

My Lane – John Skene OAM

1. What Club did you start your swimming career? What Club are you with now? I was never a swimmer! I joined the Canberra Amateur Swimming Club in October 1974 as a Parent of swimmers and have been a member of that club ever since.

2. What was your first TO credential and what year did you attain that credential? My first credential was Starter and Check Starter, which I obtained in June 1979.

3. Why did you become an official? Why do you still officiate? I became an official firstly to ensure that the swimming club had an accredited Starter for its Club nights, which at that time were held every week.



I enjoyed the experience and was persuaded to continue to get my other credentials so that the club had a qualified Referee. I continue to officiate for two reasons – I still love doing it and enjoy the camaraderie that I have built up with many other Technical Officials over the many years. In addition, I recognise the need for qualified officials to be available to work at local swim meets to help swimmers achieve their goals, particularly those seeking to get to the top in their chosen sport.

4. What is the highest credential attained?

My highest credential is Referee Level 2

5. What are your goals?

When I first started out I had no real goals other than to help out at local meets. When the AIS started up in 1981 there were occasions when we, as Technical Officials, were called upon to assist at meets, which they organised for the swimmers in their program. This gave me a taste for officiating at a higher level. I am now in the twilight of my “career” as a Technical Official and simply aim at passing on my knowledge and experiences to new Officials who are joining our ranks for as long as I am able to do so.

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

I was the lead Referee for the selection trials for the 2006 IPC World Championships. I was also a Referee at the 2011 Australian Age Multi-Class Championships and was Technical Director and Referee at the Pacific School Games held in Canberra in 2008.

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?

- Keep up to date with any rule changes



- When working at meets observe and learn from those officials working in key positions – establish a “buddy” relationship with someone with whom you can relate and learn from that person.
- Do not be frightened to ask questions of experienced officials – why did they make a certain decision which, may be unclear to you.
- Do not be disappointed if you do not get an appointment or the appointments that you get are not the ones you put in for.

