

# The Wet Gazette

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Serving Masters Swimmers in Virginia and West Virginia

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## USMS Rule Changes - 2021

**Every year at Convention**, the House of Delegates takes up rule changes. The following is a quick summary of the rule changes. For more details, refer to the 2021 USMS Rule Book.

**Meet Announcements:** The Rule Book now uses "meet announcements" instead of "meet information" or "entry forms". Meet announcements must be released no more than 1 week before the entry deadline.

**Club Affiliation:** A swimmer may not switch club affiliation in the middle of a meet. A swimmer may declare "unattached" prior to first event of a meet that a swimmer swims.

**Meet Committee:** The rule chaanc clarified the roles of the meet director, meet committee, and meet referee.

**National Championship Meets:** Championship awarding and post-meet reporting is not the purview of the Championship Committee.

**Virtual Meets:** These meets may be held in multiple venues and on different days but must be completed within 10 days.

**Dual-Sanctioned Meets:** Guidelines for dual-sanctioned meets were updated.

**Unified Fee:** Individual and Club fees are now the same nation-wide.

**USMS Board of Directors:** Past USMS Presidents are no longer non-voting members of the Board (with the exception of the immediate Past-President).

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## The First Time . . .

**At the beginning of the year**, we thought you might enjoy reading how some Masters swimmers in Virginia started their Masters journey. The following are descriptions of the first Masters workout, meet or event of some people you may know . . .

The first Masters event that I attended was the 1994 VMST Fall Meet at Norfolk Academy. I still remember talking to Betsy Durrant on the phone a few weeks before the meet when she helped me with registration forms and said hello to me when I arrived. I just remember it felt so good to be in the water again and I was (pleasantly) surprised that I could still swim! Everyone was so friendly and welcoming, this was the hook I needed to come back to swimming and I've stuck with it ever since that first meet.

*--Charles Cockrell*

My first Masters Practice was technically when I was home on break from college. I was not in the mood to swim with the intense age group club team at ACAC, so Jim Miller said hop over here in our lanes we have fun. Someone threw me some fins and I was sold.

*--Caycee Buscaglia*

My first Masters swim was at Nova at too-early-in-the-morning hour. There were maybe 3-4 other swimmers in the lane with me. Other than trying to keep up, I struggled with the terminology and how to swim the

intervals. 15 years later, I'm not very fast, but I do know how to read a workout.

*--Betsey Poehler*

After three years of traveling to DC, twice a week to play ice hockey for a women's team called the Washington Redcoats, and running some 5K and 10K races, I realized I needed to find an activity I could sustain, was closer to home and could enjoy. Late spring of 1989 I tentatively stepped on the deck at Briarwood (now ACAC) one weekday evening, spoke to the coach on deck, Jim Miller, and hopped in the pool to swim the LONG COURSE practice. I was hooked. I remember the first couple weeks of informing Jim of the upcoming practices I was going to miss. Finally Jim said, "This is Masters, you come when you can. No one is taking roll."

*--Val Pate*

I was strictly an upper level age group coach until 1981, when the director of the Jewish Community Center in Richmond and the Aquatics Director approached me about Masters. I had never heard of it. Their appeal was that they were afraid that all these "old people" were in jeopardy of medical events during their training sessions. The JCC wanted a coach who was a physician on deck when they were training.....and I became a Masters Coach and Athlete, since all my swimmers wanted me on their relays!

*--Jim Miller*

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## Current and Upcoming Events

### 2021 USMS Winter Fitness Challenge

30 Minute Swim  
February 1-15, 2021

### 2021 Go The Distance

December 31, 2021

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## General Information

LMSC for Virginia Website: [www.vaswim.org](http://www.vaswim.org)

USMS Website: [www.usms.org](http://www.usms.org)

#### Nearby LMSCs

North Carolina: [www.ncmasters.org](http://www.ncmasters.org)  
Maryland: [www.teamunify.com](http://www.teamunify.com)  
Potomac Valley: [www.PVMasters.org](http://www.PVMasters.org)

