

~NSW STATE OPEN & AGE OPEN WATER CHAMPIONSHIPS @KURNELL/BOTANY BAY NSW ~18TH JANUARY 2020~



Congratulations to the following Nepean Aquatic Centre Swim Club representatives who competed at the State Open & Age Open Water Championships.

5.0klm Michael Payne (16) ; Monique Wilson (16);

The annual 5klm Captain Cook Ocean Classic was sanctioned by Swimming NSW to provide a national qualifying event after the unfortunate cancellation of the December Championships due to the hazard air quality at the Sydney International Regatta Centre.

The importance of the State Meet was not only to strive for a placing that would lead to a place on a NSW development squad, but to allow each athlete a further opportunity to post a qualifying time for the National Open & Age Open Water Championships to be held at Brighton Beach, South Australia.

Unfortunately, the event was not very well supported due to the nature of the venue and the impromptu timing. Age medals were awarded for the Ocean Classic promoted by Elite Events and separate medals were awarded by swimming nsw for the Open and Age State titles.

An early morning trip to the south of Sydney saw swimmers greeted with a friendly welcome from locals but very little informed instruction of what was to eventuate. The conditions were cold and visibility was very poor. The course was altered on numerous occasions prior to the start from 2 x 2.5klm laps of a rectangle course to 5 x 1klm laps of a narrowed rectangle course until it was agreed that the amount of safety craft dictated the need for a 4 x 1,250m lap course. It was a deep water start and shallow water finish with a run up the sand to register the return of the athlete with timing chip in place.

There was little sun so, sunburn was not really an issue. However, windburn was highly likely and with the salt water, chaffing was a distinct possibility. Preventative measures were taken and athletes prepared on the sand.

After a delayed start, the athletes and officials found the conditions to settle a little however, the back stretch was tough with choppy seas and poor visibility.

The NACSC duo were joined by Sarah-Jane Weir of Coffs Harbour who was tackling her first ocean swim in preparation of Brighton Beach at the end of January and Sam Bonus of Windsor Swim Club who was keen to post a 15 year national qualifying time to allow him to travel to compete in South Australia.

The group remained positive and were excited to see whether they could post some fast 5klm times. Early finishing open swimmers showed the way with some encouraging quick swim results.

As Michael and Monique past the turn cones in continuing even pace, the enthusiasm of spectators on the sand heightened and a confident result looked promising for each of our team members.

It was smiles all round when the official times were confirmed and both athletes had achieved their goal. Monique was now needing to arrange transport to Adelaide and register for the 7.5klm national age championships. Michael could now add a further swim of 5klm to his 7.5klm entry and compete in two (2) championships – something that he had not approached before.

At the conclusion of the swimming, the heavens opened up and the intensity of the wind increased to make for a very uncomfortable presentation ceremony in front of swaying soaking marquees. Nonetheless, tackling the difficult conditions on this morning would no doubt lead to a more confident approach to any future ocean swim by the pair from NACSC.

Thank you to Jenni Payne for supplying transport to the venue –this was very much appreciated and so was the company on the trip.

Distance training continues this week before the team depart for South Australia for the national championships.

The national open water team to represent Nepean Aquatic Centre Swim Club in 2020 will now be as follows:-

Michael Payne 17yrs 7.5klm & 5klm

Lucas Bentley 17yrs 5klm

Monique Wilson 17yrs 7.5klm

Kiani Slaughter 14yrs 5klm



....jb