



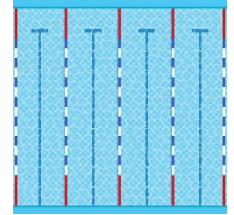
SPM NEWSLETTER

St. Petersburg Masters | North Shore Aquatic Complex

In this Issue...

From Coach Gary	2
Why Do We Swim?	2
Before a Swim Meet	2
President's Corner	3
Pool Competitions	4
USMS Spring Nationals	4
YMCA Masters Nationals	4
Big Kahuna	6
IGLA	6
ePostals: 5k/10k Swim	6
Open Water Swimming	6
Waves of Change - Andy Rodgers	7
Sand Key OWS	7
Waters of the Atlantic	7
Odyssey of the Escape from Alcatraz	8
More Open Water and Triathlon News	10
Socials!	10
A Few More from Coach Gary	11
Arms as Paddles	11
The Kick	11
Body pH	11
Why Are They So Fast?	11
Outside Lanes	12
Sherri Bogue	12
Alyssa Harmon	12
Good Luck Summer Nationals Team!	12

Nationals, Nationals, Nationals ... and Open Water too!



With two Nationals meets in April one week after the other, and eyes on the Sarasota Summer Nationals in August, the season was off to a busy start. USMS Spring Nationals in Irvine was followed a week later by the YMCA Nationals in Ft. Lauderdale. Now the team is preparing for Sarasota at the end of August!

Many of SPM team members also took to the open water in the Spring. We participated in local events, traveled near and far for different challenges. Maryland seemed to be a popular destination (my personal favorite). We raised funds for beloved teammate Andy Rogers.



Many thanks to Gary Bastie, Phil Harasz, Cheryl Kupan, Sarah Swoch, and Mike Zabel sharing their experiences, insights, and updates in this issue. Thank you to Gloria Smith for her fantastic pictures and documentation of all the various events, as well as Nathan Dean, Jim Esposito, Alyssa Harmon, Alison Hayden, Chris Stickle, and Karen Westerman for their photos. Please send content and ideas to livia.zien@gmail.com.

I want to apologize for the delay in completing this newsletter. The articles were submitted to me on time, but I was unable to complete this sooner. Please know that Mike Zabel's plea for volunteers at meets is timeless.

Don't forget, there is an Instagram account [stpetemastersswim](#) and a [Facebook page](#) with current information and events for the team.

Happy swimming!

Upcoming Pool Events

Aug. 20 / LCM: Summer SWAGfest. Gainesville FL. [Information & entry](#). Entry deadline: online entry closes Sunday, August 13

Sept. 9 / LCM: Dog Days Meet. Clearwater FL. [Information & entry](#). Entry deadline: online entry closes Wednesday, September 6

Sept. 10 / SCY: Gainesville Senior Games. Gainesville FL. [Information & entry](#). Entry deadline: received by Thursday, August 17. Senior games for 50+. USMS-recognized

Oct. 13-15 / SCM: Rowdy Gaines Masters Classic. Orlando FL. [Information & entry](#). Entry deadline: online entry closes Monday, October 9

Oct. 22 / SCY: 2nd Annual SWAGtoberfest Masters Meet. Gainesville FL. [Information & entry](#). Entry deadline: online entry closes Monday, October 16

Nov. 11-12 / SCM: Shark Tank Meet. Sarasota FL



Why Do We Swim?

By Gary Bastie

I've asked that question of myself many times and here's what I've come up with.

We swim to train for something. Swimming is great cross-training, it's great if you're injured and can't do other sports, and it always gets you in shape. When I used to run full court with the college varsity basketball team, I never got tired, and it was due to my swimming regimen.

We swim to relax. It works as a recovery tool, for mental health, and as a fun way to cool off, stay in shape, and just relax. There's no sport where you feel so relaxed once the workout's finished.

We swim so we can eat and stay fit.

We also swim in order to work on some skill.

I know there are other reasons, but I think this sums up about 99% of why most of us swim. If you have other reasons, why not write an article for the next newsletter?

