

YOUNG SWIMMERS ENQUIRY

GROUP REPORT

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** At the SASA Annual General Meeting in Aberdeen of February 1988, it was agreed that the Association should consider the issues which concerned the training and competition of young swimmers.

A year later Charles Raeburn was asked to undertake a review of the issues, and in 1990 it was agreed that Charles Raeburn should head a review committee.

- 1.2** The committee formed in late 1990 and included:

- Charles Raeburn, Scottish Schools Swimming Association
- Dr Eric Anderson, SASA Honorary Medical Officer
- Frances Smith, Warrender Baths Club
- Dr Peter Snape, Aberdeen ASC
- Alan Lynn, Stirling ASC
- Duncan Smith, Milngavie and Bearsden ASC

- 1.3** The remit of the group was to report and recommend action points to the SASA Swimming Committee. The Group decided not to define 'young swimmers' too precisely. There may be a need to extend this study to adolescent swimmers in the broad age range of fourteen to sixteen years of age.

- 1.4** The young swimmers group had great difficulty in meeting as a group on a regular basis. The result was that each member of the group 'headed up' a different section of our Report, and presented their paper to the group for discussion and development.

- 1.5** Central to the work of the group was the survey made of the views and practice both of some European swimming schemes and our Scottish Swimming Clubs. There is clearly a need to develop this way of monitoring the practice and concerns of the Scottish clubs. We were hugely disappointed in the lack of interest shown by the majority of clubs during our survey.

- 1.6** It is hoped that by reading all sections of our Report, the SASA and member clubs will take positive action to improve practice, with the hope that this will in turn benefit the swimmers of Scotland.

2 BURNOUT, TURN-OFF, AND 'THINGS'

- 2.1 Concern has been expressed in many quarters over the fallout rate of youngsters from competitive swimming. This paper is an attempt to put forward some thoughts on possible reasons for this, and give suggestions as to possible solutions. It is not a comprehensive study, but rather more designed to stimulate discussion and thought.
- 2.2 It has to be recognised from the outset that growing children are complex personalities, subject to many and conflicting pressures, and the decision of any one individual to quit competitive swimming may well be due to a combination of factors in varying proportions. There is therefore no easy answer: by addressing the individual identifiable factors, we might hope to make swimming more attractive as a sport, and retain at least some of those who drop out while they still have potential.
- 2.3 For those whose 'careers' end because of what has been termed 'developmental' reasons particularly, their continuing interest in the sport should be encouraged by channelling their efforts into the teaching and coaching side, where many an unrecognised aptitude may be awaiting discovery.

IDENTIFIABLE FACTORS

- 2.4 (i) **Physical**
Good swimmers are often successful at other sports, they simply prefer an alternative sport, be relatively more successful at it, or enjoy the social and/or physical ambience of the club.
- 2.4 (ii) **Mental** Each individual's mental capacity to cope with the discipline of swimming varies. The degree of commitment to training, to turning up to support the club, and the determination and sheer aggression that makes up the will to win or at least better one's best, is subject to both the changes of a developing body, and to the local environmental pressures noted below.

In both of these instances, there are factors which are beyond the sphere of influence of anyone, and others which can be modified with the goodwill of those concerned. It is important that the former be appreciated, so that they are not a cause of unnecessary pressure, and that the latter are addressed in an understanding way.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

2.4 (iii) Social

Peer acceptability is a major consideration to developing teenagers. Their response is determined partly by their own personality, and partly by their own environment at home, in school, and in the club.

The social aspects of any club are made up of many contributing factors, but it is worth highlighting one or two of these which perhaps make the greatest impact.

- i) Club Personnel. The enthusiasm of the club committee and the parents is a clear example. It is all too easy for the club committee to become detached from poolside activity and relationships. Parental enthusiasm should not be confused with parental 'push'. There is a fine dividing line between encouragement, and the satisfying of parental aspirations - often an attempt to fulfil their own personal frustrated ambitions.
- ii) Personality influences. Personalities of swimmers could be largely genetically determined, but are nevertheless amenable to the influences of club life, not to mention those of the family, the commercial world, and of school peer pressure. In the club, the 'loner' needs encouraging company, without being overwhelmed; the dominant person requires gentle restraint; and the insidious clique firmly discouraged. The club is basically an extended family in which discipline, encouragement and reward all have their parts to play.
- iii) Miscellaneous reasons. Smoking, drinking and drugs. The latter must never be dismissed as 'not possible in our club' - everything is possible. The club doctor or nurse should be prepared to counsel on these matters, not in a judicial manner but with reasoned understanding.

We have commented above on peer pressure, but in other indirect ways it can have deleterious effects. Peer and advertising pressure demands that they keep up with the (Mac) Joneses, in terms of material possessions, and social activity. This may require the individual to take on a part-time job to earn the money required to keep up the expected standards.

There is pressure ON parents themselves; taxiing may become an unacceptable chore; the costs of maintaining a swimmer (estimated at in excess of £1,500 per swimmer per annum) may be too great for the family budget, and they may find that their social life is unacceptably interrupted.

Academic

There is no question that the demands of the Standard Grade or GCSE's have ate into the time available for training for those at that stage of life. There can be a consequent drop in the level of performance, and loss of concentration if not interest. Clearly examinations must take priority for the great majority, but what is of concern now is the likely effect on training schedules of any possible future educational strategy. The recent proposal that the first national examinations in Scotland, and the work required for them be brought forward a year, would have repercussions on training for all competitive sports. This situation needs to be closely monitored so that appropriate action can be taken in anticipation of such changes. Whilst there is no doubting the benefit of physical exercise to mental performance, the balance has to be struck between the **time** devoted by any individual between physical training and the academic learning process. It may be useful to recall the "Linwood project" which has successfully demonstrated that many children benefit socially from daily exercise.

2.4 (iv) Burnout

This has been described as a syndrome relating to over-training, proneness to injury, sickness, and lack of progress. Doubt has been cast on its very existence, but we feel it is the amorphous complex of causes which cause a swimmer to stop swimming.

We have already discussed some of these reasons. There are others more specifically related to training and training schedules. Poor training programmes lead to boredom; excessive training leads to stress injury and sickness; parental pressure to maintain training schedules against the wishes of the swimmer; training interfering with other aspects of the swimmer's life; and the need to succeed in competition, to satisfy the club and the parent. Failure to succeed is often equated with inadequate training and preparation, thus increasing the pressures in this vicious circle.

Some of these aspects are therefore clearly psychological, but there is we believe a very important physiological element present in many cases. We have termed this the Development Factor.

2.4 (v) Development Factor

We believe this is one of the most common and least understood causes, and may precipitate others as the excuse given for giving up.

Basically any individual at a given age may have an optimum body structure, power to weight ratio etc, to allow him/her to perform optimally in his/her sport at that age. Growth and normal development may alter these parameters to an extent that they are no longer optimal, and performance is consequently adversely affected. There are few who have been in the top flight all the way

through from the age of ten. Many develop late. The optimum age for ideal development would appear to be **after 14**. Feet stop growing then, and though most girls finish their growing by 16, and boys perhaps a year later, the general body configuration is probably established by them.

The age of maturity is probably affected by the menarche and that is well recognised to be delayed in those who train to high level. It has also been suggested that training slows the rate growth itself. However it may be pertinent to ask whether the rate of growth affects the performance of the individual. Do actively growing children perform less well, and good performances occur in the lulls between growth spurts? These matters are the subject of current research projects. The importance of encouraging athleticism, and flexibility in particular, cannot be overstated.

