



SPM NEWSLETTER

St. Petersburg Masters | North Shore Aquatic Complex

Happy Fall!

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The banner streak continues as the SPM Nationals team brought home a 6th place finish from the LCM Summer Nationals in Richmond, VA.

Competitions were not limited to local or national meets either. David Gelfand traveled to Israel to participate in the Maccabiah Games, and Kathy and Carl Selles to Colombia for the Pan Am Games.



September 23 (photo S. Swoch)

In this issue, Kathy Selles shares her and Carl's Medellin experiences. Paula Texel tells the excitement at Summer Nationals, and Sherri Bogue recaps the Dog Days of Summer meet in Clearwater. Coach Gary offers more advice and tips, and entertaining musings. Mike Zabel summarizes the work of the Board.

While taking swimming seriously, there were also plenty of serious socials! And, read about Sarah Swoch's adventure in Croatia!

Thanks to everyone who helped with this issue: Gary Bastie, Sherri Bogue, Macarena Martin Mayor, Celeste Patton, Kathy Selles, Chris Stickle, Sarah Swoch, Paula Texel, and Mike Zabel for their articles, photos, and content suggestions. I want to give a special shoutout to Sarah Swoch ... She has shared so many ideas, provided photos, and articles for all our newsletters. Thank you, Sarah! Please send any ideas to me (livia.zien@gmail.com) or Alyssa (amharmon97@gmail.com). Swim happy!

Upcoming Events

Oct. 14-16 / SCM: Rowdy Gaines Classic. Orlando FL. [Information & entry](#). *Entry deadline: online entry closes Monday, October 10*

Oct. 23 / SCY: SWAGtoberfest. Gainesville FL. [Information & entry](#). *Entry deadline: online entry closes Monday, October 17*

Nov. 5-6 / SCM: Shark Tank Meet. Sarasota FL. [Information & entry](#). *Entry deadline: online entry closes Monday, October 31*

Dec. 3-4 / SCM: Chris Jackson Memorial SCM Meet. Coral Springs FL. [Information & entry](#). *Entry deadline: online entry closes Tuesday, November 29*

3000/6000 Postal Team Day - Sunday, November 13 - Completed during regular Sunday practice time. 9:00am - 11:00am

Nov. 19: Fresh Start Swim Series St. Pete (500m, 2.5K, 5K, 10K). St. Petersburg Beach FL. [Information & registration](#). *USMS sanctioned: NO*

From Coach Gary: Training the Right Energy System

By Gary Bastie

Maybe you never thought much about it but, we do train more than one energy system when we swim. And, if you know which one you're training, you'll get more out of a particular session.

For instance, there's aerobic versus anaerobic or hypoxic. Aerobic training is where you take in oxygen, enough to power you through the race. Anaerobic or hypoxic training is basically "without oxygen". It's where you've stored up enough glycogen (muscle fuel) to blast out those shorter sprints.

So, let's take a practice. Most of it is aerobic. You warm-up, do kick sets, longer sets, etc., all using the aerobic system. It's a steady-state system whereby what you breathe in, is just enough to power you at a certain pace. The more you train, the better your body gets at doing its thing and you learn to train at a much faster pace.

As for anaerobic or hypoxic, that's when you train by doing sprints. With sprints however, rather than swim with a short rest (say a few seconds between), you need more rest, perhaps up to 4:1 ratio. That's why workouts have some fast swims with more rest, more stretch time, but you're expected to swim faster than usual.

By knowing which system the workout is demanding of you, you can better give to the workout that which it actually demands. For example, you wouldn't want to work on sprinting by doing 20 x 25's with just 5 seconds rest. And, you wouldn't practice swimming miles by swimming 100's on 10 minutes., rather than on much shorter rest. I think you're getting the picture so now, it's up to you to "read" the workouts and put in the appropriate effort to what's being asked of you. And, the more you focus properly identify the system, the more you'll get out of each workout.

Tips For Practice Prep

By Gary Bastie

To some, practice is their quiet place, to be enjoyed, used to unwind, rewind, or in other ways, stay wound. For others, it's a way to start their day or regain their sanity after it. Whichever you are, here are a few tips that can help you and everyone else you'll come in contact with in the pool.

