Not So Lazy Days of Summer ...

No laziness with St. Pete Masters this summer! Long Course Meters season was in full swing. There were at least 2 local long course meets, starting with ours in July, and ending with a last chance meet in Clearwater. There were also plenty of opportunities for our open-water lovers. While the water temperatures were warm locally in the Gulf and surrounding lakes, the waters of the Pacific Ocean warranted wetsuits.

The word “teammate” or “team member” appeared at least 7 times (now 9) in this issue, which reminds me of how many activities we participate in because of our teammates and friends, even though swimming is often considered an individual sport. You can also read about two husband-wife competitors and how fun, friendly competition can be!

Next year, USMS is celebrating its 50th anniversary, and we are celebrating 50 years of SPM! Consider being part of the group that heads out to San Antonio for the Spring Nationals, and remember to be on the lookout for details about our own SPM 50th anniversary celebration.

Many thanks to John Aversa, Gary Bastie, Carolyn Kiper, Tori Kirkman, Veronica McCumber, Cindy Newton, Regina Novak, Chris Swanson, and Ann von Spiegelfeld, for their insightful and thoughtful contributions. Lots of fun stories in this issue!

I try to keep up with ongoing activities, but if I missed mentioning an event, please be sure to let me know. I will include it in the next issue. Don't be shy about sharing your news or ideas or suggestions — anything to help with the newsletter. Please e-mail me at livia.zien@gmail.com. Happy swimming and happy reading, everyone!

Upcoming Pool Events

Oct. 11-13 / SCM: Dixie Zone SCM Championships/Roady Gaines Classic. Orlando FL. Information & entry. Entry deadline: online entry closes Monday, October 7
Nov. 9-10 / SCM: Shark Tank Meet. Sarasota FL. Information & online entry. Entry deadline: online entry closes Wednesday, November 6
Dec. 7-8 / SCM: Florida State Senior Games. Coral Springs FL. Information & entry. Florida residents must have qualified at a local senior games. Entry deadline: paper entries received by Friday, November 15; online entry closes Sunday, November 17
Dec. 14-15 / SCM: Chris Jackson Memorial Meet. Coral Springs FL. Information & online entry. No deck or late entries. Entry deadline: online entry closes Tuesday, December 10

And don’t forget …

Apr. 23-26 / SCY: USMS Spring Nationals San Antonio TX

Pool Competition Recap

Our LCM Summer meet was well-attended and thunderstorm-free — what a great way to start off the season! A small group attended the Summer Nationals meet in California, and an even larger group extended the season, swimming in Clearwater’s Dog Days meet in September. Two SPMers participated in the inaugural Dr. Charles van der Horst meet in North Carolina (one volunteer, one swimmer), to honor the long-time USMS swimmer and marathon swimmer who passed away this year. And, yours truly, took advantage of being a senior with her mom in Maryland.
SPM Long Course Summer Meet

Florida summers are synonymous with thunderstorms, and the threat always looms over our LCM meet. But this year, we were spared and meet ran smoothly both days with no rain delays! We had a great turnout with 163 swimmers up significantly from 107 two years ago.

Our high point winners were Collin Deans-Brandt, Carolina Ticeira, Tiffany Weidner, Heni Szeredi, Paula Texel, Livia Zien, Cheryl Kupan, Jo Ann Harrelson, and Bob Beach. But this year’s Fashion Accessory Swimming award goes to none other than Jo Ann Harrelson. Thanks to Ryan Rager for capturing the priceless photo of Jo Jo flyin’ with her sunglasses in tact while swimming her 50m fly event. Those sunglasses from the Dollar Store stayed on the whole time — take that, Ray-Ban and Maui Jim!

With the fast swimming and efficient pace, we were still finished by early afternoon. Without the hard work of our meet director, Tora Williams, officials, and all our volunteers, we would not be able to enjoy such a wonderful swim meet every year! A huge thank you to our volunteers, John Aversa, Greg Carlin, Bob Glaser, Phil and Melissa Harasz, Katy Kline, Patty Nardozzi, Samantha Mooren, Ryan Rager, Suzzette Seril, David Stiles, Ann von Spiegelfeld, Miles Williams, and Jane Zabel (and, Mike Scott, Mandy Zipf who swim for Tampa Tarpons). And to our officials, Dan Nardozzi, Kevin Mooren, Charlotte Petersen, and Joannie Gauzens. I’ll leave you with more pictures than words …

Results can be found here.

