



DVE Aquatic President's Annual Report 2025/2026

It is my pleasure to present the President's Annual Report for DVE Aquatic for 2025/26.

When I look back over the past year, there is so much for our club to be proud of.

Across **Swimming, Water Polo and Diving**, we have seen continued membership growth, outstanding competition performances, successful fundraising and club events, strong athlete development and, importantly, more people and families being given the opportunity to participate in aquatic sport.

DVE Aquatic finished the season with **380 members — an increase of 30 on the previous year and our highest membership since the club merged in 2012.**

That is a significant achievement in itself, but the real value of that growth goes well beyond a number.

It means more children and young people participating in sport.

It means more athletes being given opportunities to develop from their first experience in the pool through to State, National and elite-level competition.

It means more parents and families coming together, volunteering together, attending competitions and events together and celebrating the achievements of not only their own children, but the achievements of others within the club.

Most importantly, it creates a stronger sense of **community and belonging**.

That is what DVE Aquatic should continue to represent.

Sporting Achievement and Development

Our athletes have again represented DVE with distinction across Swimming, Water Polo and Diving.

In Swimming, our squads have remained exceptionally strong, with many operating at or close to capacity. Over the previous twelve months DVE improved from **fourth to second in our local area** and was ranked **ninth out of 36 metropolitan clubs**.

Those results are a credit to our athletes, coaches and families.

Our swimmers competed across school swimming, Metro competition, Swimming Victoria events and National Age competition, with records broken, medal-winning performances and top-10 finishes at National Age Championships.

We have also had the enormous honour of DVE being represented at the **Australian Swimming Trials**.

To have swimmers progress from their daily training environment at DVE to the Australian Swimming Trials is something the whole club should take pride in. It demonstrates what can be achieved when athlete talent and commitment are supported by quality coaching, strong pathways and families prepared to make an enormous commitment to their sport.

Our athletes have also benefited from opportunities beyond regular training, including camps for our senior swimmers at the **Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra** and for our junior competition swimmers in Ballarat.

Water Polo – Growth, Pathways and National Competition

Water Polo has enjoyed another outstanding year.

Our players continue to compete at very high levels, including State and National competition, achieving exciting results in the **Division 2 local competition**.

That is an achievement deserving of considerable recognition.

We have also seen extraordinary representative success, including **19 DVE athletes selected for Victorian State representation**, together with six of our U14 girls progressing to represent Victoria.

Alongside those achievements has been a strong focus on developing the next generation.

Initiatives such as **FlippaBall**, targeted U12–U14 recruitment, senior coaches mentoring junior coaches and emerging refereeing pathways are all helping to ensure that younger athletes have a pathway into and through the sport.

Water Polo has also participated in events including the Canberra Cup and Ballarat Tournament, while our senior athletes have benefited from an international development experience through an extended training camp in New Zealand.

These opportunities demonstrate that DVE is providing much more than weekly training. We are creating sporting pathways and experiences that can take athletes far beyond their local pool.

Diving – Continuing a Proud DVE Tradition

Diving remains a very special part of DVE Aquatic.

Our Diving program has continued to develop, with new participants joining the program and further enquiries from families interested in becoming involved.

Training continues from our Diving home at **Carey Bulleen Sports Complex** with opportunities including club competition and participation in events such as the Club Challenge.

Diving is a highly specialised sport requiring courage, technical skill, strength and persistence, and we are fortunate to have coaches and volunteers who continue to pass their knowledge and experience to another generation of DVE divers.

We also recognise the extraordinary contribution of **Ken Houghton, who this year reached 40 years of service to the club.**

Four decades of involvement in community sport is an exceptional achievement.

Ken's contribution to DVE and particularly to Diving represents countless hours of coaching, mentoring, supporting athletes and helping maintain the proud history of our club.

On behalf of the entire DVE community, thank you Ken and congratulations on 40 remarkable years.

Fundraising, Competitions and Events

Our success throughout 2025/26 has certainly not been limited to what happened in competition.

Fundraising and events have continued to play an important role across the club.

Activities including our **Bunnings BBQs, the Jackson Carr Meet BBQ and bake sale, swimming meets, Silent auctions, sponsorships, community grants and other fundraising initiatives** all contribute financially to the club while also bringing our community together.

One of our swimming meets was so well supported that entries had to close early because it was oversubscribed — a fantastic reflection of the standing of our club and our ability to host successful competition.

Local businesses and families have also supported these activities to help reduce fundraising costs.

Water Polo has similarly continued to fundraise and reinvest back into the program, including purchasing and replacing equipment such as balls, caps and brand new Water Polo goals.

That is what good fundraising should ultimately achieve — turning community effort into better opportunities for athletes.

More Than Fundraising

However, the value of these events goes well beyond the money raised.