First, try to arrive on time, or at least be ready to go. Too many distractions take away from your focus and ability to do what you want to do next, swim and get in a workout. Some keep two sets of everything in their vehicle so that, if their bag lacks one thing, they need not go far to replenish the supply. For others, it means putting things away so you can find them. Perhaps use certain places in your bag for certain things. We need not discuss alarm clocks that malfunction, traffic, or other things beyond our control so next, let's talk about the actual practice itself. The reason is, that's how come you're here. So, why not make the most of it. I can't tell you the countless (and I mean countless) times that someone arrived as a real mess, but left relaxed and having actually accomplished far more than they expected to.

For instance, some will tell you after the practice, "I didn't think I'd go that far" or "Never thought I'd finish that last set but, I'm glad I did..." It's those real troopers that inspire the rest of us. While things aren't going their way in other areas of their lives, they do their best at the pool and inspire their teammates to do the same. And, my hats are off to them because they've accomplished something that the rest of the world only dreams of or writes about or watches movies that highlight this attribute. It's called character. Rather than be one, these folks have built it and it shows on our team.





President's Corner

By Mike Zabel

From the President's Hurricane Sandpit Filling Station. Yep, volunteering to fill sandbags for the city residents.

I hope that all of you and your families, friends, extended families are all safe from Hurricane Ian. We are truly lucky to have missed bearing the brunt of this storm.

Thank you for the outstanding events we have had over the last two months. Lisa, Megan, Sarah, just to name a few and I apologize if I left anyone out organized wonderful events such as the Rays Day and cruise.

On the topic of Team events, the Annual Holiday party will be at my house, on Friday, 2 December starting at 6 p.m. 3320 Hibiscus Dr W, Belleair Beach. A flyer should be going out soon. Potluck, I believe a White Elephant gift exchange, make pizzas in the pizza oven sort of of thing.

Next up for many is the Orlando SCM Meet in October (14-16).

St Pete Masters Board Minutes for 7 p.m. October 4th, 2022

- Brooke, Kathy, Me, Lisa, Tabitha, Chris, Cheryl, Ananda
- Previous meeting minutes approved.
- Team Christmas Party. Zabel's house. 3320 Hibiscus Dr W. Belleair Beach, FL. (301) 943-3443. 6 pm, Friday 2 December.
- Upcoming 3/6K. Dates? No extra pool time. Do during practice. Sunday Nov 13th from 0900-1100 is the date. Please put stuff back in the shed as we found them.
- Rowdy's meet, 14-16 October.
- Treasurer's Report.
- Now comparing revenue vs expenses per event. Gives us a per event accounting.
- March 11-12 2023. Bob Beach SCY meet. Awaiting confirmation from Gary at Pool.
- Discussed policy for reimbursement for cars at Nationals. Mike Zabel will draft a policy for review/comment by the next meeting.
- Miscellaneous Open Ideas? Shuffleboard? Allison is a member and can host events.
- Clock for Stroke group. Comments about that big red one?
- Coaching in the AM? See how we can do this. The Coach needs credibility. Would need one-three like-minded coaches in style that could dedicate some time. Or a monthly/quarterly technique workshop. Fly, Breast, Free, Back, Starts, Turns, A clinic day?? Mike to ask Fred about coaching, what about Gary.
- Cheryl brought up LMSC annual meeting. SPM has two votes. Oct 19th. 6 PM. Brooke is checking to see if she can attend. Megan will vote.
- USMS raised fees. Now \$65. Cheryl to send out email to team.
- Chris is looking at Air B&B opportunities for Nationals in Sarasota.
- Next regular meeting: Tuesday, November 2nd At 7 PM.
- Adjournment.

Please let me know your thoughts about the upcoming 2023 LCM Nationals in Sarasota are welcome now, which gives us time to plan. Please email me your thoughts, grab me on the pool deck or email/call me at captainzabel@gmail.com (301) 943-3443

Later,
Z

Pool Competitions

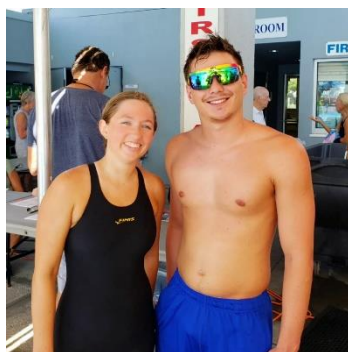
The pool competition schedule was filled with local, national, and international meets: Our Summer LCM Meet, the Pan American Games in Medellin, the Maccabiah Games in Israel, LCM Nationals in Richmond, and the Dog Days in Clearwater!