So many ways to fly

Faces of our family and friends ... and cheering squads
How many teammates can you name?

Thanks to all who make this meet happen!
Dr. Charles van der Horst Memorial Championship

By Chris Swanson

On Saturday, August 17th I headed down the road to a swim meet in Cary, NC. And yes to be clear I contemplated swimming in the meet but the 1500 Free was closed to entries so I volunteered to time. SPM did have one person there representing in the pool, Sherri Bogue. Sherri had another great meet and her times keep falling as she is back in the pool on a regular basis. It was really nice chatting with her prior to the meet as our paths do not cross often.

The meet for many seemed an ordinary LCM Meet (thankfully indoors) except the swimmers, mostly from NC, were there to remember their dear friend Dr. Charles van der Horst. Charlie, to those who were lucky enough to know him, passed away of a cardiac event at the end of Stage 6 of the 8 Bridges Hudson River Swim in mid-June. His death was not only tragic for his family and dear, dear friends but also to NC Triangle community at large. Charlie was a fantastic swimmer and he was a fantastic human being. A world renowned, retired epidemiologist who touched lives around the world; AIDS/HIV research, Hepatitis C and even Ebola were areas he spent energy trying to help cure. I often thought of him as a man in perpetual motion. Reading his FB posts usually made me envious of his energy and drive and tired on his behalf.

His loss has touched his many friends so deeply that they decided to set up a non-profit in his memory. The Dr. Charles van der Horst Water Safety Initiative is in its infancy. Our mission is to provide financial resources for youth-focused water safety programs which aim to provide the opportunity for every child to be safe in and around the water. It is a bold mission because Charlie would have wanted us to make a bold impact on his community and beyond. In short, our first phase will be to roll out beginning swim instruction to 2nd grade students in Orange County NC sometime in the Spring 2020. We plan to start with Title 1 schools but will expand the program to all 2nd grade students in the county once we get our footing. We are following a program format already put in use in Greensboro, NC so it is nice that we don’t have to reinvent the wheel. Instead we will try to make it better.

If anyone is interested in more information drop me an email at ctswanson@yaho.com.

6th Annual Dog Days of Summer

On August 24, SPM had a great showing at Clearwater’s Dog Days of Summer meet. Seventeen of our swimmers participated, with even more than Clearwater’s home team. This was, for many (maybe all?), the last chance to swim the events for the FL-LMSC’s Leather Lung Award, post some Top Ten times, or get just one last taste of long course competition before the season is over. Everyone posted at least one first place race —Congratulations to Carolina Ticeira, Sarah Swoch, Veronica McCumber, Elena Feliciano, Paul Texel, Tabitha Brandt, Karen Westerman, Dawn Clark, Cheryl Kupan, Tricia Moses, Sharon Steinmann, Eric Herman, Ryan Rager, Greg Salomon, Mike Zabel, Mike Smith, and Peter Betzer! Read about Veronica’s interesting and fun experience at the meet!

Results can be found here.
**2019 Maryland Senior Olympics**

I’m exercising a little newsletter editor privilege here, so please bear with me. I just wanted to give a shout out to my mom, who three years ago (when she turned 80 and I turned 50), suggested that we swim the Maryland Senior Olympics together. She had never competed in a meet in her life—but for her, there was no time like the present to start.

In 2016, she started off with the 50 breast and won gold. She has since added the 50 back to her repertoire. (I know you must be thinking that I surely cannot be her daughter—backstroke, really?) This year, in her 4th year competing, she placed 1st in her breaststroke and 2nd in her back…with a growing field in her age group. It’s a small meet, but it is so friendly and inviting and getting larger each year.

When I was swimming for my neighborhood summer league team as a kid, my mom was the reliable scorer, always there at home and away meets. And back then, everything was done with pencil and paper! But she always made sure she stepped away to cheer on my brother and me. To this day, she is still one of my biggest cheerleaders although she has a little competition from Greg.

I took MSO’s motto to heart: “To Participate is to Win” is perfect. Not only did I win all my events, I also placed last. But I realized that I wasn’t swimming for medals or PRs. I was swimming to spend time with my mom and my family who all came out to support us. And that was the best reward of all.

