New Calendar for Sports

By Harry DeLong

How would you like to have a web calendar that allows you to track swimming, running, biking, socials, swim board meetings, actually any kind of athletic event. In addition, how would you like one that allows you to identify similar events across the state and one where, if you decide you want to participate in one of the events, will allow you to post it to your Google Calendar?

The Workout group, Raleigh Area Masters (RAM) has been using such a calendar for several months and found it a very useful tool and its potential toward swimming and other sports quite exciting. This paper describes how we use the calendar. The potential for expansion of capabilities is to be covered by a second and more complete discussion. The RAM calendar for June is shown below and its web address is: http://www.ncmasters.org/ram/calendar.html

The calendar is the product of MyTrainLocal (http://www.mytrainlocal.com/home.php) and is available for free.

RAM uses the calendar to show all practice times, locations, coaches, maps to the pool. In addition RAM also lists swim meets, team socials, and board meetings. The calendar is easy to update and change to reflect changing conditions, coaching, pool availability and time changes.

One available feature, not yet used, is for swimmers to indicate whether or not they plan to attend a practice or swim meet. The obvious advantage here is it would allow coaches to know in advance of practice the number planning on attending and for coaches and swimmers to know how many will be attending a swim meet. Indeed, it is possible to see a list of those that have indicated they will be swimming at the meet. Great for meet planning.

Since the calendar is available on the web, it can be viewed by anyone who has web access. To

avoid security problems, the access is limited to viewing only. No changes can be made. To indicate attendance at an event, users must first register through MyTrainLocal and their application to join must be approved. This only grants limited access to indicate attendance and, if the user wishes, they can then set up their own display of the calendar to include other activities in the display. Large scale changes require someone to be the designated organizer.

- **What is displayable on the calendar**

The calendar, as currently structured, is organized to provide information about all types of events on a variety of sports. It can provide information on workouts on:

- Swims
- Runs
- Biking
- Fitness programs
- Socials
- Bricks
- Socials (Swimmers need socials)
- Other

The calendar can be easily displayed by Day (with map), Week, Month and a list (?).
People who access to the calendar can join the calendar system and indicate on the calendar their plan to attend.

Displays calendars include:

- My calendar
- Race Directory – This shows all races within time period chosen
- RAM calendar (used for this article).
- A listing of workout groups – This is information where you can gain additional information of workouts of additional groups. This list covers a selectable distance from your location. For this article, the location is Raleigh and zip code used is 27615.

- **Web Calendar display**

MyTrainLocal hosts all calendars. The RAM calendar is actually a link to MyTrainLocal with the display defaults set. A workout group without a web page can achieve the same by simply creating the calendar, setting the display default and then distributing to workout group members the web address for the calendar. This approach allows calendar users to readily access other organization calendars and events--a feature that reduces the amount of entries required of the calendar organizer yet it expands the types of events that can be displayed on the calendar. An example, if the workout group has a large number of runners or bikers or triathletes, the display can be set to display events of all of these sports, to include competitions within a set radius. The information is simply selected and MyTrainLocal displays the information on the workout group calendar.

This last feature suggests that all swims over the entire North Carolina LMSC could be readily available for all swimmers registered with MyTrainLocal. The organization hosting the event would enter the information and all groups with access would have it automatically added to the local workout group's calendar.

If there are any questions on this topic, please feel free to contact me (Harry DeLong) at: harrydelong@nc.rr.com. I will do my best to respond as quickly as possible. And no, I have no personal investment in this application, I am simply a user.

I am also planning a second article to discuss additional features of this calendar feature. The article will discuss additional features to include possible identifying sanctioned or unsanctioned events, state-wide display, providing notice of early registration rewards or discounts and potential

sponsor incentives.