Before a Swim Meet

1. Remember not to blow out your air when doing a turn. You'll need air to stay under water during your push off and break out phase. If you need to, put a little pressure on your nose by blowing a bubble or two, that will keep the water out.
2. Unless sprinting, breathe when you need to. You'll be surprise how much air helps you keep moving at a race pace.
3. Suggested, at least 8 x 25's as a cool down after an event. You'll feel refreshed and recovered.
4. When starting, remember to curl your toes around the edge of the starting block.
5. If you need help getting onto the starting block, ask someone in advance. No sense teetering when there's plenty of help waiting.
6. During the meet, stay off your feet, relax. Not too much sun. Keep hydrated.
7. Over pull the first half of any sprint up to 200, then kick at the half way mark. You'll appreciate having legs to finish the race.
8. Don't swim backstroke with a snorkel.
9. During a race, try not to breathe into a turn or just after it. Head raising too soon stops your momentum (free "umph").
10. If your start or turn is too deep, dolphin out of it. If you don't, you'll come to a sudden stop by trying to come up too soon and from too deep.
11. Grab the starting block when you start. Don't just finger tip it, grab it so you can steady yourself and/or use it to catapult you forward.
12. When streamlining, squeeze your ears with your upper arms. Make certain to have your top thumb down so you can have some leverage to squeeze.
13. Swim meet warm-ups ought to be what you normally do to get loose. For many, it's not just a 100 yd., it's several hundred or perhaps a mile, especially if you're swimming longer events.
14. Practice your swim meet warm-up during regular practices.
15. Practice your start with each practice. I like to do 5 dolphin kicks underwater before taking a stroke, unless I'm swimming breaststroke.
16. For Nationals, plan a 2 wk. taper. Speak with your coach, think back on what worked for you, and get enough rest if you've been doing plenty of yards. The more muscular, the older, and the longer the distances you train determines how long you need to rest.
17. During long course season, work longer strokes, rhythm, and a cadence that works for your entire race.
18. During tapers, work on specifics. For instance, work on starts, underwater kicks, breakouts, the first few strokes off each wall, technique drills, and the way you want to swim your races.
19. During tapers, increase your intensity and the duration of it. Make those workouts as specific to your races as possible.
20. During tapers, work your strokes into and out of turns. Don't let up for the walls, accelerate into them.

President's Corner

By Mike Zabel

We have new caps, available at the LCM meet. See Gary.

I just wanted to take the time today to speak about our meets. Our finances are heavily supported by the popularity of our two annual meets and more importantly the number of swimmer entries at our two annual meets.

We used to spend our funds on using outside people to arrange our meets. Our Treasurer, Brooke Bowman, has taken the lead as Meet Director and has strongly improved the meets. Unfortunately, we cannot host a meet without volunteers. Without officials and timers, you cannot host meets; without meets; well, you get the picture.

Not many of you have ever read the By-Laws, and frankly I never did until becoming elected. Here is Article I of the By-Laws:

ST. PETE MASTERS BY-LAWS Adopted: January 28, 2018

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Membership in the corporation shall be open to swimmers 18 years of age and over upon the payment of the annual Florida LMSC/USMS fees and registering as a St. Pete Master. Those who work out with the team must pay the USMS fee as well as a coaching fee (payable on Club Assistant) and pool fees (payable to the City of St Pete).

Section 2: USMS dues for membership shall be assessed on a yearly basis from January 1st through December 31st. St Pete Masters' coaching fees shall be assessed on a yearly basis from January 1st through December 31st at a rate determined by the Board of Directors.

Section 3: All members are expected to participate in the competitive aspects of St. Pete Masters and USMS. This includes volunteering to assist running our 3 events per year, timing at meets, officiating at meets and/or swimming competitively for the team.

By the way, its "St. Pete Masters", not "Saint Petersburg Masters". Yeah, I made that mistake as well.

Our team averages 23 swimmers a meet. SPM has over 254 members, this means that 231 members are not swimming. Also important is that we must be adequately staffed for any World Record attempts. This coming meet we have Swimmers have told Brooke that they will be going for world records, especially in the longer relays; consequently, we will need at least 2 timers (16 on Saturday; 20 for the 1500 and 16 the rest of the day on Sunday) on every lane.

Our LCM Meet is 8-9 July.

I cannot say strongly enough that we must have increased support to continue running these meets and we have the members that could staff it ten times over.

If you are reading this and not swimming, please consider coming down to time. If your spouse or friend is coming to the meet, please get them to time. Again, without timers and officials, we can no longer host any meets.

Please contact Brooke Bowman at bowman@law.stetson.edu to volunteer for the meets.

Thank You, Mike



Officially official at the Good Life Games
(photo: G. Smith)



New swim caps! (photo: M. Zabel)

Pool Competitions

A major focus the past few months was Y Nationals (April 20-23) where Cheryl Kupan recruited 18 SPM swimmers to join forces with her former CT team to swim together as the YMCA of Westport. Read about their tremendous effort below.

That's not all for Nationals as Bob Beach and Sophia Bickerton had the USMS Spring Nationals in Irvine, CA the following week!

The quarter finished off with Chris Stickle participating in the Big Kahuna Classic in Virginia Beach, and together with Jim Esposito at the IGLA in London.

