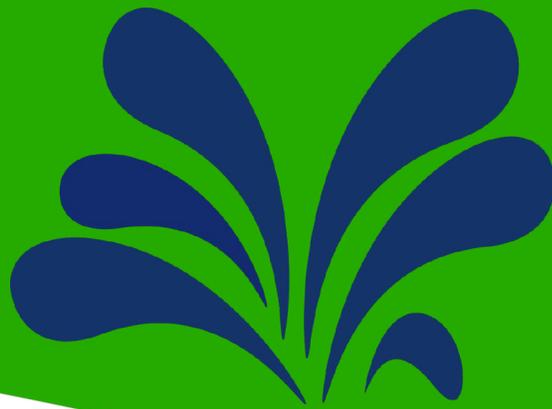


THE WET GAZETTE

Published by the LMSC of Virginia:
Serving Masters Swimmers in Virginia and West Virginia

December 2021



Reminder:

Volunteer Summit: “Relay 2022”

Denver, CO: March 4-6, 2022

As a reminder, our LMSC is looking for members who want to become stronger leaders and volunteers within our LMSC. The USMS Volunteer Summit (called “Relay 2022” this year) is designed to strengthen communication and collaboration between USMS and its volunteers, empowering volunteers to serve the USMS membership effectively. The annual USMS Volunteer Summit is an opportunity to **engage, equip** and **energize** volunteers through:

- **Engaging with subject matter and sharing experience/expertise**
- **Cultivating peer-to-peer and/or friend relationships**
- **Contributing to solving a problem and providing needed input**



USMS will pay travel expenses for this trip. The LMSC for Virginia would like to send additional members who are interested in attending. If interested please contact Caycee Buscaglia (bb2cp@aol.com). Additional information about Relay 2022 and the schedule for the event can be found at USMS.org.

2022 USMS Winter Fitness Challenge

Start your year off right with the 2022 USMS Winter Fitness Challenge!

Get your year off to a fresh start with the Swim.com USMS Fitness Series and the Winter Fitness Challenge, a 30-minute swim that takes place between January 1–31, 2021! Challenge yourself. Impress your friends. Collect all four. If you did this last year, see if you can go a little farther. If you’ve never done this before, it’s automatically a personal record. In less time than it takes to watch a sitcom, you’ll be done. Come for the swimming, stay for the magic. The Winter Fitness Challenge can be done in any manner desired: straight through, as a member of a relay, or even with fins.

At least one team is going to do this challenge together. The River City Masters Swim Group will be hosting their swim challenge on Saturday, January 15, 2022, at ACAC Midlothian. Event details:

What: USMS 30 Minute Winter Swim Challenge & River City Masters Breakfast Social

- o All participants are welcome to join us for breakfast in the Café at ACAC following the swim challenge.
- o Our very own Norwood Thornton (Professional Corporate Magician) will be providing entertainment during breakfast!

When: Saturday, January 15, 2021 at 8:00 AM

Where: ACAC Midlothian Indoor Lap Pool

How to sign up: Confirm your spot for the swim challenge with Jim Miller at jwmswimmd@aol.com. You will also need to register online with USMS at <https://www.clubassistant.com/club/clinics.cfm?c=2426>

If you aren’t an ACAC member or you can’t join the River City Masters on the 15th, several other local USMS swim groups will be participating in January. Please contact your USMS swim coach for further details about this event!

Current and Upcoming Events

2022 Swim.com USMS Winter Fitness Challenge (30-Minute Swim)

January 1 - 31, 2022; any pool

2022 USMS 1-Hour Virtual Championship

January 1 - 31, 2022; any pool

Carol Chidester Memorial Swim Series

Meet #4: January 16, 2022; Annapolis, MD

Meet #6: March 21, 2022; Annapolis, MD

2021 Go The Distance

December 31, 2021

17th Annual Tropical Splash

January 30, 2022; Alexandria, VA

David Gregg Meet

SAVE THE DATE: **Sunday, February 6, 2021;**

Henrico, VA

General Information

LMSC for Virginia Website: www.vaswim.org

USMS Website: www.usms.org

Nearby LMSCs

North Carolina: www.ncmasters.org

Maryland: www.teamunify.com

Potomac Valley: www.PVMasters.org

Nearby Zones

Colonies Zone: www.ColoniesZone.org

Dixie Zone: www.DixieZone.org

Online Meet Registrations:

LMSC Officers

Chair: Caycee Buscaglia

Vice-Chair: Ken Gardner

Secretary: Alice Phillips

Treasurer: Becca Latimer

Membership Coordinator: Chris Stevenson

Coaches: Rich Williams

Fitness: Dane Schwartz

Long Distance: Dave Holland

Newsletter: Heather and Chris Stevenson

Officials: Charlie Cockrell

Records & Top Ten: Chris Stevenson

Review: Heather Stevenson

Safety: Jim Miller

Sanctions: Kyle Ahlgren

Webmaster/Social Media: George Sushkoff

David Gregg Meet: Note the change in date. The David Gregg Meet is currently scheduled for SUNDAY February 6, 2021 in the morning. More details will be available in the January newsletter and online. Note that this meet is usually held on a Saturday, but this year we are working around some high school meets, so Sunday is our day!

