



NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 8 - NOVEMBER 2025

Introduction – A Moment in the Current

As the year's final lap approaches, we find ourselves in a powerful moment – **looking back at the waves we've made, and forward to the tides to come.**

Welcome to the eighth edition of the SSA Newsletter, where we celebrate the culmination of an extraordinary year and cast our eyes toward the bright horizon of 2026.

This month, we bask in the glow of gratitude and achievement, featuring:

- The glittering highlights and winners from the **Bombela Concession Company Annual Aquatic Awards 2025.**
- The latest surges from our **High-Performance** pathway.
- A packed **Race Ready** competitive roundup.
- A special '**Trust & Legacy Builder**' focus on the Women in Sport Trust, featuring swimmer **Cassidy Burgess.**
- The heartwarming ripple effect of our **Mass Participation Programme's** December Holiday outreach.
- Crucial updates and opportunities from the **Education & Training desk** plus more.

Whether you're an athlete chasing a personal best, a coach shaping future champions, an official ensuring fairness on deck, or a fan cheering from the stands – you're home here.

So, take a breath. Feel the warmth of the water and the strength of the current we've built together. The stories of our season's crescendo are here. **Let's dive in...**



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Happy Holidays

Message from Swimming South Africa

by Swimming South Africa Executive, Affiliates & Staff



www.SWIMSA.org

Dear Aquatics Family,

As the year's final strokes settle and we slow our pace for the holiday season, we pause to extend our deepest gratitude – to every single person who makes up the vibrant, beating heart of South African aquatics.

To our swimmers, coaches, officials, volunteers, and supporters: your daily dedication, relentless passion, and unwavering spirit are what make this community so remarkable. You are the wave we ride.

To our incredible sponsors and partners: your belief, your partnership, and your invaluable support are the bedrock upon which our athletes' dreams are built and realised. It is your commitment that fuels our waves of progress, turns potential into podium moments, and strengthens the entire fabric of our sport.

Together, you form an unbreakable team. You are the reason we can look back on 2025 with pride, and toward 2026 with electrifying hope.

May your holidays be filled with well-deserved rest, laughter, joy, and the warm company of those you cherish. Take this time to recharge and reflect.

We cannot wait to dive into the new year by your side, ready to embrace the challenges, celebrate the triumphs, and achieve extraordinary new milestones together.

Wishing you and your loved ones a wonderful festive season and a New Year of impact, prosperity, and shared success.

With sincere thanks,
The Swimming South Africa Team



Message from the SSA President

As we approach the festive season in South Africa, a special time shared with family and friends, I would like to extend heartfelt wishes to every member of our Aquatics community who celebrates Christmas. May this season bring you peace, love, and prosperity.

This time of year often sees us travelling great distances to reunite with loved ones, strengthen bonds, and build new friendships. I wish each of you safe journeys and meaningful moments throughout the holidays.

We look forward to your continued commitment and contribution in the new year as we strive to elevate our federation to even greater heights. May your celebrations be joyful, peaceful, and filled with happiness.

The year 2026 promises to be one of growth, renewed energy, and collective progress. I wish you every success as you pursue your personal and professional goals.

Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!

Mr. Alan A. Fritz



Event Spotlight: A Celebration of Speed, Precision & Achievement

The Southern Sun OR Tambo hotel was the glittering backdrop as South Africa's aquatics family gathered on Saturday night for the **Bombela Concession Company Annual Aquatic Awards 2025**. The event was a powerful tribute to the athletes, coaches, and dedicated volunteers who defined excellence in the past season.



Headline Honours: Swimmers of the Year

The night's top awards celebrated two standout performers on the global stage:

- **Pieter Coetzé** was crowned **Male Swimmer of the Year**. His stellar season was highlighted by a trio of backstroke medals at the World Aquatics Championships, including a gold in the 100m event.
- **Kaylene Corbett** earned **Female Swimmer of the Year** following her breakthrough bronze medal in the 200m breaststroke at the same championships.

