



**Barker College
Aquatic Centre**
Swimming
Coaches' Annual Report 2009/2010

Innovate

Participate

Encourage

Develop

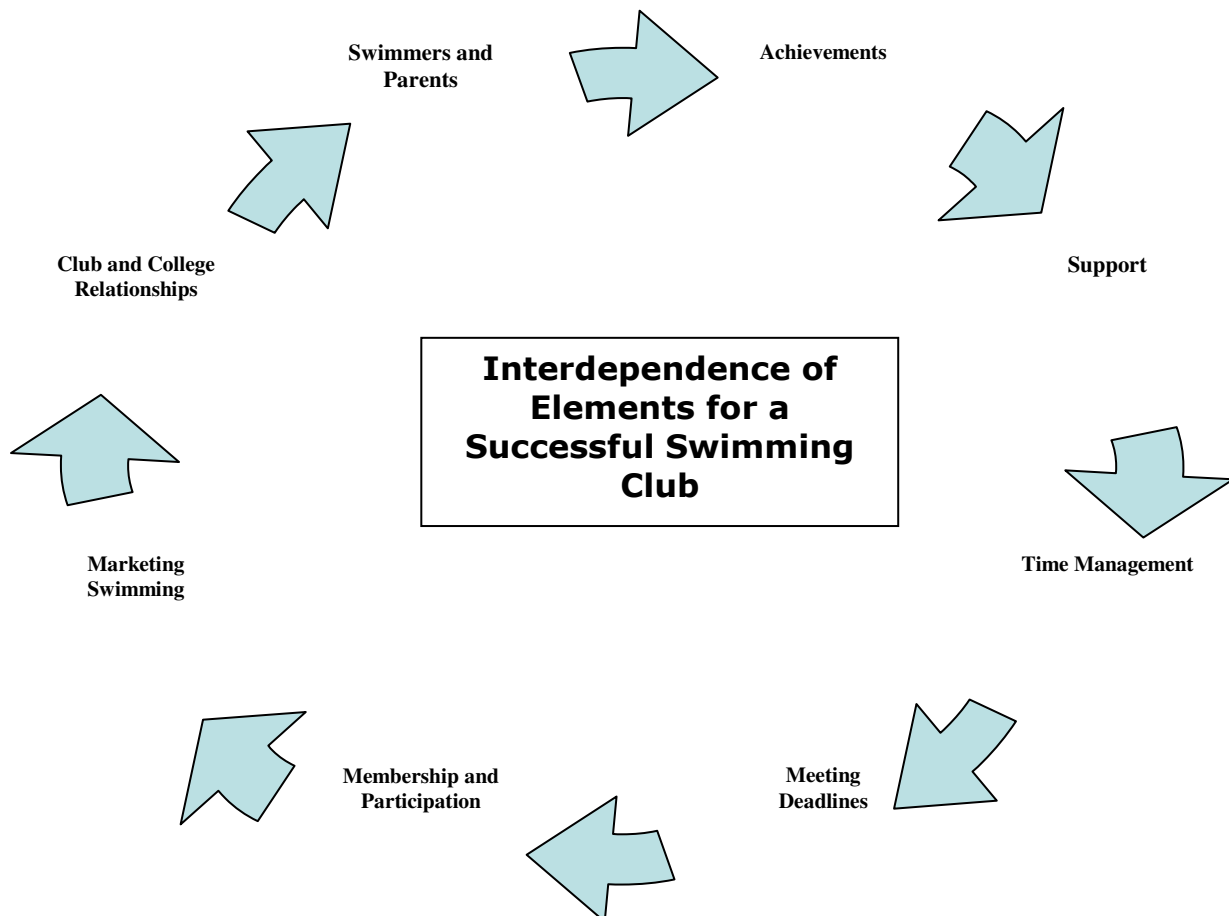
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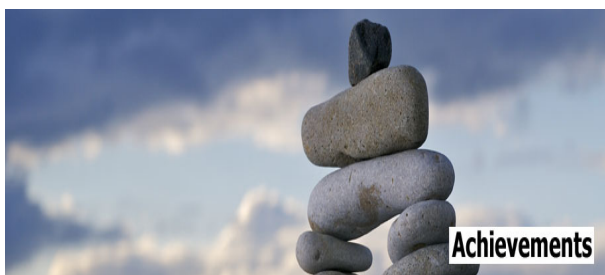
Coaches' Report Season 2009/2010

A few challenges in this report for the membership to consider, so this report could take some time!