USMS Spring Nationals, Irvine



From April 27-30, Sophia Bickerton and Bob Beach represented SPM well at the USMS Spring Nationals in Irvine, CA. Sophia, in the youngest age group (18-21), had great swims, improving all her times, and placing 6th in the 50yd breaststroke! Judge, in one of the wisest age groups (90-94), won his 1650yd free, 500yd free, and 200yd back events, and placed 2nd in his 100yd and 200yd free events. This just goes to show that swimming has no age boundaries ... but we already knew that.

Check out this [link](#) for results.



Y Nationals Team (photo: G. Smith)

YMCA Masters Nationals

By Cheryl Kupan

Congratulations to the 2023 YMCA Nationals. I always knew combining SPM with my long-time friends (some since childhood) from the Westport YMCA in Connecticut would make us a pretty formidable team. We totally dominated Masters YMCA Nationals which returned to the International Swimming Hall of Fame (ISHOF) pool in Fort Lauderdale, FL this past April. We won the Women's, Men's and Combined Titles quite convincingly and we're

hoping to repeat next year, and I hope more SPMers will join us as USMS Spring Nationals are in June 2024.

It was nice to race at ISHOF again after they renovated the historic pool, although the pool was set up with 2 bulkheads (many, many lines to look at when you're looking for the wall) and no backstroke ledges (because they didn't have enough staff) were a bit of a let down, but overall it was great to be back at ISHOF.



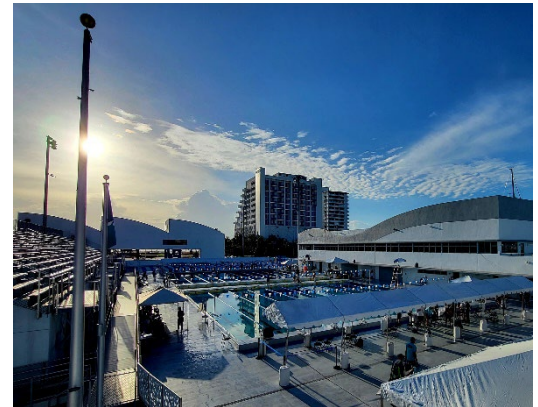
Mike, Chris, Alison, and Sarah (photo: G. Smith)



SPMers on deck (photo: G. Smith)

Just about all swimmers on the team either individually and/or on a relay were National YMCA Champions as my long-time friend and our Coach for the team, Jeff Sargent, does his best to put everyone in a position to be a National Champion. A lot of personal best times by many SPMers – too many to list here. For full results, go to the [YMCA 2023 Masters Results](#).

SPMers who were on the victorious team were: Adam Jerger, Alison Hayden, Allison Retotar, Alyssa Harmon, Bill Fallon, Bob Beach, Celeste Patton, Cheryl Kupan, Christopher Stickle, Karen Westerman, Mike Smith, Mike Zabel, Noah Manera,



Newly renovated ISHOF (photo: G. Smith)



Mike S., Mike Z., Cheryl, and Karen (photo: G. Smith)

Olivia Barkley, Sarah Swoch, Sean Gerrard, and Sherri Bogue. Apologies if I didn't list someone – working off of memory.

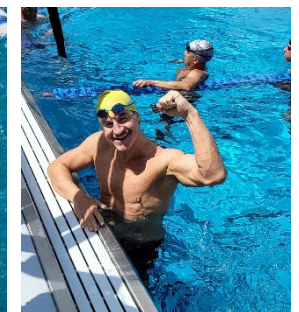
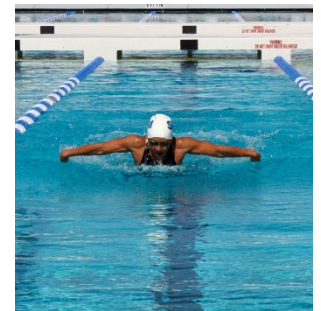
Congratulations to the 2023 YMCA Nationals Record Breakers:

90-94 200 Back: **Bob Beach** 5:11.61

Mixed 85+ 200 Free Relay: **Bob Beach**, Martha Henderson, Patricia Tullman, and Joan Campbell 3:59.10

Women 55+ 200 Free Relay: C. Milton, T. Michael, **Karen Pitre Westerman**, P. Moss 1:54.92

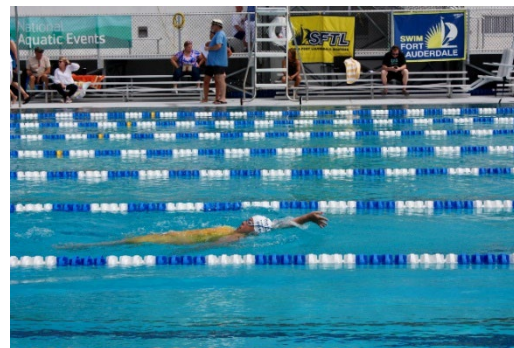
Women 55+ 200 Medley Relay: C. Milton, P. Moss, **Karen Pitre Westerman**, T. Michael 2:07.60