Celebrating Excellence Across All Disciplines

True to its name, the awards saluted stars from every corner of the aquatic world:

- **Water Polo:** **Boati Motau** and **Mitchell Garreau** were named Female and Male Players of the Year.
- **Para Swimming:** **Minke Janse van Rensburg** (Female) and **Christian Sadie** (Male) were honoured for their record-breaking seasons.
- **Open Water:** African champions **Callan Lotter** (Female) and **Connor Buck** (Male) took top honours.
- **Diving, Artistic Swimming & Promise:** **Bailey Heydra** (Diver), **Tayla-Jade van Huyssteen** (Artistic Swimmer), and World Junior champion **Kris Mihaylov** (Most Promising Athlete) were all recognised.

The Pillars Behind the Podium

The awards also honoured the essential team behind every champion:

- **Rocco Meiring**, the architect behind Coetzé and Corbett's success, was named **Coach of the Year**.
- **TUKS** was celebrated as **Club of the Year**.
- **Fish Eagles**, led by Gail Bohler, won **Club Development of the Year** for their community impact.
- Additional awards honoured top administrators, instructors, volunteers, and journalists.

A Message from Our Partners

Bombela Concession Company CEO, André van Rensburg, highlighted the shared vision of the partnership: *"We believe that success is most meaningful when it is shared... We are investing in a future where talent is recognised, communities are uplifted, and every young swimmer has the opportunity to dream boldly."*

SSA President, Alan Fritz, reflected on a landmark year: "The past year has undoubtedly been the best



season of SSA since our re-admission into world sports in 1992. Our athletes are leading the country's charge for podium performances... Our goal is to create an environment that allows them to achieve even greater performances."

Complete List of 2025 Award Winners

Award Category	Winner
Swimmers of the Year	Kaylene Corbett, Pieter Coetzé
Aquatics Personality of the Year	Aaron Putz
Para Swimmers of the Year	Minke Janse van Rensburg, Christian Sadie
Water Polo Players of the Year	Boati Motau, Mitchell Garreau
Diver of the Year	Bailey Heydra
Artistic Swimmer of the Year	Tayla-Jade van Huyssteen
Open Water Swimmers of the Year	Callan Lotter, Connor Buck
Most Promising Athlete of the Year	Kris Mihaylov
Coach of the Year – Juniors	David Glover
Coach of the Year – Seniors	Rocco Meiring
Club of the Year	TUKS
Club Development of the Year	Fish Eagles
Administrator of the Year	Janet van Huyssteen
Instructor of the Year	Vani Govender
Volunteer of the Year	Princess Xaba
Journalists of the Year	David Isaacson (Print), Ongeziwe Mjana (Radio), Siphokazi Malinga (TV)

#TeamSA #BombelaAquaticAwards2025 #LetsCelebrate #SpeedPrecisionAchievement



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High Performance (HP) – South Africa's Road to Glory

The Future Is Fast: South Africa's Rising Stars Shine in Belarus

While the aquatics year was celebrated at the glitzy Bombela Awards, the future was being forged in the competition pool in Minsk. A small but formidable four-swimmer South African team has just returned from the **Strongest Athletes Swimming Cup in Belarus** with a hugely promising six-medal haul.

The short course meet served as a perfect proving ground for young talent. **Scarlett le Roux** (17) made a stunning senior international debut, claiming silver in the 800m freestyle and bronze in the 400m freestyle, both in new personal best times. Equally impressive was **Matthew Caldwell**, who powered to three bronze medals across the 400m, 800m, and 1500m freestyle events, breaking the 15-minute barrier in the latter. Sprint star **Jessica Thompson** added another bronze in the 50m freestyle, while **Jarden Eaton** delivered a series of personal bests.

"This was my first time racing against Europeans... and the medals were a complete surprise," said a delighted Scarlett le Roux. "I learned so much from my teammates... I truly think their guidance played a huge role." The team's success, achieved with several swimmers in heavy training, is a clear signal of the rising talent and depth within the South African system, proof positive that the foundation for **LA 2028 and beyond** is being laid today.