My report of 2008-2009 had reference to "**Achievements**", "**Support**", "**Managing Time**", "**Meeting Deadlines**", "**Membership and Participation**" among a few other things like "**Marketing Swimming**" and "**Club/College Relationships**". There is some purpose in revisiting some of these items and perhaps making an assessment of what has been the outcome in each of these areas.

One thing for certain is the fact that none of these items is independent of the other. For a Swimming Club to function all of these factors and more need to come together. They can only come together with the role played by those people involved in the sport of swimming, which on the whole is a sport for the children of the parents who together make up the Barker Swim Club.





The monthly Coaches' reports acknowledge and identify those swimmers who have represented the Club at the higher levels of competition from Metropolitan through to National Age and Open Championships. The growth in numbers at this level has been gratifying and large teams of Barker Club swimmers can now be found at the major meets.

The largest team was understandably at the Blacktown Speedo Sprints and this year we had our largest contingent representing Metropolitan North West at the Speedo Finals in March. With the growth in numbers at these higher levels of competition Barker Aquatics now figures prominently on the point score ladder at Metropolitan and State Championships.

The highest individual achievers have been **Tim Cottam**, **Oskar Steven-Jones** and **Jayke Small** who gained selection into the NSW All School Team to represent their State in Brisbane at the National All Schools Championships. **Michael Gilbert** gained one of the highest accolades as a student with his selection onto the Australian School Team to Doha in QATAR in December 2009.

In pool **achievements** can only occur through individuals wanting to achieve and perform to their potential



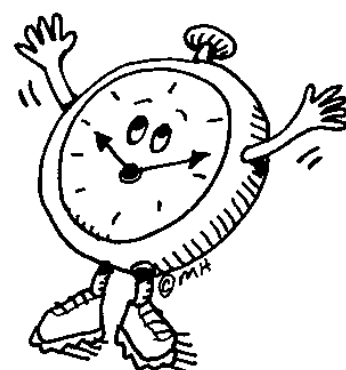
and through the **support** of parents who have children who choose to swim. This obviously includes the small group of parents who form the committee and have to manage various tasks to enable the sport of swimming to progress. Tasks undertaken by these people are quite often onerous, taxing and vexing. There is always some concern for conflict occurring when a person takes on an administrative role and makes a decision on behalf of others. We have been most fortunate that these situations have been minimal and that support for each other has kept the Club on a strong and stable footing.

The past year has had more than its trials and tribulations but it has been pleasing to see new people step up to the plate and take on roles and allow for the Club to flow. In so doing, there has been the emergence of parents and committee with new skills and roles. The groups of people who have become involved in the Committee and as Technical Officials over the past year have done a wonderful job and kept the Club on track. It is interesting to note in the Annual Report of NSW Swimming just how large our club has become. This, however, poses some leading questions.



- *Is larger better?*
- *Does a larger club need more management personnel on committee or just more people willing to assist the managers?*
- *Is an apprenticeship system on committee required to ensure Club longevity?*

Swimming revolves around **time**. Time is the measure of swimming performance and it is time which has to be used effectively. One of the biggest problems is the failure of swimmers to lodge their entries for swim meets on time. The other is the failure of swimmers to get to training on time and to complete the appropriate warm-up routines prior to training. Time creates **deadlines** which should be met. With the introduction of "**on-line entries**" swimmers will need to take on more responsibilities for their own entries. It is important for swimmers to take ownership of all aspects of their sport. Time is to be managed and used, not abused and wasted.



Training Structures, Status and Recognition

Over the past years in an attempt to keep coaching effective for all the swimmers, the Aquatic Centre has taken steps to “enforce” Club Membership but still the numbers grow in most squads. It should be pointed out that employees of Barker College are now also performing Swim Club tasks relating to Club Registration in order to control these numbers and to ensure that: *“If you swim in a transition group or squad at Barker you are a member of the Swim Club.”*



These issues are obvious management problems reflecting that Barker is self promoting and marketing its own swimming product. Growth in the success of the Club as a flagship for the school can only lead to increased recognition for **“Swimming as a Sport”** at Barker College. One objective of the Development Plan for Barker Aquatic Centre was to *“Develop a Culture of Swimming at Barker”*. This past year has continued to bring swimming into higher regard as a part of the fabric at Barker College, but is there a culture?