St. Pete Masters LCM Meet

Another successful SPM Long Course is in the books. The meet was held the weekend of July 9-10, with Brooke Bowman at the helm (when she's not serving as treasurer), wears her meet director hat. With the help of volunteers and officials the meet ran smoothly with 165 registered swimmers. Congratulations to all participants and a special congratulations to high point winners:

- Women's 35-39: Sarah Swoch
- Women's 50-54: Paula Texel
- Women's 55-59: Cheryl Kupan
- Men's 18-24: Noah Manera
- Men's 30-34: Christopher Stickle
- Men's 50-54: Eric Herman
- Women's 18-24: Macarena Martin Mayor

And a special thanks to our officials Charlotte Petersen, Kevin Mooren and Steve Freeman and to our SPM volunteers: Ananda Bergeron, Andrea Rogers, Bryant Davies, Chelsea Nauta, Dawn Clark, Greg Lauers, Ken & Rian Brandt, Laura Albee, Laura Kaleel, Linda Felton, Livia Zien, Marina Falcone, Melissa and Phil Harasz, Mike Zabel, Mitchel Hoffman, Patty Nardozi, Phyllis Scheidt, Susan Henry, and Suzzette Seril. Check out all the photos mostly by Sarah Swoch who was busy swimming and capturing the meet and few by me. Full results can be found [here](#).







Pan American Swim Meet July 21 – 28, 2022 – Medellin, Colombia

By Kathy Selles



With the pandemic under control, four shots in our arms, and a session of Covid in early July for Kathy, we feel well prepared to travel and to experience Colombia for the 2022 Pan American Swim Meet to be held in Medellin. This meet has been postponed for two years, and it is finally rescheduled and set to go. Carl began thinking about this in May. It helps that a Denver friend's son has lived in Medellin for several years and could vouch for great weather and a safe experience. We each speak passable Spanish, which will come in very handy as few people spoke English.

The meet was held at the huge Atanasio Girardot Sports Complex in the Laureles area of Medellin. This complex was built in 2010, and includes a large stadium, soccer fields, basketball courts, and areas for gymnastics, zumba, and yoga. The swimming area is called the Cesar Zapata Aquatic complex and includes multiple pools for competition and diving, including the 50-meter pool and a pool for synchronized swimming that is elevated above ground with viewing windows. Bleachers line both sides of the 50-meter pool for the entire length. On Sunday mornings, the city closes streets around the complex to allow people and families to walk, bike, roller blade and jog around the area free from traffic. All weekend, there were many people out to take advantage of the opportunity to exercise. The pools were just a 7-minute walk from our hotel.

Despite having done such events as the Hour Swim, Miami Mile, and the Hurricane Man 1000-meter swim, this will be my first swim meet. To further encourage me, Carl alerted me to the fact that medals would be awarded down to 10th place. Maybe I could score and earn a medal? Sign me up! To prepare, I had practiced starting from the blocks with Coach Fred before we left St Pete.



In Denver, I did additional practice but just seemed to get worse, so I made the decision to do water starts. This decision calmed my nerves completely and allowed me to enjoy the meet.



The meet was well organized. They utilized a “Ready Room” to organize swimmers before each event. Three heats of swimmers were gathered on deck away from the starting blocks. Three sets of chairs were numbered in order with the assigned lane number. An attendant was on hand to corral the swimmers in order, and each heat sat together until it was time to walk to the starting line with the attendant. This made for a smooth start, and also a nice time to get to know some of your competitors.

The meet began on Thursday, July 21st. My event, the 800-meter free, was the first event. There were 5 women in my age group. We were able to visit while waiting, and I was pleased to see that some spoke English, and were very happy to translate instructions and announcements. I was barely nervous, and told myself that this was going to be just like swimming the hour swim; even coming in last I had a medal! Needless to say, I was delighted with 3rd place in the 800. My other events were 100 meters: 4th place, 200 meters: 2nd place, and 400 meters: 4th place.



Carl really enjoyed meeting some of his competitors from Peru and Colombia. A Peruvian man in his age group spoke English, and was fast and fun to race against. Carl took first place in the 50 Free, 100 Free, and 200 Free. He won second place in the 400 Free and 800 Free. His Peruvian friend made him work for those medals.

The crowd liked to stay in the shade under the awnings, but had no problem cheering on their teammates.



