

Across The Lanes

The Chairman's (Editor's) Lane By Joe Gosha

This is it! My last act as Chairman of the LMSC for NC. But actually, it is simply one more in what could turn out to be a long history ('good Lord willin' and the creek don't rise') of 'acts' undertaken as the LMSC's newsletter editor. I'm truly grateful for having had the opportunity to serve you as Chairman, but quite frankly, I am MUCH more excited about the opportunity I now have as newsletter editor to turn the spotlight on many of you.

You know, you are truly an amazing bunch of people, and your swimming is just part of it. As a North Carolina Master's swimmer I have gotten to know a Johns Hopkins Doctor, a psychotherapist trained at the Jungian Institute in Switzerland, and the head of a volunteer organization that serves young women through the sport of running. But

wait, that's just three people from one team! Who knows how many other amazing stories, backgrounds, and achievements there are on that team, much less the other teams that make up our LMSC?

In this issue, among other things, I am especially thrilled to share with you the stories of two of our NC Master's swimmers. One of these is an individual who many of you have probably noted at one or more of our meets, while the other is the story of a swimmer who most of you have probably not noted or heard of in the past. I think you'll agree with me, however, that both stories belong in this newsletter, as both stories show us all that we are in excellent company. Look for Jennifer Vernon (page 2) and Michael Krayer (page 6) in their own words in this edition of Across the Lanes. Make sure to also check out Danielle Newton's great diary regarding an open water swim in Bermuda. **And oh yeah, Happy Swimming!**

IN THIS ISSUE ...

I Am A Swimmer -	Pg 2
Going Postal-	Pg 4
EYE CANDY	Pg 5
Walk On Wonder-	Pg 6
Charlotte Meet-	Pg 7
Secretary's Report-	Pg 8
Coaching Corner-	Pg 9
Postal kudos-	Pg 11
Bermuda diary-	Pg 12
Upcoming events-	Pg 15



A Golden Opportunity for Your Team!

This travelling USMS membership development display is currently making its way around the state. These pictures of it 'set up and working its magic' were taken at the YMCA in New Bern. Look for the display at a pool near you in the not too distant future. And, by the way, if you are aware that no one has yet made arrangements to bring the display to your community, contact Jerry Clark at jerryclark@bellsouth.net to see if you can still take advantage of this free opportunity (all costs are being born by USMS) to introduce more members of your community to the benefits of Master's Swimming.



I AM A SWIMMER

by Jennifer Vernon (Asheville Masters)

(Editor's note—I dare you to read this entire story without either tearing up or letting out a shout! Yes, it is a bit long, but I guarantee you it is worth every bit of time you will invest in it.)

I am a swimmer! Perhaps not one of *those* elite swimmers, but nevertheless I am a swimmer. These words ring in my head daily now.

Turning 50 in July of 2007 hit me like a wall of bricks! Having been a procrastinator about exercise for many years, I realized that NOW had arrived and had become the LATER referred to in the mental phrase “I’ll do something to get physically fit *later*.” I truly realized it was now or never and the window of opportunity to extend and enhance the quality of my life well into my senior years was closing. Or perhaps as it suddenly hit me...opening.

I have always loved the water and had swimming lessons as a small child thanks to my mother who, herself, went from being a non-swimmer to an instructor in one summer at the age of 35. She saw to it that her four children learned to swim early. Our family had a membership to the old Asheville Country Club and I lived about a three-house walk away, so I did spend my summers in the beautiful outdoor pool swimming, diving and splashing around and getting sunburned. In the years to follow, I went through the entire Red Cross swimming progression program, eventually earning the Water Safety Instructor title at age 19 at Lake Eden in the North Carolina Mountains. I still did not see myself as a real swimmer, however. I never thought of myself as an athlete of any sort. I mean, I didn’t really even learn to ride a bicycle until I was 28!

Having my WSI did help me get the occasional lifeguard duties, but nothing really clicked other than the fact I liked being in the pool. Off and on during my 20’s, 30’s and 40’s I would intermittently and inconsistently lap swim at whatever pool I had a membership to at the time. Never more than 30 minutes of the same, boring routine and then off to the showers I went, feeling good that I had done at least *something* physical. I would sometimes go many months at a time without seeing a pool. That was about the extent of my athletic career.

Sometimes the universe has a way of giving you just what you need when you need it most. Fast forward to Spring of 2007. I work as a hand therapist in a hand surgery practice and have the opportunity to meet many people from all

walks of life. The topic of Masters swimming had come up recently with two different patients on two different days. Both of them told me that Masters swimming was definitely open to swimmers of my level and that there would indeed be a lane for me and I would be welcomed. I felt an interest brewing, but still thought I wasn’t good enough and I certainly couldn’t swim that early in the morning.

One of the surgeons I work with had become a quite accomplished swimmer with Asheville Masters and I had seen his body transform over the years into that of a fit athlete. One morning when he and I were talking about swimming (I had told him on other occasions that I liked to swim and yes, I should get back in the pool, blah, blah, blah) I asked him what time he got up in the morning to swim with the team. When he told me 4:45 AM I said “I can’t do that!” His reply to me was “Why not, it’s a free country.” I doubt he realized the power his words would have on me. It was at that moment I realized it really was a matter of choice. After all, where did I really have to be at 5:00 in the morning?

I made a pact with one of the above mentioned patients who swam on the team to meet her at the pool the Saturday morning before Memorial Day. I showed up with my suit, cap and goggles and hopped into the pool, not knowing another person in the pool. I was greeted and introduced to a few others and shortly found myself at the other end of the pool. Although I didn’t really know what a 50 was, I managed to complete 15 of them that day with numerous stops to rest and catch my breath, the other swimmers leaving me in their wakes. I even got a few high fives that day. Wow, I thought. If I keep doing this, I couldn’t help but get better. So I returned on Monday and again 3 times a week for more of the same. I found myself looking forward to the challenge of doing more than I had the previous time. (continued on next page)



There was team talk about the 2nd Annual Steve Barden Memorial Swim Meet here in Asheville in September. I didn't know who Steve Barden was nor had I ever been to any type of swim meet. Someone on the team asked me if I planned to compete. I was taken aback and sheepishly asked coach Ruth Battle what one had to do or accomplish to qualify to swim in the meet. She replied "Just say you want to do it." Wow! Right then and there I said yes, I will swim in the meet. And in fact upon hearing there would be an open water component, I said yes to that as well, remembering my training at Lake Eden 31 years before. If I could do rescues in murky lake water then, I saw no reason I couldn't swim ½ mile in a lake now.