The Club certainly has gained greater recognition and has been rewarded for its achievements through organisations such as the **“Go Club”**. One perhaps would like to dispute the parameters by which we are judged but nevertheless we have been identified as a Club with Bronze Status yet we have the largest NSW Club Membership.

Club membership has a very large proportion in the Developmental Stage and it is important that the Club cater for this group at the club and regional levels. Club Nights do achieve this purpose in part and these are the initial introduction to racing. However, there is almost an obligation for the Club to promote and provide for attendance at an AAA Level Swim Meet (or something similar) as a part of their pathway.



- *How may the Club develop a competition program to provide for this bulk?*
- *Can we identify and establish an “Invitational Meet” to supplant the Abbotsleigh/Barker Meet?*

It is also apparent that the Club has achieved a very secure financial position. Consideration has to be given as to how these funds can be allocated/distributed among the current stakeholders. The College does provide a large amount of “funding” through the various payments and expenditures upon personnel, equipment and facility making the Aquatic Centre an amenity we can call “Home”. However, there is an obligation to ensure that funds are distributed in such a way among the current stakeholders to promote, encourage and develop their interest and participation in swimming. *Time to put your thinking caps on for the next budget*



- *Is there a budget plan for Club income and expenditure?* **\$\$\$**
- *What should the Club do with the accumulated revenue which will provide a social good for all and make the Club a better Club into the future?*

Your thoughts can be recorded here! _____

Going Beyond Where We Are.

Over the past two years there has been a deliberate attempt to encourage young swimmers to commence strength and conditioning programs. This does not mean lifting heavy weights and doing dead lifts, jerks and power lifts. It means exercising and controlling those muscles which enable us to reach longer and pull stronger when we swim. It is about core strength and injury prevention.

Any strength program will only have benefits through young swimmers applying themselves to a series of exercises for up to 30 minutes, twice a week. The swimmer has to have the self discipline to do this. With contributions from Barker College Aquatic Centre Program Funding and "Go-Club" rewards there is available a series of exercises with equipment for swimmers to complete at an appropriate time in their weekly schedule. Unfortunately this has not really come to fruition despite encouragement and opportunity being afforded. Individuals have to take responsibility as parents and coaches can not be there all of the time to cajole and supervise.



From a coaching perspective there is no doubt that there have been many gains. In true essence there are more swimmers who are going faster at each and every age level. More medals at representative meets would be a bonus but this is but another challenge for the swimmers. Squad numbers are high and there is plenty of support from families for the sport their child has chosen. Many children have yet to achieve potential but in the process of participating in the sport of swimming valuable lessons of life for life are being learned. These of course include: integrity, honesty, humility courage and self discipline. It is most gratifying to see the kids in the squad get together and share their time not only in the pool but at various organised social gatherings.

Thank You

My gratitude is extended to all of the coaches at the Aquatic Centre. There is a very good team of young and dedicated employees who work cooperatively to develop the swimmers from the very early stages through to the Transition and Squad Levels. As children make their pathway through to the higher levels of training to perform so many have already developed good stroke technique that further improvement comes more easily with application to regular training.



My thanks are also extended to the more experienced brigade of Jason, Shirlee and Cherie who love their work and go about their tasks independently and reliably. There is a vast difference between how it was in years past and how it now is. This can only be the result of healthy working relationships which exist between employees, volunteers, parents and children who are involved in the operation and running of Barker Aquatic Centre. The Aquatic Staff deal with over 2300 children each week and probably double the parents!

I must also acknowledge the role played by the College. There are not many swim clubs which have the opportunity to be able to occupy and use the facility with such a free reign and have all costs met. The pool space allocation through both term and holiday time has allowed for so many swimmers to achieve personal goals and continue in training programs suited to their needs at a highly discounted price.

As Head Coach and Aquatic Centre Director, I look forward to another year of progress with the Club as a part of the fabric of Barker College.

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Bruce Forbes
August 2010

Where to Next?

- To finish off I thought that it would be appropriate as a Coach to provide a challenge.
- Here is a simple survey for members to have their say and provide some guidance for the incoming committee. I am sure there are some good ideas out there which you would like to share. However, remember that any idea requires further contribution to make thoughts into a reality.
- Enjoy the challenge

What aspects of the Barker Aquatic Centre and/or Swim Club would you like to see improve?

How could this be achieved?

Thanks!

You need more space?