For more detailed reports, visit the official SSA website: [South African swimmers return from Belarus with six-medal haul](#)

The Next Wave: Team SA Gears Up for African Youth Games

The momentum continues as the focus shifts to the continent. **Swimming South Africa is proud to announce the team selected to represent the nation at the 4th African Youth Games in Luanda, Angola (10-20 December 2025).**

- **Team Announcement:** [Meet the Team](#)

This prestigious multi-sport event is a crucial development platform for our next generation of champions, offering them invaluable experience in a major Games environment. The selected swimmers have earned their place through outstanding domestic performances and embody the bright future of South African aquatics.

We call on the entire aquatics community to get behind **#TeamSA** as they prepare to compete **#ForMyCountry**. Follow Swimming South Africa's official channels for live updates from Luanda.

#TeamSA #AfricanYouthGames2025 #ForMyCountry



Competitions – Thrills in the Pool & Open Water

Tokyo Deaflympics 2025: A Display of Heart and Progress

South Africa's Deaflympic swimming team delivered a campaign defined by tremendous heart, significant personal progress, and inspiring stories in Tokyo.

The team's spirit was embodied by **Mark Roach**, whose complete focus was rewarded with personal bests (PBs) in all his events, including a 7th-place finish in the 100m Freestyle final. The legendary **Terence Parkin**, at 45, made a remarkable comeback by swimming into the 200m Breaststroke final and finishing 6th. **Kate Allwood** showcased determination by smashing PBs in every event she contested.

From **James Willers'** gutsy swims to **Amkele Qamarana's** explosive races, the entire team represented the nation with immense pride, positivity, and superb teamwork. A special thank you to Coach Candice McKenzie for guiding this spirited squad.

Watch the action: [Tokyo 2025 Deaflympics YouTube](#)

#TeamSA #ForMyCountry #deaflympics2025



A Spotlight on Leadership

Making Waves on the Global Stage: Tadhg Slattery's Deaflympics Success

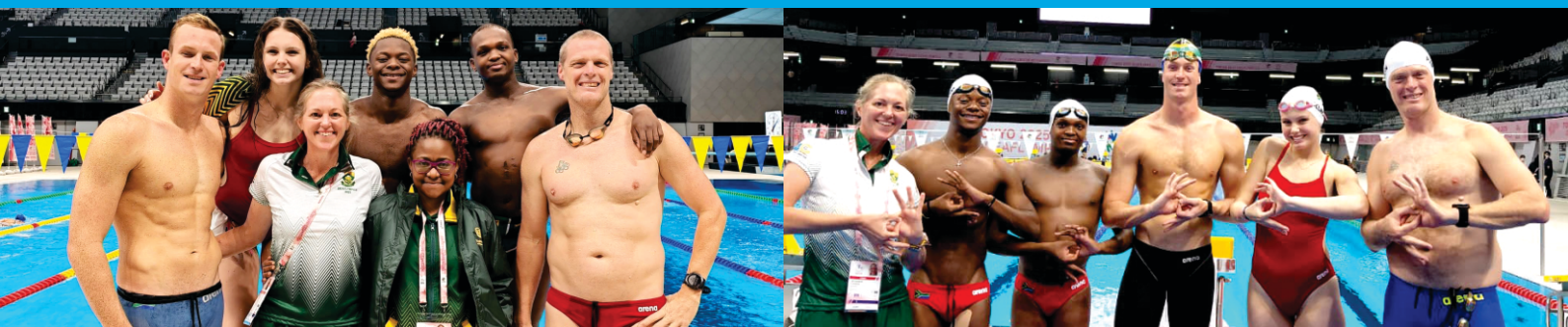
While South African athletes were breaking records in the pool at the Tokyo Deaflympics, one of our own was making a different kind of splash behind the scenes. **Tadhg Slattery**, serving as the **ICSD (International Committee of Sports for the Deaf) Swimming Director**, played a pivotal role in ensuring the swimming competition was a resounding success.

In this crucial position, Slattery worked directly with the Japan Organising Committee's swimming team for months to prepare the iconic Tokyo Aquatics Centre. The results were nothing short of spectacular. His dedication was so evident that a member of the Japan board was left in awe, remarking on the venue's stunning transformation. **ICSD President Adam Kosa** praised Slattery directly, telling him he was "doing a brilliant job."