#### Nearby Zones

Colonies Zone: [www.ColoniesZone.org](http://www.ColoniesZone.org)  
Dixie Zone: [www.DixieZone.org](http://www.DixieZone.org)

#### Online Meet Registrations:

[www.clubassistant.com](http://www.clubassistant.com)

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## LMSC Officers

Chair: Caycee Buscaglia  
Vice-Chair: Ken Gardner  
Secretary: Alice Phillips  
Treasurer: Becca Latimer  
Membership Coordinator: Jeff Bush  
Coaches: Rich Williams  
Fitness: Dane Schwartz  
Long Distance: Dave Holland  
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Records & Top Ten: Chris Stevenson  
Review: Heather Stevenson  
Safety: Jim Miller  
Sanctions: Kyle Ahlgren  
Webmaster/Social Media: George Sushkoff

### *The First Time (cont'd from page 2)*

My first Masters meet was the 1991 Southern Pacific SCY Zone Championships at the University of Southern California, just 7 years after the 1984 Olympics were held there. Me, being young and unaware of how Master's meets were run, registered for and competed in the maximum number of events—10 individual and 7 relays in just two days! I was dumb enough to keep doing that for a couple more years before my body said, "No you don't."

--Kirk Clear

I attended my first Masters meet in 2014 in Richmond, VA. I reconnected with old friends from college and we competed together for the first time 16 years. I could not have asked for a better introduction to Masters swimming, and I have enjoyed every minute since.

--Rich Williams

My first Masters experience was an evening practice in the outdoor Florida A&M University pool in Tallahassee, FL. We swam while the university's famous dancing marching band practiced on the field next to the pool. Needless to say, we all did a lot of kicking so we could listen to and watch the band.

--Heather Stevenson

My VERY FIRST Masters practice: I was living in the Berkshires of Massachusetts where there were NOT many pools. I found a Masters group - in a monastery! The coach would yell at me for doing butterfly during a freestyle set. My FIRST VA Master's practice - I was out of shape and showed up for a long course practice - ouch. Coach Jim Miller figured out quickly I was an easy teasing target and said at my second practice that we could all go home if I could put my arms above my head. I barely could!

--Molly Bittner

My first Masters practice was nearly 40 years ago. Obviously I don't remember the exact practice but I do remember it was at the old Briarwood 50 meter indoor pool which is gone now. Dr Jim Miller was coaching most of the practices at that time!

--Mark Kutz

I showed up for my first Masters practice at what was then the Riverside Wellness & Fitness pool in Richmond. But a thunderstorm hit and practice was cancelled. It was about another year before I came back again. I attended a few practices but the team then headed out of town for Masters Nationals. It was another year before I came back again. Finally, in 1994, I came back and started attending morning practices. And I haven't stopped since then. Sometimes it just takes a few tries to get started!

--Patty Miller

I don't remember specifically my first practice, but my first masters team was at the 300 Club in Gainesville, Florida. My first meet was in St. Petersburg, and it was memorable because it was outdoors right near the Bay in glorious spring weather, and there was music and beer drinking between the two days of the meet, a first for me.

—Chris Stevenson

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### **The First Time (cont'd from page 2)**

My first Masters meet was in the spring of 1974 in North Carolina. The meet was held between the trials and finals of the Junior Olympics. What I remember most was hearing the daughter of one of the swimmers cheering "Go Mom!" That was refreshing to hear the daughter cheering for the mother. During the meet I found that the cheers were for Betsy Montgomery of Ashville. Her daughter doing the cheering was Mary Montgomery who represented the U. S. in the 1972 Olympics in Munich. That afternoon was a unique experience.

