BLUE LOBSTAH NEWS

NE - SCM Championships in December!

Seven reasons to sign up for NE SCM Zone Championships this year at WPI

Are you thinking of signing up for the NE SCM Zone Championships in December of 2017? Here are seven reasons you should!

1. It's fun!
2. You know you want to!
3. Gives you motivation to train!
4. How often do you get to compete in meters?
5. It gives you a chance to wear your new team suit!
6. It will impress your family & friends!
7. It's a great way to make new friends and connect with old ones!

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"It's what you do with the rough patches that will define the athlete that you'll become." – Dana Vollmer

State of the MESC Address – by Tim Lecrone

After a very popular summer for masters swimming between the meets and open water races, the MESC crew is ready to settle into fall and winter events. With Bowdoin and Bath right around the corner, MDI has already requested a return event in January, and you can expect another great opportunity to "Toughen UP" in February with Ben Morse's ever popular challenge meet.

This year's USAS Convention was, like in years past, filled with controversy. A vote was accepted to allow open water participants to "rest" by touching safety boats as long as the swimmer doesn't push off or make any sort of forward progress as a result.

Continued on Page 2

Tim and John after banquet.

Tim Lecrone with 1976 Olympian and former world record holder (and Tim's childhood hero), Jim Montgomery. First man to break 50 in the 100 LCM Free!

Tim with 2017 US Masters Coach of the Year, Tim Waud. Taking in the International Masters Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

SMU pool where we swam Saturday morning

Photo: Crystie McGrail

State of the MESC Address (Continued from page 1)

This was in deliberation twice during the House of Delegates meetings with over two hours of debate in total. I'm willing to bet that we'll see this return to the forefront very soon after it's put into play starting in January.

The quest for making 25s conforming events for masters meets was again denied by the Rules Committee for USMS. It was then forced to a vote before the House of Delegates anyway requiring a super majority vote of 2/3 to pass. Unlike three years ago in Jacksonville under the same situation, it lacked the impact to even gain a majority vote exceeding 50%. It seems as though they'll stay as non-conforming events for a while.

Politics of the pool aside, it's going to be another amazing year of pool adventures for all that make their way up and down the lanes from exercise enthusiasts and triathletes to the most die hard competitors, and The Maine Masters Blue Lobstahs have a happy place for each and all. Happy splashes, and I look forward to seeing everyone in chlorinated bliss during the 2017-18 season!

Maine Masters Swimmer Story – By Matthew Hurley:

The truth is we never have to stop swimming. I discovered that after I turned 30 and had moved back to Maine after some difficult personal times. I wandered into the Portland Y, with my old college drag suit and my sweeds.The elastic was congealed and melted. I'd heard there was a group that swam at noon Monday through Friday. I was sad to discover a sorry lot of lawyers, real estate brokers and bankers; people who at first glance I thought I had little in common with. But they were fast, and kind, so I continued to go, and slowly I began to like them.

I was working, and by this time mostly training for Ironman triathlons. I knew I needed to make more money, but swimming, and movement, made me more happy, so 401k be damned. I sort of by accident just kept doing what I loved to do. I never would have been able to tell you when I was young how much swimming meant to me, I took it for granted, like most things when I was young, but during a time of total uncertainty it became the thing I returned to. I'm so grateful for that.

I met so many good friends there, and I'll mention Todd Larlee specifically because, here's the truth as I've learned it. If you spend enough time around good people, doing what you love, opportunities will come your way which you never could have imagined. Todd was also new to Portland, a multi-sport coach from California and through him I ended up getting a job in San Francisco with Purple Patch Fitness, the premier Ironman and multi-sport coaching service in the world. I now do what I love everyday and work with some of the best athletes in the world. As I reflect back on it now I owe it all to a group of guys and women who took me in and made me feel a part of something that I had no idea I wanted to be a part of. I think it's why so many swimmers return to the sport they thought they loathed because swimming is special. It's the most individual and isolated sport, a commitment to swim laps in a pool with other people all alone, but all together. It's a little bit like life in that it's only meaningful if it's shared.

I'm in California now, and I miss that sorry lot. I miss that terrible pool and the chatter about Peaks to Portland. If you ever find yourself in Portland head on down to the Y on high street and say hi. They're a bit slower now, but they're solid gold. Thanks for getting to know me. You're all missed.

And I can offer any advice, just keep swimming, the rest takes care of itself.

