

Hancock Prospecting increase direct funding to swimmers in the lead up to Tokyo 2021

Australia's best swimmers have been supported since 2013 by Swimming Australia Patron, Mrs Gina Rinehart

Direct financial assistance to swimmers will increase ahead of Tokyo 2021

Swimming Australia is delighted to confirm that Hancock Prospecting has increased its direct swimmer financial support, ahead of the Tokyo 2021 Games.

This increased funding has three pools, each offering a significant and distinct benefit to swimmers, as they prepare during unprecedented times:

1. **Patron's Tokyo Enhancement Payment** - each categorised swimmer will receive a once off bonus payment, in addition to their quarterly Hancock Prospecting Swimmers Support Scheme payments, to further incentivise training and preparation, during these challenging times, ahead of the Tokyo 2021 Games.
2. **Hancock Prospecting Virtual Prize Money Pool** - a once off pool of prize money will be made available for all swimmers competing in the virtual swimming series that has been organised in replacement of the Hancock Prospecting Australian Short Course Championships. This prize money rewards important performances during a time where standard competition opportunities have been reduced due to the pandemic. Further details [here](#).
3. **Hancock Prospecting Quarterly Swimmers Support Scheme Payments Extended** - due to benchmark events not being completed until the end of September 2021, rather than the funding cycle ending on June 30 like other years, payments are guaranteed until 30 September 2021 giving athletes funding certainty during their peak competition period.

Having long supported swimming at a state level in Western Australia for nearly thirty years, Mrs Rinehart and Hancock Prospecting began investing in swimming at a national level after the London 2012 Games - a time where support was especially critical to Swimming Australia.

Outgoing President of Swimming Australia John Bertrand said "Gina Rinehart's support has been a game changer for swimming, helping us transform the sport after London when we were in need of a resurgence.

"Most critical and lasting to this was the innovation she has driven for athlete funding. The vehicle we set up as a result of her support in 2013, named the Hancock Prospecting Swimmers Support Scheme, which recognises that elite swimmers are often training two to three times a day, six days a week and that for many athletes they were also trying to support themselves with casual work around this, while also

trying to complete university degrees. Quarterly payments could give swimmers the certainty they need to give 100%+ effort on their training.

“Additionally, Gina has always pushed us and challenged our thinking to ensure that we are always striving to be the best on the world stage. Her passion for our sport, high performance workings and her astute observations has meant that no stone is ever left unturned when looking for opportunities for our athletes to be performing at their best.

“Gina Rinehart recognised in our swimmers their drive and commitment to work as hard as they can to reach their dream of representing their country, and she wanted to give them the best possible platform to succeed in this. I know that Gina works to the philosophy that if you are willing to work as hard as you possibly can, you will achieve, and this is aligned to the culture we have in the Australian Swim Team and its training environments.

“Gina is constantly looking for ways for our athletes to improve and her funding has enabled us to fund two additional world-class CLOGGs systems in West Australia and New South Wales to assist us in further honing the technical skills of starts, relay changeovers and turns.”

This approach to athlete support is replicated across the other sports that Mrs Rinehart is Patron of at a national level - Rowing, Volleyball and Artistic Swimming - making her the largest non-Government supporter of Olympic and Paralympic sports in Australia’s history. In recognition of this leadership and support, Mrs Rinehart was awarded the Australian Olympic Committee’s Order of Merit in 2014.

Moving away from the direct sponsorship of Swimming Australia from the end of 2020, Hancock Prospecting will be increasing its direct support to Australian swimmers by way of the Hancock Prospecting Swimmers Support Scheme, (including for their annual dinner gala awards event). Mrs Rinehart and Hancock Prospecting remain committed to the sport and its athletes, and it is this commitment which has been seen over the course of the partnership, with Mrs. Rinehart taking her patron duties most seriously, and enthusiastically, attending major swim events.

Olympic Gold Medallist Mack Horton said: “I’d like to express our immense thanks and appreciation to Mrs Rinehart. We really are fortunate to have a great Australian backing us again as our Patron and supporter.

“Her interest in and enthusiasm towards us as swimmers is incredible, and very genuine. She has been our biggest supporter for many years now and we love having her as part of the Australia Swim Team.”

Olympian Mitch Larkin added: “It’s great to see our Patron attend our competitions, and arrange to see us outside of these events too. She even flew with us to the outback before the last Olympics, as many in the Olympic team hadn’t been there before, and she wanted to give us the opportunity to see more of the country we are so proud to represent overseas. Mrs Rinehart’s enthusiasm and leadership example is outstanding, so I think all swimmers gain from having her as Patron.”