

The Wet Gazette

The LMSC for Virginia – Serving Swimmers in Virginia And West Virginia
July 15, 2016

“That’s What Sport Is All About – Life!”

As everyone who reads the newspaper or watches television knows, Pat Summitt, the long-time Woman’s Basketball Coach at Tennessee, died from early onset Alzheimer’s. She was 64 years and coached at Tennessee for 38 years. She is the Division I basketball coach with the most wins.

The quote above and the excerpts below are from my local newspaper, the Virginian Pilot, and was written by Sally Jenkins for The Washington Post. In November of 1982 Pat Summitt wrote a letter to one of her players who was starting her first game.

...There’s no telling how you’ll do. You might be a hero. Or you might be absolutely nothing.

There’s just no telling. Too much depends on chance, on how the ball bounces.

I’m not talking about the game. I’m talking about life. But it’s life that the game is all about. Just as I said, every game is life, and life is a game. A serious one. Dead serious. But here’s what you do with serious things. You do your best. You take what comes.

*You take what comes and you run with it.
Winning is fun...Sure.*

But winning is not the point.

Wanting to win is the point.

Not giving up is the point.

Never being satisfied with what you’ve done is the point.

The game is never over. No matter the scoreboard reads, or what the referee says, it doesn’t end when you come off the court.

The secret of the game is in doing your best. To persist and endure, “to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.”

Sitting on the Dock of the Bay

By Alice Phillips

When you’re sitting on the dock, (okay, patio actually, but close enough)...when you’re sitting on the dock of the Chesapeake Bay at the renowned Hemingway’s Restaurant, with beautiful glistening water and an impressive Bay Bridge in the background, swimming four miles tomorrow seems like a good idea. You’re enjoying appetizers with friends and listening to tales from veteran swimmers. How cool is it that you’re going to swim between two giant bridges where Congress shuts down the waterway for a day of adult fun?!? Not surprisingly, this pre-swim dinner with friends was a definite weekend highlight for rookie Bay swimmers Lori Strobl and Denise Letendre

When you’re standing in sun for hours at the start, thankful for your Sherpa but wondering where you can pee, if you have the right goggles on and whether you’ve drunk enough (non-salty) water, that same 4.4 mile concept starts to get a little ominous. Add on some 20 knot winds at your back and that nagging, familiar worry could even become a sense of dread. This unknowability is what always makes open water swimming “fun”.

Virginia Masters’ own Shirley Loftus Charley (and for those who don’t know, when I say “masters” here, I actually mean, you know a world record holding Master!) has completed the Chesapeake Bay swim 28 times, which is especially impressive since officially, this past June was the 25th anniversary. Records also exist for the early years of the swim, but in its current format and course, this was the 25th year.

Eighth on the all-time list of finishers, Shirley shares, “The Bay Bridge swim can be very challenging due to the side currents and chop. It is one of the hardest open water swims that I do. My

See **Bay** on page 3.



If you need an entry and do not have access to email, call me and I will sent you an entry. Betsy

Aug 6: Lake Moomaw. Full entry was in last newsletter

Aug 6-7: Dixie Zone LC, Goldsboro, NC

August 12-13: One Mile and 5K OW Championship, Lake Lure, NC

August 18-21: Mt Hood, Oregon, USMS LC Nationals

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Records Trivia

By Betsy Durrant

I did a visual search of the LMSC records, posted at www.vaswim.org, to find the oldest record. The winners are:

EDWARD HALL. 100 Back, LCM, M60-64, set in 1983 AND

CHRISTOPHER NICKLAW, 100 Breast, LCM, M25-29,1983.

Next is DIANE CAYCE. Her 100 backstroke record for LCM in the W25-29 age group was set in 1984.

Other records set prior to 1990 are:

LCM, Deborah Sloan, W19-24, 50 Breast, 1989

LCM, Dan McDonough, M18-24, 1500, 1988

See **Records** on page 6.