---

**Dog Days of Clearwater**

by Veronica McCumber

Dog Days: the swim meet where nothing made sense! What are normally my best events ended up being my worst and my worst event was my best! I’m a Backstroker, and normally I kill it in the 200 and 100 Back. Not at this meet though, that’s for sure! My backstroke felt so off and my times were poop. Thankfully, my freestyle events made up for it. Some of my teammates know of my constant love/hate struggle with the 100 Free. Every time I swim it, something goes wrong: I land on my chest, I hyperventilate, I miss the wall on a flip-turn! For nearly two years, I signed up for the 100 Free hoping the bad mojo surrounding it would disappear. I wanted so much to love that event, but that event had no love for me. So when the 100 Free came up, I was pretty stoked to find Carolina in the lane next to mine because I knew if I could just focus on keeping up with her (she’s speedy after all), then maybe I could break the 100 Free curse. I swam my best time ever in that event and I touched the wall without a single issue! The Curse was finally broken and I’m sure my teammates were definitely laughing at my on deck victory dance afterward!

It was a super short meet, with all the events being in one day and only a single relay. The 50 Fly and the 50 Back were so close together that I missed the 50 Fly because I couldn’t make it back to the other side of the pool in time after swimming the 50 Back. Lesson learned there: don’t sign up for back to back events! Dog Days was a very unique meet and I had a blast swimming, seeing familiar faces, making goofy faces with Tabitha and making sure Mike didn't fall asleep on the lane line again.

Who let the dogs out? SPM DID!
5k/10k ePostal

We had 7 participants in this year’s 5k/10k e-postal. Dawn Clark, Kern Davis, Marina Falcone, Tim Kennedy, Pat Marzulli, Charlotte Petersen, and Mike Zabel. Mike swam both the 5k and the 10k!

Preliminary results show that all SPM participants placed in the Top Ten. A very special kudos to Marina, who broke Nadine Day’s 5k record from 2003, in the 30-34 age group! And, Kern comes back to competition by winning his 5k age group! Thanks to Dawn for pulling together the relays. Final results and relays have not yet been posted.

And Speaking of ePostals ...

By Gary Bastie

Well, another ePostal event is coming up, the 3000/6000 yd. swims. In fact, we’re going to have multiple times you can do them. But first, why do we have them? Simple reasons include: To vary the workouts, give people something to train for, access your progress (or regress), fill time, and enjoy a team activity. I thought of some others but most were illegal so I’ll just leave it at that.

When we have the ePostal events, it’s always best to do the simpler one (like the 3000) first. If you love distance, and even a number of sprinters enjoy doing a distance event on occasion, then the 6000’s your ticket. But consider this. A normal workout usually lasts up to 1½ hr. A 3000 is only half or so of that for most people so, you’re actually getting the chance to do a workout without having to do a workout. And, for those who do the 6000, it’s a good chance to see where you are in your distance swims.

For instance, we have a number of open water enthusiasts. The ePostals are a perfect way for them to stay in the game during the off season for open water events. Which in St. Pete is about one month out of the year.

So, this year, I’d like to see as many members as possible do these events. If you’re out of shape, you can swim the 3000, not push it, and see where you are and what you need to work out. If you’re in pretty good shape, then see how well you can place as compared to others your age. After all, that’s what they were designed to do and, while I’m at it. Marina Falcone just broke the 5k ePostal record (by 1½ min.) so congrats to her and everyone who did the 5k, 10k. Now it’s time for the 3000/6000 with the Hour Swim just around the corner.

3000yd / 6000yd ePostal Team Dates

- Sunday, October 13
- Sunday, October 20
- Sunday, October 27
- Sunday, November 10

These will be held during normal Sunday morning practice times, starting at 9:30am. Those who want to swim must reserve a lane with Coach Gary at myppcusa@live.com.

Normal practice will still be held, with some limitation of lanes depending on the number of ePostal participants.

And … DON’T FORGET TO REGISTER AFTER YOU FINISH … Click here.

Open Water Competition and Training

This summer, Ann von Spiegelfeld, Melissa and Phil Harasz, Jonathan Hartwell, Jason Breese, John Aversa, Sarah Kwon, Tori Kirkman, Dawn Clark, Laura Kaleel, and Sharon Steinmann all took to the open waters for some beautiful scenery and a change of pace. Ann shares her experience in the inaugural Lake Fontana event, and John and Tori recount their Alligator Lighthouse event.