Flying to victory! L-R, T-B Noah, Alison, Mike Z., Cheryl, Chris, Sarah, Mike S., Mike S. (photo: G. Smith)



Bob Beach (photo: G. Smith)



Sherri Bogue (photo: G. Smith)



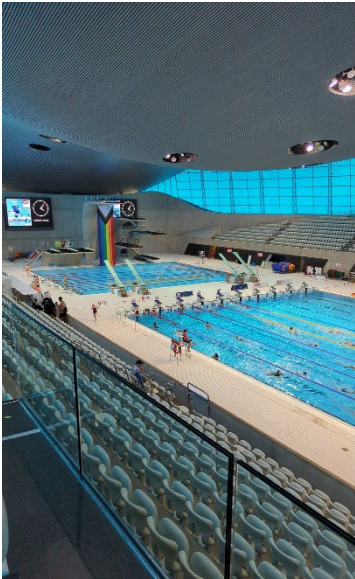
Celebration! (photo: G. Smith)

[Back to Top](#)

TIDE Swimming's Big Kahuna Masters Classic

Hopefully with fewer travel hassles than last year, Chris Stickle went to Virginia Beach to participate in the Big Kahuna Masters Classic on June 16, kicking off the LCM season. He walked away winning all six of his events: the 50m, 100m, and 200m breaststroke, the 50m backstroke, the 100m butterfly, and 200m IM. Congratulations, Chris!

Results can be found [here](#).



London Aquatic Center (photo: C. Stickle)

IGLA

Chris Stickle and Jim Esposito flew across the pond to participate in the IGLA Championships in London at the London Aquatics Center, which was the home to the 2012 Olympics. This mighty team of 2 (yes, 2) finished 11th in the Small Team Division with a total of 71 points. Chris placed 1st in his 1500m and 800m freestyle events, 2nd in his 200m butterfly, 3rd in the 400m freestyle, and 4th in the 400m IM. Jim placed 4th in his 50m butterfly and 100m backstroke, 5th in his 50m breaststroke, and 6th in the 50m freestyle.

Based on some of their Facebook posts, there appeared to be some beer and pub-related events involved as well.

Congratulations gentlemen! What a way to represent SPM!



Chris and Jim – mighty team of 2!
(photo: J. Esposito)

Results can be found [here](#).



Steve and Carl (photo: S. Swoch)

ePostals

5k/10

The 5k/10k Virtual Championships run from May 15 – September 15. Without delay, Steve Freeman and Carl Selles kicked off the event with their 5k swims, Kathy Selles doing double duty counting for both. On the first team date (June 25), Paula Texel completed hers with a personal best. A cool video taken by Mike Zabel documented part of her swim. Picture perfect

strokes! Also getting the job done early, were Sarah Swoch, Karen Westerman, Kelly Deuser, Megan Howson, Dawn Clark, and Andrew Leone.

Don't worry if you missed the first team date. There are 2 others! You will need your own counter. Please email stpetemasters@gmail.com to reserve your lane, and don't forget to [register](#)!

Sunday, August 20 - 7:00am start

Sunday, September 10 - 7:00am start



Open Water Swimming

Summer is officially here, but even before the solstice, SPMers took to the open waters, competing in various races, such as the Sand Key Open Water Series. Others, like Sarah Swoch and the Haraszs traveled for even cooler or rougher waters. And so many others, swam to raise funds for and support Andy Rogers as she battles lung cancer.



Waves of Change for Andy Rogers (photo: L. Briceno)

Waves of Change - Fighting Lung Cancer Virtual Fundraiser

Leo Briceno organized a fundraiser event, a virtual 1-mile swim that ran between Sunday, Apr 23, 2023 and Saturday, Jun 3, 2023.



April 23 (photo: L. Briceno)



(photos: L. Briceno)



All proceeds went directly to help Andy.

The event coincided at two physical locations of the [Inaugural Run Swim Run Series](#):

April 23 at Sand Key Park and Jun 3 at Madeira Beach. On June 3, there was a huge outpouring of SPM support, from near and far. Megan Howson and Bryant Davies were the

overall Female and Male winners in the 1-mile swim. Chelsea Nauta and Sharon Steinmann won their age groups, with Rob Tullman placing second. In the 2-mile swim, Stephanie Gibson took top honors, with Kelly Deuser, Valerie Valle, Alison Hayden, and Susan Tokayer winning their respective age groups. A huge shout out to the Coimbra Family relay for their support. In the Inaugural Run Swim Run event, Karen Westerman and Andrew Leone were overall winners. Chris Swanson, up in Durham, NC participated remotely to show her support. Congratulations on some great races, but most importantly, what a great showing of support for Andy.