Club Tribe News: Sixteen Club Tribe swimmers competed at the Germantown Masters Solstice Meet (SCM), and it marked a tremendously successful return to competition for our team. We were excited to welcome seven new teammates who made a big impact in their Club Tribe debuts (Rob Bellamy, Patrick Brugh, Peter Brukx, Christopher Johnson, Elizabette Macias, Michael Ryan, and Blake Sorrell), and we swam to a second place combined team finish among 30 clubs at this well-attended, highly competitive meet.

Our team had excellent swims across the lineup (full results were sent out by email) but we wanted to highlight the following accomplishments:

FINA WORLD RECORD -- W 200-239 200 MEDLEY RELAY

Club Tribe's Women's 200-239 200 Medley Relay broke the Virginia LMSC, USMS, and FINA World Record, lowering the existing world record by over three seconds to a scorching 2:06.51. All four legs were incredibly impressive: Susan Williams (BK, 32.31); Kristen Harris (BR, 35.77); Margaret Conze (FL, 30.17); and Fall Willeboordse (FR, 28.26). Congratulations, ladies -- this is an amazing accomplishment!!

VIRGINIA LMSC RELAY RECORDS / CRESCENDO RELAY

Club Tribe established three Virginia LMSC relay records on the Men's side, with the 160-199 team of John Rockwell, Rich Williams, Patrick Brugh and Rob Bellamy posting a time of 1:59.73 in the 200 Medley Relay, and the 72-99 team of Michael Ryan, Christopher Johnson, Blake Sorrell and Peter Brukx swimming 1:41.30 and 8:19.01 in the 200 and 800 Free Relays, respectively. The guys are to be credited for rattling the USMS National Record in the 800 Free Relay in what essentially became a late-night swim due to meet delays. Club Tribe's 500 Crescendo Relay of Ellen Horne, Vince Romano, Elizabette Macias and Shannon Greene very nearly took down the big trophy with an outstanding second place swim.

VIRGINIA LMSC INDIVIDUAL RECORDS

Four Club Tribe women combined for a total of seven individual Virginia LMSC Records: Fall Willeboordse (W 55-59 50 BR (38.91) and 100 FR (1:03.97)); Kristen Harris (W 45-49 50 BR (35.78) and 100 BR (1:17.02)); Susan Williams (W 55-59 50 Fly (31.06) and 50 Back (32.31); and Elizabette Macias (W 18-24 100 BR (1:15.06)). Congratulations, record-holders!

VMST NEWS: VMST also had some record-breakers at the Germantown meet! Shirley Loftus-Charley set eight new LMSC records in the W70-74 age group. Keven Mastracci set four new records in the M25-29 age group, and Alexandra Marsell set two new records in the W25-29 age group. All LMSC records will be posted on the LMSC website (www.vaswim.org).

Breaststroke Racing Tips

By Andrew Sheaff*

Practice is where every swimmer improves their skills and improves their fitness. Improved skills and fitness should result in faster racing, but that's not always the case. To swim faster, you have to execute your races effectively, and this is a distinct skill that is often overlooked when preparing for competition. To help you improve this skill, I'm going to provide you with specific ideas to help you improve your racing.

As with all of these tips, I'm going to focus on the critical areas of race management, and then describe how each of those areas is relevant to each particular stroke. Today, we're going to explore some key ideas for how to effectively race backstroke events. While these ideas can be immediately implemented in your next meet, you have to PRACTICE these tips in order to be most effectively at executing these skills in competition. You want these strategies to be habits, and that's only going to happen with practice. Let's check them out.

1. Breathe to win. Breaststroke is the one stroke where you breathe every stroke. As such, the breathing action tends to get little attention. It's taken for granted. However, because the breath happens every stroke cycle, it makes sense to use it to your advantage. It's a simple place to put your focus.

Too often, breaststrokers breathe UP rather than breathing FORWARD. This is especially true as you fatigue. The head comes up high, which causes the hips to drop. Not only will this slow you down, it will make the last quarter of the race painfully difficult. Make sure you're focused on breathing forward each stroke, and this will help carry all of your speed in the direction you want- toward the other side of the pool.

Beyond the mechanics of lifting your head to breathe, it's critical to make sure you get full breaths of air. Be patient and get a full breath each time you lift your head, especially at the beginning of the race. Swimmers are often really excited, and as a result, fail to breathe fully at the beginning of their races. The air you breathe early is the air that keeps your speed later.