An added complication in the growth stakes, is the mental development of the child, particularly at the younger end of the age scale. Youngsters, particularly those under the age of ten have less power of concentration, and are unable to cope with the training programme of their elders. They are also unable to concentrate and fulfil their full potential at galas which go on late through three long sessions a day. They also need a longer break in the summer to recharge their batteries of energy and enthusiasm.

There are swimmers who can adjust and accept these changes and who are prepared to continue at a high although not improving level, and give good service to their clubs, whilst others, perhaps the majority, cannot, become frustrated, and give up.

2.4 (vi)

What can be done to overcome these remediable factors, to enable more swimmers to continue in competitive swimming for longer, and to enjoy doing so. Action is necessary at national, district, club and individual level if any progress is to be made.

2.5

At national and district level, competition must be geared to the developmental status of the swimmers. It is questionable whether three sessions a day in national and district galas is in the best interests of the swimmers, and any session stretching beyond two and a half hours is too long. The type of competition should also be addressed. Is it too much to ask under tens to swim as intensively as we do? Would they not respond better to competition as part of a relay team? The actual swimming time is short, there could be several swims in a session, and the team spirit engendered is far greater than that in individual events. It also changes the emphasis from individual achievement to team achievement, which is arguably less stressful for the individual. District relay leagues, inter-district and national relay championships could well replace the current competitive scheme for most of these swimmers. For the more outstanding there could still be a place for individual events, although one would have to say that the very existence of such events would pressurise children to achieve such standards, thus defeating the object of the exercise.

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- 2.6** One further factor is important, and often overlooked as trivial, and that is the reward to those who perform, particularly at the younger ages, and for those who just manage to make a final and may never do any better. A small memento can mean a great deal to these swimmers.
- 2.7** At club level, again considering the younger age groups, training must have an element of fun and enjoyment, and the healthy competition engendered by dividing the group up into an equivalent of the old school 'house' system has a lot to recommend it. It breeds responsibility and loyalty, which are invaluable attributes of any club swimmer, and instilled at an early age will carry over into later years. Training sessions must not be overlong, as concentration lapses and boredom rapidly sets in.
- 2.8** Clubs must also be understanding of the individual's wishes. Swimmers are people, not performers, and there is a limit to the amount of loyalty that can be reasonably demanded amidst competing pressures.
- 2.9** It is also incumbent to make the social environment as attractive as possible; it must be accepted that clubs have little control over their physical environment.
- 2.10** At an individual level, **COACHES** must be aware of all these factors which affect their charges. They must be aware of the other activities in which they may be involved; the post-Christmas training for the Schools Cross Country Championships can be physically damaging to swimmers who already have an intensive training programme, and may be the straw that breaks the camel's back as far as overuse injury is concerned. Coaches must appreciate the problems which arise from the normal development of the child, and adapt training schedules accordingly. It might help to identify such problems before they arise, and the keeping of regular height and weight charts in relation to performance could help in this respect.
- 2.11** To enable coaches to become aware, they and the swimmers would benefit from counselling at club level. Coaches' courses could profitably include information about child development, physical and mental, and the effects of intensive training schedules on individual personalities.
- 2.12** The medical team should have a role at all levels in these aspects of education. They must be regarded as 'neutral', and be seen to be neutral in all matters, although it must be said that for the doctor, the welfare of the individual swimmer is paramount, not that of the club or the parent. Where clubs find it difficult to establish a medical team of their own, the clubs might be encouraged to work with specified medical centres.

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- 2.13** Doctors in this respect are practising preventative medicine, which is undoubtedly better than cure. Unfortunately not all doctors have the knowledge or the skills to do this; they too may need training! A doctor is not necessary in every instance, and an appropriately trained nurse could perform equally well. Nurses must be much more common amongst parents in a club than doctors. All counselling must of course be confidential, and this may make parental participation difficult. This is perhaps something parents of formal swimmers could be encouraged to consider. The first task however within the club and the district, is to identify these people.
- 2.14** If there is any one message to come out of this, it must be that parents, coaches, clubs, officials need to understand what the problems and pressures are that face swimmers of today, be they physical, psychological or social, and that requires an education programme. Our ability to influence the problems of burnout, turn-off or whatever you want to call it, is largely dependent on parents, coaches and swimmers adopting a realistic understanding of what is possible, what is not possible, and what is desirable for each individual swimmer.

3 OVERVIEW OF THE SURVEYS CARRIED OUT

- 3.1 In order to give the group some idea of the level of commitment expected of the young swimmers in Scotland a survey was carried out in the hope of obtaining information from all Scottish Clubs. The survey also attempted to outline the way in which the training and coaching of our youngsters is structured and gave the respondents the opportunity to express their opinions and theories on how we might improve or develop the present system.
- 3.2 The survey was carried out using the questionnaire shown in Appendix 1. The questionnaire was mailed to all Scottish Clubs in spring 1991 by the SASA Central Office and was recirculated via the Scottish Swimming Coaches Association (SSCA) after the Scottish Age Group Championships in July.
- 3.3 The reason for the recirculation was that it appeared that the initial mailing had failed to reach many of the coaches. This seemed somewhat strange as it had been mailed together with the information on the Age Group Championships and we can only conclude that it went missing somewhere between the Club Secretaries and the Coaches.
- 3.4 From the one hundred and thirteen clubs listed as having competitive swimmers in the 1990 SASA Annual Report a total of thirty six replies were received, together with one reply from a member of the SSCA who now coaches in England.
- 3.5 If one considers that the aim of this group is to attempt to put forward constructive proposals, which will hopefully benefit swimming throughout Scotland, the apathy and reluctance to divulge information shown by this level of response is probably the most significant finding of the survey.
- 3.6 At the same time as the above survey was carried out, the questionnaires on Training and Competition shown in Appendix 2 were circulated to all of the National governing bodies for Swimming in Europe. This was an attempt to assess the current state of thinking on the training, coaching and organisation of competition for young swimmers on the Continent. Whilst the response to this survey was limited, seven replies in total, the information it provided is of great interest.
- 3.7 It should be remembered that the information collected by these surveys is such that it does not allow precise statistical analysis and can only therefore be used to indicate broad trends within those clubs who replied. Because of the poor response it is not possible to claim that the information is representative of the majority of Scottish Clubs, but that it gives a glimpse of the organisation in those Clubs sufficiently motivated to reply. Similarly the European responses give a feel of the varying approaches adopted to the training and coaching of youngsters in the fourteen and under age group.

THE REPLIES

- 3.8** The number of squads in each Club varied from one to seven and the age distribution of the swimmers within these squads was similarly variable. The average age spread, in years, of the squads was four, with a minimum of two and a maximum of eight. Length of sessions varied from thirty to one hundred and twenty minutes, with an average of sixty minutes. The frequency of the sessions ranged from once a week to eleven times per week and understandably the length and frequency of the sessions increased as the upper age limit of the squads increased. It would appear from the figures however that the opportunity still exists for the precocious eight year old to train six or seven times a week for an hour at a time.
- 3.9** The volume of "work" and the intensity of "work" again increased steadily through the age range from eight hundred metres steady to three thousand metres medium to maximum per hour. As current knowledge suggests that children prior to puberty cannot train anaerobically it is a concerning to see the use of maximum intensity training in these younger age groups.
- 3.10** The trends in how the sessions are structured in relation to the teaching of technique and the various types of work are summarised, by age group, in the attached graphs. (see Appendix 3)
- 3.11** Each individual will interpret these graphs differently depending on their personal bias, but the impression gained is that throughout the age ranges, and particularly in the very young age group, technique work is sadly lacking.
- 3.12** The presence of endurance, speed and pace work at this early stage suggests an over emphasis of the competitive aspects of swimming too early in the youngsters careers considering that it is generally accepted that this should be avoided.