Sand Key Open Water Swim Series 2

A large group of SPM swimmers participated in the Sand Key Open Water Series 2 on May 13. An unofficial 10k swim was won by Andrew Leone. Samantha Fulmer was the 2.4mile age group winner. The Dean Family swimmers, Cullen, Selah, and Nathan all participated in the 5k. Bryant Davies swam the 2.4 mile, Stephanie Gibson, Sarah Swoch, and Pat Marzulli swam the 5k. Nice showing, SPM!



(photo: L. Briceno)

Waters of the Atlantic

By Sarah Swoch

In a daring adventure that bridged the gap between Tampa Bay and Jacksonville, a group of intrepid open water swimmers from the west coast set out on an unforgettable 8-mile beach swim.

For the swimmers accustomed to the calmer waters of the west coast, the formidable conditions of the east coast presented a new level of challenge. The wind whipped



(photo: S. Swoch)

fiercely, and overhead breakers towered at a staggering three feet. Although these conditions were considered normal for the local swimmers, the group from Tampa Bay needed to adapt quickly to safely navigate through the break.

Thankfully, the Duval Open Water Swimmers lent their expertise to ensure the Tampa Bay group could navigate the break without losing their swim buoys. With their guidance, the swimmers learned how to maneuver through the powerful waves. Unfortunately, the kayaks accompanying the team struggled to make their way through the break, capsizing multiple times. However, with determination and the assistance of taller swimmers, they eventually conquered the challenge and made it out to sea with most of our snacks.



(photo: S. Swoch)

Once beyond the breakers, we were greeted by swells that propelled us along the picturesque shoreline. Passing by elegant beachfront houses and resorts, we experienced the tranquil beauty of St. Johns County. The presence of

cannonball jellies added an element of wonder to the swim, although we encountered some stings from unseen sea nettles.



(photo: S. Swoch)

Despite the bouncy conditions, the kayakers remained undeterred, displaying remarkable skill and dedication. With their unwavering support, they managed to keep the swimmers' spirits high and provided regular feeds, ensuring they stayed energized with maltodextrin & mashed potatoes throughout the journey.

As the team neared the end of their epic swim, they were rewarded with an exhilarating body surf towards the beach. Though they emerged slightly worse for wear, the beachgoers' kind assistance in gathering the gear dumped from the kayaks helped turn the experience into a heartwarming moment. Celebrating their triumph, the swimmers capped off the day with a well-deserved burger and a visit to Buc-ees, creating lasting memories.

Odyssey of the Escape from Alcatraz

By Phil Harasz

In 2017, Melissa and I had reached the point where we were ready to retire from triathlon. We decided to begin our retirement by completing one last iconic race, the Escape from Alcatraz triathlon held in June every year in San Francisco. The main attraction of this race is that you jump off a boat at Alcatraz Island and swim to shore. It is only 1.25 miles due South to reach shore, but there is a current which sweeps you West, towards the Golden Gate bridge and out to sea. Because of the current, they set the landing site at the St Francis Yacht club, which is just over two miles Southwest from Alcatraz Island. The swim is followed by a 25 mile (very) hilly bike ride, and an eight-mile run along the coast with breathtaking views of San Francisco Bay.

As luck would have it, severe weather moved in the day before the race and forced them to cancel the swim. We ended up doing the bike and the run, but never got to complete the swim. The bike and the run were awesome, but still, the main event was the swim!

Ever since 2017, we've been saying that someday, we ought to go out there just to do the swim. That "someday" finally arrived when I was invited to attend a software conference in San Francisco the week of June 26th. I googled "Alcatraz Swim" and found a website for an outfit in San Francisco which hosts several Alcatraz Swims every Summer, odysseyopenwater.com. Their swims are not races. The host organized group swims with safety vessels for a reasonable fee, and were hosting a swim on Saturday, June 24th, the weekend before the start of the software conference. It was as if the universe reached out and said "Stop procrastinating, it's time to do that swim".

Odyssey Swim times the start with the incoming tide to minimize the strength of the current. The current is caused by the snow melt from the Sierra Nevada mountains. Because of this constant snow melt, the water is usually three or four degrees cooler than the ocean outside the bay, and large sharks tend to avoid the bay because of the lower

[Back to Top](#)



salinity from that snow melt. And with all the snow you've read about this past Winter, the current is quite healthy this Summer and moving fast.