USMS LCM Summer Nationals Recap

By Emily Cook

The 2017 USMS Summer National Championship was held in Minneapolis in August. Over 150 clubs and more than 1,000 swimmers ventured to the Land of 10,000 Lakes to swim LCM at the Jean K. Freeman Aquatic Center at the University of Minnesota. There were swimmers from as far away as Hawai'i, and a few international locations. If you've never been to a USMS National Championship, you should, don'tcha know? If you have been to one and missed Minneapolis, I'm here to tell you that it was a good one.

The deck was, well, bedecked with signage in local phrases such as "you betcha" and "uff-da." At this point, you've probably heard all about the records that were broken, especially the 21 set by Willard Lamb in the 95-99 age bracket. You can read articles for days about the record-breaking swims, which were thrilling. However, the swims and people that aren't in those articles are what struck me the most.

Despite being a national championship, there were still swimmers of all shapes, sizes, abilities (athletes are allowed to swim up to three events they have not qualified in), and personalities. There was the woman who trotted a stick horse around deck to cheer her friends on with. Folks from Fort Lauderdale sported umbrella hats, flags, and enthusiasm that won them a spirit award. One man swam his backstroke using the vintage double arm technique. When swimmers and timers had to go to opposite ends of the pool for the 50m races, it manifested as two dancing, high-fiving lines as they passed people in the first row of the bleachers. Then, there was the 3-generation relay…

Acoustics being what they are in large pool facilities, I didn't hear the announcer. After a fashion, I noticed that the swimmer in lane 1 was in the older demographic and was falling behind. Other people were noticing too. The announcer's voice finally broke over the crowd, informing us that the relay in lane 1 was represented by 3 generations of a single family, with the eldest as the anchor. As the news rippled through the crowd, people started to clap. I beamed, flashing back to clapping for the last swimmer in my age group days. "This," I said to myself, "is what swimming is supposed to be like." As soon as that thought flashed through my mind, the crowd started to cheer. The swimmer determinedly zig-zagged down the lane. By the time she passed under the final flags, everyone was standing, the din could be heard outside, and more than one person had something in their eyes. It wasn't the chlorine.

Next year there will be no Summer National Championships, in lieu of the Pan Am Masters Championships, which will take place in August in Orlando, Florida. Although Pan Ams will be a larger meet, there are no qualifying times. Registration for Pan Ams opens October 15th. Mark your calendars for a trip to the Sunshine State, where the sun and smiles are sure to be beaming…it's a meet not to be missed!

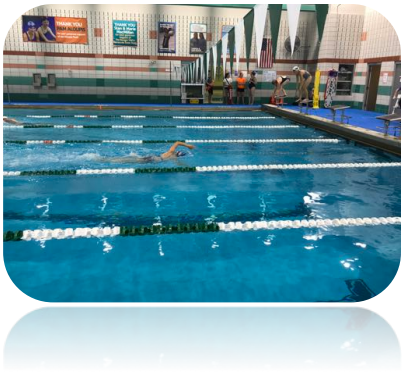
Coach's Corner:
Which Technique is Best For You? By Todd Larlee

One of the oldest discussions in the swim coaching and athlete community is the concept of whether an athlete should work on technique or fitness when participating in swim workouts over a period of time. This is part of the discussion many Masters swimmers have with their coaches and/or lane mates at this time of year. When reading the different articles on the "off-season" the most common advice is to work on a weakness. Many Masters will consider working on technique at this time.

A couple of things to preface this article -

1) There is nothing that can replace working with a coach on deck that has years of Masters swim coaching.
2) Most Masters swimmers need to be careful with using power producing or drag increasing equipment. Examples are paddles, an ankle band, an Eney Buoy with any water inside or a parachute. My prerequisites for using these type of equipment is a depth of swim history-defined as swimming consistently for at least 3x/week for 48-50 weeks per year for at least 2-3 years or swimming faster than 1:30/100 yards or having grown up swimming in high school or college. Even still, see point #1.

Some key points follow that should get the conversation started. This is by no means the totality of the issue.

