

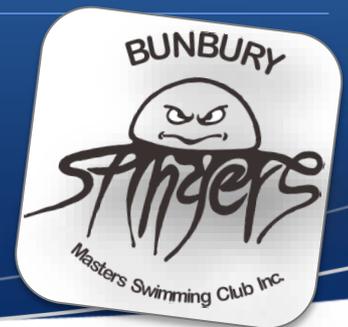
The STINGERS NEWS

Bunbury Masters Swimming Club Inc Newsletter

Fitness, friendship, fun!

In this issue we introduce the executive for the club for 2022, Julie inspires us with her Rotto swim experience and more.

Read on for the latest STINGERS news...



Hello Everyone

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2022.

In this edition you can read all about Julie's experience swimming the Rottne Channel Swim, and lots of other items.

Kareena Preston is back in Bunbury next week to give us another of her valuable training sessions. Everyone is welcome to join in and gain from Kareena's years of experience as a swimming coach.

Kareena will be conducting an open water training session at Koombana. Be there to start at 9am on Sunday 20th at the Sailing Club of the beach.

Wednesday the 23rd Kareena will coach the AM training session at the pool at 10am.

Read On
Ben

UPCOMING EVENTS

Next meeting 11th April 11:15am
Bunbury Swimming Club
Rooms SWSC

**Kareena
Preston** 20th March 9:00am
Koombana Bay

23rd March 10:00am
SWSC training session



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Want to improve your swimming and help your lane mates too?

You can – by becoming an accredited coach.

How? It's simple! Complete the Masters Swimming Coaching course – it's online, you can do it in your own time, and the club will cover your costs.

What's the catch? There isn't one. You get a better insight into training, and we have more trained members swimming amongst us. We would like you to take on a role of mentoring other swimmers in your lane, but are not asking you to give up your training time – you can share your knowledge from right there in the pool.

Interested? Speak to Sally Murphy or any committee member.

On a serious note, we currently have only two accredited coaches, covering over 100 members, and four training sessions per week. Our new model means we are moving away from having a deck coach, to take the pressure off these volunteers.

BUT our insurance does mean we need to have accredited coaches. Our goal is to have enough people trained that every lane has a trained person to act as lane leader. Please don't hold back – you don't have to be the best swimmer, or the fastest. But you will be the nicest! Giving back to your club makes you that. And your own swimming will improve as you understand more about technique and routines and all that other coachy stuff.

My Rotto Solo Swim Journey – by Julie O’Connor

What got me into swimming?

I have always loved sport... especially coordination sports. At school I loved gymnastics and diving, and at university I finally got the chance to follow my lifelong dream to water-ski... eventually representing WA for 10 years at the National Tournament Water-Ski Titles. After I retired from competitive skiing, there was another burning lifelong wish that had to be fulfilled... to skydive. I had a fabulous 5 years in the sport, doing a little over 1000 skydives. However, over the years of high-impact sports, I had accumulated too many injuries (but no regrets), so around the year 2000 I decided that swimming needed to be my new main sport. I had swum since I was 4, but only ever for fitness and fun, so had never once considered how fast I was swimming, or whether I could improve.



What got me into ocean swimming?

I started swimming in the ocean with Brendon at South Cottesloe and really enjoyed it. I was eventually talked into entering the Cottesloe-to-Swanbourne Ocean Classic in 2004. At the time, I had no idea if I could even complete the 2km swim! However, I did, and I loved it. I also joined Melville Masters Swimming Club and really enjoyed the Endurance swimming in the pool as well, first completing all 62 Endurance swims in one year in 2006.

In 2009, I went to New Zealand to help Brendon rescue their run-down family dairy farm (so no swimming for 2 years), returning at the end of 2011. We then moved to Peppy Beach and joined Bunbury Masters, and I entered my first Busselton Jetty swim in 2012... swimming a 1:23. I absolutely loved swimming around the Jetty, and we started training there regularly from November to March each year. Over the next few years, I gradually brought my time down to around 1:10. It wasn't until I completed the Masters Coaching Course in late 2016 that I seriously set about getting faster. My challenge was set... to improve enough to break through the 1-hour barrier!

In 2017 I had my stroke videoed and set about improving my Catch & Pull, so in 2018 I achieved a step change in my Jetty time, swimming a 1:02... my goal was within reach. In 2019 I came tantalizingly close... 1:00:45... how frustrating! I was so determined to break the hour in 2020 that I "swam out of my skin" and achieved my current PB of 56:21... I had finally done it! Whilst talking to a friend that I had helped train for the Port to Pub, I was asked what my next challenge was. I hadn't thought about it until then, but replied "I guess it has to be a Rotto solo"! And so, the journey began!

What have I signed up to?

