

## **The curiosity of March swimming**

*By Bill Davis, SwimMAC Carolina Coach*

Late winter/early spring is a special season for swimming. Besides the weather being frequently changeable, there are changeable swimmers in the water to coach.

For year-round Masters competitors, March is when championship training is culminating. This means months of hard yardage are being replaced by race pace work and more stroke specific workouts. For newer swimmers who have joined the team in the past few months, March brings increased confidence and the ability to go more yardage. For triathletes and open water specialists, the month begins serious yardage training as the summer race season approaches. This can bring competing goals for a team.



For clubs around the state, this can pose unique coaching challenges, especially if lane space is limited. At SwimMAC Carolina we are fortunate to be supported by a head coach, David Marsh, who believes strongly in Masters and dedicates ample lane space for our swimmers. But, many clubs try to jam all this in with few lanes, and competing interests.

So, how do we all swim in harmony, stay out of each other's way, and still maintain a team atmosphere? The answer is threefold – purpose, patience, and persistence.

First, let's talk about purpose. There will be workouts that are not specifically tailored to your upcoming goals. But, that does not mean you have to proclaim "garbage yardage" or swim mad. Take a look at a set and figure out how you can keep the intervals but adjust the goals. For example, if you are faced with a long aerobic IM set but need to do sprint work, swim part of each IM fast in your stroke. Then, hang on the wall for the duration of the interval.

Next, there is patience. This means you need to recognize that there simply will be days where the workout will not be suited to your goals and it is hard to adjust. On these days, do the best you can with what you are given realizing a better set is just around the corner. Or, support your teammates' goals that day. Or, hit the hot tub a little early.

Lastly, be persistent. No matter the day or the goals, stick to your plan and your swimming. Over many months of hard training, your persistence will be rewarded at your next race or by completing a harder set you did not think was possible.

And, if the above advice does not work for you there is the fourth "P." It is produce, as in produce a pool in your backyard, where every workout will be just as you want it.