USMS Coach Lina Bot was chosen to be the US coach for this meet. She is here on the left in this photo, giving a thumbs up to the camera. She sent out emails before the event to introduce herself and find out a little about each swimmer. She organized some evening dinners for anyone interested

which allowed us to meet some of the other US swimmers and divers. We later found out that Lina’s mother was from Colombia. Lina’s Spanish was excellent, and she was great at organizing the group

After the week of pool events, we traveled about 2 hours to Guatepé for the open water event. There were many swimmers taking part, and the water was a comfortable temperature. Here, Carl took second place in his age group in the 3K event; his Peruvian friend got first place.



With the meet completed, we stayed in Guatepé for four nights, then traveled on to Sante Fe for two nights, and lastly to Jardin, our favorite, for four nights. Each town was interesting in its own way, and the local people were always pleasant.



Knowing Spanish was an asset, as there was not much English spoken anywhere except in Guatepé, where some of the waiters spoke English. The food was excellent, and water was safe to drink almost everywhere. We really enjoyed our stay, and found the Colombian people to be pleasant and patient with our Spanish skills. The Pan American meet was fun and a great way to travel and get to know a little about a foreign country.



2022 Summer Nationals Recap

By Paula Texel



SPM Nationals Team (photo: P. Texel)

Ten SPM swimmers made their way to Richmond, Virginia in early August to compete in the 2022 Summer Nationals. At the end of the 5-day competition we were so excited to raise the 6th Place team banner! In between figuring out who was riding with who to and from the meet, enjoying dinners together, making runs to Publix to stock up on well needed nourishment, and a side trip to Crumbl (soooo good!), SPM swimmers had some great races!

Before I share the awesome individual races, I have to give a huge shout out to our relay swimmers. We know if we don't swim relays we don't place Top 10! Congrats to Alison Hayden, Eric Herman, Noah Manera, Macarena Martin Mayor, John Nixon, Allison Retotar, Christopher Stickle, Paula Texel, and Karen Westerman for contributing to those relays. (Chris, they

wouldn't let you swim twice in a relay and have it count?

LOL!) And we couldn't have swum so fast without Sherrie Bogue cheering us on! Many SPMers came home with gold medals, including Alison Hayden (200 Fly, 200 IM, 400 IM), Noah Manera (200 Fly), Chris Stickle (1500 Free), Paula Texel (200 Back), and Karen Westerman (100 Fly). There were so many Top 10 swimmers from our team that it would take up this entire page to list them all!



(photo: P. Texel)

We certainly thank the volunteers and staff at RVA for running such a smooth event. We were disappointed the warm-up/warm-down pool wasn't available due to last minute filtering issues, but the team there did a great job and the meet ran smoothly. Even with a thunderstorm



Paula, Allison, Karen and banner! (photo: P. Texel)



Another coveted banner (photo: P. Texel)



SPM Nationals Team (photo: P. Texel)



Karen and Paula – Medley Relay (photo: R. Collins)

roaring outside one afternoon, the meet continued on without delay! Not sure we will be that lucky next summer in Sarasota – but I know the whole team who traveled to Virginia is very excited to see a huge SPM turnout next summer!

Full results can be found [here](#).



Sarah, Russell, Eric, Sherri, Alison, Chris, David, Megan, and Greg (photo: S. Swoch)

Dog Days of Summer LCM Meet – Clearwater

By Sherri Bogue

The last LCM meet of the season was not a disappointment for the St Pete Masters. We had 9 swimmers representing us at the Dog Days of Summer meet in Clearwater. Sherri Bogue, David Gelfand, Russell Hawkins, Alison Hayden, Eric Herman, Megan Howson, Greg Salomon, Chris Stickle, and Sarah Swoch. Even though this was only a 1-day swim meet, we had a great time. The meet was not just attended by swimmers from the Florida LMSC and Gold Coast LMSC we had swimmers from New York, North Carolina, and even a FINA swimmer. The



Sherri, Sarah, Alison, Chris (photo: S. Swoch)

day started early with 3 of us doing the 1500 free – Sherri Bogue, Alison Hayden and Sarah Swoch. St. Pete Masters swimmers placed first in at least one or all of their events – a very strong showing for everyone with many having improved times. There was even some



David, Megan, Sarah, Eric, Chris (photo: S. Swoch)

inter team competition between a few of us to make the day more fun. We even started planning team events in between our events.