I now had a tangible goal. I was in training for my first swim meet and had less than three months to prepare. I made it a point to go to bed earlier and get out of bed when the alarm went off, avoiding the snooze button. I set my mind that swimming regularly was now a part of my life. My only real worry about the event was fitting into the tiny team suit that by all appearances was two sizes too small, but that was as large as they make team suits. I was going to cram myself into it or else and I was going to complete the ½ mile open water, some relays and a few pool events and that was that.

The big day finally arrived and we went to Biltmore Lake for the open water race. I was given a numbered cap, a number drawn on my arms and thigh and a fake tattoo with the team logo. I was one of them! In my mind, by completing the ½ mile course, I would be winning the race. I had neglected a couple of important factors, though. 31 years is a long time to go without lake swimming. I had not taken a test swim prior to race day to get a feel for it. I had also not taken into account the effects of current or the lack of visibility in murky water. We did have a few minutes of warm up in the lake but I immediately found myself with very shallow breathing, and difficulty swimming with my face in the water. I tried to be slow and deliberate and calm myself down so I could be ready to do this. I kept telling myself I could do it and was determined I would do it.

At the start of the race I smiled all the way into the water, and at first found myself swimming right along in a sea of colored caps. I was where I needed to be. It wasn't too long after that, though, that I realized everyone else seemed to have passed me and I was swimming alone. I started to have shallow breathing again and felt a mild panic come across me. I kept going, but occasionally turned on my side to do side stroke so I could keep my face out of the water. I had never felt panic while swim-

ming.

As I approached the first turn and also the first rescue kayak, I found myself instinctively aiming for the kayak for help. I swam to the boat and wrapped my arms around the bow, breathing rapid and shallow. The kayaker asked me if I was OK. I said I was having a problem. He offered to assist me out of the lake, but I told him I just needed a minute to collect myself. What seemed like minutes passed, but it probably was a matter of seconds. I said goodbye and thank-you to the kayaker and off I went. I was a bit more relaxed and centered. I was **GOING** to finish and that was all there was to it. There would be no turning back now. I just couldn't accept failure at this point.

I also remembered someone having told me it really didn't matter what stroke you used, that freestyle meant you were free to choose. So I decided to choose side stroke. This is not a Masters stroke or a competitive stroke, but one I had perfected in my Red Cross drills as a rescue stroke. I swam as long and strong as I possibly could. Having my face out of the water was comforting. At one point after leaving the first kayaker, I looked up into the sky. It was an overcast day with huge cumulous clouds in ever-changing formations. When I looked up in the midst of my self talk, the clouds I saw resembled a giant Buddha or other such spiritual figure with a large round body and a smaller head on top. In some strange way I found that very calming and just knew I really had nothing to worry about. I wasn't going to drown. I knew how to swim and I knew I could finish the course. It didn't matter to me at that moment what my time would be.

I made it a point to speak to all five or six kayakers as I passed them. I had the feeling they had all seen my struggle and were keeping their eyes on me. So I took a second to tell each of them that I was OK and that this was much more difficult than I had imagined.

So, alternating sides with my side stroke, I finished the course. In fact, I finished it almost exactly like my estimated seed time, which was a miracle in my mind since I had struggled so much in the beginning and took time out to collect myself. My first words upon exiting the lake were "That was really hard." But I had done it! Was I accomplished or what! I can't describe the thrill and surprise I felt upon receiving an award for 3rd place in my age group. Those early mornings were paying off.

The remainder of the meet was held in more familiar ter-

Check Out These Hotties!!

Asheville Masters Swimming decided to have a little fun with the well known TYR "It's Personal" slogan.

Just about every swimmer is familiar with the famous swimmers who are portrayed in USMS SWIMMER magazine. They include a hand written note from the athlete about their personal or team work-out ethics.

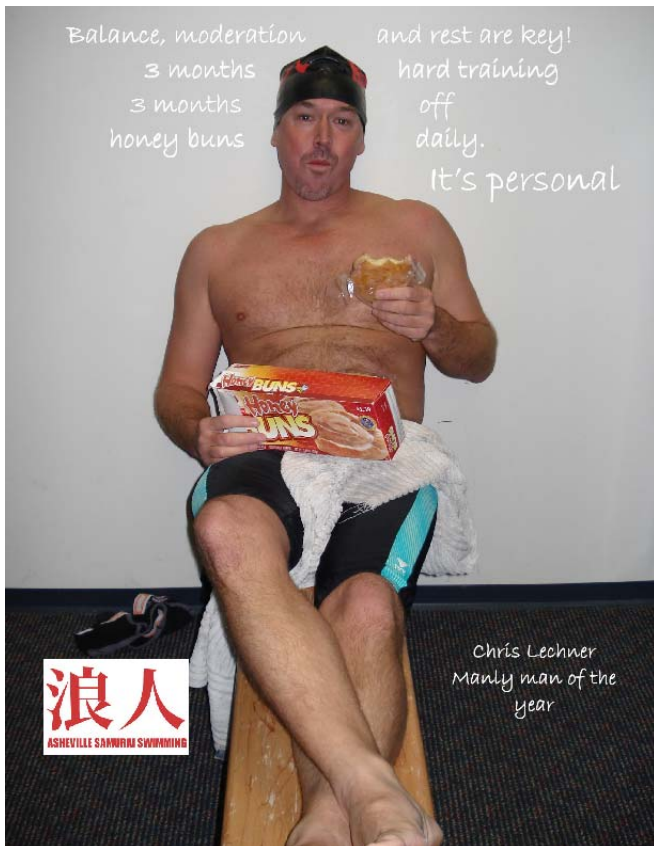
AMS decided to take pictures of their swimmers, add their samurai logo instead of the TYR symbol, and a quote that stretches the truth just enough to make it humorous and fun; we are a fun group!

Seven swimmers were photographed and their 8x10 glossies were displayed at the AMS annual Christmas party. Of course this was without their knowledge and they had nothing to do with writing their own personal messages.

Ruth Battle, our AMS coach and Master Swimmers Kenet Adamson and Chris Lechner were chosen to be the first AMS LANEMATES of the quarter for 2008. We intend to post three new AMS swimmers each quarter in "Across The Lanes" for everyone's enjoyment.

Our intention is to have a picture taken of every team member which will be laminated and displayed at the pool where we train as a group. We also will continue to write the swimmers comment's for them or it just might get serious!

