

Swimming WA Australian Unity GO Club Workshop – A great success!



Swimming WA ran its first ever Australian Unity GO Club Workshop at Challenge Stadium on Tuesday, 15th January. Maxine Green from Swan Hills Swimming Club, Sharon Russell from Rockingham Swim Club and Grant Trew from the Department of Sport and Recreation all provided valuable hints and tips on how to make your Swimming Club a great success. Arena, City of Perth, Swan Hills, Vic Park and Rockingham Swim Clubs all had participants attend the Australian Unity GO Club Forum.

Maxine Green of Swan Hills Swimming Club has been instrumental in helping the Swan Hills Swimming Club receive Gold status standing in the 2007 Australian Unity GO Club PB Results. Maxine opened the forum and discussed the importance of really understanding your swimming club. This includes understanding what the club currently is, what members of the club want and what the club wants to achieve in the future.

Sharon Russell from the Rockingham Swimming Club provided many valuable tips which have contributed to the success of the Rockingham Swimming Club over the past few years. Rockingham Swimming Club also achieved Gold status standing in the 2007 Australian Unity GO Club PB Results. Sharon discussed many issues which clubs constantly face such as increasing pool hire fees, the structure of the committee and roles of committee members as well as many other issues. Some of Rockingham's tips on how to run a successful swimming club are listed below.

Tips to running a successful club!

- Get a great PR person to meet and greet and provide orientation for new members. First impressions last.
- Know all of your members – their needs, expectations, family, their job, where they work etc etc
- Ensure some one has the responsibility for liaising with papers etc and try and get at least one story per month. You need to be constantly out there with a variety of different angles! This is FREE ADVERTISING
- The more frequent you hold club nights and social get togethers the better the club atmosphere but make it quick and effortless!
- Never under estimate the importance of uniforms. It sets the team apart from everyone else.
- Plan events to give you maximum exposure in your community – I.e. Not all fundraising needs to be for the club, help out well deserving charities in your local community. When you have 100 swimming shirts out there knocking on doors for the Red Shield appeal it speaks volumes.
- Promote Equity and diversity in your club – and ensure you balance exposure of your top athletes right through to your beginners!!! Create a professional image that is family friendly too Elitist can be limiting.
- Speak out for your all of your members – never allow policy to always dictate the decision – sometimes policies become outdated and need to be changed. Be innovative and help promote the sport from the grass roots up.
- Always express that you need "parents help" not that it is their duty! Be firm but in a nice way. Hand select for roles and always place square pegs in square holes.
- The coaching and the committee is a "partnership" – it is 50/50. be clear on what committee decide on and what the coaches decide on, but always encourage collaboration, communication and a consultative approach for the benefit of the whole club.
- Enforce ground rules with the committee – all for one and one for all approach.
- Build strong relationships with council, and always portray a community focus. Work to build a partnership with the pool managers and show them how you can help their business and visa a versa. Maybe make them an honorary sponsor i.e. Logo's on shirts etc It all helps. Councils love that sort of things also. It can create volumes of good will.
- Thank all of your sponsors once a year by placing an advert in the paper (great bargaining power for next year), signed/framed team photos also go down well. VIP seating/refreshments and marquees at events are a real winner too.
- Ensure your handbook or club booklet is always up to date and contains all the relevant information parents and swimmers need to know about your club, with references to other useful information.
- Educate all members on the benefits of email and websites – saves time and money for everyone!
- Create contracts with Successful Senior swimmers fee rebates/reductions for public speaking, school visits and other days to promote the club and swimming in your local area.

Swimming WA would like to thank Maxine Green, Sharon Russell and Grant Trew for their time and knowledge which they so generously donated towards the Australian Unity GO Club Workshop. Swimming WA encourages every club to have at least one representative come to GO Club forums as they provide a great opportunity for clubs to liaise and network with each other for the common goal of improving swimming in Western Australia.