

# AGE EXPECTATIONS

Patrick Devine



are presented for your analysis.

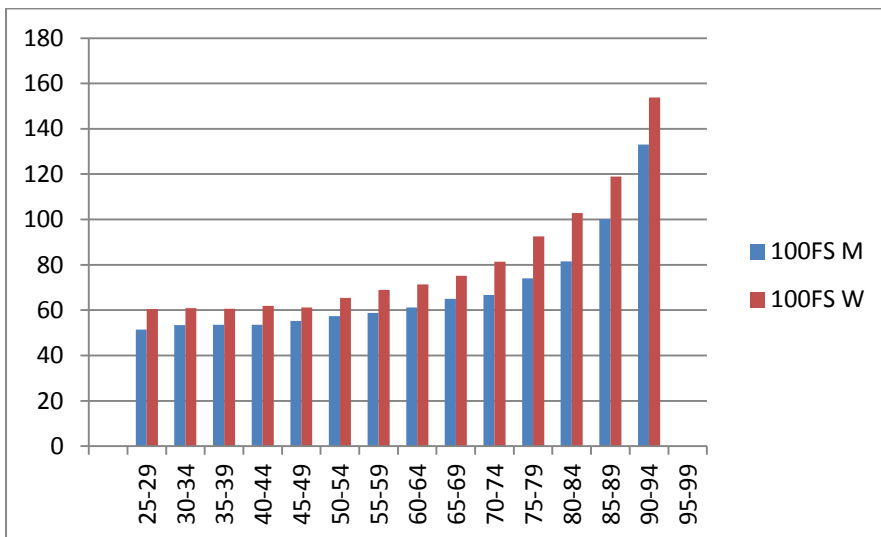
The basis of this article is to challenge your expectations about ageing. It will probably confirm everybody's opinion about what should happen to everyone else but not to them. Each year FINA publishes the top 10 swimmers for the previous year. Following advice from a statistician, several events have been selected and the resulting graphs are based on age groupings and the fourth fastest time for swimmers where at least 10 times have been reported. The resulting graphs of time versus age

Swimmers may find the graphs a suitable tool for reassessing their goals for each age group or annual plan. For all events there is gradual fall off in times to age 55-59 then a significant increase with further ageing.

For some, the results have been a frustration at the "unexplained" loss of form as they age. Others work on training, gym work and improving technique but a fall off will still gradually occur. Talking to the aged warriors of our sport and usually their stories contain a litany of health problems that accompany any success. Should the age of diagnosis of major health problems within our society be plotted against numbers it would very likely result in similar curves. Most of the gurus for a long life and health over the last half century have failed to prove their theories and have consequently turned to dust or ashes.

As you set goals for the future consider technique, fitness and ageing. The following graphs are a useful tool.

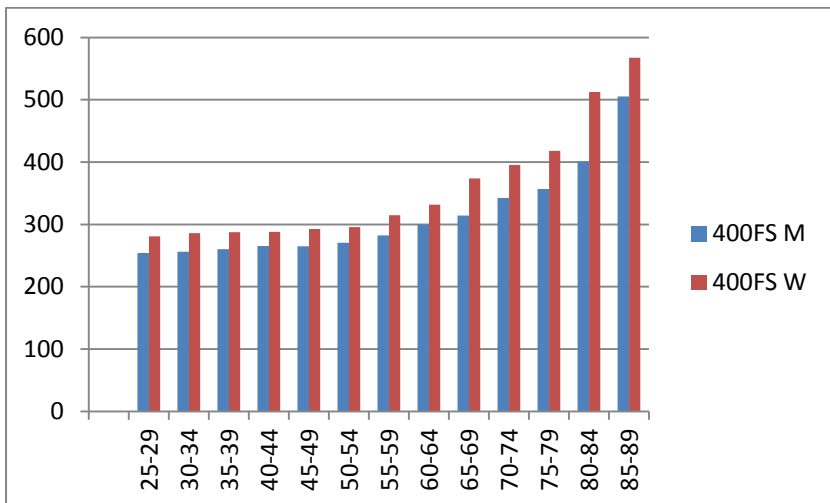
## 100 m FS- TIME (SECONDS)/AGE GROUPS; WOMEN-PINK: MEN-BLUE



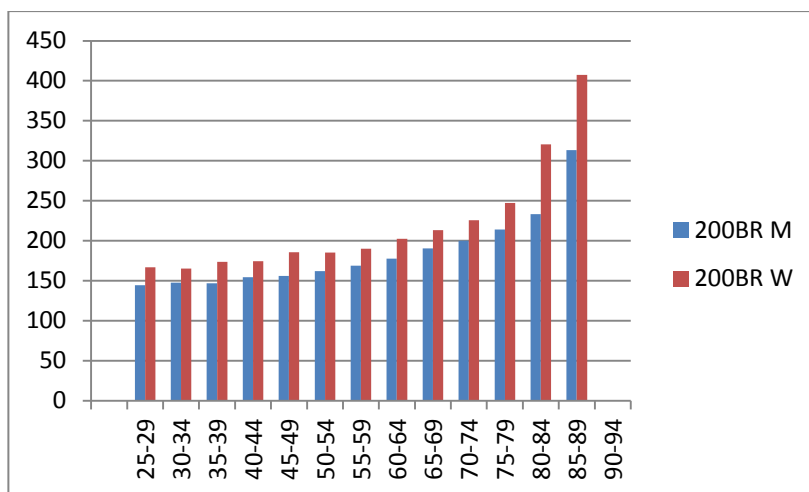
There is little variation in the ageing patterns for events. It is very likely that standardised data from athletics, weight lifting, track cycling and triathlons will produce similar results. Undoubtedly the performance times for masters athletes will improved but it is anticipated that the pattern of fall off will follow the same pattern.

As they age, many find deteriorating times difficult to accept but maybe this article will assist some who are wondering why. Future swimmers will probably straighten out the “deterioration curve” to some extent.

**400 m FS- TIME (SECONDS)/AGE GROUPS; WOMEN-PINK: MEN-BLUE**



**200 m BR - TIME (SECONDS)/AGE GROUPS; WOMEN-PINK: MEN-BLUE**



**400 m IM- TIME (SECONDS)/AGE GROUPS; WOMEN-PINK: MEN-BLUE**

