



Alick Wickham, Honor Coach, Solomon Islands, 2022



Videos: [Re-enactment 1](#) [IMSHOF 2022](#)

Alick Wickham “Introduced the crawl stroke to the sport of the Western World”. This was observed by Frederick Cavill (IMSHOF Honorees The Cavill Family) who refined the stroke and promulgated its usage. The early marathon swimmers used breaststroke and trudgen. These strokes would not have allowed future swimmers to have complete long swims in shorter times. Alick was therefore the most influential coach who allowed the sport to grow hugely in the next 100 + years.

Records for 10 km + marathon swims start in about the mid-1800s. It is well documented that swimmers from the First Nations in the Americas, Africans and Asiana Islanders excelled in the open water swimming long before the recorded start of our sport.

Alick was an all-around aquatic pioneer and carnival attraction. He set the unofficial world record for 50-yards freestyle in 1910 and was the inaugural Australasian dive champion in 1904 and from 1908–1912 the New South Wales state champion for both diving and swimming. He set a diving record, attracting 70,000 spectators in 1918, for a 62 meter swan dive into the Yarra River, Melbourne and is also credited in the development of body surfing.

In 1974, the International Swimming Hall of Fame inducted Alick Wickham.

[Expanded Biography \(Openwaterpedia\)](#)