Jim Hinton



WALK ON WONDER -

Michael Krayer

Editor's Introduction—

At October's Autumn Splash in Hillsborough, the two fastest lanes in the fastest heat of the Men's 200 meter freestyle were occupied by two imposing European natives named 'Mike'. Mikael Orn, who is originally from Sweden and who now swims for DAMA, is an Olympic medalist (Moscow 1980) who is also enshrined in the Arizona State University Hall of Fame (expect an article about Mikael in an upcoming ATL). Michael Krayer, a native of Germany who now swims for RAM, is a graduate student at NC State in Raleigh who swam undergrad for UNC Wilmington, and who was named as the Colonial Athletic Conference's Male Scholar Athlete of the Year for both 2004-2005 and 2005-2006. When I asked Michael the series of questions that form the basis of the following article that he has written for us, I thought I knew what his answers would look like—'European superstar age group swimmer, heavily recruited, etc., etc.' The answers I got surprised me—like they may surprise you—and only added to my admiration of this multi-talented, multi-faceted, young man.

IN HIS OWN WORDS

I started my competitive swimming career with a relatively small club in Hofheim Germany when I was 6 years old. I eventually swam for a very talented young coach, Adam Olle, who made the best out of the limited pool and practice facility space we had. Two of my greatest accomplishments as a young swimmer were to take 3rd in the 100 backstroke at junior National Championships when I was 13 and to swim in the Junior National Finals in the 50 freestyle when I was 17.

I had an older brother who went to college in the United States and swam and ran cross country for Florida Atlantic University. I also wanted to come to the US for school and was looking for a University on the East Coast, which had a marine biology program and a swimming program. UNC Wilmington was an obvious choice. I was a walk on my freshmen year and showed big improvements considering the more intense practices in college, which I had never experienced before, except for the occasional training trips with the Hofheimer Swimming club in Germany.

My English was sufficient when I came for my freshmen year, since I had done an exchange program to Hardin, Montana for 9 months when I was in High School. Freshmen and Sophomore level classes are pretty basic and I had covered much of the same material before in German gymnasium



(high school). Once I decided to do a double major in marine biology and chemistry, my workload increased and the subjects got much harder. I also did summer school for a couple of year to finish both majors in time.

My most memorable swims at UNCW were the CAA record setting 400 freestyle relay, which I led off with a new UNCW freshmen record (which was also my fastest time in all four years in college for the 100 free), my 50 free individual CAA championship my junior year, and taking second in the 200 free my senior year just touching out my good mate Tim Lane.

With my Ph.D. in Chemistry I hope to work in the pharmaceutical industry eventually. I don't know yet where I would like to go (Germany or US), but once I have finished my degree I will apply to a variety of different places. This year I received a Fellowship, meaning that I do not have to teach freshmen classes to get assistance from NCSU, which fact has given me more time for my classes and research, and also for swimming. I don't nearly train as much as I did in college but I try to swim four times a week and lift weights and do other dry land exercises three times a week. I feel like I can swim just as fast with less training. The only benefit you get from swimming 60-70000 yards a week is that you can swim a multi-day invitational or championship meet with prelims, finals and relays every day, without breaking down as much. Now I can concentrate on swimming the 50

free as fast as I can. I figure it will take a 22.9 to get into finals at the (upcoming) German (Olympic) trials. My best time is a 23.22, and dropping a couple of tenths is well within reach.

My current goal is to get stronger and keep a good feel for the water. I will swim a few meets in the spring before the German trials in April.

I'm a very active person, I love to play soccer, basketball, ski, snowboard or just go for a run. But swimming is my life and I will always cherish what the sport has done for me. I always get mad that I see nonsense sport on TV like poker, eating contests, or scrabble, but rarely see swimming. I personally think swimming is a very marketable

sport. People love watching swimming during the Olympics, so why can't we make it more attractive any other time

**Best wishes to you in the German trials,
Michael!**

We all truly hope to see you in Beijing!

Online Meet Registration for Charlotte —a first for the LMSC for NC

Charlotte SwimMasters Sunbelt Championships Charlotte, NC, Saturday and Sunday, January 26 and 27, 2008

This is the first Masters's meet in North Carolina to provide an online entry system. The host chapter, Charlotte Swim Masters, asks that you use the online system, and let your friends know about it so they can use it, too. The system provides for ease of entering, and accuracy with all facets of your entries. As Jerry Clark, our newly elected LMSC for NC Chairperson has said, "We encourage everyone to use it because any uncertainty about seed times, registration numbers, spelling of names, etc. is eliminated. An instant confirmation is sent to each person who enters. Simply go to www.ncmasters.org and click on the Sunbelt online entry system, fill in the required fields, order your long sleeved shirts and it's done!"

Please note that you must have a current 2008 USMS Registration to compete in the Charlotte meet. Also, ONE EVENT REGISTRATIONS will not be available at this meet! Please do not wait until the last minute to send in your 2008 USMS Registration. Allow at least seven days for the processing of your 2008 USMS Registration form.

With 818 registrations by year's end, 2007 was a banner year for the LMSC for NC. We are expecting an even better year in 2008. Make sure to send in your 2008 USMS Registration if you have not already done so.

Secretary's Report

NC LMSC Meeting October 27, 2007 – 2:40 p.m. Triangle Sports Plex, Hillsborough, NC Minutes

Attendees: Joe Gosha (Chairman), Jerry Clark (Treasurer & representing CSM), Elizabeth Nowak (Secretary & representing THAT), George Simon (Registrar), Ruth Battle (AMS), Greta Van Meeteren (TRYM) [via phone], Danielle Newton (DAMA)

Meeting was called to order at 2:40 p.m. after the conclusion of the 2007 Autumn Splash SCM Meet in Hillsborough. Joe thanked everybody for their willingness to meet/conference call in today. Everybody introduced themselves to the group.

Minutes from the April 1, 2007 meeting were read and unanimously approved.

Membership Fees (George)

LMSC of NC membership hit an all-time high of 818!!! Great work by all in continuing to support and encourage swimmers to join the LMSC of NC!!

Current (2007) membership fees are \$30 (of which \$20 goes to USMS and \$10 to LMSC of NC).

Beginning January 1, 2008, USMS fees are increasing \$25 which ultimately causes the total fee to increase to \$35 (if LMSC of NC were to continue with the \$10 fee).

Discussed the need to start reporting in the LMSC of NC financials on a separate line item for LMSC of NC dollars vs. USMS dollars. The Treasurer will start reporting these separately for the 2008 fiscal year.

