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About Laurie Lawrence

Laurie Lawrence, a former Australian Rugby Union Representative and Olympic and World Champion Gold Medal Swim Coach was born in Townsville, tropical North Queensland.

His father, “Stumpy” was for many years the manager of the famous Tobruk pool on Townsville’s foreshore. During 1956 and 1960 the Tobruk pool was the training venue for the Australian Olympic Team. Swimming greats like Dawn Fraser, Lorraine Crapp, Jon Henricks, John Konrads, Murray Rose, David Theile and John Devitt were some of the many athletes that trained there. As a young boy Laurie was steeped in this environment. This was the beginning of Laurie’s love and passion for swimming.

Laurie the baby teaching expert

Laurie’s passion for baby swimming began after the birth of his first child in 1975. With help from his three children, Laurie carefully researched, documented and developed a program which today is internationally recognised.

Laurie’s baby program is unique in that it:

- Integrates baby’s physical, social and emotional needs into the swimming lesson
- Pre-Conditions baby for submersion, by teaching them hold their breath on command
- Teaches baby to swim without the assistance of floatation devices
- Encourages baby to be independent in and around water at the earliest possible age
- Teaches baby safety skills that may one day save their life

Laurie the coach

Laurie has coached Australia’s elite swimmers at Brisbane’s 1982 and Edinburgh’s 1986 Commonwealth Games, as well as Los Angeles 1984, Seoul’s 1988 and Barcelona’s 1992 Olympic Games. His coaching achievements boast 10 gold, 11 silver and 12 bronze medals from swimmers he has directly assisted at Olympic level, swimmers he has coached boast a combined 23 world records. Some of his best known protégé’s include; Jon Sieben, Duncan Armstrong, Tracey Wickham and Steven Holland.



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Laurie the water safety advocate

Drowning is the greatest cause of accidental death in the under five age group in Australia. In 1988, Laurie launched the “Kids Alive” Drowning Prevention Campaign to combat the problem. Today, with support from the Federal Government and community service advertising, the program runs nationally. As a result drowning statistics have reduced significantly. According to Laurie there is still a long way to go. “Our target is zero deaths by drowning”.

Laurie the academic

Laurie also balanced his life around the pool with academic studies. His academic achievements boast:

- Bachelor of Arts Degree (James Cook University)
- Diploma of Teaching (Kelvin Grove Teachers College)
- Diploma of Physical Education (University of Queensland)
- Master Coach Swimming Australia
- International Hall of Fame Honor Coach