3.13 A broad comparison of the situation in Scotland with that in the European countries that replied shows a similar distribution in terms of water time, but an appreciably higher percentage of steady aerobic work in all age groups.

(See Appendix 4 and 5)

3.14 Interestingly the replies from Belgium and Germany, two of the more prominent European swimming nations, indicated much shorter periods of water based training in all age groups, with a maximum of eight hours per week in the twelve to fourteen year age group; the emphasis being on quality not quantity.

(See Appendix 5)

3.15 The remainder of the information collected in these surveys will not be commented on further at this point but will be incorporated in the sections on Training, Coaching and Competitions.

4 COMPETITION

4.1 Preamble

In organising competition for younger people we adults tend to:

- a) assume that competition should be a replica of the adult version;
- b) capitalise upon and possibly exploit the enthusiasm and energy of young people.

We are concerned to ensure that as far as possible the young children who join our clubs are given positive and encouraging experiences within the club. Our sport must compete for children with an ever increasing range of sport. Swimming has to guard against the temptations of income generation from younger children.

4.2 It is our view that we need to introduce young people to competition gradually and in a manner which sustains their interest. As a means to this end we recommend:

- a) that through the education programme we convince people at club level that no one should take part in competition until they have sustainable skill;
- b) that through the education programme we ensure that at club level there is adequate rehearsal practice and acquisition of competition skills;
- c) that at District events entries should start at 11 years;
- d) that graded meets be encouraged, that graded meets, time band and cumulative time meets become part of the swimming programme;
- e) that meets and inter club competition be made more enjoyable by:
 - i) having shorter programmes of competitions. These should not last for more than two hours.
 - ii) encouraging officials to handle lower level meets sympathetically by improving communication to younger swimmers.

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- iii) encouraging meet organisers to re-consider medal ceremonies'. We are not convinced that emphasising the winning of an event is always appropriate.
 - iv) draw organisers' attention to the ASA publications on organising meets.
 - v) produce a small advice package for announcers. In-Service opportunities could be useful to support this venture. Good presentation of events can enhance the occasion.
 - vi) paying attention to the 'total environment' of competition, eg air temperature; hospitality, pool side safety, etc.

4.3 As the SASA has overall "control" of swimming competition, the accreditation procedures of open meets need to be adapted to include some of the above principles and recommendations

5 TRAINING AND COACHING

5.1 What therefore can we in Scotland take out of the information gained from our own Clubs and our European colleagues?

We need a system for the development of our Young Swimmers that incorporates all of the following principles:

- 1 All round four stroke competence
- 2 Technical Development
- 3 Aerobic Development
- 4 Skill Development

Once these have been acquired and the child, for that is what they are, is old enough, they can move on to add:

- 6 Race preparation and practice
- 7 Introduction of goal setting and planning for competition

And finally, after puberty, with careful and competent supervision:

- 8 Land Training

5.2 How can we incorporate this in a club programme at Age Group Level

We need to look at:

- 1 Squad Structure
- 2 Frequency of sessions
- 3 Duration of sessions

These can best be illustrated by the following Training Timetable which shows obvious progression from the three sessions per week Development (D) Squad, through to the seven sessions per week Age Group (A) Squad.

Squad	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sun
D	1800-1900	1800-1900	-	-	1800-1900	-
C	1830-2000	1730-1900	-	1830-1945	-	1530-1700
B	1700-1830	1700-1830	1700-1830	-	1700-1830	1530-1700
A	0600-0730 1630-1800	- 1930-2100	- 1630-1800	- 1700-1830	0600-0730 -	- 1400-1530

Although the same basic principles apply at all levels, aspects such as volume and intensity will increase in this progressive programme.

Attendance requirements are important and should be established for each Squad, in the order, for example:

- 2 out of 3 sessions per week
- 3 out of 4 sessions per week
- 4 out of 5 sessions per week
- 5 out of 7 sessions per week

The Age Group Squad (A) follows a weekly Cyclical Programme as shown below.

Sessions

- 1 Aerobic work - mainly Freestyle
- 2 Backstroke/Breastroke/~Butterfly and/or Kick/Pull work
- 3 Aerobic work on Freestyle/No 1 stroke
- 4 Mixed Medley work
- 5 Broken swims/Speed work
- 6 Aerobic work - mainly Freestyle
- 7 Mixed stroke session

Regular testing is incorporated into the programme for the older Swimmers who have begun to compete at a higher level, eg 10 x 200 metres Freestyle test set, 30 minute swim.

A cyclical programme at D Squad level would not be on the same lines as above but a three-session per week programme would be stroke based, eg

- Session 1: Freestyle
- Session 2: Backstroke
- Session 3: Breastroke
- Session 4: Butterfly/IM

so the swimmer who always misses the Tuesday session, eg would be missing a different main stroke each week in any month.

Technique work is imperative throughout. No matter what age and stage, what type of workout, etc good technique should be stressed. Specific technique work should be built into the programme throughout the year - for all levels of ability and probably into almost every session for young development squads.

Extended Club Structures

The above system would be fed by a Learn to Swim Scheme and further upper squads could exist to cater for older/higher level swimmers, depending on the needs of the particular Club. For older, less committed swimmers the more repetitive elements of training could be interspersed with sessions on Life Saving, Water Polo, Synchro skills, etc in order to vary the programme, and possibly lead on to further aquatic interests.

5.3 ELEMENTS OF TRAINING IN MORE DETAIL

i) All Round 4/Stroke Competence

This is extremely important at Age Group level with work on individual strokes/IM's and combinations.

ii) Technical Development - establish sound technique

Fundamentals - ensuring mechanically sound principles are being applied. Stroke development - adaptation as swimmers grow and become stronger.

iii) Aerobic Development

Adolescence is the best time to develop aerobic capacity with steady, over distance, short rest work with control and even pace.

iv) Pure Speed Development

Swimmers are at an age when the body is best able to develop nerve and muscle coordination. Speed and technique over short distances, eg widths/12-15 metre sprints and extended speed over 25/50 metres.

v) Skill Development

Starts, turns, finishes, relay take overs. Work on these competitive skills must be planned into the programme not just left to turn out.

vi) Race Preparation and Practice

Warm up rehearsal/pace work/broken swims/fast efforts - knowing how it feels to race including competition skills.

vii) Introduction of goal setting and planning for competition.

viii) Land Training

Development of flexibility. Prior to every pool session time should be spent on this important area which should be taught and established at a young age before there is an awareness of self-conscious attitudes.

Development of strength. General body weight exercises, running and circuit training should be included in the Programme. Use of external weights, multi-gyms, etc must be questioned strongly at Age Group level.

5.4 SCHEDULING OF SESSIONS

Frequency of sessions will vary according to age and stage of ability and will also depend on length of sessions - 1 hour duration for 10/12 year olds, 1 1/2 hour for 12/14 year olds should be a general guideline, though an occasional 2 hour session should not be a problem at upper ability levels. It may also be felt wise to hold back a precocious young swimmer.

Sessions should be carefully planned throughout the week especially with regard to early morning training which should not follow after a late evening sessions. Where evening pool time is at a premium it may be necessary to augment the programme with several early morning sessions. Ideally, a balance should be sought.