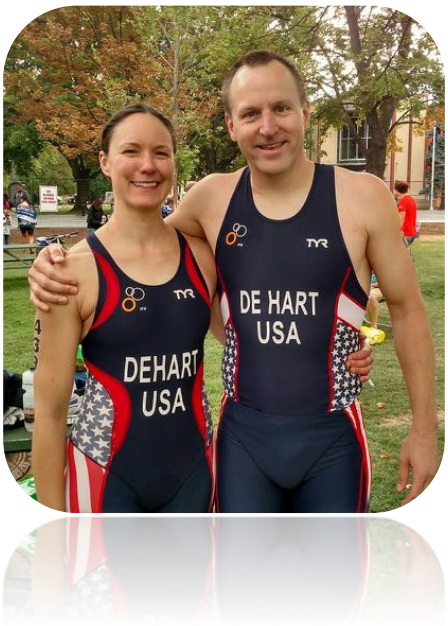


1. Every body is different. What may work for the tall, long armed male athlete swimming may not work for the shorter, shorter levered female athlete swimming in that same lane. Why try to pigeon hole them into that same technical model?
2. Does two months of working on technique elicit the changes needed to make a difference in technique? Does three? My guess is no. These type of changes will likely take upwards of at least a year to incorporate into an athlete's training.
3. The Masters swimmer simply does not have the time to swim 5-7x/week to incorporate daily/weekly technique work. And even if they could-is it the best use of their time?
4. People expect that with "better" technique comes faster swim times or ease of swimming. *Perhaps* over time-but definitely not right away. And if that swimmer works on their technique over a long period of time without faster times how does the coach explain that to the athlete?
5. Is there a transfer of technique/drill work to their swimming when they start swimming a set of 10×100(or insert set here) on a set interval at 80-85% or high aerobic effort or race pace effort? Again-I don't think so. At that point, the athlete is only trying to make the interval without getting completely out of breath.

In my experience, there are several other ways to help swimmers with their mechanics over a period of time. The most important aspect is to figure out what that athlete's goals are in their events, the athletic history and the many other variables at play in the pool. Best of luck to everyone at the start of Fall 2017!

Swim…Run? Aqua…thlon?
by Pieter deHart

Growing up a swimmer by nature, running always seemed an unpleasant cross-training chore, something that coach would make us suffer before we could experience the blissful horizontal weightlessness of the pool. After college, running became a self-imposed vertical form of exercise, and I discovered that the demands of each sport can have complementary and even synergistic benefits to the other. Putting them side-by-side in a single event, however, is a unique challenge unto itself. Unlike triathlons, with the bike-heavy format and where it is not infrequent to overhear folks saying "I just have to get through this swim…," to succeed in events that combine only swimming and running requires one to be solid and strong in both sports. There are competitions short and long, open water and pool swims, trail, track, and road runs. While they have been called many different names around the globe, officially there are two distinct competitions: Aquathlon and SwimRun. One of the most frequent questions I've had over the years has been "What's THAT?"



Aside from being a mouthful to pronounce, aquathlon (ah-KWA-thlon), is some of the most fun I've ever had. Aquathlon is a fast-paced individual event combining swimming and running, with a nearly 50/50 balance of time spent in each. There are two internationally recognized formats: 2.5K run/1K swim/ 2.5K run, or 1K swim/5K run. Both formats lend themselves to intensely competitive events, as well, with strong swimmers and runners found throughout. You can find some longer or differently-proportioned races throughout the U.S., but in general aquathlon is short-distance and all-out: most competitors finish in under an hour. Races take place in open water, salt or fresh, or occasionally a pool. Races may be advertised with a variety of pseudonyms, from "Splash-n-Dash" to "Dip and Dash." plainly inaccurate "Biathlon" and "Duathlon" (two distinctly different sports in their own right), or even "Aquathon" (eliciting nightmares of Swim-a-thons from my youth!).

Regardless of the name, the transition from swim to run or vice versa is key in aquathlon. Athletes speedily swap their quick-lace shoes for cap & goggles and back (for R/S/R), or peel off a wetsuit, cap & goggles to don shoes and race bib (for S/R). Most folks find the run-to-swim transition in the R/S/R format more challenging than the swim-to-run transition. After the all-out sprint of the first run, with all the blood pumping to my legs, it feels as though you're just learning to swim during that first 500m in the water. One needs to calm their mind and breath to avoid overheating or panicking in the water. In such a short race, there's no time for a lack of confidence.

SwimRun may involve the same two disciplines as aquathlon, but is another beast entirely. Having officially started in Sweden a little over a decade ago, SwimRun is performed in teams of two competing in Female, Coed, or Male categories. The rules generally require competitors to be within 10m of their partners on the swim and 100m on the run. Some races require partners to be tethered to one another on the swim portions of the race. Even when tethering is not required, I have found great success with my teammates by using a tether throughout the race - including the runs - so that the lead teammate can assist the other.

