making parents and guardians aware of their obligations.

The club will continue to;

- publish time keeping rosters as soon as possible after entry lists are submitted and the host club/association have advised the club of its obligations.
- Provide hard copies to the swimmers to bring home prior to the event where time permits.

The club is aiming to;

- Advise parents by e-mail of their nominated time keeping role where time permits.

Club Championships

In order to avoid clashes with Surf Lifesaving competition programs to maximise participation by age group swimmers, the club trialled an alternative format for this years club championships. Whilst the objective of greater participation was achieved, the format was difficult to manage and did not have the level of excitement and individual rivalry that we have come to expect from this event. As a result, the committee have decided to return to a single day championship, most likely a Saturday and will endeavour to plan the event to avoid any clash with other major water based sporting events (open water competition / surf club championships) in which club members will be competing.

Where to from here?

The club has advised Venueswest that it will be developing an MOU that will clearly outline the clubs agree position on cost sharing with Venueswest for asset management and maintenance and financial contribution toward costs associated with coaching staff travel for interstate travel and personal development. There are many assumptions under the current arrangement from both parties. It is time for the club to revise its constitution to make it more applicable to the club's current operations and relationship with Venueswest.

Sponsorship

The club will continue to pursue sponsorship opportunities as they arise. The identification of the role of National Coordinator is a critical component of this with a strong emphasis being placed on National Age and Open swimmers being organised to contribute more time to raising funds to assist them with travel costs.

The club is currently in discussion with a large resource company with the hope of securing \$20,000 sponsorship in addition to sponsorship and fundraising already identified to assist with club development.

I believe that club should also explore the option of incorporating a 'life saving' component into it operations that may enable the club to offer tax deductible donations to interested individuals and organisations in the same way that most Surf Life Saving Clubs can offer this option.

Conclusion

The task of running the Arena Swim Club is complex and time consuming. Unlike many other sports that I have been associated with, it is non-seasonal and there is rarely time to rest and reflect on what has been achieved.

The club cannot run without the many hours of volunteer time provided by the committee and parents who offer their time.

I am pleased to see so many nominations for committee membership for the 2011 year.