Additional training at weekends could be built in only if really necessary due to limited pool time during the week, partly because problems could arise due to the competitive calendar. The weekly training programme should be established throughout the season with the addition, perhaps, of 'training camps' in the holidays, and a major break must be programmed into the summer for at least three to four weeks.

If at all possible, a Club Night should be established as a focal point in the week, ideally for all Squads to be involved.

5.5 TRAINING LOADS

Volume per session will obviously vary according to age and ability as well as the type of work being carried out. In any carefully planned programme, weekly total volume should increase throughout the season as swimmers grow and become stronger. Big yardages are not as important as was once thought; it is quality not quantity that counts.

Intensity: every programme should incorporate a balance of the type of work done in terms of training intensities, the vast bulk of which will be sub maximal. terminology varies, eg:

Steady	Medium	Hard	Maximum
Base Aerobic	Sub Threshold	Threshold	Overload

As understanding is the important element, coaches should use the most appropriate words and probably the top line is more relevant for young Age Groupers.

There was some discussion as to whether the group should issue further, more detailed guidelines on Training Loads, but as each Club's situation is different it was felt that the above was sufficient. The SASA may feel it wishes to go further and issue it's own guidelines.

6 EDUCATION ISSUES

This paper focuses on two main areas:

- 1 The key issues in children's sport
- 2 Recommendations for an education 'curriculum' within SASA training courses

We wish to acknowledge the assistance of the National Coaching Foundation's Coach Development Programme in the compilation of Sections (1) and (2).

6.1 (i) Introduction

We are all aware of the tremendous contribution that participating in sport can make to a child's overall development. Young people are naturally competitive and they are growing up in a competitive world with all its associated pressures. There is no doubt that sport can help to prepare children for the stresses of adult life. However, we must not forget that for sport to continue to play a positive role in society, competitive fervour must be balanced by adherence to the principle of 'fair play'. It is all too easy for those involved in sport to lose sight of the need for such a balance in their quest for competitive successes, and indeed to lose sight of the fact that participation in sport must, first and foremost, offer children the prospect of fun and enjoyment.

6.1 (ii) What Can Swimming Offer Children and Young People?

Sport in all its many forms has a great deal to offer children and young people. Apart from the joy of physical activity in itself, it gives them the chance to develop a sense of self worth, a knowledge of their own abilities, an opportunity to work in co-operation with others and an understanding of competition. Swimming offers the chance to experiment with physical and emotional boundaries in a healthy and safe environment. In short, it gives children and young people the chance to develop some of the skills needed for living in our society.

Through sport and recreation, children and young people can develop an enthusiasm for active participation which can become the basis for a lifelong interest in personal fitness and health.

And yet....

A child's happy participation in swimming may be jeopardised by the inappropriate expectations and attitudes of the adults involved. For example, play as a means of experimentation and exploration is an essential part of a child's development. Adults have a tendency to forget this in their emphasis on winning at all costs. There are dangers in forcing children beyond their capabilities and differing levels of interest. There is a need for tremendous patience while the child develops his or her own sense of direction and purpose and while the body develops its own particular strengths and capabilities. Competition can be of great value in providing the needed edge, the challenge to strive for a personal goal, but competition should be used to enhance and develop personal performance, not to measure it.

6.1 (iii) Children's Sport - The Issues

The major issues in children's sport can be summarised:

- 1 The 'win-at-all-costs' approach with its potentially detrimental effect on children's emotional and physical development.
- 2 A lack of knowledge on the part of coaches and parents about children's growth and development, which places unrealistic expectations on the child.
- 3 The intrusion of the adult values and rules into children's sport, distorting the child's approach to participation.
- 4 A decline in the respect for the abilities and skills of others, resulting in discord and intimidation.
- 5 A lack of sportsmanship, which is generally evident in many areas of children's sport.
- 6 Violence in children's competitive sports and the tendency of the media to highlight violence and rough play.
- 7 Overemphasis on one sport, leading to both physical and mental stress resulting in a lack of enjoyment.

To deal with these issues, it is necessary to return to child-orientated attitudes so that the quality of play can be improved to meet the needs of all young sport participants whatever their abilities and skills.

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- 1 To ensure that children and young people find enjoyment and lasting satisfaction through participating in physical activity.
 - 2 To make adults aware that children play to satisfy themselves and not necessarily to satisfy adults and their ambitions.
 - 3 To encourage children and young people to adopt a fit and healthy lifestyle by making sports participation attractive, safe and enjoyable.

Everybody has a responsibility to 'play the game' - players, coaches, teachers, officials, parents, young leaders, playworkers, administrators, spectators and news media. Together their attitudes and actions can ensure high standards of sporting behaviour and help to emphasise fun, friendly competition and individual fulfilment.

SECTION 2

6.2 SASA EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Current developments are suggesting three levels...

6.2 (i) Level 1

Goals:

- 1 To help parents and potential coaches appreciate their role in making swimming a positive experience for children; and contribution to life skills and personal development.
- 2 To encourage parents and potential coaches to consider both the positive and negative effects that swimming can have on children.
- 3 To give parents and potential coaches some useful guidelines for 'good' practice when working with children.

Content:

- 1 Planning, organisation and safety
- 2 The value of swimming
- 3 Children's enjoyment of swimming
- 4 Knowing about swimming
- 5 Knowing about children

6.2 (ii) Level 2

Goals:

- 1 As no. 1 previously
- 2 To identify some of the important developmental factors (physical and psychological) to be considered when coaching children.
- 3 As no. 2 previously
- 4 As no.4 previously

Content:

- 1 Social development of children
- 2 Physical development of children
- 3 Psychological development of children
- 4 Implications of 1, 2, and 3 for coaching

6.2 (iii) Level 3

Goals:

- 1 Know the patterns of physical growth and development which affect sports performance.
- 2 Know the principles by which children adjust and adapt to the demands of exercise.
- 3 Know why children cope well with steady state but not with repeated high intensity exercise.
- 4 Understand the role of learning and maturation on skill development.
- 5 Be aware of the complex relationships between group members, roles and rules, and their implications for coaching.
- 6 Understand how competitive stress is generated.
- 7 Know how to reduce stress in children's sports.
- 8 Knowledge of legislation and the Children's Act.

Content:

- 1 Physical growth and development
- 2 Response to exercise
- 3 Control of movement
- 4 Psycho-social development
- 5 Coaching styles for different groups
- 6 Play, sport and competition

6.2 (iv) Level 4

Goals: as previous Level 3

Content: as before for Level 3

6.2 (v) Summary

Coaching children is a heavy responsibility, but it can be a very enjoyable one. By taking account of physical and mental changes, you can support them at every stage of development, helping them to reach their personal peak of fitness and skill. By putting the children first, and thinking positively, you can bring satisfaction and achievement into their lives. By actively working with other adults you can create the right environment for continuing enjoyment. By putting effort, progress, and team spirit before winning, you can encourage discipline, fair-mindedness and sportsman-like behaviour. And by adapting rules and equipment to suit children's needs, you can introduce them to a world of exciting possibilities. Coaches must have real knowledge of the Children's Act and matters of safety and security. Coaches must acquire a range of coaching strategies which incorporate the complexities of interpersonal skills.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- A We recommend that the SASA monitors, through a biannual survey, the practice of young swimmers in competition and training.
- B Through the education programme offered by the SASA, all coaching staff should acquire an understanding and knowledge of the development of young people; and appreciation and knowledge of the dimensions of interpersonal skills and the knowledge and skills of the sport implicit for 'quality coaching'.
- C The Enquiry Group feel that the SASA should now issue guidelines on the coaching of young swimmers. These should include:
- i) The length of training sessions
 - ii) The number of training sessions
 - iii) The content of training sessions

As this Report was being printed, the book "Coaching of Young Swimmers" by Wilkie and Madsen, came to the notice of the enquiry group.