LMSC for Virginia Website:
www.vaswim.org

USMS Website: www.usms.org

Nearby LMSCs

North Carolina: www.ncmasters.org

Maryland: www.maryland@usms.org

Potomac Valley: www.PVMasters.org

Colonies Zone: www.ColoniesZone.org

Dixie Zone: www.DixieZone.org

ONLINE Meet Registrations:

www.clubassistant.com

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Graphics from www.swimgraphics.com

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average time is 1:57, I have been as fast as 1:45 and as slow as 2:09. You never know what the conditions will be until you show up on race day.”

Several days before this year’s race, weather channels and apps showed a small craft advisory for the race area, located between Sandy Point State Park near Annapolis and Kent Island near Maryland’s Eastern Shore. No doubt locker rooms up and down the East coast were full of chatter about the conditions, as swimmers checked and re-checked temperatures, wave heights and the actual weather forecast.

More than 6000 people have completed the wetsuit legal, Chesapeake Bay swim over the years, and while it is not an official USMS sanctioned event, it is well-known among open water aficionados. Openwaterswimming.com ranks the race 95th among worldwide OW swims and fourth on its list of the top USA races.

Several veteran racers found this year’s windy conditions to be enjoyable. Shirley loved the lack of side current and at age 64 actually swam her second fastest time ever. Peluso Open Water swimmer Courtney Moates Paulk, who has braved the waves 14 times, swam her fastest time ever. This was a bittersweet swim for her however as it was her first finish without her mom waiting on shore at the finish.

Virginia Masters coach and athlete Dr. Jim Miller, who has completed 17 Bay swims, didn’t enjoy the adventure quite as much this year. He found the variable water temperatures created by deep water at the surface to be distracting and the waves breaking over his back, to be a bit troubling: “About a third of the time...your head was underwater when you were intending to take a breath.” Always thinking with a coach’s mind however, Jim adds that our ability to react to variable conditions is the real challenge of open water.

Denise Letendre would like to do the race again when conditions were more calm. She reports, “People who had done the race before talked about how cool it was to look up at the bridges during the swim, but I felt like I couldn’t

really do that because I had to constantly be focused on riding the waves and making sure I got a good breath before another wave came.” That being said, Denise won her age group and really enjoyed the feeling of fatigue and accomplishment when the race was over.

Lori Strobl also reports that she tried to “tune into” the wave patterns and ride them when she felt one coming in. This allowed her to transition between letting her arms recover on the down wave and using her kick to propel her. She says, “I am not a big kicker in general, however I did a lot more kicking than I would ever do” in a pool.

Peluso Open Water’s Craig Dunbar used his Garmin watch to measure his pace during the race. It shows a remarkable up and down pattern that reveals the effects of both the push and pull of those tailwind waves.

In terms of preparation and training, approaches vary. Lori did three to four pool swims a week. More naturally a sprinter, her volume tends to be lower than others, but her quality is high. Lori would have done more open water preparation but high amounts of rain in May limited all of the RVA athletes from river sessions.

Denise trained for about six weeks leading into the race as she was already preparing for Short Course Nationals. She was able to sneak in four James River swims before the Bay, which enhanced her confidence. Denise also does kickboxing one to three times a week, which she finds increases her upper body endurance.

Always The Master, Shirley truly amazes with her mental toughness. Starting in May, besides all her normal training, Shirley does one long straight swim every week. She starts with 30 minutes the first week and adds another 15-30 each week until she is doing a straight pool workout for two hours and 15 minutes. (She actually continues this regimen past the Bay swim, working her way beyond three hours since she is doing a ten-mile swim in late July).

Regardless of preparation swimmers will find that Mother Nature will always provide the biggest challenge at the Chesapeake Bay swim.

The right attitude, a solid training foundation, personal confidence, and a little support from your friends, are all things that increase the odds of success. For more information about the Great Chesapeake Bay swim, consult the following:

A 12 minute video of the swim:

<http://play.smilebox.com/SpreadMoreHappy/4e4451794e6a51354e544d3d0d0a>

This year's results:

https://linmarksports.com/old/index.php?option=com_jwdintermediate&view=students&layout=result&eid=220&Itemid=518

History and Archives:

Photo below:

Back row – *Craig Dunbar, George Sushkoff*
Front row – *Lori Strobl, Amy Frick, Courtney Moates Paulk, Denise Letendre, Tess Andres*

More on the Bay Swim



Photo above:

Denise Letendre, Lori Strobl, Craig Dunbar, Tess Andres, Mariah Dudley



Comfort Drills

New or nervous swimmers, try these drills to increase your comfort level

[Chris Ritter](#) | February 26, 2014

Water is not our natural environment. Some swimmers are better at adapting to the aquatic world than others. When you don't feel comfortable, your body will never be able to realize its full potential in any environment, much less in the pool.