Results can be found at:

<https://www.usms.org/comp/meets/meet.php?MeetID=20220910DOGDAYL>

Maccabiah Games

New member David Gelfand, represented Team USA at the Maccabiah Games with stellar swims! The games were held from July 17-22 in Israel. In his 100m and 200m breaststroke events, he placed 15th and 11th, respectively, and 10th in his 200m IM. In the Para Swimming finals, he placed 1st in the 100m Free, 100m Back, 50m Free, 50m Back, and 50m Fly, and 2nd in the 50m Breaststroke, racking up loads of medals. Congratulations, David!! Read more about him at the following [link](#). More photos and full results from the event can be found [here](#).



(photo: Micha Banano), from the Para Swimming Gallery

Postals

Virtual 5K & 10K National Championships

By Sarah Swoch

The preliminary results look great for SPM as a strong competitor in the 5K & 10K virtual championships that ended on September 15th this year. We are waiting to hear if our 13 participants were enough to sneak into a top 3 spot and score some prize money for the most participants from one team. We added 3 new individual All American titles to our team this year, 5 additional relay All American titles and likely set two new national records. Even with this being the first 5K and 10K swim for many of our swimmers.

Our individual and relay entries were top notch! Chris Stickle was 2nd in the 5K, Pat Marzulli 4th, Macarena Martin Mayor was 1st with Kelly Deuser in 2nd for the 18-24 age group. In the 25-29 women's age group Megan Howson was 3rd and Alyssa Harmon 5th. For the 35-39 age group Stephanie Gibson was 2nd and Sarah Swoch 3rd. Paula Texel scored 2nd in the 50-54 age group. Dawn Clark was 10th in the 55-59 age group.

The 10K had a record number of participants this year. Noah Manera and David Gelfand went 1st and 2nd in the 18-24 age group. Chris Stickle finished 3rd in a tremendously competitive 30-34 age group. Macarena Martin Mayor, Caroline McCartney, and Kelly Deuser went 1, 2, 3 in the 18-24 women's division and Sarah Swoch finished 2nd in her age group.

With a team all finishing in the top 10 individually the relays were also spectacular. The women's 5K was able to enter 2 relays who both finished in first place: Kelly Deuser, Macarena Martin Mayor, and Megan Howson in the 18+ and Sarah Swoch, Stephanie Gibson, and Paula Texel in the 35+. We were short on men's entries in the 5K event to maximize our relay entries. But we were still able to score 3rd with our sole entry in the 25+ 4x5K mixed relay composed of Chris Stickle, Stephanie Gibson, Paula Texel, and Pat Marzulli.

The Men's 18+ 3x10K of David Gelfand, Noah Manera, and Chris Stickle was first place, and should be a new national record at 7:06:46, pending final results, crushing the previous record of 7:46:18. The women's 18+ 3x10K relay of Macarena Martin Mayor, Caroline McCartney, and Sarah Swoch also finished in first place. Finally, the Mixed 18+ 4x10K relay also placed first with a time just under 10 hours, beating the previous record held by SPM's Carl Selles, Chris Burke, Sarah Swoch, and Sarah Kwon.

If you want to join in on the fun, we are in the window to swim the 3000 and 6000 short course yard virtual championship. The scheduled team day is Sunday, November 13th. But you can also grab a partner to count and do it any day before the deadline of November 15th.

I think it's great fun to receive a package of medals in the mail. It's a very accessible national championship to participate in, you can do it from anywhere any day



between September 15th and November 15th. Participating in it is a great way to support our team. Relays only work if we have enough people to fill them. You don't have to be #1 in your age group individually to be #1 as a relay team. If you need a little more time to train before you decide to enter a virtual championship, keep the original virtual championship in mind, the hour-swim which is done during the month of January.

Open Water Swimming and Triathlons

Fort DeSoto Triathlon Trilogy

On July 17 at the at the 2nd of the Ft. Desoto Triathlon Trilogy, Laura Albee medaled with a 2nd place finish in the sprint triathlon. This was the first triathlon she participated since she broke her foot running. She modestly says that she was quite pleased that she finished. Teammate Steve Bossert placed 5th in his very competitive 50-54 age group. Congratulations to both Laura and Steve!