We find ourselves in full agreement with the recommendations and guidelines contained in the book. The book contains a host of ideas and it should enhance the development of swimming for the young people of swimming.

- D Competition provides the major focus for all the training - consequently the Enquiry Group conclude that the SASA should now consider the production of:
- i) The procedures on the conducting/producing of competitive events for young people
 - ii) Recommendation for "Staged Development" of competition appropriate to the younger age groups. (see Appendix)
 - iii) Recommendation for a seasonal approach to the sport.
- E Provision of **information for parents** of basic procedures for training and competition, with in built guarantees of security and accountability.
- F The 'environment' of the swimmers on a day to day basis is again regarded as critical. The 'ethos' of clubs and their squads may require major review for many clubs.
- Clubs should be encouraged by the SASA to seriously consider the total personal, social and physical development of the young alongside technical training and competition.

NB: All involved in the administration of swimming should recognise that our sport has to compete with all other sports for many of the same children.

STAGED DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETITIVE SWIMMING - A STARTER PAPER

INTRODUCTION

The Young Swimmers Enquiry Group recommend a formal development plan for younger swimmers. This paper attempts to set out some underlying principles and some possibilities for inclusion in such a programme. It is envisaged that a programme of competition be outlined and recommended for swimmers from the youngest to the oldest 'masters' swimmers. We have only attempted here to consider the younger swimmers.

Legislation may be acquired to implement some suggestions. It has to be understood that swimmers and their coaches will practice for whatever competition is established.

PRINCIPLES

- A All young swimmers should be encouraged to participate in a wide range of learning opportunities.
- B As far as possible the younger swimmer should not have 'negative' experiences of competitions.
- C The full range of the 'elements of swimming' (viz: Speed, Endurance; Techniques) can and should be covered.
- D The importance "hidden curriculum" of different ways of teaching/creating, alongside the values of health, equality of opportunity, and relationships cannot be underestimated.
- E The nature of competitions which are established, will normally be reflected in the associated training.

COMPETITIONS

10 years and Under:

This should be at sub district level, in a club and Inter-club setting. Frequently the emphasis should be on team competitions. Both in relays and in team scoring. The only individual events would be within a "triathlon" of events (eg 200 IM; 100 F/S; 100 STROKE) producing cumulative times. No competitive session would last more than 2 hours, with a limit of 2 sessions per day.

To emphasise the technique elements for strokes and starts/turns - special events can be staged before swimmer may enter races. Techniques may require to be improved before entering competitions.

Competitive events for these younger swimmers should be staged with a clarity of purpose and sympathetic manner by technical officials.

11 Year Group:

At this age children could be permitted to add to the range of opportunities, a limited number of individual events up to District level.

However, stroke and start/turn techniques should continue to be evaluated prior to entering these competitions.

Team events should continue to predominate in the competitive calendar. In addition, it may become appropriate to introduce "time-band" events with swimmers competing within broad time-scales.

12-13 Years:

A full range of competitions at individual and team back is now possible. However, it will again be important to mirror the order of Speed, Endurance, Technique.

It may be suitable to consider a period of the year for the major competitions, to permit other sporting and cultural activities.

The difference in the scale of maturation from boys and girls has to be recognised. Consequently the possibilities of 2 "tracks" of competitive opportunity to be organised.

Appendix 1 Questionnaire distributed to Scottish Clubs

YOUNG SWIMMERS GROUP : Survey of Scottish Clubs							PAGE 1 OF 3
How many training Squads (up to age 14 years) does your club operate ? <input type="checkbox"/>			Please complete one column of the table below for each of these squads. If you run more than six Squads please use the second sheet provided				CLUB NAME
AGE RANGE IN SQUAD						EXAMPLE	
						11 - 12	
1) How many sessions per Squad per week ?						6	
2) Length of sessions on average ?						45 MINS	
3) Normal time of afternoon sessions ?						4.30PM	
4) How many morning sessions per week ?						3	
5) Volume of work covered per hour, expressed in metres ?						1500	
6) Intensity of work ? Steady..Medium..Hard..Maximum..						MEDIUM	
7a) Percentage of : Technique work						10	
7b) ----- : Pace work						20	
7c) ----- : Speed work						20	
7d) ----- : Endurance work						20	
7e) ----- : Kick and Pull						20	
7f) ----- : SKILLS (Starts Turns & Finishes)						10	
7g) ----- : Freestyle						25	
7h) ----- : Backstroke / Breaststroke						25	
7i) ----- : Butterfly						25	
7j) ----- : Mixed Medley work						25	

Page 2 is a continuation sheet in the same format as Page 1

YOUNG SWIMMERS GROUP : Survey of Scottish Clubs							PAGE 3 OF 3
Answer the questions below by ticking the appropriate box						CLUB NAME	
8) Are your Programmes planned on :			Yes No		PLEASE ADD ANY COMMENTS YOU W/W H/W/E IN THE SPACE BELOW TOGETHER WITH THE NUMBER OF THE QUESTION THEY REFER TO.		
An Annual Basis ?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
A Phase of Season Basis ?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
A Weekly Cycle ?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
A Daily Basis ?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
9) Do you use :			Yes No				
PADDLES ?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
FLIPPERS ?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
10) Do your swimmers competently use a Training Clock ?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
11) Do you use pulse checks ?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
12) Do your swimmers do pre-swim flexibility ?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
13) Do you keep a Training Log ?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
14) Do you encourage swimmers to take part in other physical activities outside the Club ?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
15) Do you have a Land Training Programme ? If so, please describe :			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Appendix 2

COMPETATIVE SWIMMING and the YOUNG SWIMMER A SURVEY OF THE AVAILABILITY AND STRUCTURE OF COMPETITION

- 1) Does your National Governing Body / Federation have any Regulations concerning the Competitions for Young Swimmers aged up to 12yrs ?
YES / NO - If YES please give details.
- 2) Does your National Governing Body / Federation issue any Guidelines on Competitions for Young Swimmers aged up to 12yrs ?
YES / NO - if YES please give details.
- 3) Do you have NATIONAL LEVEL COMPETITIONS FOR :
 - a) Individual swimmers aged 10yrs and Under ?
YES / NO - If YES please give details.
 - b) Individual swimmers aged 11 / 12 years ?
YES / NO - If YES please give details.
 - 4) Do you have NATIONAL LEVEL COMPETITIONS for :
 - a) TEAMS in the 10yrs and Under age group ?
YES / NO - If YES please give details.
 - b) TEAMS in the 11 / 12 years age group ?
YES / NO - If YES please give details.
 - 5) What other kinds of competitions do you have for :
 - a) The 10yrs and Under age group:
 - b) The 11 / 12 Years age group:
 - 6) What is the Maximum length of a Competitive Session (expressed in minutes eg. 60mins) for :
 - a) The 10yrs and Under age group _____ MINS
Additional comments :
 - b) The 11 / 12 years age group _____ MINS
Additional comments :
 - 7) What is the Maximum length of a Competitive day (eg. No of sessions/length of session) for :
 - a) The 10yrs and Under age group :
Number of Sessions _____ Average session length _____
Additional comments :
 - b) The 11 / 12 years age group :
Number of Sessions _____ Average session length _____
Additional comments :
 - 8) What kinds of prizes are awarded to these age groups?
 - a) The 10 and Under age group :
 - b) The 11 / 12 years age group :
 - 9) Are you aware of any NEW ideas for Competition for Young Swimmers
 - a) In the 10yrs and Under age group :
 - b) In the 11 / 12 years age group :
 - 10) Please add any general recommendations / comments you may feel useful in relations to competition for youngsters.
 - 11) What is the average cost per entry at Open competition for young children ?
 - a) In the 10yrs and Under age group _____/EVENT
Additional comments :
 - b) In the 11 / 12 years age group _____/EVENT
Additional comments :