During the year, several of our swimmers participate in the Rainbow River open water swim series. In July, Dawn Clark, Sharon Steinmann, Ryan Rager, and Laura Kaleel got to enjoy the constant 72° water temps for a little over 3 miles down the river. Melissa and Phil and company have resumed their Sunday morning swims at Pass-A-Grille. They meet up at the Paradise Grille across from the Hurricane Restaurant at 8:00am.

Coach Gary brought up the inspirational swims that occur on our own team and across USMS, citing the Mighty Mermaids, a six-member 60+ relay team who swam the English Channel over the summer. They have been written up in several publications including AARP and NextTribes.
Fontana Lake Swim
By Ann von Spiegelfeld

Melissa and Phil Harasz and I traveled to the mountains of North Carolina to try out the first ever Swim Without Limits Lake Fontana swim. The event organizers were originally trying to get a permit in June but could only secure a permit for the latter part of July. This was potentially problematic due to rules prohibiting open water swims 5k or longer in water temperatures 85 degrees and above. We were getting updates during the week that the water temperature was being officially measured throughout the race course. During the week of the swim, water temperatures were being measured above 85 degrees. But, Mother Nature came through with beautiful rain, lots of it the night prior, and dropped water temperature close to 84°F so the race was a go.

I started in a wave before Mel and Phil as I was doing the 10k swim, and they were doing the 5k. From my perspective, and to make a long story very short, sighting buoys was extremely difficult. No personal kayakers were allowed, and I found myself at every buoy point asking the official to point me in the direction of the next buoy. The initial 5k (first loop) was not hard to sight, I just followed the mass of people. But things really spread out on the second loop and I found myself alone doing major zigging and zagging. Apparently race organizers received a lot of feedback regarding buoy placement. Yes, the water was warm, but during the summer I swim solo at St. Pete Country Club which has no cooling system and water temperature there runs close to 90. I was exhausted from the 10k. In the old days, a 10k was a “drop in the bucket” -- I realized how much I was undertrained for this event, but delighted my shoulder gave me no issues having had shoulder surgery just 7 months prior. I placed first in my age group for the 10k. It was really nice for Mel and Phil to wait for me to finish.

When I asked for Mel and Phil’s race report I received the following quote from Phil: “My wife took off 5 minutes after me and caught me in twenty minutes. She tapped me on the shoulder as she passed, and waved”. Notable is the fact that Phil swam butterfly to the finish line, Wow! Melissa placed 5th overall in the women’s division for the 5k. The fact Phil swim butterfly to the finish is simply amazing.

It looks like next year the permit has been obtained for the event to occur in a June. It will be interesting to see the difference in water temperature. I must add this was a beautiful venue. At one point, on the second loop of the swim I passed a few groups of campers on the lake shore cooking over a campfire. My mind drifted for a brief moment, and I pretended I could join them, but then the bigger part of my brain kicked in and I just kept swimming!

Alcatraz Sharkfest

Jonathan Hartwell and Jason Breese swam in the Alcatraz Sharkfest on July 27, and both had excellent races. Jonathan placed 2nd in his 35–39 age group, and Jason 3rd in his 50–54 age group. Justus Breese, joined his brother and placed first in his 55–59 age group. Congratulations!

Upcoming Open Water Swims

| Oct. 13 — Lucky's Lake Swim (1.5K). Orlando FL. Information & registration. |
| Nov. 30 — Rainbow River OWS, Saturday, November 30 at 7:45 AM – 12 PM, Dunellon, FL |

Swim to Alligator Lighthouse

A larger contingent trekked down to Islamorada this year to swim in the annual event than last year. Sarah Kwon, John Aversa, Dawn Clark (and Heni Szeredi, kayaker), Tori Kirkman (and boyfriend Donnie, kayaker), and Sharon Steinmann and Laura Kaleel (the SPM Mermaids) competed as a 2-person female relay. Great swimming by all, and special congrats to John who placed 4th, Sarah 8th in the solo divisions, and the SPM Mermaids 4th in their 2-person relay divisions. Thanks to John and Tori for sharing their stories!