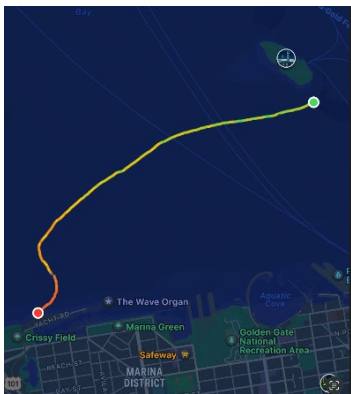
For this swim, they told us, we were in luck because the incoming tide was best for an 8:30 AM start (as opposed to some other swims which they'd had to start at 5:30 AM). On top of that, they'd had a rare five consecutive days of sunshine, which meant the water was in the low 60's instead of its usual mid 50's. When we signed up for the swim, we estimated our time to swim one mile in open water. They assigned us numbers based on those estimated speeds with the slowest being number 1 and counting up as time estimates shortened. We had around 70 swimmers, and I was 53 and Melissa was 54. We looked around at this crowd which clearly looked younger and fitter than us and couldn't imagine we ranked that highly in this group! But there we were.

On the boat ride out to the island, the wind was blowing a steady 10 to 12 mph out of the West, so there was a healthy one-to-two-foot chop rolling in from the West while a heavier than normal current was flowing steadily from the East. About halfway to the island, as we watched the heavy rollers going under the boat and felt the chilly wind on our faces, a definite veil of doom and gloom fell across everyone's face on the boat. We were all thinking the same thing: "What have we gotten ourselves into?"

Melissa stared distantly at the deck and said "I want to swim with you. Stick close to me, Okay? I want to stay with you".

"Um, sure, OK, but you're a faster swimmer." I warned her, "You might have to pause a lot and wait for me."

She swore that was no problem. She was too frightened of being swept out to sea alone. At least with me she'd have company. The boat got into position, and the captain asked us to jump, one by one, starting from the lowest (slowest) swimmer and working up. After the first 30 or so people had jumped, the jumping platform was empty, as everyone was staring at everyone else to see who was brave enough to be next. The crewman yelled "Come on! Who's next?"



Phil's swim track (photo: P. Harasz)

That's when Melissa leapt to her feet, climbed up on the platform and I scrambled to step up behind her, ready to be her guardian angel in the water. Just as she was about to leap the crewman yelled at her, "goggles!"

"Oh! Yeah!" she exclaimed. She pulled them into place and leapt. I immediately jumped up, checked my goggles, and leapt in right behind her. She was already stroking hard and moving, probably 10 feet away from me and disappearing fast. I put my head down and sprinted with all my might for about 10 yards, looked up, and now she was 20 feet away and not bothering to look for me AT ALL. Another 10 yard sprint and I'm breathing hard and I look up and now she's 30 feet away, still stroking hard and fast, and she is not looking back. That's when I realized, "Oh, it's every man for himself here. She is obviously not waiting for me!". So, I relaxed and focused on catching my breath and finding my rhythm in the rolling chop. Within 15 minutes I could no longer see any of my fellow swimmers, but did spot a kayaker a

way off, so I knew I was being watched and was able to relax and focus on swimming.

The current was relentless. Swimming in Pass-a-Grille on Sunday mornings, I only sight about once every 20 strokes. But for this swim, I was sighting every 10 strokes and every time I came up for a look, I was pointing straight West and looking at the Golden Gate bridge. To appreciate the force of this current, just look at the satellite track recorded by my Apple Watch. As you look at this, keep in mind that I was aiming South, straight down!

The green color signifies faster swimming, while yellow to red is slower. Look how fast I was moving West! About 30 minutes into the swim, I began to feel how the current kept turning my body towards the Golden Gate bridge, so I began to lean into it, focusing on swimming in a leftward arc. That's where you see the track bend just a little bit more Southward. That final bend to the left near the end was when I could see the finish at the Yacht club and could feel the current slacking off the closer I got to shore, so I focused on aiming right at the finish. You can see how the color turns more orange as I'm moving more slowly now fighting the current, but by then I knew I wasn't going to miss that finish line. Right at the end I was able to make a nice lazy turn to the right and coast to the finish line.

When I stood up on the beach, Melissa was there waiting for me. She'd finished ten minutes ahead of me, as I figured she would. I looked at my watch and it read 59:39 – I was under one hour! The excitement and sense of

accomplishment upon finishing (ten minutes faster than I estimated!) was an incredible feeling. It was especially gratifying after having just endured a cold and foreboding boat ride out to the island.