SCOTTISH AMATEUR SWIMMING ASSOCIATION COMPETITIVE SWIMMING and the YOUNG SWIMMER A SURVEY OF ATTITUDES TO AND OPINIONS ON TRAINING

- 1) Does your National Governing Body / Federation have any Regulations concerning the training of Young Swimmers ?
YES / NO - If YES please give details.
- 2) Does your National Governing Body / Federation issue any Guidelines on the training of Young Swimmers ?
YES / NO - If YES please give details.
- 3) Do you have any concerns about or a philosophy on the training of the young ?
YES / NO - If YES please give details.
- 4) In your opinion how much time should be spent on Water Based Training in the following age groups ? - (Expressed as hours/week)
 - a) The 10yrs and Under age group _____ HOURS / WEEK
Additional comments :
 - b) The 11 / 12 years age group _____ HOURS / WEEK
Additional comments :
 - c) The 13 / 14 years age group _____ HOURS / WEEK
Additional comments :
- 5) In your opinion what intensities of training should be used in these age groups ? - (Expressed as a percentage of total time spent training eg. Steady/Aerobic 15%, medium/Sub threshold 20% etc.)

	10 yrs and Under	11/12 yrs	13/14 yrs
Steady / Aerobic	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
Medium / Sub Threshold	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
Hard / Threshold	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %
Maximum / Overload	_____ %	_____ %	_____ %

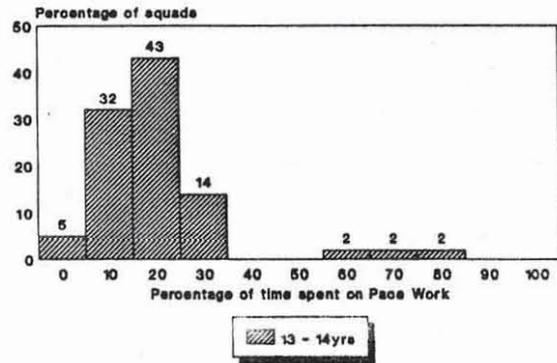
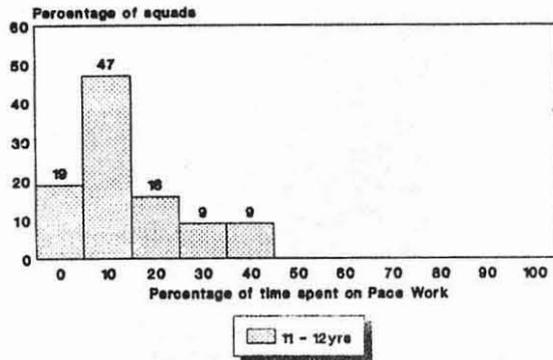
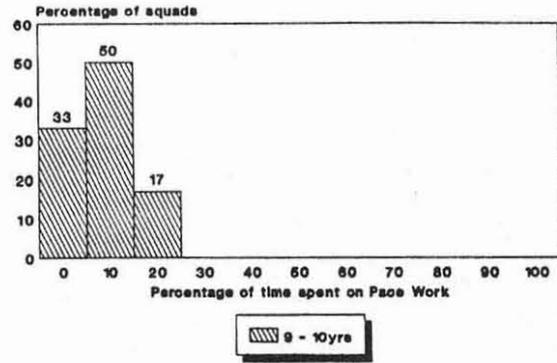
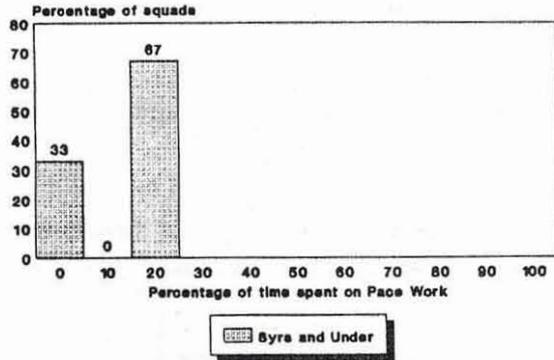
 Additional comments :
- 6) In your opinion should LAND TRAINING be employed in these age groups ?

Under 10yrs	YES/NO	HOURS/WEEK ?	_____
		IF YES - WHAT TYPE ?	_____
11 / 12 yrs	YES/NO	HOURS/WEEK ?	_____
		IF YES - WHAT TYPE ?	_____
13 / 14yrs	YES/NO	HOURS/WEEK ?	_____
		IF YES - WHAT TYPE ?	_____

 Additional comments :
- 7) On what do you base your training schedules for these age groups ?
- 8) How do you monitor the progress of your Young Swimmers ?
SWIMMERS AND PARENTS POWER TO INFLUENCE NATURE OF TRAINING
- 9) How are the wishes of swimmers and their parents accommodated in your experience ?
- 10) Has any work been done in your area to study the effects of Swim Training on this group of children and/or their families ?
- 11) Please add any general training recommendations you may feel useful for youngsters.
- 12) Do coaching courses in your area include education on Growth and Adolescence, Young children and learning, Communication and Young people etc. ?
- 13) Do you have any other training related ideas ?

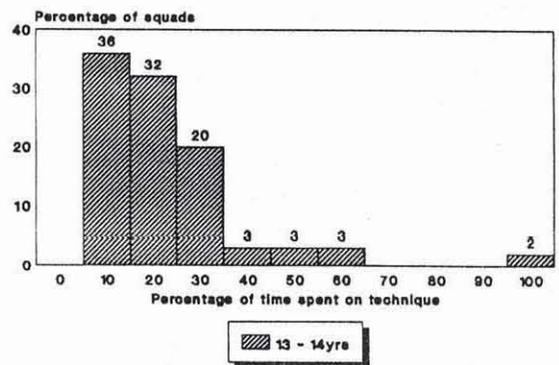
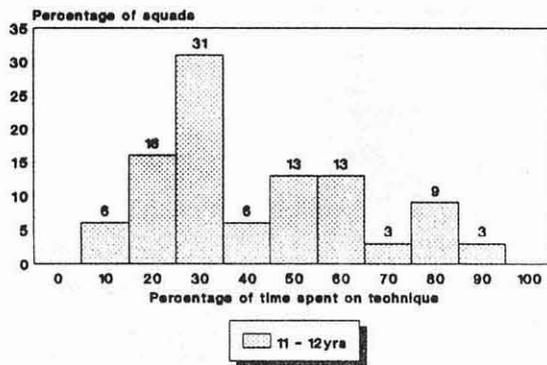
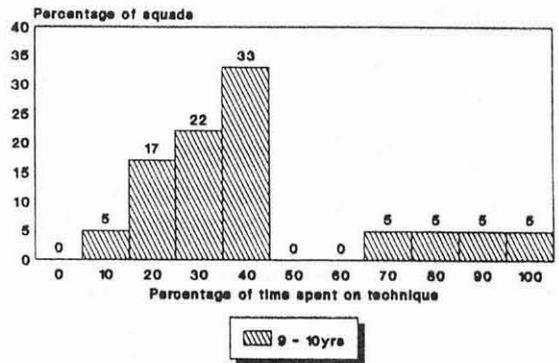
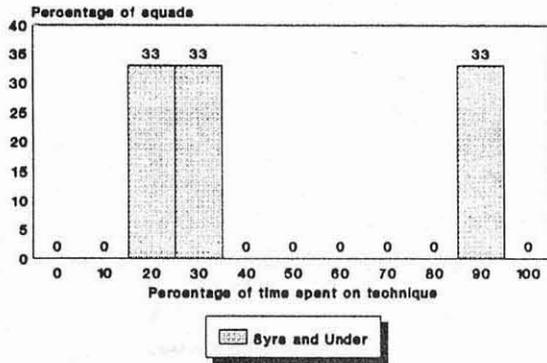
Appendix 3