Our whole-club **Christmas Pool Party attracted approximately 150 members and family members** and received extremely positive feedback.

That event is a wonderful example of what DVE means beyond competition.

It brought Swimmers, Water Polo players, divers, parents, siblings, coaches and volunteers together simply to enjoy each other's company. Those occasions are important.

They create friendships between families who may otherwise only see each other briefly on pool deck. They give younger athletes and newer members to our club the opportunity to feel part of something bigger. They allow us to celebrate together without a stopwatch, scoreboard or judging panel. This is a sense of **belonging** that we want every DVE member and family to experience.

Our Home and Our Partnerships

None of this can happen without access to quality aquatic facilities and strong relationships with those who operate them.

WaterMarc Greensborough remains the home of DVE Aquatic and particularly our Swimming and Water Polo programs.

It is where a large part of the daily life of our club takes place.

It is where athletes train, coaches coach, families gather and friendships develop.

The strength and future of DVE is therefore closely connected to our relationship with WaterMarc and with Banyule City Council.

During the year we continued to advocate for the club and discuss opportunities to strengthen DVE's long-term place within the facility, including discussions around a **Home Club Agreement**.

Our swimming program is experiencing particularly strong demand, with squads at or near capacity, and available lane space continues to place a limit on further growth.

That makes our partnership with WaterMarc even more important.

Our commitment is to continue working constructively and positively with WaterMarc and Council so that DVE can provide opportunities for even more people to participate in aquatic sport in the years ahead.

Likewise, **Carey Bulleen Sports Complex remains the home of DVE Diving**, providing the specialised environment required for our Diving athletes to train and develop.

We value both of these relationships enormously.

One DVE Aquatic Club

One of the opportunities I am particularly excited about is continuing to strengthen the identity of DVE as **one aquatic club with three disciplines**.

Our Swimming, Water Polo and Diving programs each have their own character and competitive pathways, but together they form DVE Aquatic.

The work undertaken during the year to consider ways of supporting **dual participation for families involved in more than one DVE aquatic sport** is one example of how we can continue breaking down barriers between disciplines and creating stronger connections across the club.

We should make it easier for a swimmer to discover Water Polo.

We should encourage a family involved in Water Polo to understand what Diving offers.

And wherever possible, we should encourage our members to see themselves first and foremost as part of the wider **DVE Aquatic community**.

Celebrating Bob Oldfield

This year we also celebrated a very special personal milestone with **Bob Oldfield turning 80**.

Bob continues to make an extraordinary contribution to DVE as our Registrar and as a Swimming Official.

His work is often undertaken quietly behind the scenes, but the quality of our membership records and the history that Bob continues to preserve are invaluable to the club.

To remain so actively involved at 80 years of age is remarkable.

Happy 80th Bob, and on behalf of DVE, thank you for everything you continue to contribute.

Remembering Lindsay Ellis

Sadly, this year we also farewelled one of the most significant long-serving members in our club's history, **Lindsay Ellis**.

Lindsay became involved with Diamond Valley Swimming Club in 1970 and remained connected through the formation of DVE Aquatic, providing an extraordinary **54 years of service**.

His contribution extended across officiating, administration, coaching and mentoring.

He became a District Referee, later a State Referee, mentored new technical officials and spent many years developing junior swimmers. He was recognised as a Life Member of his club and Metro District North, received a Swimming Victoria Meritorious Award and a 50-year service award.

The **Ellis Family Trophy**, awarded each year to DVE's outstanding junior member, provides a lasting reminder of the contribution Lindsay and his wife Joy made to our club.

Lindsay's passing reminds us that today's DVE exists because generations of people have chosen to give their time and knowledge so that others could enjoy aquatic sport.

We remember him with gratitude.

Looking Ahead

As President, I am enormously proud of what DVE Aquatic has achieved during 2025/26.

We are growing.

We are competing successfully.

We are developing athletes who can progress from their first experience in aquatic sport through to State and National representation and even the Olympic Trials.

We are raising funds and investing those funds back into our athletes.

We are bringing families together through competitions, Presentation Nights, fundraising activities and social events.

We are developing new pathways for young swimmers, Water Polo players and divers.

And we are continuing to advocate for the facilities and partnerships that will determine the future of our club.

But ultimately, all of these achievements lead back to one thing.

People.

More people participating in aquatic sport.

More children discovering something they love.

More athletes being given the opportunity to reach their potential.

More parents volunteering and contributing.

More families forming friendships.

And more people having somewhere they feel they **belong**.

That, to me, is the greatest measure of DVE Aquatic's success.

Thank you to our athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, Committee members, Life Members, families, WaterMarc, Carey Bulleen Sports Complex and everyone who has contributed to another wonderful year for DVE Aquatic.

Together, we continue to make DVE a club where people can **participate, develop, achieve and belong**.

Lee Anderson

President

DVE Aquatic