More Open Water Swimming and Triathlons



At the Great Chesapeake Bay Swim
(photo: N. Dean)

The 40th St. Anthony's Triathlon, took place the weekend of April 28-30. Several SPM participated in the events. Olympic distance: Kelly Deuser 5th, Andrew Leone 7th in the Male VIP division, Dawn Clark in the "First Ladies of St. Anthony's Hospital" Female team placed 5th. Rich Knipe had a great finish in the Sprint distance.

Impressive swimming by the Dean family in the Great Chesapeake Bay Swim on June 11. Cooper and Cullen placed 3rd and 4th respectively in the 1-mile M1-14 non-wetsuit, In the 4.4 mile wetsuit division Liam won his 15-19 age group, Selah won her 20-24 age group, and Nathan placed 4th in 45-49 age group. Congratulations to all! Results can be found [here](#).

Also on June 11 and also in Maryland (Cambridge, MD) at the Ironman 70.3 Eagleman, Karen set a PR and took nearly an hour off her best time finishing with a 6:49.42. Alongside her was her husband and honorary SPM member, Russ. Way to go the distance, IronCouple!



Swim Around Key West (photo: A. Hayden)

Alison Hayden was the 1st place overall female winner with a tie of 5:13.02 in The College of the Florida Keys Community College Swim Around Key West. Even with choppy conditions and a kayaker medical emergency she still emerged the winner. The 12.5 mile swim took place on June 17. Results can be found [here](#). Congratulations, Alison!



IronCouple (photo: K. Westerman)

Socials!

Thanks to Megan Howson coordinating social events for the team, SPMers do not sit still ... not even at play. Call it cross-training perhaps, whether it be peddling for a beer through the streets of



Pedal Pub-bing around St. Pete, April 29 (photo: S. Swoch)

Upcoming OWS Events

Aug. 6: Mermaid Open Water Swim (1/2-mile, 1-mile, 2-miles). Boca Raton FL. [Information & registration](#). USMS sanctioned: NO

Aug. 20: Swim Hobbs Island (1-mile, 2-miles, 5-miles). Huntsville AL. [Information & registration](#). USMS sanctioned: yes

Sept. 9: Swim for Alligator Lighthouse (8-miles). Islamorada FL. [Information & registration](#) USMS sanctioned: NO

Sept. 16: Upstate Splash Charity Open Water Swim (1.2 & 2.4 miles). Salem SC (Lake Jocassee). [Information & registration](#). USMS sanctioned: NO

Sept. 17: Bridges to Bluffs (10K). Knoxville TN. [Information & registration](#). USMS sanctioned: yes

Sept. 24: Swim Around Charleston (12.5-miles). Charleston SC. [Information & registration](#). USMS sanctioned: NO

Oct. 7: Swim the Suck (10-miles). Chattanooga TN. [Information & registration](#). USMS sanctioned: yes



Vertical Ventures outing, or 'upping' June 30 (photo: M. Zabel)

the Grand Central and Edge Districts or challenging oneself to great heights at Vertical Ventures. This group is always up for some healthy competition.

On Sunday, 7/30 at 11:30am, the team will meet at The Deck Bar and Grille (5901 Sun Blvd, St Petersburg, FL 33715-1159) to send off all 48 of our swimmers who are heading off to LCM Nationals!

A few more from Coach Gary

Arms As Paddles

Have you ever thought about your arms as paddles? You ought to. When canoeing or kayaking, a paddle is used for directing movement. It's held perpendicular to the surface of the water and the paddler tries to keep it that way until each stroke of the paddle is finished.

Well, it's the same with pulling. While many slip their arms through the water, the best swimmers try to have maximum resistance, knowing that the greater the pressure, the better. So, if you have little feeling on your palms and forearms, you're probably slipping your elbows back during the pull phase.

A good remedy is to concentrate on your forearm pressure. Try to keep it the same throughout the pull. And remember, the first part of the arm motion is a pull but, once the arm passes the shoulder, it's a push backward. If you watch most beginners, they'll pull maybe up to the shoulder and then slip their arm's backward, missing out on at least half the propulsion they could have had with a high elbow and finishing their stroke.

Finally, do an online search for free videos that show underwater pulls from some of the best swimmers. They might make it look easy but they also are doing it correctly. Keep that in mind, and you'll become a much better swimmer.

The Kick

While the kick doesn't give us much propulsion, our feet and legs do balance us, help us keep our momentum, and they're vital to the finish of any event. With that said, next time you have a kick set, make it specific to your races and training. Don't just kick mindlessly, make it work for you.