Results can be found [here](#).
By John Aversa

After hearing so much from teammates about the swim for Alligator Lighthouse, I was really looking forward to the challenge. I had my sights set on a 3:15-3:30 swim depending on conditions but other than that didn’t know what to expect. As the race neared, we were notified about storm conditions potentially cancelling the race. Regardless, I prepared by eating like I was going to swim eight miles, and prepared feed bottles for my wife's kayak.

As many know by now, the swim was cut in half about thirty minutes before the start. I was disappointed, however, erring on the side of safety when there are four hundred plus swimmers is understandable.

On the positive side, we didn’t need to drink/feed (swim was only four miles), the jellyfish stayed away, storm conditions cooled off the water, and truthfully, I’ve swam through worse chop at Pass-A-Grille. My wife and I proceeded to start our anniversary weekend earlier, and with more energy than expected and made some friends in the process.

We’ll definitely do it again; cool venue, lots of swimmers, good vibes, not to mention, I’d like to do the full distance. It took us 1:32 to finish by the way. That’s a typical half marathon for me, without feeling injured and overheated at the end. Even if the race had been cancelled, I would have enjoyed the process and am very grateful to swim with a group that never ceases to challenge and push me daily.

By Tori Kirkman

In 2018, I participated in the Swim for Alligator Lighthouse. It was a tough 8 miles, both physically and mentally. I had been stung all over by moon jellies, but the lighthouse, which is 4 miles out near a reef, was one of the most beautiful places I’ve ever visited… and definitely the most beautiful place I’ve swam to. I saw a turtle, a shark, and so many beautiful fish; the water was clear and the lighthouse was old and sturdy and beautiful. It made the achy shoulders and the little stings worth the journey, but it was definitely a challenge. All that made me nervous but excited to participate again this year.

On September 13th, my trusty kayaker-boyfriend and I drove down to Islamorada, as did my amazingly supportive mom and step dad, who never miss a big event. When we arrived, we met up with our fellow SPM team members and friends who were participating in the challenge along side us the following morning. Dawn Clark, Sarah Kwon, Michael Treman, John Aversa, and myself were swimming solo. Laura Kaleel and Sharon Steinmann were doing a 2 person relay, and Heni Szeredi was kayaking for Dawn. Several of us stayed in a condo together in Key Largo that night and spent time together carbo-loading and prepping our bags for the morning.

The alarms went off long before the sun was up, and we all got up and headed toward the race start in Islamorada. The weather forecast had been precarious in the days leading up, and we saw some lightning in the distance, which added to the uncertainty. As we were setting up our kayaks and covering ourselves in Vaseline, there was an announcement. They were cutting the race in half, with a turnaround at 2 miles, for a 4 mile total course length. It was disappointing, but I knew I could make the most out of it and pick up my speed more throughout the race.

This year was an in-water start, with 10 of us taking off at a time, 10 seconds apart. With the sun now above the horizon and our kayakers situated off in the distance, we all hopped in and awaited the start. The national anthem was sung and a prayer was prayed, and then they started shuffling us off, 10 at a time, out into the ocean. As usual, Donnie found me pretty quickly, and I felt nice and strong throughout the race. I did really enjoy being able to pick up my pace with the shorter distance, but the scenery was pretty monotonous as we didn’t get to visit Alligator Lighthouse this year. The current was rough, which was hard on us at times and hard on the kayakers the entire time, which made the shortened course a bit of a blessing in disguise. Two miles out, turn around, two miles back, and I reached the finish line in 2 hours and 18 minutes. Overall, I still really enjoyed the race, and of course the comradery with my amazing teammates and all the great organizers and other athletes.
Tri, Tri, Tri!
Cindy Newton, Carolyn Kiper and Tim Kennedy — 3 of our many multisport athletes were off competing in Ironman races this summer. Cindy shares her experience in Canada, and Carolyn gives post-race analysis of her recent event on September 30 in Georgia.

Ironman Mont Tremblant
By Cindy Newton

8/18/19. Ironman Mont Tremblant. First, where is that? Its in the Laurentian Mountains, 80 miles Northwest of Montreal, Quebec, Canada. It’s a French speaking, beautiful, European style village, and a perfect venue for an Ironman. It was my 11th Ironman and is now my favorite place to race. The swim is a 1 lap course, 2.4 miles, in Lac Tremblant. My swim time was 1:09 and I came out of the water in 4th place in my age group. You move onto an epic 112 mile bike leg with 5900 feet of climbing on a super scenic and fun layout of a course. I stuck with my target watts on the bike and had a 6:18, which I was happy with because I stuck with my plan even though I dropped back to 11th. But I didn’t toast myself, which led to a 4:25 marathon on a run course with 1500 ft of climbing and moved me back into the top 10. I loved every leg of this race, finished with a total time of 12:05, which was 9th place in my age group. There were 3 Americans in the top 10, the rest Canadian, and a 101 women in the race (50-54). It’s definitely a course worth repeating once you know the ins and outs, and I’m hoping with some adjustments in my training, I will improve next year. I give this venue and course an A+.