I've had the privilege of working with some of the best coaches in the sport of swimming: Milt Nelms and the late Richard Quick. Both were incredible teachers and they specifically were experts in helping swimmers become comfortable in the water, and therefore more efficient in their swimming.

Here are some of the best drills they used and that I recommend you try to gain more efficiency and security in your swimming.

Alligator Breathing

While holding on to the side of the pool with both hands and having either your feet on the bottom or securely on the wall, bring your face close to the surface. Open your mouth as big as possible and have the lower part underwater and the upper part of your mouth still above the surface. Calmly continue breathing with half of your mouth in the water and the other half above the surface. You may choke or swallow a few gulps, but that's why you should be holding onto the side or standing on your feet. After a few tries, you will figure out how to breathe with water in your mouth.

Most swimmers' biggest technical problems revolve around breathing. If you can gain confidence breathing with water in your mouth, then you will become a more proficient breather because water almost always finds its way into your mouth when trying to breath. Use this drill to teach your brain that you will survive if you get water in your mouth.

Dead Man's Float

This drill is also sometimes referred to as your "aquatic signature." The name pretty much sums up the drill, you float as if your limbs and body were lifeless. Your back should have a nice round curve. Let your legs and arms just dangle. When you need to breathe, simply lift your head quickly and sip some air as low to the water's surface as possible. When you do this, make sure that only your head moves and that nothing else—no arms or legs—assist in your breathing movement.

This drill helps your body understand that you don't need to kick or pull in order to get air. Going back to the breathing problems many swimmers have, if you can teach your mind to rely on only your head and neck for air, more of your kicking and pulling power will go into making you faster. That effort can be put toward moving you farther down the pool rather than pushing up for air.

Starfish

Be sure that you have a clear lane to use when performing this drill. Swim any stroke. Somewhere in the middle of the lap, try to stop yourself as quickly as possible and come to a flat, floating position on the surface with your arms and legs spread out like a starfish.

It's harder than it sounds, but learning how to go from swimming speed to a sudden stop, in the shortest distance possible, is a great skill to learn. Once you have the hang of stopping, try starting from the starfish position as quickly as possible. See how long it takes to get back up to speed. Just like athletes on land benefit from learning to accelerate and decelerate their bodies quickly, the same is true for swimmers in the water.

Underwater Twist Kick

Push off underwater. While staying in a streamline position begin to either dolphin or flutter kick while twisting and rotating all the way around. As you move, continue to kick down the length of the pool while staying underwater. If you can do the whole lap without breathing, that's great! If you can't, that's OK, too, just take a breath as quickly as

possible and go back to the underwater twist kicking.

This drill builds new body awareness that can help you hone in on having a balanced kick. It also helps you navigate your ever-changing orientation to the surface, all while traveling down the pool. Alternate twisting clockwise and counter-clockwise. You may find that your kick is imbalanced, causing you to go off course when twisting in one direction or another. Is there a big difference in your effectiveness or speed when you turn one way or the other? This is a great drill for self-experimentation that can teach you how to change your kick to make it straighter and faster.

There are just a few drills that you can use to add variety to your training while teaching your body to be more comfortable and confident in the water. And as that increases, your performance will also improve.

** Always ensure that you have proper supervision when swimming, especially when doing drills underwater.*

About the Author—[Chris Ritter](#)

Chris Ritter is the founder of [RITTER Sports Performance](#) online training programs and the author of the e-book, [SURGE STRENGTH](#), which details how to strength train specifically for swimming performance. Ritter, a swimmer himself, has a degree in kinesiology and exercise science and he specializes in training athletes of diverse abilities, ranging from beginners to Olympians. Follow him on Twitter [@RITTERSP](#) or like his [Facebook page](#) for updates and training tips.