George reiterated that the Treasurer for the LMSC of NC must be different than the Registrar. This is currently the case for the LMSC of NC as Jerry is the Treasurer and George is the Registrar.

The LMSC of NC should NOT be paying "Club" fees out of its bank account. Currently there are 2 "Clubs" in the LMSC of NC; the North Carolina Masters Swimming (NCMS) Club and the US Coast Guard Club. Thus, a separate NCMS banking account will be set up by Jerry so there is a division of accounts for the NCMS Club.

Discussion surrounded as to whether the \$10 LMSC of NC fee should be increased or not.

Discussion surrounded the development of adding an optional donation to the membership application to help fund the NCMS account. These monies will be used to help offset the costs of relay entry fees and other associated costs at both SCY and LCM National Swimming Championships and other NCMS club items.

Motion was passed to keep the NC LMSC fee to \$10 for 2008 fiscal year and to add an optional donation to the 2008 membership application to help fund the NCMS account.

2) Nominations for LMSC for NC Board Officers for 2008 & 2009 (All)

Discussion surrounded various nominations for LMSC of NC Officers for a 2-year term (2008 and 2009)

Motion was passed to approve the following Officers:

Jerry Clark (CMS)– Chairman

Ruth Battle (AMS)– Vice Chairman

Elizabeth Nowak (THAT) – Treasurer

Greta van Meeteren (TYRM) – Secretary

George Simon has so graciously agreed to continue as our Registrar/Webmaster, Joe Gosha will take on the responsibilities of Editor for the LMSC of NC quarterly newsletter, and Henry Stewart will continue as the Top Ten & Records Chairperson. Thanks to all current Officers for their dedication throughout 2006 & 2007!!! We look forward to Jerry's leadership and continued increased involvement from team reps throughout the LMSC of NC at all future meetings.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectively submitted,
Elizabeth Nowak, Secretary

COACHING CORNER

by Griff Helfrich,

THAT
MASTERS
COACH



In this issue of *Across The Lanes* we are pleased to inaugurate a new column entitled **Coaching Corner**. We are grateful to Coach Griff Helfrich from Tar Heel Aquatic Team for his invaluable input for this column.

From the THAT website we find that:

Griff was born and raised in Williamsburg, VA and began a passion for competitive swimming at an early age. He was a member of the Virginia Swimming Board or Directors from 1999-2001 as an athlete representative. Griff gravitated from Virginia to North Carolina to attend UNC-Chapel Hill where he was a varsity swimmer. Griff swam with UNC and THAT before a shoulder injury cut short his career. Since then, he coached swimming part-time with THAT and Durham Academy before becoming a full-time coach at THAT in the Spring of '06. The son of teachers, Griff graduated from UNC with a b.a. in Philosophy in 2006. His hobbies include listening to and playing music, and various board sports. He brings to the pool deck a true passion for the sport of swimming, an expertise in swimming done right and a pure enjoyment of the athletes he coaches.

Many thanks to Griff for this great addition to the newsletter!

From Griff, here's how it works...

What follows below is in two parts. The first part is one of my workouts. It is followed by a description of what is going on with the workout, explaining what is being emphasized and why, and giving a few tips and whatnot.

Masters 12/18 Free

Quote: "With self-discipline most anything is possible." - Theodore Roosevelt

300 loose, middle 100 kick

Warm Up

Distance

100-200-300-400-500-500-400-300-200-100 @ :15 rest
pull the even distances, descend effort to all out last 100

A Lanes

2 x thru:

100 sidekick @ :10 rest
100 10/3/10 @ :10 rest
100 salute drill @ :20 rest
10 x 75 descend by 3's, last one all out @ 1:25
easy 50

4 x: 4 x 25 variable sprint kick @ :40

B Lanes

2 x thru:

100 sidekick @ :10 rest
100 10/3/10 @ :10 rest
100 salute drill @ :20 rest
8 x 75 descend by 4's, last one all out @ 1:35
easy 50

4 x: 4 x 25 variable sprint kick @ :40/ :45

C Lanes

2 x thru:

100 sidekick @ :10 rest
100 10/3/10 @ :10 rest
100 salute drill @ :20 rest
6 x 75 descend by 3's, last one all out @ 1:45/ 2:00
easy 50

All our workouts start with a quote. These range in subject matter but usually have something to do with self-improvement. I had a coach in high school who always did this and it gave you something to think about when you were staring at the bottom of the pool for hours on end. Most of our workouts follow a similar pattern of a short general loosen into drills to set up proper technique, followed by a main set and then usually ending with a short hypoxic set for those who have time. Our workouts are only an hour, and so for the “A” lanes, our goal is to be at 3k meters or above each workout. The “B” lanes are about 2.5k – 3k and the “C” lanes 1.5k-2.5k per workout.

In this workout, you basically have two options: you can do a long, smooth aerobic set or a more focused, technique-intensive workout. We like to do long, aerobic freestyle with the whole team early in the week to loosen the body up for the rest of the week's training.

The distance option on this workout uses pull throughout the set to work on freestyle technique. Pull is great freestyle technique work when done well, and when mixed with regular freestyle swim can really improve touch on water and connective body strength.

The non-distance option of this workout uses drills to set up for a shorter, more focused set. We use a lot of cycles in our training, it gives a swimmer the opportunity to get a feel for the set and then come back and really work everything a little better a second or third time through. The drills in this workout are designed to improve long-axis body balance in the water by kicking the body from side to side. Many people think freestyle in swum on their stomach while it is actually a side-to-side rotating motion and all of these drills work on using a strong kick to set the body in a good, balanced position and maintaining that position while incorporating the arms into the process.

The non-distance workout also has more kick in it. I have found that Masters swimmers as a whole do not kick as well as they should, and so I try to find ways of making kick a little more fun than just repeats on intervals. This kick set is made up of short repeats working on changing speed with your legs. You can mix strokes by rounds of four if you want to work on something other than freestyle kick. I think kick is one area all Masters swimmers could improve upon. Leg work is always great aerobic training and will improve your swimming technique immensely if it is stuck to as a staple of your in the water training.

Happy Swimming – Griff Helfrich

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- USMS conducts not only 'Open Water' but also 'Postal' Long Distance National Championships, and that,
- One North Carolina Master's Swimmer competed and placed in all five Postal Long Distance National Championship events in 2007, and that,
- To the best of this editor's knowledge, he is the first North Carolina Masters swimmer to ever accomplish that feat?

