



SLAM DUNK

St Louis Area Masters Newsletter Jan/Feb 2004 Vol. 1/ is. 1

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Warm-up:

Welcome to the first issue of "SLAM Dunk" the new newsletter for St. Louis Area Masters! Like any other first, putting this newsletter together has been both exciting and a little nerve wracking. It is my hope that over the course of the next year this newsletter will bring you some articles that will make you think, inform and entertain you. Looking at the articles contained in the issue we are off to a great start.

Part of the fun of putting this newsletter together has been the sharing of ideas with other people in the swimming community. I know that many times in my Masters coaching persona I feel pretty isolated. Some people attribute that to me being sleep deprived. However being able to talk (or e-mail) with other people out there and get a sense of what they are doing for this great sport has been a good experience. I am anxious to get the rest of the SLAM swimmers involved in this experience.

So now it is time to move on to the "main set". It does not matter how many yards you swim but how you swim the yards. I hope that the "SLAM Dunk" will help you with that.

See you at the pool,

Erik

President's Letter:

I hope everyone is having a great holiday!

I can't believe it's been three years since I took this job. I was reviewing an old column from November 2000, which was my first for the club. In that column, I listed a number of new ideas for the club. Those were a new and improved web site and computer software that would run our meets and post our results more efficiently, and better use of email to update everyone on upcoming events, last minute things, and other information such as air fares and hotel accommodations for away meets. We haven't been perfect, but we have made great progress and substantially reduced the amount of money we spend on postage.

On other news, we completed our first short course meters meet at the Mid-County YMCA in Brentwood. It looks like we had around sixty people, which are quite a few for our fall meet. Thank you to all those who attended and competed, and even bigger thanks to those who helped run the meet! We will look to next spring to see how many of those times qualified for National Top Ten. Remember, even if you don't want to swim, at least come to time for a while. For those of you who are new to masters swimming, all of our events are swum regardless of sex or age. Instead, we run heats according to time. No one is too slow!

Other new things (or things we haven't done in a long time) are open water swimming and long distance swimming. We have now had two open water swims since that time, and this summer, we be adding a long distance national postal championship. For those of you who don't know, in addition to pool and open water events, United States Masters Swimming (USMS) holds what it calls postal meets. These, as their name imply, are swims that you do in your own pool during a specified time period and then mail in your results by a certain deadline. The times or distances are tabulated and the results are posted. The races USMS sponsors are a one-hour swim in January in which you see how many laps you can do in one hour, a 3000/6000-yard postal swim and a 5K/10K meter swim. We were awarded at

the National Convention in 2002, the USMS National 5K/10K Postal Championships. The money we raise from this will go to help the Ozark LSC (age group swimming) outreach. This will be held from May 15, 2004, to September 30, 2004. More information will be available in our next newsletter.

While I realize that not all of you are not into competing and especially not at that distance, we are therefore, adding an emphasis to fitness swimming. Michele Shinn has stepped up to the plate and is serving as the chair of that committee. She is also our delegate to the United States Aquatics Sports national convention.

A big thanks to Erik Strom, coach of Parkway Masters for volunteering to be the news editor and originator of the "SLAM Dunk".

Speaking of volunteers, anyone with an accounting background who would like to serve as our treasurer would be most appreciated. Carol Levin, our long time treasurer stepped down last year and we had Allyson Garverick take over the reins. However, as a young person, she was naturally transferred out of town. The duties of the treasurer are not much. He or she will be required to balance the checkbook and prepare balance sheets, write occasional checks for registration and make deposits. If interested please contact me at bhopson@swbell.net.

It's not too late to start planning ahead. Short course nationals, which are in Indianapolis, are only four months away. Now is the time to start planning! Swim Magazine will have meet information and entry form in its January/February Issue. Information will also be available on the USMS website at www.usms.org. Don't forget our next upcoming meets: Annual 1650/1000 mile meet February 1, 2004, at Parkway South and our Spring Meet March 13-14, 2004, at Washington University. (The pool will be accurate!)