Global Swim Series



(photo: C. Stickle)

Chris Stickle beat out some of the top Olympic swimmers on Sept 3 in the Global Swim Series. He writes, "We all have days we



(photo: C. Stickle)

will remember forever. For me this is one of those days. Thanks to Global Swim Series for putting on a fantastic event. I could not be more proud of my time 16:40. It was a lifetime best mile in either pool or open water. I got 5th overall and won my age group but most amazingly beat out

some of the best Olympic stars of this sport. I grew up watching stars like Ryan Lochte, Brent Hayden, Anthony Irvin, Cullen Jones, Cody Miller and Blake Pieroni. To be able to race these legends was an honor and privilege but to actually win is unbelievable!" Awesome swimming, Chris!!!

Page 1 of 3 (116 items)

| Pos | Name | Time | Cat Pos (Gen Pos) |
|-----|-------------------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Ethan Zhou #46 Male 0215 | 00:16:14 | 1 (1) |
| 2 | Trevor Dentley #19 Male 0215 | 00:16:17 | 2 (2) |
| 3 | Felipe Alvarez #133 Male 0215 | 00:16:27 | 3 (3) |
| 4 | Daniels Vermeleone #31 Male 1639 | 00:16:28 | 1 (4) |
| 5 | Christopher Stickle #8 Male 3039 | 00:16:40 | 1 (5) |
| 6 | Brent Hayden #4 Male 3039 | 00:16:47 | 2 (6) |
| 7 | Joel Acosta #116 Male 3039 | 00:16:50 | 3 (7) |
| 8 | Carlos Dolabella #77 Male 6099 | 00:17:01 | 1 (8) |
| 9 | Ryan Lochte #1 Male 3039 | 00:17:05 | 4 (9) |
| 10 | Eddy Marin #109 Male 3039 | 00:17:55 | 5 (10) |
| 11 | Juan Zambrano #97 Male 4049 | 00:18:09 | 1 (11) |
| 12 | Lubo Rold #81 Male 0215 | 00:18:17 | 4 (12) |
| 13 | Jonathan Pisto #136 Male 3039 | 00:18:18 | 6 (13) |
| 14 | Simon Scheinfeld | 00:18:24 | 5 |

Rainbow River



(photo: Sarah Swoch)



Swimming outside the box, Sarah Swoch, Chris Stickle, Alison Hayden, Megan Howson, Ananda and her sister, and Andrew Leone, took to Rainbow River and joined the Rainbow River Swim Club on September 17. Check out some fun images taken with Sarah's GoPro at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIU3vwRmKBk>.



(photo: Sarah Swoch)

Socials



Paul and Kiernan – July 29, 2022 (photo: C. Kupan)



With all the monthly outings organized by Megan Howson and the social committee, SPM was just as busy out of the water as in the water. Almost 5 years to the day, Paul Patton successfully defended his



(photo: C. Kupan)

championship title at the SPM Bowl-A-Rama on July 29.

Back in 2017, with Kiernan and Celeste cheering him on, Paul won the title from previous champion, Eric Herman. This year, joined by Averil, he holds onto the pin! On August 21, SPM gathered for another fun



Night with the Rays (photo: C. Patton)



Paul Patton wins the title (with Kiernan and Celeste - July 22, 2017 (photo: L. Zien)



Calypto Breeze Cruise (photo: S. Carpenter Van-Dijk, M. Zabel)



Bowl-A-Rama (photo: C. Kupan)

outing and celebrated Rays victory at the Trop, against the Kansas City Royals. To close out September, everyone enjoyed a great dinner and cruise on the Calypso Breeze in John's Pass.

Outside Lanes

Water Warrior Alliance

By Macarena Martin Mayor

Clean-up dives keep not only our surface waters clean, but all that trash that gets accumulated along the water column and the bottom! Keeping our beautiful beaches clean is up to all of us who live here! Three of our SPM swimmers (Sarah, Meg, and Macarena) participated in a dive clean-up with the Water Warrior Alliance



(photo: M. Martin Mayor)



(photo: M. Martin Mayor)

(<https://www.waterwarrioralliance.org>) and loved every minute of it! If you are a certified diver, you should consider diving with them (gear rental is free thanks to Gulfport Dive Center for the clean-up divers!) and keep our waters clean, and if you are not, this organization performs water-goat clean-ups all around the city monthly! This is the perfect opportunity to give back to our community's beautiful waters that have given us the opportunity to swim in and have an awesome time!