Reflecting on the challenge before his first major technical meeting with 41 nations, Slattery shared: *"I have gained good experience and faced many challenges... This afternoon at 17:00, I will have my first Technical Meeting with 41 countries attending. Wish me luck."*

His leadership ensured the venue was not just ready but was hailed as **the best swimming venue at the Deaflympics Games**, providing a world-class stage for athletes like Mark Roach and Terence Parkin to shine.

This achievement underscores the deep well of administrative and technical expertise within the South African aquatics community. Congratulations to Tadhg on this fantastic accomplishment – you have represented South Africa with immense distinction on the global sporting stage.



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Belarus Swimming Cup: A Six-Medal Statement

Our young stars made a powerful statement in Minsk, returning with a **six-medal haul** that signals a bright future.

The team's success was built on versatility and resilience. **Matthew Caldwell** emerged as a powerhouse, claiming **three bronze medals** in the demanding 400m, 800m, and 1500m freestyle events. **Scarlett le Roux** announced herself on the senior international stage with a **silver in the 800m free** and a **bronze in the 400m free**, both in new personal best times. Sprint specialist **Jessica Thompson** added a **bronze in the 50m freestyle**.

The team's depth was further proven by strong performances from **Jarden Eaton**, who set multiple PBs and narrowly missed the podium, and a competitive 5th-place finish in the mixed freestyle relay.

#TeamSA #BelarusSwimmingCup2025



Inaugural Africa Open Water Cup: Dominance in the Deep

Team South Africa asserted its strength in open water swimming, dominating the inaugural Africa Cup in Guinea with a series of commanding performances.

The team's prowess was on full display across all distances. **Callan Lötter** was in a class of her own, striking **gold in both the 5km and 3km knockout events**. **Sven Van Der Linde** and **Hannah Neilson** provided excellent support, each securing **silver in both individual races**.

The squad saved its best for last, as the quartet of **Van Der Linde, Neilson, Clayton Kassebaum, and Lötter** powered to a **gold medal in the Mixed Relay** with a decisive time of 25:33.6, capping off a perfect team performance.

#TeamSA #AfricaCup2025 #OpenWaterSwimming





Detailed Results Summary

Tokyo Deaflympics 2025:

- **Mark Roach:** 50m Free (12th), 100m Free Final (7th, PB), 200m Free (PB)
- **Terence Parkin:** 200m Breaststroke Final (6th), 100m Breast (13th), 50m Breast
- **Kate Allwood:** PB times in 50m/100m/200m Free, 50m/100m Breast, 200m IM
- **James Willers:** PB in 50m Fly, 100m Free, 200m Free
- **Amkele Qamarana:** PB in 50m & 100m Breaststroke

Belarus Swimming Cup 2025:

- **Matthew Caldwell:** 400m Free (Bronze), 800m Free (Bronze), 1500m Free (Bronze); 100m Free (8th)
- **Scarlett le Roux:** 800m Free (Silver, PB), 400m Free (Bronze, PB); 200m Free (4th, PB)
- **Jessica Thompson:** 50m Free (Bronze); 50m Fly (4th), 50m Back (4th)
- **Jarden Eaton:** 4th 200m Fly (4th, PB), 6th 100m Fly (6th, PB); Multiple PB's
- **Relay:** 4x50m Mixed Freestyle (5th)

Africa Open Water Cup 2025:

- **5km Event:** Callan Lötter (Gold), Sven Van Der Linde (Silver), Hannah Neilson (Silver), Clayton Kassebaum (4th)
- **3km Knockout:** Callan Lötter (Gold), Sven Van Der Linde (Silver), Hannah Neilson (Silver), Clayton Kassebaum (4th)
- **Mixed Relay:** Van Der Linde, Neilson, Kassebaum & Lötter (Gold)

Full Set of Results



Women in Sport Trust Fund – 'Trust & Legacy Builder' & Athlete Profile

Building a Legacy: The 'Trust & Legacy Builder' Event

On 22 November, the Women in Sport Trust hosted a powerful and inspiring gathering. Beneficiaries and alumni of the Trust came together for a day dedicated to **connection, mentorship, and empowerment**.

