



At 79, swimmer is the oldest in Rottne mission

SARAH MOTHERWELL

When the first wave of swimmers leave Cottesloe for the Rottne Channel Swim on February 25, Dieter Loeliger will be a stand-out competitor — the oldest swimmer in the race.

Mr Loeliger, who turns 79 on Sunday, has been the oldest swimmer in every one of the 13 races he has competed in since his first race in 1996.

The Margaret River swimmer, who has missed only three races since he first competed, has always entered the race as a solo swimmer, including this year.

“Every swim is hard and no fun,” he said. Mr Loeliger uses the event as an annual goal to keep fit



physically and mentally. “I was an asthmatic, still am, the swim can help with my asthma to a degree,” he said.

When he first started racing in 1996, Mr Loeliger came in the top third of competitors but now he finishes in the bottom third.

“Just to get on to Rottne,” Mr Loeliger said was what he wanted to do this year. “I hope I’m not last but even if I am it doesn’t matter.”



Annual goal: Dieter Loeliger uses the Rottne Channel Swim to keep physically and mentally fit.

Picture: Michael Wilson