



Sport History

Swimming

Origins and the sport today:

Initially one of the seven agilities of knights during the Middle Ages, swimming emerged as a competitive sport in the 1830s in England. In the 1880s, keen swimmer Frederick CAVILL witnessed South Sea Islanders swimming front crawl while on his way to Australia. On reaching his adopted homeland, CAVILL began teaching the technique to the young. In 1902, one of his sons, Richard CAVILL, returned to England and lowered the 100-yard freestyle record, paving the way for the new crawl technique to be adopted Europe-wide.

By 1880, the first national governing body (Amateur Swimming Association) was formed. Swimming was then part of the first modern Olympic Games in Athens 1896, with the World Swimming Association, Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA), formed in 1908 at the London Olympics.

Today, more than 200 national federations compete in FINA-affiliated events, including world championships, world cup events and master and junior championships.

Swimming at the Commonwealth Games:

Swimming, alongside diving, is one of two disciplines under the sport of aquatics, which is one of the 10 core sports at the Commonwealth Games, meaning it has to be included in the program. The other nine are: athletics, badminton, boxing, hockey, lawn bowls, netball, rugby sevens, squash and weightlifting.

The sport made its first appearance at the Hamilton 1930 British Empire Games. There were two aquatic disciplines: swimming and diving – the program also included the only women's events of the Games. Notable performances in Hamilton included Alfred PHILLIPS (CAN) winning two diving gold medals, Noel RYAN (AUS) taking out two swimming golds, and Joyce Cooper (ENG) winning four swimming golds.

The all-time Commonwealth Games swimming medal table is dominated by Australia, with a total of 660 – 310 more than England. At Glasgow 2014, Australia was clear at the top of the swimming medal table with 57, compared to second-placed England with 28 – this was Australia's highest medal haul at a Commonwealth Games.

Swimming in Australia:

Australia has a glittering history of swimming success – and it is the country's most outstanding Olympic sport, dating back to the 1900 Paris Olympics, when Frederick LANE won two individual golds (200m freestyle and 200m obstacle event).

Swimming Australia was formed in 1909 and changed its name to Australian Swimming between 1985-2004 because of a new corporate structure, but rebranded back to Swimming Australia.

One of the most significant figures in the history of Australian swimming is Dawn FRASER. She was awarded World Athlete of the Century at the World Sport Awards in 1999, having won four Olympic gold and four silver between 1956 and 1972, while breaking and holding 41 world records over 15 years. She set new Australian records in all freestyle events up to 880 yards and also won six Commonwealth Games gold.

Ian THORPE's Olympic Games roll of honour includes five gold, three silver and one bronze. An incredibly versatile swimmer, THORPE achieved success at 100m, 200m, 400m and 800m distances. He also won 10 Commonwealth Games gold and one silver, across the Kuala Lumpur 1998 and Manchester 2002 Games.



**Gold Coast Aquatic Centre
(GAC)**

Swimming



Nicknamed 'Madame Butterfly', Susie O'NEILL first rose to prominence at the Auckland 1990 Commonwealth Games, winning gold in the 4x100m freestyle relay and silver in the 100m butterfly. Post-Auckland, O'NEILL never failed to win a medal at any international meet she attended. She won a total of eight Olympic medals and 10 Commonwealth Games medals, including six gold at Kuala Lumpur 1998.

Samantha RILEY won gold medals in the pool at the Victoria 1994 Commonwealth Games and Kuala Lumpur 1998, and was also the first Indigenous Australian athlete to win an Olympic medal, with bronze in the 100m breaststroke at the Barcelona 1992 Olympic Games.