So in the meantime, keep swimming and keep having fun!

Bruce

USMS 2003 SCY TOP TEN TIMES

For times performed from June 1, 2002 - May 31, 2003

WOMEN

35-39

Michele D Shinn	500 Free	5:27.94	10 th
Michele D Shinn	1000 Free	11:14.25	5 th

40-49

Stephanie Petersen	50 Breast	32.58	5 th
Stephanie Petersen	100 Breast	1:11.02	3 rd
Stephanie Petersen	200 Breast	2:37.79	4 th
Stephanie Petersen	200 IM	2:23.59	10 th

45-49

Terry Varney Freerks	100 Back	1:07.02	7 th
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MEN

75-79

Robert S Blake	200 Free	2:47.76	3 rd
Robert S Blake	500 Free	8:17.06	8 th
Robert S Blake	1650 Free	28:31.36	4 th

Congratulations to Michele, Stephanie, Terry and Robert on some outstanding swims and making the National top ten rankings. Thanks for representing SLAM so well.

Our next newsletter will have the Top Ten times for Long Course swims performed from October 1, 2002, to September 30, 2003. They were not official as of the publication of this newsletter.



“The Ten Commandments of Master’s Swimming”

#1

Thou Shalt Protect Thy Shoulder!

A Pragmatic Guide to Surviving a Long Swim Season

By Michele Shinn

Another summer’s worth of coaching has come and gone and now it’s time for me to get serious about my own swimming. I’ve always said I am a much better swimmer than I am a coach but swimming Masters makes me do both on many occasions. With Short Course Nationals in our own backyard (April, 2004 in Indianapolis) many in SLAM are in the pool with greater energy and expectations than in recent years. As I plan out this season I’ve come upon some revelations. Some of these revelations are old pieces of truth I have become reacquainted with while others are new experiences I’ve come upon as a thirty five year old athlete (Yes, I too have found my body is different now and responds differently to training...if you are reading this I’m sure you have discovered the same thing!). I want to share some ideas on fitness and sports science that I hope will result in all of us surviving the season injury free and culminating with personal bests at the Natatorium in Indy.

Well, it starts and ends with the shoulder. If you can’t pull, you can’t train effectively. The thought of kicking just makes me ill! There are a few things that help my shoulders and I believe you will find them beneficial.

Balanced Breathing

I just got done swimming a five-mile ocean race, and in the pool, I tend to get too lopsided in my breathing. I breathe too often on my right in the pool. The down side about being so right-side dominant in the ocean was that the waves didn’t always cooperate. The down side about being so right-side dominant in the pool has a couple ramifications. The right side dominance I have leads to overuse of my left shoulder. When I get so heavily dependent on my right side breathing, I end up pulling harder with my left hand and develop rotator cuff tendonitis.

This article is about the shoulder but you really can’t separate neck from shoulder issues. The other problem I commonly experience when I get too right-side dominant with my breathing is tightness in my neck that limits my left rotation when I try to get to the side. In extreme cases, I experience referred pain down my right arm...so...the key to shoulder care, as it relates to breathing, is balance...breathe on both sides.

Stretching

I’m not a big believer in regimented stretching for my age group swimmers. The same can’t be said for Master’s. The fact is we are older now...we are not as flexible as we once were. We are not as pliable as the age group swimmers. For the most part, age group swimmers are plagued by laxity in their shoulders leading to pain; Master’s swimmers are plagued by tightness leading to painful shoulders. When it comes to stretching I don’t like regimes where one swimmer stretches another swimmer’s shoulder...too much opportunity for injury.

My pre-practice activities include a 15 minutes gab session with the other girls and then about 1000-1500-yard warm-up swim. As far as stretching I do it away from the pool and often after a practice session.