That swimmer's name is **John Flack (THAT)**, and you can read more about his accomplishments by checking out the Long Distance National Championships page on the USMS website. To go there, simply copy the following web address into your browser:

www.usms.org/longdist/ldnats07/.

AND WHILE YOU ARE VISITING WWW.USMS.ORG ...

...be sure to check out the discussion forums page. You'll find some great information (workouts, reviews, discussions of technique, etc.), and great entertainment. (One particularly unusual and funny current discussion revolves around whether or not a male swimmer can or should wear his speedo to a waterpark—who knows, maybe he is a candidate for Asheville Master's 'Lanemate of the Month.')

LMSC - NC Officers and Staff

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Do you recognize any of these people? (And are those some new kind of power drinks they seem to be enjoying?)

They are our North Carolina Master's Swimming contingent to this past October's "Round the Sound" Open Water swimming event that was held in Bermuda.

Their story, as told by DAMA Swimmer/Coach Danielle Newton, follows below.



Ten Triangle-Area Swimmers Attend Bermuda Open Water Swim

Written By: Danielle Newton, DAMA Head Coach

As soon as the open water race announcement hit the inboxes of DAMA swimmers who'd participated in previous international open water swims, such as St. Croix and Bonaire, word spread like wildfire through our team email listserv about the Bermuda "Round the Sound" swim. Longtime DAMA swimmer and open water enthusiast, Gretchen Van De Carr, was the first to stir up interest. In a matter of days, we'd shared more than 20 emails amongst the team, all of us talking up ideas of sharing hotel rooms, sharing airline deals we'd seen online (as low as \$240 with 2 stops from RDU airport) and other travel logistics. In total, we had 5 swimmers from DAMA that were attending – Heidi Williams, Tommy and Lindsay Gainer, Gretchen and myself.

In addition to DAMA swimmers, the THAT swim team had 4 swimmers set to attend – Elizabeth Nowak, Martha Montgomery, Tommy Bastable, and Kacie Wallace, plus one of their coaches, Jen Gawler. RAM swimmer Billy Su, was also geared up to make it a swimming vacation that would not soon be forgotten.

The race was to take place on October 21 in Harrington Sound, which sits southeast of the capital city, Hamilton. Five race distances were offered: 0.8K, 2K, 4K, 7.25K and 10K. The host resort hotel, Grotto Bay, was offering greatly reduced rates. Gretchen and myself, along with our spouses/significant others, traveled to and roomed together in Bermuda. The following is a diary-style synopsis of our trip. I hope you enjoy reading it!

Thursday, October 18:

Gretchen, Jeb, Rob (my husband) and myself flew into Bermuda in the evening. Getting through customs wasn't as bad as we'd predicted. We took a cab from the airport to the Grotto Bay hotel, which took all of a whopping 3 minutes to get to! After dumping our luggage in the room, we went out to the resort terrace to join a good size group of swimmers who were already socializing. Randy Nutt, the race organizer for the U.S. based swimmers, appeared shortly thereafter and announced the location of the following morning's swim. The socializing tapered off an hour or so later, and we left to explore the resort grounds.

As we walked toward the hotel pool, we happened upon 2 caves (hence the name – Grotto Bay), one of which was lighted and open to exploring, the other was dark, and only open during daylight hours. We were amazed at the cave's geologic formations and the crystal clear water! It was so beautiful!

Friday, October 19:

When the morning sun shone and woke us, we jumped up excitedly, like kids' on Christmas morning, eager to see the presents under the tree. We walked out onto our 3rd floor balcony, and fully took in the view. "Wow!" and "It's so beautiful!" and "Let's get moving, guys!" were some of the comments that followed.

A few swimmers, eager to test out the waters and stretch out their cramped-in-coach-class legs, joined in on a morning Pilates workout followed by a 2-3 mile swim. Everyone was making plans on how to spend their day: Gretchen and Jeb planned to go scuba diving, Heidi and others planned to take the bus into

Hamilton to sightsee. Rob and I made plans to rent “pedal cycles” (a regular bicycle) from a local shop in town, and spend the day riding the old Bermuda Rail-Trail.

Our bicycle excursion was excellent. What a beautiful way to see many parts of the island! We passed through many perfectly manicured gardens, old military forts, naval shipyards, and lighthouses. After riding and exploring for 4 hours, we hopped on a ferry that took us back into Hamilton, where we returned the pedal cycles. From there, we hopped on the bus and returned to our hotel room where Gretchen and Jeb were getting a much needed nap.

Our hotel phone rang at 5pm. It was Heidi, calling to invite all of us to a night out on the town. Gretchen and Jeb accepted the offer, while Rob and I declined, instead deciding to make it a romantic night.

So we put on our best outfits – Rob in dress slacks, a crisp new button down and a handsome blazer, and I put on a black cocktail party dress, heeled sandals and <gasp!> ... some makeup! It’s not often that swim coaches find themselves at places where such attire can be worn! Dinner was excellent, albeit expensive. Afterwards, we took our shoes off and walked hand-in-hand, strolling along the beach front. Ahhh, how sweet! < cue cheesy love story music here >

Saturday, October 20:

After eating bagels or oatmeal in our hotel room, we made plans to go snorkeling in Tobacco Bay, not too far from our hotel. The nearest bus stop was in St. George, a town that was the original capital of Bermuda, so there were a few things of interest to stop and see. One such place was the famous “Unfinished Church”.

We made the long walk to Tobacco Bay and snorkeled for a bit, maybe 20 or 30 minutes. We would’ve gone longer, but the water was a little cold. Don’t get me wrong, it was the perfect temperature for an open water race, but not so for gentle breaststroke sculling and fin-assisted kicking! We took a few pictures with Gretchen’s underwater camera, including some of the amazing schools of fish that seemed to border us all around anytime we remained still, and of the beautiful, huge coral reefs everywhere!

Back at the hotel, we caught the arranged tour buses that would take us to the race site, which was the Harrington Sound, near Palmetto Bay resort. Back at the race site, Randy Nutt introduced us to the local open water race

director, Reeve Trott. This Bermuda local told us about the history of the swim and announced that this year marked the 17th annual race. He warned us about the 2 types of jellyfish we might see during our race; regular, mostly harmless “moon jellies”, and the rare, more dangerous, “spaghetti-like” man-o-war type of jelly. You could almost hear everyone gasp at the description, and mutter “I hope I don’t see any tomorrow!”