The Epic Battle of the Sexes: Husband vs. Wife
By Carolyn Kiper

[Note: for those of you who are not familiar with 70.3, this is the total miles of the race. It consists of a 1.2 mile swim, a 56 mile bike, and a 13.1 mile run].

Tim Kennedy and I had already competed in two half Ironman races earlier in the year. Tim won one and I won the other. Now, for the final half Ironman of this year, it would be winner take all.

Tim, being a Shark group swimmer, is the stronger, faster swimmer. I, being a Fine Wine group swimmer, am like the tortoise to the hare… slow and steady. Tim is also the stronger, faster cyclist. But I am the real runner between the two and often reel Tim in to grab the win within the last 1 or 2 kilometers.

Tim’s training had been going really well and even his run was getting stronger. He just might be able to hold me off this time! In the last few weeks before the race, my work really got in the way of training, but I had performed well at the recent local sprint triathlons, taking 1st place age group wins in 3 of 4 races.

But the real deciding factor could be Mother Nature. Augusta was forecast to have record heat the week of the race. Race day was expected to top out at 95 degrees Fahrenheit with a heat index of 100 degrees. While I normally race well in the heat, this was taking it to a new level.

With a rolling start for the swim, Tim moved toward the front of the line and entered the water at 7:50am with swimmers who expected to finish the swim in less than 30 minutes. After swimming around slower swimmers who snuck in ahead of him, Tim finished the swim in 26:29. I lined up with those expected to finish the swim in 35 to 37 minutes and did not enter the water until almost an hour later, at 8:45am. I exited the swim in 34 minutes and ran into transition.

Tim now leads by 7 minutes and 33 seconds.

After the swim, there is a long run into transition to get the bike and head out onto the bike course. This is T1. Tim got through Transition 1 in 5:31 while I took only 4:01.

Tim now leads by 6 minutes and 1 second.
The bike ride was on a new course for this race. It was a little hillier than the last course and quite a bit windy today. And it was so much hotter. I've never felt this hot on the bike. I started out pretty well but later was passed by 3 girls in my age group. In the last 2 miles, my calves started cramping, and I almost had to come to a complete stop. I whimpered my way into transition after 3:27:22. Tim finished the bike in 3:00:15 so I just lost another 27 minutes… ouch!!

**Tim now leads by 33 minutes and 8 seconds.**

Once off the bike, I ran with the bike into transition, racked the bike and changed into my running shoes. I downed some salt tablets, grabbed my visor and race belt, and walked out of transition. This transition, T2, took me 4:13 while it took Tim 7:30. I gained just over 3 minutes on him.

**Tim leads by 29:51.**

The first mile of the run was mostly a walk with very short runs to try to shake the calf cramps out. I was able to run a little more in the second mile. My goal was to try to add a little more running every mile. I downed Coke at almost every aid station, a little Gator Ade here and there, salt tablets and water, and my quick fuel… jelly beans. And I stayed focused on trying to close that gap between Tim and me. Tim finished the half marathon in 3:23:24 while I finished in 2:55:48. Wow, I just gained 27 minutes and 36 seconds on him!!

**Tim wins by 2 minutes and 15 seconds.**

But did he really win? As Chris Burked pointed out, my late start exposed me to more of the heat, so when you factor that in, who really won? (See Tim's and Carolyn's reactions in the screenshots below.)

But the best response came from Fred Lewis. While standing on deck listening to this post-race banter about who really won the race, Fred turned to Tim and, without saying a word, put his hand to his forehead in the shape of an “L”.

So, even if I didn’t really win the race, I did win the last laugh!

---

**Why Fast Fridays?**

By Gary Bastie

For the afternoon group (whoever shows up), I've been having “Fast Fridays” (hereafter, “FF’s”) for those who wish to. I think you might find the reason why, interesting.