Why not stretch before practice? I have a 50 minute drive to the pool and with two children, a husband (okay, three kids!), four cats, three dogs and turtle, -- 5 a.m. just comes too early to squeeze it in. Also, I'm not convinced this the best time to stretch. I look at stretching as a workout. I reserve a 45-minute workout session per week for stretching. It is my time to work out the kinks and focus on fluid like motion. I like to rely on a cross between yoga and Pilates (some like the phrase yogalates). Remember, stretching is a time-based activity not an intensity-based activity. More is better in terms of stretching only when it comes to time. Long, slow applications of elongated positions are effective in increasing range of motion and warding off injury.

Strengthening

Presently, my strength training is geared towards improving my power off the blocks and as I turn (Commandment #3 will deal with this issue). My point with strengthening as it relates to the shoulder is more about what not to do. I dare not, at this point in this series, propose a weight-training regime for Master's swimmers...there are too many variables. Just consider my group at Rockwood. We have male and female swimmers covering numerous decades. The strengthening needs are just too complex for this presentation and I am not a believer in the "one size fits all" approach to strength training.

Here are some facts about a swimmer's shoulder in the midst of a strength training program: if you experience shoulder pain, in or out of the water, bench press, incline bench press, military press, lat pulls, and dips (I call these five exercises the "Fearful Five" because I have seen them cut short many a swimmer's season) will be pain provocative. It's a fact and you read it right here. If you experience pain and you are a

swimmer, eliminate these activities from your strengthening protocol. Remember this fact: doing bench press never got anybody through the water faster!

The season is long. Periodization and cycles are two keys to any successful training program. We'll talk more about periodization in Commandment #4 so be patient. For now, focus on your shoulder health (waiting until your shoulders are sore is way too late), by seeking balance by breathing on both sides; stretch with a purpose, dedicated attention to long, slow stretching; and eliminating the "Fearful Five".



Michele is head coach of the Waterloo Piranha Swim Club. Her team is 65-1-0 over the past eight years. She trains at Marquette High School under the direction of Jim Haliburton and is the reigning Master's National Champion at 1000 yards in 35-39 year old division. She can be reached via E-mail, mdswim23@hotmail.com

SLAM Meet Schedule

- 1/1/2004- 2004 USMS 1 Hour Postal Championship- PST-LD; Nancy Ridout, 580 Sunset PKWY, Novato, CA 94947, 415-892-0771, nancyridout@mindspring.com; Chris Foote, 415-457-9645, dummy4me80@hotmail.com; Sponsored by Tamalpais Aquatic Masters; www.usms.org/longdist/ldnats04/1hrentry.pdf; Sanctioned by PC LMSC
- 02/01/2004 – SLAM/Parkway Masters Annual Winter 1650/1000 Meet, Parkway South High School, Sanction to be issued by Ozark LMSC
- 02/14/2004 -- Indiana University Masters Meet - Bloomington, IN, SCY; Nan Stager, 3720 Bluebird Ln, Bloomington, IN 47401, 812-333-6951 (h), 812-855-3009 (w), nstager@indiana.edu; Sanctioned by IN LMSC #164 S 03; Pre-entry (2/11/2004) & Deck-entry
- 03/06/2004- Wildcat SC Meet - Lexington, KY
03/07/2004 SCY; Meg Smath, Lancaster Aquatic Center, 1000 Complex Dr., Lexington, KY 40506, megsmath@bluegrass.net; Sanctioned by KY LMSC
- 03/13/2004- Ozark Spring Short Course Championships, Washington University
03/14/2004 sanction will be issued by Ozark LMSC,
- 04/02/2004- CMSA (Illinois) State Meet – Barrington, IL, SCY; Barrington
04/04/2004 High School, Sanction to be issued by Central LMSC
- 04/22/2004- 2004 USMS SC Championships – Indiana University Natatorium,
04/25/2004 Indianapolis, IN, www.usms.org/comp.scnats04/; Sanctioned by IN LMSC, Mel Goldstein, 5735 Carrollton Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46220, 317-253-8289
- 05/15/2004- 2004 USMS 5K/10K Postal Championship- PST-LD; Bruce E. Hopson,
09/30/2004 315 N. 11th St., Apt. 703, St. Louis, MO 63101 bhopson@swbell.net; 314-588-8066, Sponsored by St. Louis Area Masters. Sanctioned by Ozark LMSC
- 06/13/2004 SLAM 3rd Annual 1-Mile and 2-Mile Open Water Swim – Sunnen Lake, YMCA of the Ozarks (Potosi), MO Sanction to be issued Ozark LMSC
- 06/26/2004 2004 USMS 2-Mile Cable Championship (open water) - Eagle Creek Reservoir, Indianapolis, IN www.usms.org/longdist/ldnats03/1meintry.pdf; Sanctioned by IN LMSC, Mel Goldstein, 5735 Carrollton Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46220, 317-253-8289
- 08/12/2004- 2004 USMS Long Course Championships - Chatham City Aquatic Center,
08/15/2004 Savannah, GA, LCM; Scott Rabalais, 20 Oak Park Pt., Savannah, GA 31405, 912-927-7016, scottrabalais@compuserve.com; Sanctioned by GA LMSC