2. Time your walls. Relative to the other strokes, breaststrokers tend to take fewer strokes and use lower stroke rates. This can cause a lot of problems with turns. I'm sure you've seen it. A swimmer takes a stroke, glide forever, then finally do a turn. At the other extreme, another swimmer seems to take 5 strokes inside the flags, take a half stroke to finish, and then tries to execute a turn.

Breaststroke is a difficult stroke. It takes a lot of strength and a lot of energy. Every time you fail to time your walls effectively, you're losing all of your speed. While the turn itself will be slow, what's worse is that it will take a lot more work to get back up to speed after the turn.

The solution is simple- pay attention to how many more strokes you'll need to take, and adjust those strokes heading into the wall. As much as possible, you want to finish each lap on a full stroke. Work on this skill in practice, and you'll find you'll be able to execute it in competition.

3. Manage your stroke rate. Breaststroke is an interesting stroke in that there are many different styles of breaststroke, all of which can be successful. Some swimmers swim with longer, slower strokes, whereas others swim with shorter, faster strokes. The key is to know what type of breaststroke works best for you, and stick with it! If you perform better with a longer stroke, make sure you stay patient and resist the urge to increase your stroke rate. In contrast, if you're more effective with a higher stroke rate, make sure that you stay consistent with keeping your tempo up instead of gliding. If you're not sure what style of breaststroke will suit you, experiment in practice during faster racing sets, or during sprints.

4. Plan your pullouts. Especially in short course competitions, races can be won or lost during the pullouts. If you don't have awesome pullouts, don't despair as it's more about executing the best pullouts
(cont'd on page 4)

Backstroke (cont'd from page 3)

for you. If you get great distance off the wall and have a great pullout, you need to make sure that you stay patient and take advantage of those monster pullouts. Resist the urge to breathe early, and get as much as you can out of each one.

On the other hand, if your pullouts aren't great and you're a better swimmer on the surface, consider being disciplined in NOT gliding much prior to and after the pullout. Instead, move through the pullout quickly and get right to your strength- the swimming. Finally, there are some swimmers that have started to omit the pullout completely! This might be a great option for you if you are significantly better breaststroke swimmer than you are at pullouts.

Pay attention to what happens in practice and competition. If you consistently move ahead with your pullouts, you'll need to make sure you're getting as much out of every pullout as you can, even when you get tired. If you find yourself losing ground, consider getting up faster, or even removing the pullout altogether. Use the strategy that will help you go the fastest!

5. Have a plan. There are a lot of different ways to swim each race, and many of them can work. It's important to know what's going to work best for you. While I can't necessarily predict what your best strategy will be, I'll provide you with some options. Regardless, I know that the plan that won't work is the 'see what happens' plan. Unfortunately, this is a plan that a lot of swimmers use, even really fast swimmers.

Swim your race rather than someone else's. Know what race strategy is going to be most effective for you, and stick with it. Not sure how to approach your race? Here are some strategies to play with, as well as the distances that these strategies tend to work well with. Remember, to experiment in practice, and once you find a strategy that's comfortable, make it a habit. Regardless of your plan, remember to integrate the other tips into your race strategy.

- **All out**- This strategy is as exactly as it sounds, you go as fast as you can, for as long as you can. This strategy is perfect for the 50 breaststroke. As there are very few individuals that can make this strategy work over 100 m/y, I would recommend being slightly conservative at the beginning of a 100 m/y race.
- **Control, build, blast**- For this strategy, the 1st quarter of the race is swum fast and controlled, the 2nd quarter is swum build to maximal effort, and the 2nd half is swum all out. This strategy is best suited for the 100 and 200 breaststroke.
- **Negative split**- When negative splitting, the goal is to swim the 2nd half of the race faster than the 1st half of the race. At about the halfway point, you really make a move and then bring it home fast. This can work well for the 200 distance, particularly if you rely on your staying power rather than your blinding speed.

Conclusion

While training sets the stage for fast racing as it develops your abilities, you actually have to execute your races to display those abilities. Too often swimmers simply attack their races with great enthusiasm, and little intention. When racing backstroke events, you can avoid this mistake by planning your breathing, managing your legs, controlling your tempo, attacking your turns, and executing a race strategy. If you can accomplish these objectives, you'll be well on your way to accomplishing your goals.

**Andrew Sheaff is currently an assistant swimming coach at the University of Virginia, the 2021 NCAA Champions. He helps swimmers and triathletes find comfort, ease, and speed in the water by providing the foundational skill development tools that enable them to achieve their aquatic goals. If you have any questions about skill development or improving your performance, he can be reached at through his website www.andrewsheaffcoaching.com or via e-mail at andrew@andrewsheaffcoaching.com*