--Betsy Durrant

I love United States Masters Swimming even though I don't swim nearly as much as I should or used too. I've swum masters in Texas, Illinois and Virginia and been a USMS member for almost 30 years. Boiling down my first experience is as simple of the love for the water and the desire to keep involved in a sport I love so very much. I've been very blessed and have gotten to go to Hawaii six times for Masters open water events (Maui Channel Relay and the Waikiki Roughwater Swim) and even a Masters Nationals. I've swum Big Shoulder's 5K in Chicago I think about 10 times and actually came close to winning once. I'm not anything close to the legendary status of Chris Stevenson or Dave Holland mind you, but that's the great things about Masters, who cares. It's about the people and the friendships and since moving to Virginia in 2004 I have formed lifelong friendships and bonds that will last well beyond my time with my head in the water. Granted my trips to George Mason for the all-out 25's was a great meet or the still standing LMSC SCM relay record we set in Rutgers are still memorable experiences. By far the greatest joy Masters has brought to me is my wife Kristan who is the love of my life and we met at the David Greg Memorial meet almost a decade ago and have been happily (that's my opinion – lol) for over 5 years now. Kristan and I have 6 children (27 to 13) between us and Kristan's dad has been a lifelong swim coach so to say that swimming has been an important part of our lives would be a bit of an understatement but I think we would both agree there is no better sport than swimming.

--Bill Winters

My first Masters experience was the race across Donner Lake in northern California. The race director pointed to a spot across the lake (about 3miles long) between two trees and said "That's the finish line. There are kayaks on the water to support you. Take whatever route you'd like, but know that the kegs will be waiting at that spot". Chill environment and gorgeous lake swimming with camaraderie and beer at the finish line. . . I was hooked on Masters swimming from that point on.

--Kate Stephensen

In 2004 I had just graduated college, moved to the Chapel Hill-Durham area to start a job, broke up with my college boyfriend, and didn't have many friends. Someone at work suggested I try Masters swimming (which I was surprised I had never heard of since I had swam USASwimming most of my childhood), and so I tried out a team in Chapel Hill. They practiced at the Koury Natatorium at UNC every Monday, Wednesday, Friday at 5:30am and Sundays at 8:00am which worked great with my schedule. I was the youngest swimmer by about 15 years! I happily found my spot in the A- lane and swam with those folks every M, W, F, and Su. I loved it because I was back in the water (after taking a four-year break in college), I made new friends outside of work, I was able to compete again (but this time for fun — though it has taken me years to appreciate!), and realistically it is the only form of exercise that I truly love. From then on every time I've had to move for grad school or work, I always look for the local Masters team to join. And if there isn't one, I try to develop my swim community.

--Becca Latimer

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### **Rule Changes (cont'd from page 1)**

Election Notification: LMSCs must notify members about election procedures at least 15 days before any election.

Term Limits: The term limits for USMS Board At-Large Members were clarified to show that an at-large member may serve only two consecutive terms (regardless of zone changes).

Emergency Amendments: Amendments submitted to the relevant committee are considered emergency amendments if they are submitted after August 1st of each year.

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# The Amazing Marianna Berkley

*By Betsy Durrant*

One of the great things about Masters Swimming is the people we meet and get to know. Marianna Berkley was one of the most interesting and most enjoyable of my many friends and teammates. Marianna died on January 1, 2021 at age 98.

She was a great competitor and enjoyed meets and racing. She is listed in the USMS Top Ten consistently from 1998 through 2016. Marianna also had numerous times listed in the FINA Top Ten, which includes times from all over the world.

One of my favorite memories of Marianna was when she was #1 in the FINA World ranking in the 50 breaststroke. Knowing she did not use a computer, I printed out her age group and took it to practice. When I showed her she was #1 in the World, her initial response was "Oh darn." She then explained that she had planned to tell me that day that she wasn't coming to practice anymore because she was so slow and held everyone up. Then she said "I guess I need to keep coming."

I explained to her that she did not get in the way. She had a great sense of "lane etiquette" unlike many in the practice. Whenever she stopped to rest, she stayed out of the way. She always left on the interval or rested and did every other interval, or half the distance. I also told her that yes she had gotten slower. But it was obvious that others in her age group had gotten even slower, which made her the fastest in comparison.

I will truly miss her. She was always so positive and informative. Marianna and her husband did a lot of traveling and camping and lived in Italy for a tour during his Navy career. When I was going anywhere new to me. I would mention it to her and she had been there.

She really was an amazing person in many ways.



Marianna with Ida Hlavacek



Marianna with Nancy Speer