For instance, if you sprint, then you need to practice sprint kicking. A long-distance slow kick is just the opposite of what you're going to be doing in a race and it will help little when you put a greater effort into your kicks. Instead, kick some sets very hard and allow for active recovery. That's where you ease up, don't stop, but allow your legs to recover so you can sprint again. Try it and see.

Body pH

I've written about this before and lately have helped a number of athletes by explaining what happens to our bodies. Take PH, or the acidity/alkalinity of our bodies. If we get too acidic, the term used is "Acidosis". That's where you can't relax, sleep gets difficult, and you'll never have your best times because you've lost the fluidity of movement.

So, what can you do to keep your PH balanced? Since we're mostly water, take a look at any pool. If it's not balanced PH-wise, then the water smells, tastes weird, leaches chemicals from the tiles and grout, it's milky, etc. We are like the pool. If we balance our PH, especially prior to competition, we'll have better races and recovery.

But how can we do that? By diet. Most foods are either acidic or alkali to some degree or another. If you go online and find the PH of various foods, then you'll know what to eat so as to keep balanced PH-wise. And, by having a diet balanced PH-wise, you'll enjoy better performances and life will be much better than if your PH isn't balanced.

OK, so how can you know your PH? Go to the vitamin discount stores or pharmacy and buy some Nitrazene Paper. Each small roll comes with a chart. All you do is tear off a small portion and wet it with your tongue (before teeth brushing or eating/drinking anything). That will tell you what your PH is at a given moment. To change your PH, simply eat whatever foods are high or lower in PH and, over just a couple of days, your PH will change, and you'll feel better.

I could go on with a few other tasty tidbits but I think you get the point. PH is important and vital to your performances. From experience and research, I've found that no one gets their best times when too acidic. Best times usually come when your PH is balanced. Nuff said.

"Why Are They So Fast?"

We look at fast swimmers and often wonder why they're so much faster than we are. Without getting too technical, the biggest reasons are as follows:

- A. They're younger than we are.

- B. They train more than we do.
- C. Their stroke technique is superior to ours.
- D. They have no jobs, families, no extra weight, to stop them, while we certainly do.
- E. They're more driven, have greater opportunities.
- F. They listen to their coaches. I asked the Dad of an Olympian and that's what he told me.
- G. Due to the simplicity of their lives, they're more mentally focused on swimming than we are. To us, there are more important things in life. But, to a younger swimmer, that is their life.

Outside Lanes



(photo: championsmojo.com)

Sherri Bogue on Champion's Mojo!

Listen to Sherri's interview with Kelly Palace and Maria Parker, as she shares her successful weight loss journey. She is

an inspiration to us all! The recording can be found [here](#).



(photo: A. Harmon)

Hats Off to Alyssa Harmon!

Congratulations to Alyssa on receiving her Masters of Arts in English from the University of West Florida! She completed her degree while working full-time and swimming in Nationals meets as well. That's a triathlon in itself.



Good Luck Summer Nationals Team!

We're sending forty-eight of our swimmers to Sarasota from August 2-6! Wish your teammates luck and keep up to date on their progress at this [link](#).

We will be represented by Robert Beach 93, Peter Betzer 81, Sherri Bogue 59, Dawn Clark 59, Kern Davis 69, Jim Esposito 60, Marina Falcone 36, Linda Felton 73, Lisa Flanagan 61, Stephan Freeman 67, Stephanie Gibson 40, Jeffrey Gould 60, Alyssa Harmon 26, Russell Hawkins 37, Alison Hayden 52, Scott Hensley 41, Eric Herman 52, Mitchel Hoffman 70,

Megan Howson 27, Dick Keiser 79, Nancy Kiernan 69, Cheryl Kupan 59, Anna Lopez 43, Noah Manera 25, Macarena Martin Mayor 25, Chelsea Nauta 35, Christopher Nelson 46, Matt Nixon 57, Joseph Novak 46, Charlotte Petersen 59, Claire Piazza 26, Tom Pollock 40, Noelle Ponce 55, Allison Retotar 36, Greg Salomon 61, Kevin Schutz 60, Michael Smith 66, Sharon Steinmann 65, Bill Stephens 72, Christopher Stickle 33, Sarah Swoch 38, Paula Texel 53, Robert Tullman 59, Valerie Valle 46, Kenneth Wazyniak 39, Tiffany Weidner 38, Karen Westerman 56, and Michael Zabel 63.

Go SPM!

SPM Officers

President

Mike Zabel

Vice President

Lisa Flanagan

Secretary

Kathy Selles

Treasurer

Brooke Bowman

Board Members

Ananda Bergeron

Tabitha Brandt

Megan Howson

Chris Stickle

Valerie Valle

Coaches

Head Coach

Fred Lewis

Assistant Coach

Gary Bastie