First, we have sprinters on the team who, at least according to them, never get the chance to do much sprinting in practice. So, FF’s let them do just that. A little speed work, a lot of rest, and...you know the drill. Sprinters love that sort of thing because it allows them to swim at race pace, which is just another name for “all out”. But, if they don’t get enough rest, they usually don’t swim “all out” so...FF’s.

Second, I try to make FF’s fun and interesting. It’s not that swimmers have short attention spans. It’s not that swimmers have short attention spans. It’s not... Anyway, where was I. Oh, the fun and interesting part. If we get to do something different (mentally, physically, adult beverage-adly), we tend to like it a lot more than doing the same things over and over again. For instance, the age groupers are only age groupers for so long. Then, they “age up” to adulthood, stop swimming, go to school, get jobs, etc. But Masters, they swim for decades and decades. So fun and interesting helps make each week a lot more than just the old, dull, routine.

Third, FF’s allow you to get out of your comfort zone. Most of us stay there unless some emergency prompts us to do a lot more than we’ve been doing. Like being chased by a shark or gator. At any rate, if you get out of your comfort zone, you generally get into your race mode. I think distance swimmers have a much easier time with this but, at any given meet, there are relays and shorter events that require what? FF’s.

Fourth, FF’s are generally about 2400 yd. And, since most who participate are looking forward to what they’re going to do AFTER the 2400 yd., I feel I've helped satisfy that longing to be awake during Friday nights, First Friday events, SPM social events, and the like. After all, how long does it take to do a measly 2400? Not very long.

And fifth, FF’s allow you to work at your stroke in an all out fashion. You can’t do that during most sets but you can during FF’s. So, the next time you’re thinking of skipping a morning workout, getting ready for a meet, or putting yourself to the FF test, why not stop in for an unusual FF workout? Many have become addicted but I don’t charge extra once they do.
Coach Gary’s Tip of the Month

This month’s tip isn’t to not bet on horses, buy used cars, or not to swim the 4-IM. Instead, it’s an actual tip that I think everyone can use. But, what is it?

It’s my tip for a faster flip turn. But, why do you need a faster flip turn? You need one if you swim sprints, relays, or if you want to beat the person next to you. And, it goes something like this:

First, there are several parts to a flip turn. The way I’ve taught it to sprinters in the past was to break it down into:

1. Starting position for the hands. They should be at your hips, palms facing pool bottom, and used to help propel your initial flip position. In reality, it feels as if all you’ll do is bring both palms up to over your head. Then, you end up on your back, with hands pointing in the right direction (where you just came from), and ready to push off.
2. Push off as soon as your feet touch. There’s no need to twist on the wall. Just push off, turn your head slightly to the left or right (depending on which side you want “up” to breathe), and you’re on and off the wall very quickly—which is the purpose of a flip turn.
3. Just before you begin your turn, push both feet together and point your toes. While they may separate as you bring them over, they’ll “pluck” out of the water much quicker. The reason you point the feet is twofold. First, you don’t want to put “boots on” and drag your feet. You want to pluck them quickly out of the water and second, pointed toes mean that you can’t hit your heels on a wall. In fact, pointed toes mean your feet will recoil like springs when they touch the wall.
4. Get hands tight together and arms locked while you’re on the wall. That way, when you push off, you’re streamlined.
5. Stay deeper so you can get under the turbulence you’ve created while swimming into the wall. You don’t want to push off right into that turbulence because, especially with longer distances, you could lose at least a foot/turn. And, if you’ve ever lost a race by inches, you know how important feet are.
6. Dolphin kick at least once for longer races and much more for sprints. That allows you to milk your push off speed longer and we can all push off faster than we can swim so, enjoy what you’ve earned and maximize your push offs.
7. Practice doing the entire turn as quickly as possible for shorter races and as easily as possible for longer races. So, you can either use a tip of the month or, you can tip me every month. It’s your choice but I think that turns are a very important part of workouts and races.

Let’s see how many can improve theirs in the upcoming months.

