

My Lane – Ben Ramsden

1. What Club did you start your swimming career?

What Club are you with now?

I just follow my kids. They started at Terrey Hills and they're now at Abbotsleigh. Hence so am I!

2. What was your first TO credential and what year did you attain that credential?

I've been Timekeeping / Marshaling / Check Starting since about 2010, but it was several years before I became officially accredited to do those roles.

3. Why did you become an official? Why do you still officiate?

That regular announcement at meets... *"Please could anyone come and help with time keeping so we can get started?"* Officiating beats sitting in the stands, and I have the opportunity to work alongside some great and passionate people. I now have a group of good friends in swimming. There's also a part of me that hates watching poorly run meets - I just feel as if I have to do my bit to fix it!



4. What is the highest credential attained?

I'm not hierarchical, but I understand the question. (I believe that Timekeeping is one of the most important roles at a meet, although I'm not sure that many people see it that way). I am a level 2 Starter, level 1 Referee and recently gained my AOE credential.

5. What is your goal(s)?

I want to keep learning and gaining new experiences, so I don't stagnate or get bored. Ensuring the long-term sustainability of the swimming sport is a passion of mine.

6. What is the highest-level meet at which you have officiated?

I officiated at the 2017 NSW State Open. It was a fantastic meet - many of the Australian team were there having their first hit out after Rio, and there were a number of Internationals. Someone put an extra coin in the meter and all the lights were on so the water really sparkled.

I particularly enjoyed that meet - most positions were filled, there were excellent briefings/debriefings from the Refs, and things seemed to run really well. I really enjoy working as part of a large team of enthusiastic people who all know what they are doing.

Also, last September I was very fortunate to join the SAL Technical Officials National Training Camp in Canberra and officiate at the State Teams event. A particular highlight was *nurturing my inner geek* by running the High Speed Video overhead camera timing system! Checkout [my blog](#) for a full camp report.

7. With respect to your answer to Question 6, can you please pass on some of the strategies/tips you used to help you achieve your appointment?

In general what I find has worked for me is:

- Know my boundaries. Immerse myself so that I enjoy it, but don't over commit and get burned out.
- Be reliable, consistent, follow instructions and do a good job.
- Be positive. Avoid negative people and attitudes. Offer solutions not problems.
- Be proactive and don't be satisfied with the status quo.
- Enable others to succeed, not make them dependent.
- Have objectives and keep learning - ideally from experts, of which there are many in NSW. Participating in the SNSW training program has been particularly beneficial, but unofficial debriefs after every meet are also invaluable.