Editor's Note: This article came from the USMS website under "Training." I included it in the newsletter because as a coach, I was always surprised at the number of experienced swimmers as well as new swimmers who did not breathe correctly.

Records continued from page 2.

LCM, Perry Lange, M30-34, 1500, 1987
LCM, Lisa Tubergen, W25-29, 50 & 100 breast, 1985
LCM, Lisa Bennett, W30-34, 1500, 50 fly, 200 IM, 1988
LCM, Deborah Cain, W25-29, 1500, 1985
LCM, Marie Kelleher, W75-79, 1500, 1989
LCM, John Tudor, M30-34, 50 free, 1989
LCM, Ken Neubauer, 100 & 200 breast, 1988
LCM, Calvin Barnes, 100 back, 1989

SCM, W45-49, 200 fly, Lucille Griffin, 1988.
SCM, W30-34, 50 breast, 100 fly, 200 IM, Lisa Bennett, 1989
SCM, W35-39, 400 IM, Terry Sue Gault, 1989

SCY, W30-34, 50 & 100 breast, Lisa Bennett, 1989
SCY, M75-79, 200 free, Patrick Frank, 1985
SCY, W25-29, 500 & 1650, Deborah Cain, 1985
SCY, M80-84, 50, 100, 200, 500 free, Patrick Frank, 1988

I was very surprised that there are so many records that are 25 years old or older. Most are from long course; I think that is because there are fewer opportunities to swim long course.

Check out the records at www.vaswim and set your sights on going for it!

Coach Karen Mickunas ready for her special practice for July 4.



Commonwealth Games

By Bud Swiger

The Commonwealth Games of Virginia masters swimming meet was held June 18th at the Christiansburg Aquatic Center. This large and beautiful facility is co-owned by Virginia Tech and Christiansburg. The meet directors were Howard Butts and John Pero. The pool was set in the long course format. The meet was recognized by USMS meaning both USMS and non USMS swimmers could participate and all USMS Top Ten and USMS or LMSC records were also recognized.

The Commonwealth Games is an annual event in western Virginia and has been held for 27 years. Last year, over 55 individual and team sports were featured for all ages and abilities. Additionally, 9,200 athletes participated in 2015. Forty masters swimmers participated with four states and numerous USMS clubs represented.

VMST members fared well this year with five members winning 4 or more events. These five swimmers were Bryan Stone, James Farmer, Sherman Bamford, Jim Slaughter and Barbara Boslego. The VMST 240-279 men's 800 free relay consisting of Jim Slaughter, Bud Swiger, James Farmer and Bryan Stone broke the Virginia LMSC long course record.

The Commonwealth Games is a well-run meet with very friendly volunteers in a magnificent facility. It is one of the few long course meets in the middle Atlantic area every summer and the only one in Virginia this year. I highly recommend this meet to all of our Virginia LMSC swimmers for the future.

*The Men's 800 Free Relay for 240-279
who set a new LMSC Record:*

Jim Slaughter

Bryan Stone

Bud Swiger

Jim Farmer



Alice Phillips

Alice wrote the article on the Bay Swim. I've known Alice a long time from meets. I knew she is a teacher, but that is all I know outside of swimming. The signature on the bottom of her email says:

Alice Phillips

Science Department

Honor Committee Advisor

Head Swim Coach

This refers to her job at Trinity Episcopal School in Richmond.

I know she is a very good swimmer, so I looked up her Top Ten history. Her first Top Ten time was in 1993 at age 27 in 100 Fly. Her latest Top Ten listed is from 2013, the 200 IM. There are a total of 30 swims listed. Quite a record!

NOVA Swimmer Makes Olympic Team

From a Facebook post by Diane Cayce

Diane Cayce is a long time VMST member and a coach at NOVA in Richmond. She posted that **Townly Hass** made the Olympic team by finishing **first** at the trials in the 200 Free. Townly has completed one year at the University of Texas.

The NOVA team had 9 swimmers qualify for the Olympic Trials.

Local Masters Swim Committee Newsletter
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I found these photos online by searching for” Rio Olympics Swimming Venue”