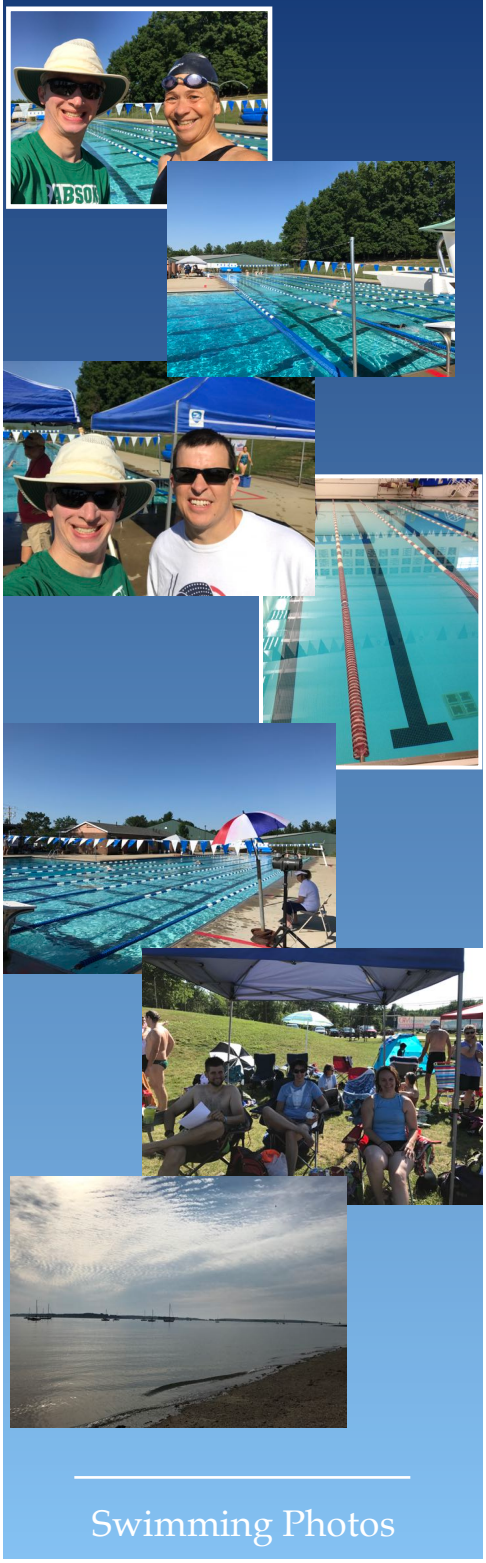
Swim..Run.. from Page 6 (Continued)

Race formats, terrains, and distances vary greatly, but many SwimRuns are point-to-point, open water, with trail elements. Total distances vary from 8 to 40 or more miles, with varying ratios of swimming to running. I tend toward SwimRun races in which swimming is around 25% of the total distance, as that usually means I'll spend about the same amount of time swimming as running. In SwimRun, be prepared for anything, from climbing and rock scrambling to navigational scales, poorly marked courses, and rough or cold water. Given the more rugged and unpredictable nature of this sport, most races have significant gear requirements, including at least a ¾ wetsuit (down to knees), course map, GPS, safety whistle, and first aid compression kit. SwimRun races usually also allow optional equipment such as paddles and buoys.

For sports that both combine swimming and running, aquathlon and SwimRun couldn't be more different. Aquathlons have a transition zone where gear comes off or goes on; in SwimRun, all the gear travels with the athletes, so we run in our wetsuits and swim in our shoes. The shared experience of SwimRun truly builds camaraderie, and allows teammates to share the agonies and joys of the race. Aquathlon is recognized by most national multisport federations, and athletes can qualify for the World Multisport Championships hosted and governed by the International Triathlon Union (ITU). The ÖtillÖ (literally "island to island" in Swedish) organization has assumed the role of defacto governing body for SwimRun, hosting the annual self-proclaimed "SwimRun World Championship," with ÖtillÖ branded races as qualifiers for a race season finale.

Nevertheless, one commonality is that both sports are still relatively new, and finding a race near you in the U.S. can be as much of a challenge as the race itself. So, whatever your interests and background in swimming, if you're looking to add challenge and excitement to your training and racing – and a bit of travel - I highly recommend dipping your toe into either of these sports. Fortunately, Maine offers plenty of places to test your mettle in training sessions. Why not mix in a little run with your swim?