I decided that 2021 was too soon, so set my sights on 2022. However, I didn't have any really close friends with a boat so had no idea how I was going to arrange one, and my longest swim to date had been 5k, which resulted in 2 very sore shoulders due to chronic injuries to both! Great start! I also hate swimming on my own, so had no idea who would help me train as I thought it was a bit mean to ask Brendon to do that much swimming. Finally, I got some luck and a couple of major items fell into place: my friend Rhonda from Busselton Masters was keen to train at the Jetty with us; and I finally plucked up the courage to ask a boat-building friend from my days at Melville Masters about a boat. I stated the obvious to Rhonda... if you are going to do all this training, why not do a solo yourself? It took some persuasion, but she finally agreed. However, Rhonda had even fewer contacts for a boat, so it finally came to me that we should combine and swim a Tandem Solo (2 solos sharing one support boat). So, we entered, neither of us yet believing that this feat was achievable.

The training.

1st challenge: to increase our distance per week from 12-15km to 25-30km! The first thing I had to do was to find a great shoulder physio to help me prepare my shoulders to get past 5k! Luckily, through Megan at Bunbury Masters, I found Jenny Evans... what a star! Jenny's comment, when she looked at my shoulder MRI results was: "thank goodness you have come to me with 5 months to go instead of 5 weeks!". Over the next 5 months, we set about training my shoulder stabiliser muscles to do enough to get me to Rottneest.

1st setback: in mid-October I caught parainfluenza, which I hoped would pass in a few days... it took 3 weeks! Worse still, after just one week of being healthy I came down with tonsillitis... another 2 weeks of sub-optimal training!

1st 10k: Rhonda and I had decided to do 7.5k at the Bunbury SWA Open Water round, as we weren't prepared for 10k, and the water temperature was still too cold (hovering around 20 degrees). However, the forecast was too good to pass up, so just 2 days after me getting over 6 weeks of illness, we completed our first 10k swim in perfect conditions!

By now, our routine was swimming at the Jetty from Friday to Sunday, and swimming in the pool on Monday and Wednesday. I was keeping track of all our swims in a spreadsheet, to ensure that we were completing enough distance each week, but at that stage we had no real plan about how to prove that we could swim the distance required in one go. So, we then set a target of one slightly bigger swim at the Jetty each week... starting at our first double-rounding (7.2k); then 7.6k, followed by 10.2k, 10.8k, 11.2k, 11.6k and finally 12.8k. We didn't want to risk really stirring up our shoulders and having to back off the training, so we stopped there. During February, we stopped doing the really big swims and focussed on testing kayaks and feeding etc. Finally, we felt ready to swim to Rotto... if only the weather would be kind!

The Swim!

I refused to take any notice of the forecast until a week prior, and even then, knew that it wouldn't start to get reliable until around Wednesday. I wasn't too concerned when the forecast on the Tuesday was bad, and it then steadily improved until Thursday morning... even kidding us that it might be a really nice swim with around 10-12 knot winds all day and no sea breeze! Sadly, the forecast then turned around again and so, by the Friday night, we knew we were in for the hardest swim that we could have imagined... 15-knot winds, building to 25-30 knots during the day, with extreme cross-currents as we approached Rottneest... there was still a 50% chance that the swim would be cancelled!

Saturday morning confirmed the forecast, but the organisers decided to go ahead. We knew that this would mean significant shoulder pain for both of us, but were determined not to let our amazing support crew down. We had Natalie and Noel (the builders of the boat) skippering and navigating (plus Nat was definitely 'Minister for Laughs' for the day); Dee (our own private GP) looking after health and nutrition; plus 4 amazing paddlers (Rhonda M, Aaron, Jan and Ian) taking turns in the 2 kayaks (I think their job was harder than ours actually). Brendon, Mel (Rhonda P's partner), and Peter (Rhonda M's partner) were our land-based support crew.

6:00am! Off we went! The first task was to find our kayaks and then the boat by the 1.5k mark. It wasn't completely straight forward, but was achieved without any great drama... ok, so now we had just over 18k to go.

Up until the 12k mark we were in familiar territory, as we had swum this far in fairly rough conditions at the Jetty. However, this is where things started to get tough. During all our training swims, we had never managed to drink the recommended 750-900ml per hour as we were swimming longer between stops at the Jetty so could only drink so much. Therefore, the actual swim was the first time that we were taking on this amount. At 9:00am I had included a protein-based drink, thinking that having something more substantial in our stomachs would be good. At 9:40, I had included paracetamol in our drink as I knew we would be starting to get sore shoulders. At the next stop, my stomach was so full that there was no room to put anything else in... and it decided to get rid of some! Although I was confident that it was just an overfull stomach, and not motion sickness, I took an anti-nausea tablet just to be sure, and we slightly cut down our volume each stop... stomach issues solved!