Champion's Mojo

Kelly Parker Palace of Swim Melbourne Masters is an award-winning podcast host. Check out her interview with our Judge!

https://www.championsmojo.com/episodepage/bobbeach162?fbclid=IwAR2e_evHUxFhghDqGbSk0kweK8yRWMITzdn3UpuSoee7cYCxRxa6sjRB_Ag



Eat. Sleep. Swim.

By Sarah Swoch

What is the perfect vacation? For me, it involves a lot of swimming, and usually I'm not traveling with my swimming lane mates, so it's a little bit of a sketchy adventure. I've found many interesting pools in my travels and swum some solo open water as responsibly as possible.

When I saw the advertisements for SwimTrek it seemed like a perfect fit. They are ideal for the solo traveler, since



Kornati National Park. · Murter, Croatia

they bring together a group of swimmers and then plan every part of a safe open water swimming adventure. Nearly everything is included except getting to the hotel and dinners, it was one of the easiest holidays as far as planning.

Before arrival there is a SwimTrek chat where each swimmer makes an introductory page and can then talk with everyone who will be in the group. We were able to set up a WhatsApp chat and coordinate our arrivals, transfers, and even some activities for those of us who were arriving early and staying on after. The group consisted of mostly UK based swimmers, but The Netherlands, Sweden, Chile, New Zealand, Australia, and France were also represented. Swimmers ranged in age from 18-70. The group reminded me a lot of our team.

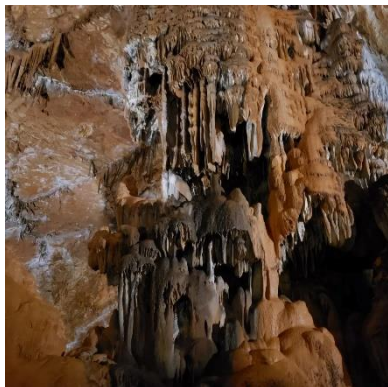


Pink swim caps

I opted for the Croatia trip since it appeared to have warm clear water and was the right price for me. Croatia also happens to be THE vacation spot for Europe, they have a history of hosting swimming training camps in their sunny oceanfront pools and gorgeous waters. Our SwimTrek guides met our group of 16 the first night for a safety briefing and a quick test swim to see if we told the truth about the 1K times we submitted in our initial paperwork. From there they split us into three groups based on our speed, yellow caps, orange caps, and pink caps. Sound familiar? Like our fine wine, stroke and shark groups? The trip was scheduled for about 4K per day split between a morning and afternoon swim. Though the pink caps, my group, convinced our boat driver to take us back a bit from the start so we could swim about 6K per day. Anyone who wished to take an easy day could switch groups or enjoy some of the swim from the boat. We had three boats, rented from a local boat captain, one to accompany each group. One of the boats was a traditional Croatian boat that was built by the owner. The boat captain's wife cooked our lunch and sent it with us on the boat too.



In Sali - The freshest seafood you can find.



Manita peć Nacionalni Park Paklenica

We all know where there are swimmers there will be food. Lunches were delicious, but each evening our group went out to try all the different restaurants on the island of Dugi Otok (Long Island). Croatians take pride in their food and everything was fresh, delicious, and local. The wine, salt, olive oil, bread, seafood, and cheese, everything was award winning and some of the best in the world. Salt is collected on the island of Nin, Cheese from the sheep on Pag, Olive Oil and seafood from Dugi Otok itself and wine made in every region of Croatia. Since it's not the biggest country they don't export much of what they make. We took full advantage of eating everything while we were there.

Our SwimTrek guides had safety in mind. They are open water swim coaches, ocean lifeguards, boat captains, first responders, the list of their certifications goes on and on. They even kept an eye on me when I opted for snorkeling after each swim instead of climbing on the boat for a nap and snacks like nearly everyone else. By



PinVečka Kula. Sea bream



Cuttlefish straight from the sea in Veli Rat Dugi Otok

the end Keith, or ex-RAF guide, would just throw me some fruit so I could carry on with my adventures. They worked with our local guides to come up with the best swims for the conditions on any given day. We didn't have to worry about anything except when we would start following fish straight into a wall. The limestone had lots of holes for the fish to swim into, not so many big



Waterfall at Nacionalni Park Plitvička jezera
Plitvice Lakes National Park

enough for us humans. Jason and Keith wasted no time getting to know us all and adjusting the trip to the things we liked. From coordinating the swims so all the groups would finish at nearly the same time to picking up apricots for snacks when they discovered how much everyone in our group liked fruit.