FACES IN THE WATER



Swimming Photos

Misc. Summer Meets & Races

Jenny Thompson Meet: front from left: Susan Rardin (Camden), Brittany Harrington (Searsport), Emily Cook (Lyman), Mike Hurd, Pieter DeHart (Thorndike), Ted Clark (Waterville). Rear from left: Dale Syphers, Bill Jones (Hope)

The 2017 Hobbs Pond Swim winners: Mark McCluskey and Lianne McCluskey (1st female), Hope. Matt McKeon observes.
photo by Mary McCluskey

MESC Blanket:
Question for Members: by Anne Uecker

This is an MESC blanket made from some of our old t-shirts. The blanket is backed with a soft fleece. A second blanket will also be available.

Currently we are thinking about giving one blanket away in association with each of two time points.

1. The first for registering or renewing as a MESC swimmer before the first of the year, and
2. The second for registering for the New England short course yards championship in March. All individuals registering for either will be entered into a raffle.

The above, however, is not written in stone. If you have other ideas for the blankets, come and share them at the annual MESC meeting that is typically held after the Bowdoin meet, currently ***scheduled for November 4th.*** Even if you don't have thoughts about the blanket specifically, come to the meeting anyway!

Wicked Shahp Blue Lobstah Branded Stuff

Blue Lobtah T Shirts – Only $10 bucks! Wow!!

Email Tim Lecrone to place your order before they are gone forever! Really!!

Tlecrone@msn.com

Upcoming Meet Schedule

October 2017

October 1st
Kingston Lake Swim
Exeter NH
Event Website

October 14th
October Swim Fest Simmons College (SCM)
William J. Holmes Sports Center Pool
8:30am warmup, 9:30am start

October 28th
9th Annual Leaf Peepers Masters Meet (SCM)
9:30am 2:00pm
Uppper Valley Aquatic Center
White River Junction, VT

November 2017

November 4th
George Erswell Meet
Bowdoin College

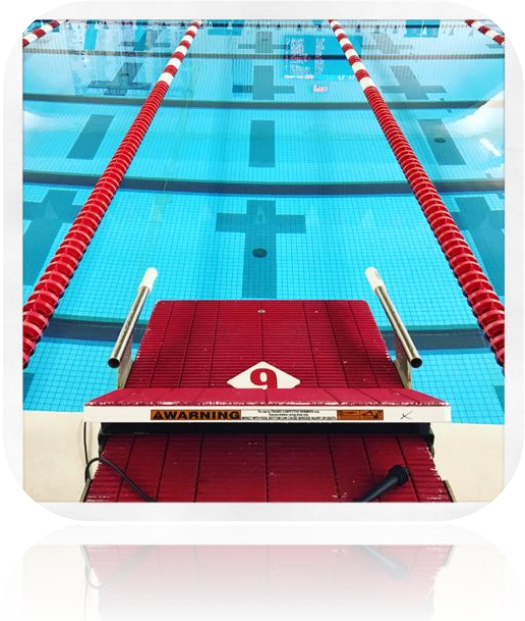
December 2017

December 8-10
2017 NE-LMSC SCM Champs
WPI Pool - Worcester Mass
Meet Website

Visit

www.mainemasters.org

To access all upcoming meets, important meet information, and signup forms.



Save The Date!

New England LMCS and Colonies Zone Short Course Meters Championship Meet

@ the beatutiful WPI Pool

December 8-10

Please contact mike@mastersswimmer.com with ideas and/or content for future Maine Masters Newsletters.

Letters to the Editor

Hello Maine Masters Swimmers,

I hope you enjoyed Issue #4 of the Maine Masters Swimming Newsletter.

I've really enjoyed helping to put together the newsletter this year.

Everyone has been so helpful. There are so many amazing swim stories and you are all a treasure trove of swim knowledge!

Please keep the articles coming!

Please email or Facebook message me any ideas you'd like to see, photos, stories, or articles you'd like to write about. I'll do my best to include your ideas in future publications.

I'd love to add more pictures from swim events (HINT HINT)!

Hope to see you this fall/winter at New England Meets!

Happy Swimming and GO BLUE LOBSTAHS!

Mike Hurd

mike@mastersswimmer.com

To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others. – Tony Robbins