However, we still had 8k to go, were already in reasonable pain, in territory that we had never been, and with the weather deteriorating (seas were now 1.5-2m and the wind was swinging to a sea-breeze and building). There was only one thing for it... heed Dory's advice to "just keep swimming"! The stretch between 12 and 16k was the hardest for me, and I think Rhonda too as I noticed that we stopped talking at drink stops (we had enough to deal with in our own heads!). I had asked the crew to let us know when we were past 16k, as it would then be just "1 Jetty swim to go". It was only then that I finally had my first look at Rottneest... and couldn't believe how close it looked... it was only 2k ahead, as Phillip Rock and the safety of the lee of the island is at 18k. Now, for the first time, I knew we could make it!

I had told the boat that they could depart at Phillip Rock if all was well, and that the kayaks could leave us as soon as we were with the Surf Lifesaving crew that patrol the last section. What I had not factored in was that there were so many boats in the swim channel (as the teams all get in to swim the last section together) that we couldn't see the buoys so had no idea where to go amongst the sea of boats! Luckily our kayakers saw what was happening and returned to guide us right up to the last 450m roped off section.

Putting our feet down at last and realising that we had made it was the most amazing feeling!

All I can say about a 20k Rotto solo is that, firstly it is not a 20k journey... for me it was a 470k, 6-month journey; and secondly it is anything but a solo effort... it took everyone in our crew to get us there! We will be forever grateful.

If any of you have ever thought that you would like to swim solo to Rotto, I say go for it... it will be an achievement that you will be proud of for life. I would recommend that you get your Jetty time down to around 1:10 first, and that you set a good training plan to give you the confidence that you will need to ward off any negative thoughts when things get hard. There are several members of the club that have achieved this feat, so you don't have to do this alone... just ask for help.



Executive Positions for 2022

Our club executives for this year are as follows:

Club President

Sally Murphy



Vice President

Allan Taylor



Secretary

Richard Morris



Treasurer

Jodi Dyson

“Good for Me” says Ron Edwards

Ron Edwards, 86, is one of Bunbury's oldest swimmers.

Having arrived in Bunbury in 1982 with his wife, to start up an upholstery business, Ron started swimming purely to be social.

Forty years later, he's still going.

"After a while I became competitive and began swimming with the Bunbury Masters," Ron said.



"Then I got faster and more into freestyle. I'm now still going - so it must be doing something good for me health wise."

On February 26, Ron took part in the 40th Bunbury Barrett Swim Thru - his 30th time in the event.

The swim, which is run by William Barrett and Sons to raise money for the Bunbury Surf Life Saving Club, is a 1.6 kilometre swim in the Leschenault Inlet.

Ron said the event to him was about friendship. "Some of the swimmers I've known for a long time, so I just hop in and swim and then have a chat after. You're all happy to see one another year after year and that's what I enjoy the most."

"While I'm swimming - there's a cloud around me, my mind goes off and I don't think of anything else, just about swimming."

Vorgee E-1000 Top Country Club Points winner & 2021 Country Correspondence Carnival winner

Well done Stingers! Thanks for collecting our award Sally.



Busselton Jetty Swim

Approximately one third of our club members swam in the Jetty event this year. A great effort by everyone on a fantastic day.

Congratulations to all.



Mr Money Penny hangs up his calculator

After 17 years of keeping our club accounts in tip top shape it's time for our beloved Treasurer, Brian Hall, to pack away the spreadsheets.

What an amazing achievement to volunteer for such a long time -Brian you are a true club legend.

Thankyou



Travelling Stingers

Covid has put a damper on everyone's travel plans so when the borders opened Maureen Owen and her daughter Hayley set off on their long planned road trip to the eastern states.



Tanya, Noelle and Aina organised a friendly Meerkat to accompany them on their travels, so Maureen has been keeping them up-to-date with her adventures.



Club Contacts

President	Sally Murphy
Vice President	Allan Taylor
Secretary	Richard Morris secretary@bunburymasters.asn.au
Treasurer	Jodi Dyson
Coaching Coordinator	vacant
Coaching Committee	Julie O'Connor, Pam Hall, Danielle Pesci, Chris Gibbs
Club Captain - Open Water	Allan Taylor
Club Captain - Pool	Alicia Stiffle
Endurance	Liz Common
Public Relations	Tanya Price
Safety	Steve Povee
Newsletter	Ben van de Ruit editor@bunburymasters.asn.au
Social	Tanya Price



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Thanks to all contributors

As always, many thanks to all contributors to our newsletter. 😊

Til next time
See you in the water!
Ben – the Ed.