09/01/2004- 10/31/2004 2004 USMS 3000/6000 Yard Postal Championship PST-LD;
10/31/2004 Bob Bruce, 61200 Parrell Rd., Bend, OR 97702, 541-317-4851,
bobbruce13@attglobal.net; Sponsored by Central Oregon Masters
Aquatics; Sanctioned by OR LMSC

THE ABOVE LOCAL MEETS ARE TENTATIVE AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE IN BOTH LOCATION AND DATE.

For more information regarding the meets listed above it is highly recommended that you contact the host LMSC and the meet director.

Swimmer Profile:

"SLAM Dunk" wants you to meet Bruce Hopson

SLAM Dunk: How did you get your start in swimming?

Bruce: Because my older brother swam and I wanted to do everything he did.

SLAM Dunk: What was your first swim meet/experience like?

Bruce: I was seven years old, and my first meet was our conference meet at the end of the summer. It was long course. I won my heat - heat 1! Probably the only time I ever won a 50 free event,

SLAM Dunk: How long have you been involved in Masters swimming?

Bruce: I have been involved for six years. I have been the president of SLAM for the past three years.

SLAM Dunk: What is your favorite event/stroke?

Bruce: Open water swimming - any distance.

SLAM Dunk: What is your goal as a swimmer?

Bruce: My goal is to win my age group (men 35-39) in the 5K swim at Big Shoulders in Chicago.

SLAM Dunk: What is your favorite set in practice?

Bruce: The set I really like because it is a challenge is 3 x [300 @ 4:00, (2x 200 @ 2:30), (3 x 100 @ 1:10)]

SLAM Dunk: If you were not a swimmer what sport/activity would you be doing?

Bruce: Theatre

SLAM Dunk: What keeps you busy away from the pool?

Bruce: Work.

SLAM Dunk: What is your favorite food, TV show or movie, sports team?

Bruce: Ice cream, ER and Mizzou Football.

Quotes, Thoughts and Musings:
Special correspondent Otis B. Driftwood

You really don't pay for things with money. You pay for them with time. "In five years, I'll have put enough away to buy that vacation house we want. Then I'll slow down." That means the house will cost you five years---one-twelfth of your adult life. Translate the dollar value of the house, car, or anything else into time, and then see if it's still worth it.... The phrase spending your time is not a metaphor. It's how life works. --- Charles Spezzano

In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life: it goes on.
-Robert Frost, poet (1874-1963)

The bamboo that bends is stronger than the oak that resists.
---Japanese proverb

ST. LOUIS MASTERS SWIM CLUB (SLAM)
and
UNITED STATES MASTERS SWIMMING
Membership Application for January 1, 2004 through December 31, 2004

The 2004 membership fee is **\$35.00**. This consists of the USMS fee of \$25.00 and St. Louis Masters fee, which is \$10.00. For insurance purposes, USMS membership is required for participation in any Masters function (meets, practices, etc.). This fee includes a one-year subscription to SWIM magazine (normally \$15.00). Membership in SLAM is required for participation in team practices and social events.