Then we all departed on separate boats for an ocean cruise to our start locations, where a local would help point out landmarks to use for sighting. For my race, the 4K, the big turn was at a rock named “No Name Rock”, which was a refrigerator-sized rock island a little ways away from the 2K start area. On top of the rock was a big wooden sign with a bright orange arrow pointing you to swim a 90 degree angle around it. Everything else about our race course was pretty mellow.

After the ocean cruise, we had a small social with free beer and wine, homemade dips and snacks, all provided for us by the local Bermuda swim team – the Dolphins. The locals were so awesome to have provided that for us! We really felt great generosity towards them, so a pool of money was collected for us to give to the Dolphins on race day.

Race Day: Sunday, October 21:

Elizabeth, Billy, Martha and I were doing the 4K race. Heidi, Tommy Gainer, Tommy (from THAT) and Kacie were doing the 10K race. Gretchen was doing the 7.25K race, and Lindsay was doing the 2K.

Our races had staggered starts so that we would all finish close together. The weather had been beautiful, mid-to-high 70’s, with bright sunshine, blue skies and few clouds on the previous 3 days, but today was different. The skies were gray, and the sun radiated bleakly through the thick, low-lying clouds. The temperature had dropped to the low 70’s. It seemed as though the rain would hold off for the race. But some wind had picked up, thus causing some choppiness to the water.

The 4K race started, and I started swimming at a moderate-fast pace, sighting every 9 strokes or so. It was fine until about 5 minutes into the swim. Then the choppiness started to eat me alive. I don’t have much experience with open water swimming (my first year, and this was my 4th race), so when the chop picked up, I had a hard time breathing. I had to stop more than a few times to choke out water I’d breathed in, but after a while, I learned to time my breaths with the rise and fall of the chop.

I began to feel lactic acid building up in my triceps from the lack of training for this race. My moderate-fast pace slowed down to a moderate pace, and my stroke form started to get ugly. When I'm tired, I begin to cross over my centerline, most noticeably on my left arm entry. Mix bad form with choppy water and sighting every 9 strokes, and the end result is swimming way off course. When I realized how far off I'd gone, I swam hard and fast back closer to the sound's shore. There, I caught on with 2 men who were swimming a decent pace. I figured I'd use them to sight for me. It began to work until I noticed I was still crossing over and falling to the right of their feet! Frustrated at myself, I began to swim breaststroke for a bit, and found that my long glide timing matched the waves just perfectly, so in essence, I'd do an outswEEP/insweep/breath at the top of a wave, and recover/kick/glide as the wave would crash down and help push me forward. I did breaststroke for a while, and kept up on the 2 guys' feet until my hip flexors and pectorals started to fill with lactic acid, and I got dropped.

I swam into the 2K checkpoint area and looked at my watch, which I'd set to run on stopwatch mode. I almost smacked myself in the face when I saw it report I'd already been swimming for 58 minutes! I thought to myself, "WOW! That was so slow! Those waves were fierce, and I sure did swim off course a lot! I better get moving!" So I took a drink of fresh water offered to me by the race volunteers, and swam off towards the finish line.

I went around "No Name Rock" soon thereafter, and had to switch back to breaststroke for a bit, since it became very shallow. If I'd stuck to freestyle, I would've ended up with coral under my fingernails! At this turn-around point, the water was much more calm – in fact, I don't remember there being any waves. Sighting became easier and I was swimming better in a straight line. I was so exhausted by this point, that I was in auto-pilot mode. I wasn't even thinking about technique or breathing, I was just letting things happen naturally and slowly. I thought about quitting, once, but then I remembered that I'm not a quitter, and that even though I may be swimming slow, I would still finish. I kept thinking of an image of a turtle and the caption..."Slow and steady finishes the race." I also retreated to my tried-and-true mental imagery of The Little Train That Could. "I think I can, I think I can, I think I can – YES! I can!" I know, weird...but so much of distance swimming is mental, especially when you're like me and never train at all.

Near the end, I saw one of those "spaghetti-like" jellies off to my left. It was close, maybe 5 feet away. I immediately stopped, dropped underwater and looked all

around to see if I was in the middle of a horde of them. Luckily, the water is pretty clear, so I can see about 10 feet in front of me. I didn't see any more, so with my heart rate at 200 beats per minute (ha!) I resumed swimming towards the finish. I kept my head position a little higher after that, just in case another jelly decided to swim in my path!

About 5 minutes later, I finally crossed the finish line. I looked at my watch – 1 hour, 37 minutes! Wow, so my first 2K took 58 minutes, and my last 2K took 39 minutes! And to think of how exhausted I was after the first 2K! If only I hadn't gone off course so much, or I'd swum better in the chop, or I'd trained even a little bit for the swim...I would've done so much better! Oh well, it felt great to be finished!

The rain was still holding off, but the weather had turned colder, mid-60's maybe. I bundled up in a dry towel, and hung out with the rest of the Triangle crowd, sharing stories of our swims. The best thing to drink at this time would've been water, but we couldn't seem to find any! The only drink that seemed to magically appear before us was beer. So we "replenished" ourselves with dehydrating liquids, knowing fully that we'd regret it later. But...how often do we find ourselves on a beautiful island on vacation?

The rain held off until just before the awards ceremony. Five of the Triangle swimmers received awards for 1st through 3rd place:

Heidi Williams, 10K – 3rd place 20-39,
Tommy Gainer, 10K – 2nd place 20-39,
Martha Montgomery, 4K – 2nd place 20-39,
Elizabeth Nowak – 4K overall winner,
Billy Su, 4K – 1st place, 20-39

Once the awards ceremony was concluded, we jumped back on the bus back to the hotel. Immediately, showers began and plans were made for our social night at the famous Swizzle Inn, home of the Bermuda national drink – the "Rum Swizzle".



Frank Clark Meet hosted by Triad Masters Swimming

Saturday, March 1st, 2008

Sanction: Sanction by LMSC for NC for USMS, Inc. Sanction # 138-02

Meet Director: Mark Medendorp, dorp11@yahoo.com, 336-575-6122

Facility: Grimsley High School Pool. 801 Westover Terrace, Greensboro, NC. 25 yard, 8 lane racing course with attached diving well. 6 lanes will be used for competition, with one buffer lane and one warm-up/down lane attached to the diving well.

Eligibility: Swimmers *must* register with USMS as of the 1st day of the meet as determined by the Registrar of NCMS. NO EXCEPTIONS. USMS rules govern the meet.