This "Trust & Legacy Builder" event was more than a meeting; it was a strategic investment in the future of South African sport. It provided a vital platform for current athletes to connect with the leaders who have walked the path before them, fostering a powerful cycle of support and shared wisdom. The day underscored the Trust's core mission: to build lasting legacies and shape the future leaders who will carry South African aquatics to even greater heights.

#SSA #WomenInSportTrust #TrustAndLegacyBuilder



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Athlete Profile: Cassidy Burgess (Swimming)

We are thrilled to finally introduce you to **Cassidy Burgess**, a talented swimmer from Cape Town and a proud recipient of the Women in Sport Trust. Currently focused on her exams and training, Cassidy shared her inspiring journey and big dreams with us.



Your Introduction & Journey

"Hello! My name is Cassidy Burgess from Cape Town," she begins. Her journey on the international stage started early, with the huge honour of representing South Africa at just 15 years old at the Commonwealth Games, followed by the Junior Worlds in Israel. Her sights are firmly set on the future: "I have set goals for the next few months, training extremely hard... determined to improve my swimming times and achieve my goals." She dreams of representing Team SA at upcoming Youth Olympics, World Cups, and Commonwealth Games.

Your Experience with the Women in Sport Trust

For Cassidy, the support of the Women in Sport Trust has been life-changing. "Being a recipient... is such a huge honour and Blessing!" she says. "Having their sponsorship... has made such a huge impact, as financially it's not always possible to DREAM BIG."

This support has directly enabled her to compete on the world stage, including at Junior Worlds in Budapest and, most recently, at the **World Aquatics Swimming World Cup in Chicago** in October. "Being surrounded by so many phenomenal swimmers... was mind blowing and so inspirational," she recalls. "I returned home with more determination to achieve my goals."

Your Future Goals

Cassidy's plan is clear and focused. **The Near Future:** In the next season, she will "focus on improving my swimming times, increasing the intensity of my training schedule, improve technique, and strength training." She aims to use her extensive international experience as a springboard for growth.

The Far Future: And her ultimate dream? "My BIGGEST dream is to represent my country at World Cups and the Olympics."

A Message to the Aquatic Community

Cassidy extends a heartfelt "huge thank you to my Parents, family, coaches, friends and the Women in Sport Trust, for supporting my swimming journey." She adds a special note of thanks "to the Swimming South Africa Executive Team for believing in me and allowing me the opportunity to grow as a swimmer. I'm determined to make you Proud!!"

We thank Cassidy for letting us into her world and wish her, Myra, Ogechi, Oluchi, and Zalika nothing but the very best for the future. The path is bright for these phenomenal women!



Mass Participation Programme (MPP) – Community Currents

Splash Into Summer: MPP Holiday Programs Make Waves Nationwide

The festive season has begun, and across South Africa, the Mass Participation Programme is turning community pools into vibrant hubs of joy, learning, and life-saving skill-building. Our December Holiday Program is officially in full swing, delivering on our core mission to promote water safety, swimming skills, and active living among the youth.



Making Waves in Musina (Limpopo)

The program kicked off with great energy in Musina, Limpopo, where it will run until 10 December. Each day is filled with the sounds of laughter and splashing as young participants learn through play and structured activities. This initiative is a powerful glimpse of **what true community transformation looks like** – watching young minds grow in confidence with every stroke.



Expanding the Ripple to Klerksdorp (North-West)

The wave of impact has spread to the Kanana Swimming Pool in Klerksdorp, North-West! This exciting program is the result of a fantastic partnership between **North-West Swimming and the Matlosana Municipality**. Together, we are creating a safe, fun space for children to embrace the water, learn essential skills, and stay active during the school holidays.



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These holiday programs are more than just swimming lessons; they are a foundational investment in a **drowning-free future** and the cultivation of a lifelong love for aquatics. We invite everyone to join us in supporting this vital work. Let's continue to make waves and change lives, one splash at a time!

Look forward to more exciting updates and highlights from the nationwide MPP Holiday Program in our next issue!

