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RECOVER

PAGE 28 THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2023 \$2.80

MAGIC NUMBER

CILS E-UP

to be reduced from the current 29, after a report found a need for the local government sector.



Picture: Nikki Davis-Jones

MAKING A SPLASH

MASTERS SWIMMERS CHASING GOLD **P5**

Golden days at Masters titles

Alex Treacy

A registered nurse who moonlights as a surf lifesaver and a bookkeeping whiz who tumbled to the pool in the wake of a fractured spine are among those to claim gold at the ongoing Masters Swimming Australia National Championships in Hobart.

Creative Accounting Pty Ltd owner Gabrielle Osborne, 54, of South Hobart, won gold in her first of five events, the 100m breaststroke.

The specialist sprinter will also compete in the 50m breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle, and also the 100m freestyle, in coming days.

It has been a long journey to here, Ms Osborne told the Mercury.

"I swam as a kid but then gave up. I became quite unwell in my forties, I had a melanoma and fractured my spine, so I wanted to prioritise my health and wellbeing," she said.

Swimming was one of the few exercises her damaged spine could support. She dived back into the pool but found it "boring" until she set herself a goal to make the 2019 Masters.

Hearing the starter's gun in a competitive race "rekindled" her love of swimming and she hasn't



Jayde Richardson, 30, of Hobart, Stuart Elkott, 70, of Sydney, and Gabrielle Osborne, 54, of Hobart, are all taking part in the Masters Swimming Australia National Championships in Hobart. Picture: Nikki Davis-Jones

looked back since.

Golston Bay registered nurse Jayde Richardson, 30, tasted gold in Tuesday's 800m freestyle event, the first of eight she will compete in.

When the Mercury checked in at about 2pm on Wednesday, she was just half an hour away from swimming the 200m freestyle.

"I'm a bit nervous, I'm just sort of

padding the back of the grandstands," she said.

Ms Richardson, who specialises in surf and open-water swimming, is also a triathlete and lifesaver at

Clifton Beach SLSC. The Masters runs until Saturday at the Doonee Kennedy Hobart Aquatic Centre and features more than 400 competitors from across Australia.