Deadline: Entries must be received by mail (to meet director), email (dorp11@yahoo.com) or fax (336-335-2966) by Midnight on February 25, 2008. Entries received after this time and date will be handled as *deck entries*. Relays and deck entries **must** be submitted by 9:30 am on the day of the meet.

Fees: \$6.00 meet surcharge. \$3.00 per event for pre-registration. Deck entries accepted at \$5.00 per event. There are *no* relay charges. *There will be no refunds, unless the meet date is changed.* Those registering via email or fax **must** have payment ready at the time of the meet.

Scoring and Awards: Individual events will be scored 9-7-6-5-4-3-2-1. Ribbons given to top 8 finishers in each event. Yes, we still have ribbons!

Drawing: All swimmers competing in 4 or more events will be entered into a drawing to be held just before the 500 free for a \$25.00 gift certificate for swim gear. Winner must be present at drawing to win.

Seeding: All events will be seeded by sex and time, with the exception of the following events: 500 freestyle and 1000 freestyle. These events will be seeded by time only with sexes combined. All events will be seeded slow to fast, except the 500 freestyle and 1000 freestyle which will be fast to slow. "No Time" will be placed in slow heats. Meet Director reserves the right to combine sexes in any events. There will be positive check-in for the 500 and 1000 freestyle events. Event limit is five events.

Schedule: Warmups will begin at 8:00 am with the first event (1000 free) starting at 8:45 am. The second warmup session will begin at the conclusion of the 1000 free, with the meet continuing at approximately 10:00 am. The diving well and one outer lane will be open during event 1. Dependent on entries and timeline, 5-10 minute breaks may be included in the event order per Meet Director.

****You must always enter the pool feet first (during warm-ups) except in sprint lanes.**

Frank Clark Meet Entry Form

March 1, 2008

Please print legibly

Name: _____ Team Initials: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Sex: M F Age: _____ DOB: _____ 2008 USMS Number: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

	Women	Time	Event	Time	Men
1	_____	1000	Freestyle	_____	1
			Break		
			200 Medley Relay		
7	_____	50	Freestyle	_____	8
	9	_____	200 IM	_____	10
	11	_____	50 Backstroke	_____	12
	13	_____	100 Butterfly	_____	14
			Break		
	15	_____	100 Breaststroke	_____	16
	17	_____	200 Freestyle	_____	18
	19	_____	100 IM	_____	20
	21	_____	50 Butterfly	_____	22
	23	_____	100 Backstroke	_____	24
			Break		
	25	_____	50 Breaststroke	_____	26
	27	_____	100 Freestyle	_____	28
	29	_____	200 Open (strokes)	_____	30
			200 Free Relay		
	35	_____	500 Free	_____	35

Number of events: _____ x \$3.00 each = \$ _____

Meet Surcharges: x \$6.00 = \$ 6.00

Total: = \$ _____

Make Checks payable to **Triad Masters Swimming (TMS)** and mail to:

Mark Medendorp
213 Leftwich St.
Greensboro, NC 27401

Read and Sign this Release from Liability: I, the undersigned participant, intending to be legally bound, hereby certify that I am physically fit and have not been otherwise informed by a physician. I acknowledge that I am aware of all the risks inherent in Masters Swimming (training and competition), including possible permanent disability or death, and agree to assume all of those risks. AS A CONDITION OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THE MASTERS SWIMMING PROGRAM OR ANY ACTIVITIES INCIDENT THERETO, I HEREBY WAIVE ANY AND ALL RIGHTS TO CLAIMS FOR LOSS OR DAMAGES, INCLUDING ALL CLAIMS FOR LOSS OR DAMAGES CAUSED BY THE NEGLIGENCE, ACTIVE OR PASSIVE, OF THE FOLLOWING: UNITED STATES MASTERS SWIMMING, INC., THE LOCAL MASTERS SWIMMING COMMITTEES, THE CLUBS, HOST FACILITIES, MEET SPONSORS, MEET COMMITTEES, OR ANY INDIVIDUALS OFFICIATING AT THE MEET OR SUPERVISING SUCH ACTIVITIES. In addition, I agree to abide and be governed by the rules of USMS.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

THAT Devil Spring Splash

March 29, 2008

Sponsored by: Tar Heel Aquatic Team (THAT)
Sanctioned by: LMSC for NC for USMS, Sanction # 138-03
Meet Director: Griff Helfrich
Meet Referees: Pending

LOCATION: Duke University Taishoff Aquatic Center (attached to the Wilson Recreation Center), Durham, NC; <http://map.duke.edu/building.php?bid=7799>; Eight lane 25-yard competition pool with 7-foot wide lanes and a depth tapering from 4.5 feet at both ends to a depth of 7 feet in the center. Continuous warm-up/cool down lanes will be available throughout the meet in the diving well. The facility also features a Colorado Timing System 5000 and 8-lane scoreboard. There is ample bleacher seating for competitors and spectators.

RULES: USMS rules govern the meet. You must attach a copy of your 2008 USMS registration card to the entry form. No one-event USMS registrations. You must sign a waiver. Your age as of March 29, 2008 determines your age group for the meet. **Except for sprint lanes in warm-up and when competing, ANY ENTRIES IN WATER MUST BE FEET FIRST.**

DEADLINE: Entries must be **received** before 5:00 p.m. Saturday, March 22, 2008. No faxes accepted. Deck entries will be accepted as space allows but you are strongly encouraged to sign up in advance. If you have any questions, e-mail Griff Helfrich at helfrgr@email.unc.edu.

FEES: Single fee of \$40.00 covers entry fee, facilities charge, and cost of the clinic. Late entries are \$45.00. No charge for relays. Make checks payable to Tar Heel Aquatic Team. Meet fees are non-refundable.

ENTRIES: Swimmers may swim up to 5 individual events. Mail entry form and fee to Griff Helfrich, THAT, 3020 Pickett Road, Suite 424, Durham, NC 27705. Checks need to be made out to Tar Heel Aquatic Team.

AWARDS: Custom awards.

SCORING: Individual events will be scored 9-7-6-5-4-3-2-1, relays 18-14-12-10-8-6-4-2. Meet results will be posted on www.ncmasters.org and will be sent to team representatives and the NC LMSC records chairperson.

WARM-UP: The clinic instruction will begin at 10:00 a.m. and run to 11:30 a.m. followed by a 45 minute warm-up until 12:15 pm. Sprint lanes will be designated with diving allowed from 12:00 – 12:15 p.m. (25 yard, one-way). The meet will start at 12:30 pm. Continuous warm-up/cool down lanes will be available throughout the meet in the diving well.

