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# Stoked with new super pool

## Marion up with best in world

REECE HOMFRAY

ADELAIDE'S new \$100 million aquatic centre has been rated second only to Beijing's elaborate water cube which hosted the 2008 Olympics.

Hayden Stoeckel - who won silver and bronze at the Beijing Games - gave the new centre a rave review after a training session this week.

Stoeckel, who trains at the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre and has competed at Sydney's Olympic Park, said Adelaide's new pool was easily the best in Australia.

He said its consistent 3m depth and chlorine-gas treated water made it perfect

for elite swimmers.

Stoeckel returned to the water after a short break last week and swam faster than average times in the state centre at Marion.

"Because it's chlorine gas the water feels a lot lighter and you can always tell whether water is heavy or not," Stoeckel said.

"The pool feels like you're floating on air and you don't have to try as hard.

"Outside of Beijing, it's the best pool I've swum in."

Stoeckel also said having a gym, pool and recovery facility in the one centre was perfect for elite swimmers.

He said Australia's best swimmers would be "amazed" when they hit the pool for the national short course championships from July 1-3.

Two days before that, triple Olympic gold medallist Libby Trickett will swim a 100m freestyle time trial in the new Marion pool in a bid to make the national team for the world championships.

Earlier this year Swimming SA revealed it had submitted an expression of interest to Swimming Australia to host the 2012 Olympic trials in the new centre.

# Centre of excellence gets thumbs-up

DUAL Olympic swimming medallist Hayden Stoeckel and *The Advertiser* sport reporter Reece Homfray road test the new \$100 million State Aquatic Centre which opened to the public on Tuesday.



**Likes:** The competition pool is 3m deep the whole way along. You can dive in and don't

have to worry about the bottom and when I'm swimming in a deeper pool

like this I feel like I'm going faster than a 1.5m pool. It reminds me of the Beijing pool and I had great swims in that.

**Likes:** The light water. It might sound weird but it makes a difference. Because it's chlorine gas the water feels a lot lighter and you can always tell whether water is heavy or not. The pool feels like you're floating on air and you don't have to try as hard. I'd been out of the water for a week and was sick before that when I trained there this week and was surprised because I did some really good times.

**Likes:** Everything is in the one place. For SASI swimmers, divers and water polo players, having a gym, recovery facilities and

training venue in the one place is a huge bonus. When I was preparing for the Beijing Olympics I'd swim at the aquatic centre in North Adelaide then jump in the car and go to the gym at Kidman Park. At this centre you can do a hard gym session then jump straight in the pool.

**Dislikes:** The two pools look quite close and at last week's age

championships I heard someone accidentally jumped in after hearing noise from the opposite pool. For the national short-course championships it would be a good idea to put a barrier or temporary wall in between because you want to be 100 per cent focused on the starting block.

**Undecided:** Water slides. Everyone loves a water slide, it looks a fun place for families to take their kids. I'll have to wait until next time to have go.

## RATING: 8/10

Outside of Beijing, it's the best pool I've swum in. Beijing is the one place where everything was perfect, especially with 16,000 people crammed in, that was the ultimate. Adelaide's new centre looks state-of-the-art and has everything elite swimmers need. Australia's best swimmers will be amazed at how fast they'll swim in the national short-course titles in July.



**Likes:** The water doesn't leave you smelling like chlorine for three days afterwards. The new pools are run on chlorine gas as opposed to chlorine liquid which is commonly found in pools. It's cleaner, doesn't smell and doesn't leave you feeling dehydrated.

**Likes:** Air flow. More than 6000 people went through the centre

on opening day Tuesday, after more than 1500 hit the water the week before for the Australian age championships. It was warm outside yet the centre was refreshingly cool. There's not much worse than a humid indoor pool which leaves you feeling exhausted.

**Likes:** Lanes galore. Both pools are 10 lanes wide, meaning you're unlikely to be packed in like sardines and grabbing the swimmer's foot in front of you. Current programming will make a minimum of 10 lanes available to the public at all times.

**Likes:** Facilities. Change rooms and the pool deck are spotless, which is what you'd expect from a brand new centre. Changerooms are easy to find, some are a little small, but clean. Lockers are easy to find and use and there's

lots of room on the pool deck and in the grandstand for swimming bags and spectators.

**Dislikes:** The pools cut in half with a boom. If it's your first swim in a while

you'll gladly take the 25m laps but if you want a decent hit-out you want the full 50m. Otherwise you spend more time pushing off the wall than actually swimming. It's frustrating when there are two 50m pools next to each other, but it may stay that way until after the national short-course titles in July.

**Undecided:** Cost. Adults will pay \$7.20 for a swim and \$2 for a locker to keep your phone and keys safe while you're in the water. That's good value to swim in a brand new elite swimming centre, but three times a week you're looking at just under \$30.

## RATING: 9/10

The big drawcard for the casual lap swimmer is a clean centre, where you won't be jammed in the one lane and it won't cost you the earth. Free parking in the multi-storey car park next door is a bonus and opening hours of 5am to 10pm weekdays gives users flexibility.

My only qualm is having two 50m pools both cut in half but that could be temporary.

The \$100 million centre is money well spent.



## **STATE AQUATIC CENTRE ON SHOW**

<b>April, 2011:</b>	National Age Championships.
<b>June, 2011:</b>	Libby Trickett's 100m freestyle time trial
<b>July, 2011:</b>	National short course championships
<b>October, 2012:</b>	FINA World Junior Diving Championships
<b>2012:</b>	London Olympic swimming trials?

**LOOKING GOOD:** Olympic medallist Hayden Stoeckel inspected the new \$100 million aquatic centre at Marion this week and has rated it one of the best in the world