Our hotel was arranged by SwimTrek, and was a nice, clean and comfortable room with a morning breakfast. Perhaps a little outdated, but also the only hotel on the island. SwimTrek is a trek after all, and we were too tired by the end



Formed tufa at Nacionalni park
Plitvička jezera Plitvice Lakes National

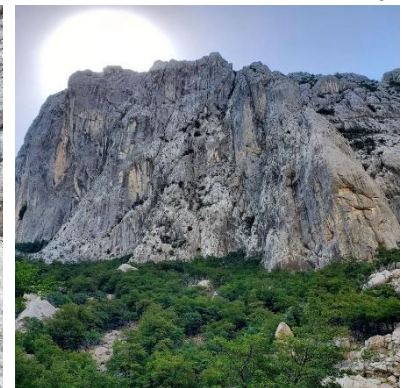
of dinner to care about anything but a shower and sleep. I opted for a roommate share and was paired with Suzanne, a geophysicist from the UK working in Amsterdam. We could be found dead last on every hike trying to identify all the flora and fauna, there couldn't have been a better match. There is an option for a single room for a small supplemental price.

We were able to swim around a few of the multitude of islands off the coast of Croatia in the Adriatic Sea. We swam around gorgeous islands of limestone where people had been planting olive trees and raising sheep for thousands of years. Most of the islands don't have fresh water, but they have plenty of pristine beaches. Our boat captain and local guides knew all the spots the tourist boats take trips to. They took us to see the incredible limestone walls in Telascica Nature Park and the Roman Ruins on some of the islands of Kornati National Park. We got to swim into sea caves and hike up to spectacular overlooks. Despite all the swimming, I didn't feel like we missed any sight-seeing. Our other local guides were willing to spend the trips to the islands and back discussing all the fish with me. We found that Latin was a fantastic way for us to understand each other when English wasn't working. They often worked at the fish farms and as commercial fishermen so were very familiar with the local ecosystems. They even told me the secrets for finding an octopus.

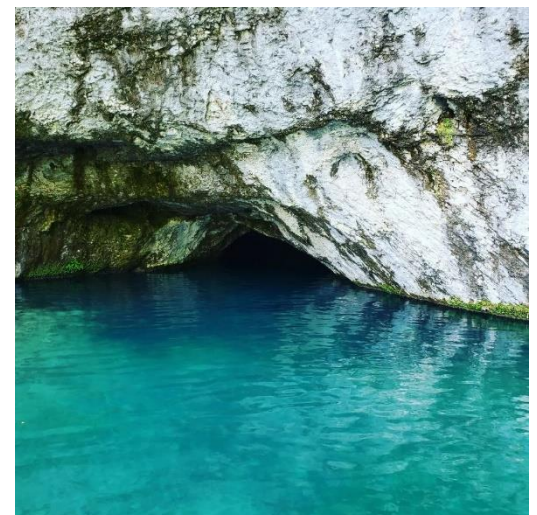
Croatia has many national parks that are world heritage sites. Kornati being one of them. I also took some time before the SwimTrek to go to Plitvice Lakes, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site with Mark, a swimmer from Australia, who also arrived early. After the trip I did a



Nacionalni Park Paklenica - rock climbing



Zadar



Color of the water - Plitvice Lakes National Park

bit of solo travel up to Paklencia National Park for hiking, river rafting, and rock climbing before returning to Zadar and then back home.

I hope to join SwimTrek again next summer, perhaps in Greece or Turkey, for another adventure. Eat, sleep, swim is the perfect combination for a relaxing holiday.

One more from Coach Gary: What's in A Name?

I've often wondered what would happen if we made some simple changes, let's say, to swimming. For example, we say things that can be taken to mean more than one thing. Butterfly drill comes to mind. Some might think it's what you use to poke holes in insects so, it can be misleading.

Then, there are names that don't quite describe something as well as they could. If we changed those names, people would better know what we're talking about. Instead of goggles, we'd put on our *foggles* so we could use our pull booty. Rather than sit on a kickboard between sets, we'd sit on our FBR's or floatable butt rests.

And lastly, some names are obvious. Take 'underwater dolphins', aren't they all? So, there you have it. And that my friends, is what happens when you think of stuff while you're swimming. Try it and see.



Save the Date!

Friday, Dec 2

Keep your eyes out for a flyer and more information about SPM's annual holiday party, to be hosted by Mike and Jane Zabel!

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