SEEDING: All events will be pre-seeded with the exception of the relays, which will be deck seeded by time. Deck entries will be added as space allows. In some cases, men and women may be combined if needed. All events will be swum slow to fast. Relays will follow USMS age groupings 25+, 35+, 45+, 55+, etc. Relay teams may be women, men or mixed.

NOVICE EVENTS: New this year for participants who have never swum in a masters swim meet and would like to give it a try without having to worry about turns. Four 25 yard swims (one for each stroke) have been added to the event list. The times/results for these events will not be eligible nor submitted to USMS for top 10 nor local/state/national/world records.

DIRECTIONS TO POOL: From I40, take Highway 15/501 (Exit 270) east towards Durham. Stay on Highway 15-501 Bypass to Highway 751/Cameron Blvd (Exit 107). Turn right onto Highway 751/Cameron Blvd. Proceed to second light and turn left onto Science Drive. Turn right onto Whitford Drive. Go to top of the hill, parking lot is on the right. Pool is down the hill and left of the Yoh Football Center.

OTHER: No food or drinks may be brought into the facility.

THAT Swim Clinic

This year's rendition of the THAT Devil Spring Splash features a swimmers clinic and a meet combination in a one day format. The clinic will be a short-axis tips/drills and long-axis tips/drills covering all four strokes with instruction given by THAT Master's Coaches including Jeff Dugdale, Griff Helfrich, Brent Watkins as well as Jeremy Linn, 1996 Olympic Gold and Silver Medalist. This group of coaches brings many years of expert instruction for swimmers and coaches at all levels. Come and be a part of this unique format and get instruction that will help you be a better competitor throughout the year. The clinic will be held prior to the meet from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Come and join the fun and make a big "Spring Splash"!!!



1996 Olympic Gold and Silver Medalist, Jeremy Linn, brings uniqueness and innovation to swimming.

In his four years at the University of Tennessee, Jeremy Linn fulfilled every college athletic dream a swimmer could have. The Harrisburg, Pennsylvania native established records, won both team and individual championships and carried the name of Tennessee swimming into international competition. Linn was crowned SEC Champion six times as an individual in addition to leading five relay squads to first place finishes.

A three-time SEC Swimmer of the Year, he became only the third swimmer to win the same event, the 100-yard breaststroke, for four consecutive years at the SEC Championships. The crowning accomplishment of Linn's SEC dominance, however, was helping the Volunteers claim the SEC Championship Team Title in 1996.

On the NCAA Championship stage, Linn was no less spectacular. The lanky Pennsylvanian won individual national titles a total of four times. Linn became the first Vol to claim two individual titles (100 & 200 Breaststroke) at a single NCAA meet since Andy Coan in 1979. All told, Linn won 17 All-America honors in his four years at UT. His time of 51.88 still stands as the American Record in the 100 yard Breaststroke.

Outside the scope of collegiate competition, Linn proved himself to be one of the top breaststroke swimmers in the world. At the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, Linn won the silver medal in the 100-meter breaststroke, establishing an American record. Linn also played a vital role on America's gold medal winning 400-meter medley relay that bested an eight-year-old world record by two seconds. Linn followed his 1996 Olympic effort with a gold medal performance in the 100-meter breaststroke at the 1997 U.S. Open Championships.

In his twenty five years of swimming experience, Jeremy has had the opportunity to learn from many of the greatest swimming minds ever. Combined with experience at the highest level of competition and a degree in Psychology, Jeremy has created theories and philosophies of swimming and competition that he delivers like only he can.

THAT Devil Spring Splash

March 29, 2008

Warm-ups permitted from 11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Events begin at 12:30 p.m.

Name: _____ Street: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: () _____

E-mail Address: _____

Age as of 3/29/08: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Sex: _____

USMS Registration #: _____ (attach copy of USMS card) Team Initials: _____

Please circle event numbers, and specify stroke for 200 Open event:

Women's Event #	Entry Time	Event In Yards	Men's Event #	Entry Time
1	_____	200 Y IM	2	_____
3	_____	50 Y Fly	4	_____
5	_____	400 Y Free Relay (W, M, Mixed)	6	_____
10 minute break				
7	_____	25 Y Free (Novices ONLY)	8	_____
9	_____	100 Y Breast	10	_____
11	_____	50 Y Back	12	_____
13	_____	100 Y Free	14	_____
10 minute break				
15	_____	25 Y Fly (Novices ONLY)	16	_____
17	_____	100 Y Fly	18	_____
19	_____	50 Y Breast	20	_____
21	_____	100 Y IM	22	_____
23	_____	200 Y Free Relay (W, M, Mixed)	24	_____
10 minute break				
25	_____	25 Y Breast (Novices ONLY)	26	_____
27	_____	100 Y Back	28	_____
29	_____	50 Y Free	30	_____
31	_____	200 Y Open -- Circle which stroke: Fly Back Breast	32	_____
10 minute break				
33	_____	25 Y Back (Novices ONLY)	34	_____
35	_____	200 Y Free	36	_____
37	_____	200 Y Medley Relay (W, M, Mixed)	38	_____

Please read and sign:

I, undersigned participant, intending to be legally bound, hereby certify that I am physically fit and have not been otherwise informed by a physician. I acknowledge that I am aware of all of the risks inherent in Masters Swimming (training and competition), including possible permanent disability or death, and agree to assume all of those risks. AS A CONDITION OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THE MASTERS SWIMMING PROGRAM OR ANY ACTIVITIES INCIDENT THERETO, I HEREBY WAIVE ANY AND ALL RIGHTS TO CLAIMS FOR LOSS OR DAMAGES, INCLUDING ALL CLAIMS FOR LOSS OR DAMAGES CAUSED BY THE NEGLIGENCE, ACTIVE OR PASSIVE, OF THE FOLLOWING: UNITED STATES MASTERS SWIMMING, INC., THE LOCAL MASTERS SWIMMING COMMITTEES, THE CLUBS, HOST FACILITIES, MEET SPONSORS, MEET COMMITTEES, OR ANY INDIVIDUALS VOLUNTEERING OR OFFICIATING AT THE MEETS OR SUPERVISING SUCH ACTIVITIES. In addition, I agree to abide by and be governed by the rules of USMS.

Name (print): _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Entry Fee (make check payable to Tar Heel Aquatic Team): **\$40** (\$45 after March 22, 2008)

Mail Entry form and fee to Griff Helfrich, THAT, 3020 Pickett Road, Suite 424, Durham, NC 27705