<i>2004 SLAM Membership Form</i>		
<i>Renewal?</i> Y/N	Date	Membership Fee - \$10.00
Name	Sex (M/F)	Date of Birth <small>(MM/DD/YY)</small>
Street		<input type="checkbox"/> <i>New Address</i>
City	State	Zip
Home Phone	E-Mail	
Business Phone	Occupation	
<p>Optional Information: Where do you usually workout? Would you be interested in assisting on a committee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>		

2004 USMS Membership Application				
<small>Register with same name, as you would use for competition. Please print clearly.</small>				
Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial	Office Use only:	
Street			Apartment	
City	State	Zip	Home Phone	Work Phone
Date of Birth:	Age:	Sex:	Today's Date: Mo. Day Year	
Club (Must be USMS registered club or you will be registered as "unattached")			Email Address	
Fees: USMS Fee: \$20.00 Ozark Fee: 5.00 Total Fee: \$25.00 <small>(\$7 goes towards Swim Magazine)</small>		Renewal? Y/N <input type="checkbox"/> Name Change: Old Name:		
Voluntary Contribution to USMS Foundation \$		Swimming Hall of Fame Foundation \$		
<p>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 MEETS OR SUPERVISING SUCH ACTIVITIES. In addition, I agree to abide by and be governed by the rules of USMS.</p>				
Signature _____			Date _____	

PAYMENT: Make check for **\$35.00** (\$25 for USMS + \$10 for SLM) payable to **St. Louis Masters**. Send completed forms and check to **Hap Gentry, Membership Chairman, 9034 Monmouth St. Louis, MO 63117.**

Please enclose a self-address stamped envelope. You will receive your membership card by mail.

Please make sure you have signed the above form.

Coach Profile:

"SLAM Dunk" wants you to meet Hap Gentry:

SLAM Dunk: how long have you been a coach?

Hap: I have been coaching for 29 years as a Summer Club, AAU now USS Age Group, and Masters Swim Coach in New Haven, CT, Pittsburgh, PA and St. Louis, MO.

SLAM Dunk: What do you remember about your first group of swimmers/coaching experience?

Hap: I remember the success of the 8 & Unders winning their Championships. I also, remember the fun and excitement of helping each swimmer to the next level in their skill development.

SLAM Dunk: What is your favorite thing about being a coach?

Hap: Helping each swimmer achieve their potential or their goals. Also, designing creative challenges, which match the needs of each swimmer in the pool relative to their goals. That is always a challenge. Finally, watching the progress of each swimmer in the long term and enjoying the "ah ha" moments" along the way.

SLAM Dunk: What is your biggest goal/challenge as a coach?

Hap: Figuring out a way to uniquely "connect" with each swimmer so that there is a trust and understanding developed. Also, developing a challenging practice for all swimmers, which is creative and develops new skills (pace, stroke technique, conditioning threshold, mental endurance, confidence, etc.)

SLAM Dunk: What was your first meet as a swimmer like?

Hap: My very first competition was probably summer league, but I don't remember it. My first BIG meet was as a seven-year-old going to West Point. It was a 3-4 hour bus ride from home with a stay over. I sat with the "big guys" (high schoolers). We sang Beatles songs as they came on the radio. During the meet, I clearly remember my coach (Jim Barton) whispering to me, "if you

win this race, I'll buy you an ice cream after the meet." No surprise - I LOVE ICE CREAM - I won by a mile (15.7 for 25 yd Freestyle; I still have the ribbon) and he delivered.

SLAM Dunk: How do you spend your time away from the pool?

Hap: Familyman. My wife's job keeps her traveling a lot. Currently, I am my son's primary care giver, so I am his breakfast buddy in the morning, his homework resource in the afternoons, and his chauffeur to evening activities. I also take care of a variety of household projects from building a patio to doing laundry. I swim, bike or run when I can find the time.