#SSA #MassParticipationProgramme #MPP #LearnToSwim #WaterSafety #HolidayProgram

Education & Training (E&T) – Building Future Leaders

From the E&T Desk: A Message for Todswim Teachers

From baby splashes to big waves, every swimming journey begins with love and skill. *“Tiny hands, little feet, and a whole lot of love in the water.”* The Todswim program builds the crucial foundation for a lifetime of aquatic safety and enjoyment, fostering key early development:

- Builds Confidence & Muscles
- Builds Quality Time with Parents
- Improves Sleeping Patterns
- Enhances Coordination & Balance



An Important Update on the Todswim Conference

Swimming South Africa wishes to provide an update regarding the planned Todswim Conference, themed **“Revive. Reinspire. Reimagine Todswim.”**

After careful consideration, **the conference originally scheduled for 9-10 January 2026 in Johannesburg has been postponed.**

This decision was made due to an insufficient number of paid registrations to host a successful event at this time. Our goal is to deliver a conference that is impactful and valuable for all attendees. Therefore, we are now planning to reschedule for **May or June 2026**. We believe this additional time will allow us to secure a larger audience and enhance the overall experience.

We sincerely apologise for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your understanding.



The Path Forward: Rebuilding Our Foundation

We want to share important updates regarding the Todswim program, which has faced challenges and taken a backseat in recent activities. Recognising its role as the **foundational basis for all other swimming disciplines**, the E&T team has held several meetings with a dedicated core group to strategise a comprehensive restructuring.

Our primary goals are to reunite all qualified Todswim teachers and assist those unable to complete the course due to obstacles like the inability to log practical hours – a issue stemming from a limited number of accredited assessors. We also acknowledge the limitations in course offerings and essential workshops across affiliates.

The rescheduled conference in mid-2026 will be geared towards addressing these challenges, outlining alternative pathways for course completion, and providing valuable professional development. **We encourage all Todswim teachers and trainees to stay engaged.** Together, we can revitalise this vital initiative and strengthen its role within our swimming community.

For the latest updates on the Todswim Conference and program, please follow official SSA channels.

Upcoming Events

"Mark Your Calendars!"

December 2025/January 2026 Preview

- **African Youth Games** – Luanda (Angola), 10-20 December 2025
- **CTMA Open Water 3** – Grabouw Dam (WC), 13 December 2025
- **SA NAG Artistic Swimming Championships** – Selborne College (Buffalo City), 10-14 December 2025
- **SA NAG Diving Championships** – St Andrews School (Senderwood), 11-14 December 2025
- **Salnikov Cup** – St Petersburg (Russia), 19-20 December 2025
- **1st Grand Prix** – Nelspruit, 10 January 2026

Stay tuned for details on upcoming events on our official website and social media channels.

General Updates – Poolside Chat

History Rewritten: Kris Mihaylov Smashes 41-Year-Old Record



The South African swimming history books have a new entry! A massive congratulations to **Kris Mihaylov** for an extraordinary performance, blasting to a time of **54.51** in the 100m Butterfly and **shattering a championship record that had stood since 1984.**

This isn't just a fast swim; it's the erasure of a four-decade-old mark and a powerful statement from one of our brightest young stars. The pool, indeed, has a new legend. Well done, Kris!

#TeamSA

SSA Stands Against Gender-Based Violence

As we celebrate achievements in the pool, we also recognise our responsibility beyond it. Today, and every day, Swimming South Africa stands united with the global community in the fight against **Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**.

As an aquatic family, we are deeply committed to fostering a culture of **respect, safety, and equality** in every facet of our sport – from the deck to the administrative offices. We encourage all clubs, coaches, officials, and athletes to uphold these values and be part of creating a safe, inclusive environment for everyone.

#SSA #EndGBV #16DaysOfActivism



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Stay tuned for more news, features, and behind-the-scenes updates from the world of South African aquatics!

SHARE THE SSA LOVE: Want to see yourself or your club featured? It's easy! **Don't forget to tag us** in your posts and stories. That's how you get featured in our official channels, so take advantage and share your aquatic pride!



Your Feedback is
IMPORTANT to US!



Contact Us

We value your feedback and inquiries. Please reach out to us through the following channels:

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Follow, Share, Engage! Let's grow swimming together.

Want Your Story Featured?

Submit news, events, or athlete spotlights to brynwell.kasper@swimsa.org!



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