Filling Your Cup the Chlorine Way

By Regina Novak

Life pulls us into multiple directions:

- Working a full time job, with or without a commute, that may or may not fulfill us
- Making decisions about our aging parents health, and sometimes being actively involved in caregiving
- Running young children back and forth between school and activities
- Going back to school
- Missing college aged children and planning weekends away to visit them
- Maintaining our personal relationships
- Looking for answers with health concerns, either for us or for a family member
- Being a part of Masters swimming and any other personal interest

How do we do it all? Does anyone out there get in bed at night and wonder how they got through their day? When our cup is empty, we are unable to give our best self to anything we do. This can lead to burnout... burnout at work, in life, in relationships and at the pool. When something you typically love and enjoy doing does not interest or excite you anymore, you are likely on the brink of burnout.

Finding ways to keep our cups full is essential to a thriving life. When our cup overflows, we can give the best of us to the areas mentioned earlier. If we don’t take the time to care for ourselves, life will lose its luster. Sleep will suffer. Performance will be off. Relationships will suffer. While none of those things sounds good, many of us find ourselves in situations where we are just going through life with little exciting us.

How do we keep the cup full? As swimmers, I think a lot of us go to the pool (or the open water) to find comfort and energy. NSAC is one of our “happy places” to escape to. We can get in and just shed whatever is weighing us down. We can look around and be grateful that along with being a great physical outlet, Master swimming gives us teammates that we can count on to lift our spirit and give us a laugh when we need it the most.

In addition to your swim, walk, bike, run, etc, find at least one other way to fill your cup on a daily basis. Why burnout when we can flourish?
From Coach Gary: Greetings!

As a larger swim club, we always have new members, visitors, old members who recycle themselves and, we never know who’s going to walk into the pool area. In fact, members of the USMS board have not only visited, they also swam with us one fine afternoon. So, I think you get that there are folks at practice whom you don’t know.

At the same time, we also have those who wander in, don’t read signs, or ask questions. Then, they jump in any lane. So, this article is dedicated to knowing what to do when any of the above enters what some consider to be “our space”. You see, we can have a positive response that helps us gain and retain members or, we can develop a bad reputation, something we absolutely don’t want.

For instance, if you see some new face and they’re in the general vicinity of “our lanes”, what should you do? Tell them to get out before we throw them out? How about giving them the third degree? I mean, we could call the cops but, here are a few recommendations that might work better.

First, ask if you can help them. That’s my job, Fred’s job, and the lifeguard’s job. In fact, I do a lot of that in the afternoon—especially when there are so many other activities going on. Then, I wait for their reply. That tells me how to direct them.

For example, if they’re a lap swimmer (most don’t know the phrase “swim to stay fit”), I’ll direct them to the proper lane or pool. If they’re a visitor, then I’ll know which lane to place them after a few questions regarding on what interval they can repeat 100’s. Fred would have you do the same thing. So, if there’s a coach on deck, refer them to the coach. The reason is, I get a lot of emails from visitors and they’re looking for either me or Fred so we can direct them accordingly. But, if they’re looking for someone or something else, then direct them to one of the guards.

But, let’s say that I didn’t do that. Let’s say that I told someone to leave or get out of a certain lane. Most would feel that I’ve been rude to them. If they were a member, they probably wouldn’t thank me for doing that. When threatened, most people react in kind or are offended. Some have made trouble for SPM and even the City. And, how do I know this? It’s happened. So, it’s best to defuse the situation with a simple, “Can I help you?” That let’s people tell you what they need so you can direct them. Besides, SPM doesn’t need a bad rap. Instead, we need to be on good terms with the City, potential members, visitors, and current members. So, put yourself in the other person’s shoes and, next time you see a stranger, you know what to do.

---

**SPM turns 50 in 2020!**

Can you believe it? As USMS celebrates 50 years of Masters swimming next year, so does St. Pete Masters! Established in 1970, SPM also holds the longest continuously running meet, now known as the Bob Beach SCY Championships named for one of the founding members of the organization, Judge Robert Beach. Plans for the celebration are already underway, and the festivities will coincide with our meet in March/April 2020. Stay tuned for more information and be prepared to party!

---

**SPM Officers**

- President: Steve Freeman
- Vice President: Phil Harasz
- Secretary: Cheryl Kupan
- Treasurer: Livia Zien

**SPM Board**

- Kern Davis
- Melissa Harasz
- Cheryl Kupan
- Sarah Kwon
- Paula Texel
- Miles Williams

**Coaches**

- Head Coach: Fred Lewis
- Assistant Coach: Gary Bastie

Back to Top