SLAM Dunk: What is your favorite food/movie or TV show and sports team?

Hap: A Beautiful; the Simpson's (subtle humor ribbing at most everything); JFK (I believe in more than one shooter; It's a Wonderful Life (great message for all at anytime of the year); comedies in general.

SLAM Dunk: Give us an example of a Hap Gentry swim practice.

Hap: 10 x 100 Freestyle on 2:00 (just kidding). Each practice is different, thought about in advance but modified based on who is there that day. Here is a weekend's practice. (Practice from 12-11-03)
400 Warm-Up

Balancing and switching drills from Total Immersion Weekend Workshop.

10 x 50 on various (based on speed)
First length limited to 9 strokes; second length limited to 18 strokes; the first length feels like a drill; the second length feels like swimming but most swimmers experience a difficulty using all 18 strokes. Further into the set swimmers muscles begin to learn to develop stroke length rather than stroke rate. Also, at slow speeds, they're challenged to develop good horizontal balance before trying to generate increased speed through increased rhythmic hip rotations.

10 x 75 on various (based on speed)
Chose a stroke count for the first length; add 3 strokes to the second length; add 3 more strokes to the third length; if swimmer can't get to correct stroke count on third length, then reduce first and second length's

stroke count to accommodate last length. The objective is to sense and "hone in" on three different stroking rhythms, which equate to slow, medium and fast speeds; while making an effort to be efficient along the way.
 10 x 50 on various (based on speed)
 First length is stroke count in first length of previous set; second length is stroke count in third length on previous set. Now swimmers make clear distinction between thoughtful, slow speed swimming (perfect stroke mechanics) versus the same

stroke mechanics but at greater rhythms such that speed develops with minimal loss of stroke efficiency.
 2 x 400 Swim
 Chose rhythm before swim and ask if able to achieve rhythm through following swim (pace implied)

 Approximately 3,000 in 1.5 hours (moderate practice; hard practice would be 3,500-4,000 in same time)

December Meet Report:

This past Pearl Harbor Day saw a renewal of SLAM's annual Short Course Meters meet at a new location—the Mid-County YMCA near the lovely Galleria in Clayton Missouri. Forty-eight swimmers from the southern Illinois/eastern Missouri area tested themselves against the clock. This year featured something new—a team competition between the various masters clubs and workout groups that comprise SLAM and other USMS Clubs. In that team competition the young guns from Washington University, on the strength of their three winning relay teams, overpowered the cross-river heat from Illinois Masters, with the home team from Mid-County YMCA in third. The final team standings were:

Wash U (WU)	153
IL Mas (IM)	111
Mid-Cnty Y (MCY)	68
Rockwood (ROCK)	44
Parkway (PKWY)	38
Rec-Plex (REC)	35
Team-StL (TSTL)	25
W-County Y (WCY)	21
CSP	20
Fla Mav (FLM)	20
Sugar Crk (SC)	20
Lebanon VMST	10
HEAT	6
SLU	5

Scoring notes: Teams scored 5-3-1 points for 1st – 3rd for each event in each age group. Relays were worth double points. Swimmers entering the meet as unattached or "SLAM" did not score points in the team competition. SLAM would have had 187 had its points been scored.

In the race for high point swimmer, Leonardo Mendoza and Jimmy Pierotti of Wash U took first in all five of their events for 25 total points, with Julie Tang of West County YMCA close behind with 21 points for 3 firsts and 2 seconds. In fact discerning eyes will note that Julie was the entire W-County Y team. Louis XIV ("L'etat c'est moi.") would have approved.

As for the rest of us, links to the results by event are below. Bruce Hopson of Team St. Louis turned in another swim of note, going a blistering 18:48.17 in the 1500 meters, after most folks had headed for the exists. (Now see what all of you missed.) That would have placed him 9th in the USMS Top Ten List for 2002, so we will keep a lookout for this year's list.