PERCENTAGE OF TIME SPENT ON PACE WORK BY AGE GROUP



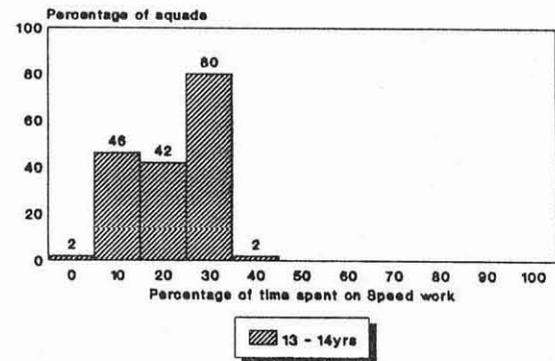
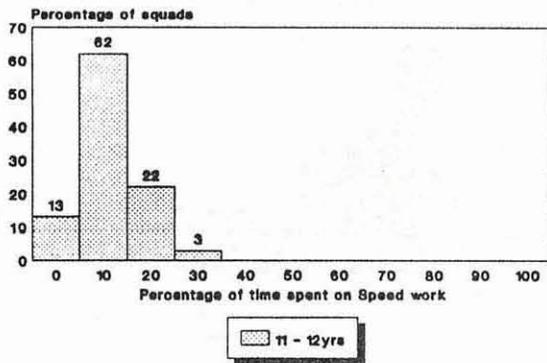
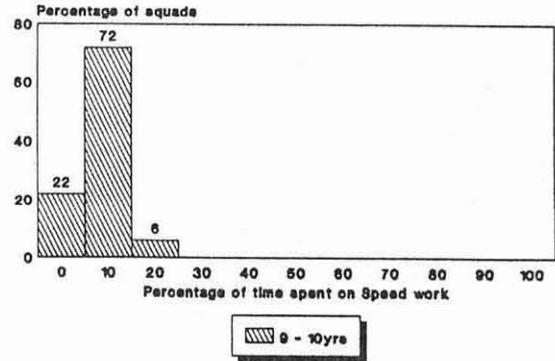
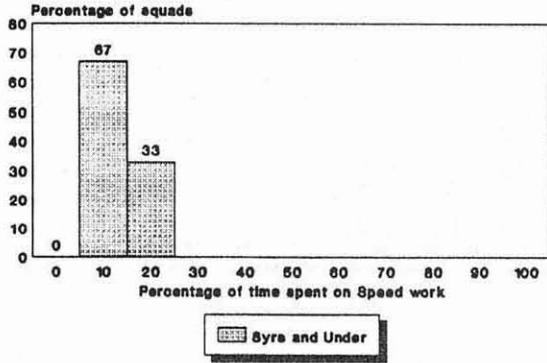
Appendix 3

PERCENTAGE OF TECHNIQUE COACHING BY AGE GROUP



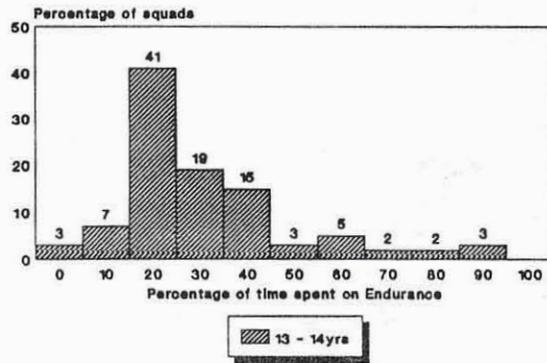
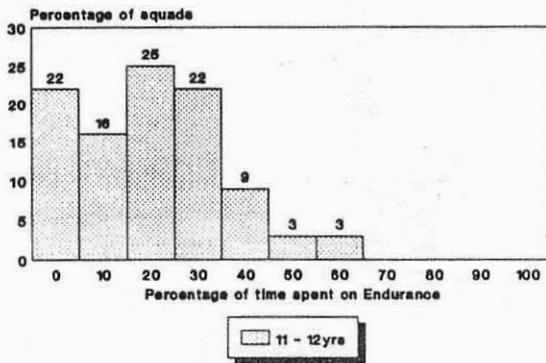
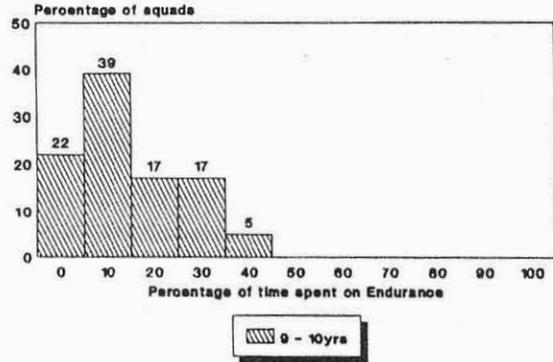
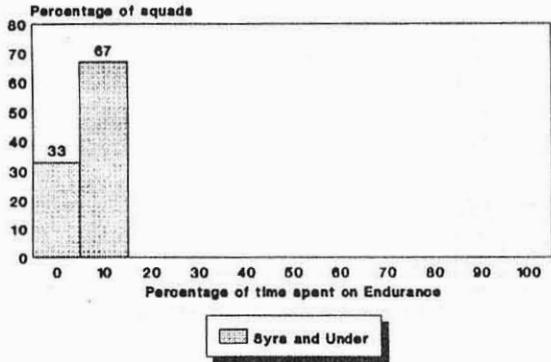
Appendix 3

PERCENTAGE OF TIME SPENT ON SPEED WORK BY AGE GROUP



Appendix 3

PERCENTAGE OF TIME SPENT ON ENDURANCE WORK BY AGE GROUP



**Appendix 4
Responses to Training Questionnaire**

Question 5

Work Intensity	10yrs and under		11 / 12yrs		13 / 14yrs	
	Average	Range	Average	Range	Average	Range
Steady / Aerobic	80%	50 - 100%	65%	30 - 90%	45%	25 - 75%
Medium / Sub threshold	15%	0 - 50%	25%	5 - 60%	20%	10 - 50%
Hard / Threshold	2%	0 - 10%	15%	0 - 60%	20%	5 - 50%
Maximum / Overload	0%	0%	1%	0 - 5%	3%	0 - 10%

Question 6

Opinions on the use / introduction of Land Training

Age Group	Hours per week		Type of Land Work
	Average	Range	
Under 10yrs	90mins	30 - 240mins	Flexibility's and stretching Play to train co-ordination Various fun games Gymnastics and use of body weight in exercises
11 / 12yrs	120mins	60 - 360mins	Co-ordination skills Ball Games , Jogging Use of body weight in exercises Flexibility's
13 / 14yrs	240mins	120 - 600mins	Gradual introduction of gym exercises with small weights Ball games, Jogging Flexibility's

Appendix 5

RESPONSES TO THE TRAINING QUESTIONNAIRE

Question No.1- Does your Governing Body / Federation have any REGULATIONS concerning the training of Young Swimmers ?

BELGIUM - NO FINLAND - NO
 GERMANY - YES No National Competition before age 14 (boys) or 12 (girls). Only 50m for 8 and under.
 MALTA - YES Parental consent and Medical Fitness
 POLAND - YES Detailed programme of Coaching
 ROMANIA - YES We have a methodical guide line concerning the training of young swimmers.
 WALES - NO

Question No.2 Does your National Governing Body issue any Guidelines on the training of Young Swimmers

BELGIUM - NO FINLAND - NO GERMANY - NO
 MALTA - YES Regarding Time of day, length of workout and type of workout, i.e. no weights unless 13 and physically mature.
 POLAND - YES Detailed programme of coaching
 ROMANIA - YES A guideline is updated and issued from time to time depending on the evolution of research.
 WALES - YES through coach education programmes.

Question No.3 Do you have concerns about or a philosophy on the training of the young

BELGIUM - YES do not train them too much and too hard. Technical skills are trained first, combined with endurance and speed (especially fast movements)
 FINLAND - YES not too seriously nor too much in amount nor too "Result oriented" at too early an age.
 GERMANY - YES In my experience I still see too many kids burned out too early. This is due to too little technique training and too much pressure on the young.
 MALTA - YES Keep it fun, keep it interesting, provide a challenge, stress technical development not racing (winning) and stress personal best - be the best that you can be!
 POLAND - YES Proper development of young swimmers based on a variety of strokes and exercises, avoiding weights and intervals.
 ROMANIA - YES We are concerned that some young coaches try to get success too quickly and burn out too easy and too soon the young swimmers. We need good swimmers at junior and senior level and our concerns are directed to avoid the leaving of sport of the young swimmers to stressed or too tired of our sport/work/water.
 WALES - Philosophy - NO Implementation - YES

Question No.4 How much time should be spent on water based training in the following age groups (hours per week)

	10 and under	11/12 years	13/14 years
BELGIUM -	2-3	4-6	6-8
FINLAND -	3(3x45mins)	6-7	12-16
GERMANY -	2-3	3-5	5-8
MALTA -	5-7	7-8	8-10
POLAND -	4-6	6-10	10-14
ROMANIA -	6	9	13-14
WALES -	3	5-6	8-9

Additional Comments :

Poland - 10 & under sessions include games play(fun) and easy swimming.
 Germany - 13/14yrs Real training has to have started. There is no time to joke any more. If they don't train at this age they will not reach any good basics.

The replies to questions 5 and 6 are tabulated in Appendix 4

Question No.7 On what do you base your training schedules for these age groups.

BELGIUM - Interests, needs and the year program
 FINLAND - Pool time available and children's school times / my work times
 GERMANY - Competitive program, room available, time available
 MALTA - Facilities available, attention span and Coach/swimmer ratio.
 POLAND - General non specific swimming development based on natural movement.
 ROMANIA - To keep the feeling of enjoying what they are doing; the performances improving naturally, not forced and all the time to have new ways in motivation and methods for better times
 WALES - No comment

Question No.8 How do you monitor your swimmers progress ?

BELGIUM - Training Camps twice a year, Competition listings and personal visits to club training/competitive sessions.
 FINLAND - Times in competition and observation of the swimmer.
 GERMANY - Test - "What I train I test" Eyes - Observation is part of coaching
 MALTA - Technical standards evaluation every 3 months Participation The smiles on their faces
 POLAND - Stroke analysis and general progress
 ROMANIA - By time and personal sentiment of the swimmers that they are able to easy things/exercises, some times age very difficult.
 WALES - No comment.

Question No.9 How are the wishes of the swimmers and their parents accommodated in your experience ?

BELGIUM - Swimmers no problem. Parents sometimes expect too much and push too hard.

FINLAND - Parental opinion taken into account but not allowed to interfere with personal ideology of coach.

GERMANY - Parents should leave the swimmers to the coach!

MALTA - Reasonable requests are accommodated, unreasonable ones are turned down.

POLAND - Parents attitudes play a big role in young swimmers career

ROMANIA - Most parents believe that they know as much or more than the coach, especially if the child is not progressing. Those with a sporting background leave the coaching to the coach, though some still believe that their experience from years ago is better.

WALES - No comment

Question No.10 Has any work been done in your area to study the effects of swim training on this group and/or their families

BELGIUM - No FINLAND - No
 GERMANY - Yes - results not known.
 MALTA - No POLAND - No WALES - No
 ROMANIA - Few and not relevant

Question No.11 General Training recommendations for youngsters.

BELGIUM - Let them play whenever they want to under 10 Teach them that serious swimming starts around 16yrs old.
 FINLAND - Not too seriously, emphasis on skills not results. What you do should always be of prime quality - you should ALWAYS know the what / why / when's when working with children. Coaching children is one of the most demanding and rewarding things I know.
 GERMANY - Kids have to have fun. They must like to swim. A coach can help them develop but they must learn that they can achieve success if they work and that no one will get angry if they do not want to.
 MALTA - Be enthusiastic Make the kids feel part of the Team - they are! Realise they are the future!
 POLAND - More easy technique based swimming plus variety Encourage them to have fun from swimming.
 ROMANIA - To understand that performance comes step by step and that it is no use to jump 4 steps at a time.
 WALES - No comment.

Question No.12 Do coaching courses in your area include education on Growth and Adolescence, Young Children and Learning, Communication and Young People etc.?

BELGIUM - Yes, but too little
 FINLAND - A little in the passing, but too little.
 GERMANY - Partly. I am a Nationally ranked A-licence coach and so I can only go to National Courses, so I am not sure.
 MALTA - No
 POLAND - Yes
 ROMANIA - Yes, but not in the way you are doing this. We have a long way to face in the area of communication between different kinds of people. A lot of us were used only with orders. I believe you know what I am saying.
 WALES - Yes

Question No.13 Do you have any training related ideas ?

BELGIUM - No comment
 FINLAND - No, but I'd love to hear what you come up with!
 GERMANY - I always loved to swim and I hope to give back a little bit to the sport. I think on the whole the children must love and respect their coach in order to be successful. A coach must also be free of the goals he never reached and avoid trying to impose them on his swimmers. The coach models people to enable them to become champions, but the children do it and it is their job and their glory. I always hope that my swimmers reach their goal and most of all that they transfer their knowledge to win to continue to be successful in life. Sport is education!
 MALTA - No comment
 POLAND - No comment
 ROMANIA - For us is a changing of system, motivations. So we try to put some other basis in our area, to change the concepts of the coaches, senior swimmers, clubs. It is really difficult. Of course that we keep all the good things in our competitions and regulations, the good experience that give us satisfactions all the years ago.
 WALES - No comment.

Appendix A Romanian Guidelines

ANNUALLY	AGE GROUPS		
	10yrs	11-12yrs	13-14yrs
No. weeks of work	40	43	41
No. of training sessions	160	258	30
No. of hours	336	532	860
No. of hours in the water	240	390	500
No. of hours on land	60	86	160
No. of hours of competitions	36	56	100
No. of Kilometres/week	6	12	18.6
No. of sessions/week	4	6	11
No. of hours/week	8.5	12.25	9.5