

The Wet Gazette

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Serving Masters Swimmers in Virginia and West Virginia

February-March 2021

Practice Shenanigans: SwiMardi Gras Style

by Alice Phillips

SwimRVA Hammerhead Coach Chandler Grant put a great practice idea on the table and Head Coach Jay Peluso couldn't say no. How about a little Mardi Gras theme for the February doldrums?!

The Hammerheads enjoyed two on-theme workouts. The first involved the Mardi Gras parade. The coaches organized their groups mostly into threes. Each group swam a straight 1000 – normally a drudgery set! But in the parade style, the trios swam a steady, comfortable pace, each taking turns leading for a 100. The leader would pull the parade for a 100, then pause at the wall, catching their breath and letting the parade pass by, then bringing up the rear. The new leader swam a 100, paused, and fell to the back....and so on. Everyone was amazed how quickly the 1000 went by when you only had to be the pacesetter a few times. Plus no one got confused about whether they were on the 650 or the 700. The parade then continued with a similarly arranged, 600 kick set using fins and boards. It was a great way to get in the longer yardage while barely noticing it!

At the next practice, the Hammerheads earned their celebratory sprint beads. After a long warm-up with some build to speed 50's, the crew was challenged to do 10 x (2x100). The first 100 of each pair was at a fast pace, at least five seconds better than CSS pace. The swimmers hustled up that first 100, paused for about five seconds to

catch the time, then swam the second recovery 100 nice and easy. Each time you beat your time, you got some Mardi Gras beads, but the trick was then you had to wear them. Many fashionable, swim statements were made via bracelets, anklets, necklaces, and "hats" (tucked into caps or goggle straps). Later in the set, the coaches set up challenges among paired swimmers of similar speeds. The winners got to "steal" a set of beads if they beat their challenger. All agreed the first few 100's seemed pretty easy, but like just about every 20 x 100 set ever, by the time you hit a dozen or so, the difficulty really picked up. When all was said and done though, everyone had a great workout and some sparkly fun to go with it.



Hammerhead Coaches Chandler Moore, Tess Andres, and Margaret Aldrich

The Fitness Lifestyle

By Rich Williams

Many of us are now starting to feel some sense of relief about the pandemic. People are getting vaccinated and infections are on the decline. It appears that this crisis will someday end.

Maintaining fitness over the last year has been challenging, to say the least. Gyms and pools were closed for several months. When they reopened, significant restrictions limited our time in the water. The ease of just "showing up" for a swim was gone. I think many of us let our fitness slide a little as the scheduling headaches and the training obstacles mounted. I know some people who had to set an alarm for 4:00 a.m. just to ensure that they could reserve the only pool time that worked for them. Sometimes an extra day-off seemed like the most rational option. The audience reading this publication is an extremely motivated group that has made fitness, health, and fast swimming top priorities. An unfortunate consequence of the pandemic is that many of us may have developed some bad habits that need to be fixed.

Fitness is a lifestyle. It isn't a diet, a resolution, or a series of workouts. True fitness is the cumulative benefit of making good decisions daily in a manner that you can sustain indefinitely. No one should ever "go on a diet" - they should change their diet.

(Cont'd on page 2)

Current and Upcoming Events

2021 USMS Summer Fitness Challenge

2K Swim or Dryland Workout
June 1-15, 2021

2021 USMS SCY Nationals

Greensboro, NC
July 21-July 25, 2021

2021 Go The Distance

December 31, 2021

Note from the Editors: The pandemic has made getting content for the newsletter a little more difficult - we don't always have much swimming news to tell you. That's why publication of the newsletter has been a little hit or miss this past year. We expect to be back on a regular monthly schedule when swimming events pick back up again. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to send us articles about people, places, or things relating to fitness, swimming, people in Masters swimming, etc. If you don't have an article but have an idea for article, we can try to find someone to write that article. We look forward to the time when we are all back in the water again. — Heather and Chris

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The Fitness Lifestyle (cont'd from page 1)

There is no enduring benefit "to getting in shape for a meet." We should strive to maintain fitness and "peak" for meets.

I am incredibly lucky to work with an amazing group of athletes through Club Tribe. We recently embarked on a journey to reset our fitness and health habits to help us return to our pre-pandemic routines. In true Club Tribe fashion, we made it into a competition, with 50 members participating. I wanted to share with you some of the details because I think that anyone could benefit from this type of reset.

We chose to do this "Lifestyle Challenge" for one month, but the true goal was to develop sustainable habits that would endure beyond the competition. Each day was an opportunity to score points for positive behaviors. We were awarded points in the following manner:

- Complete a swimming workout - 2 points
- Complete a 45-minute dryland workout (weights, cardio, yoga, etc.) – 1 point
- To encourage recovery, if one completes a workout for 6 consecutive days, he/she also scores 1 point on the seventh day for taking a rest day (not training)
- Consume at least 2.5 cups of vegetables, 2 cups of fruit, and 5.5 oz of lean protein in a day – 1 point
- Avoid soda, alcohol, and junk food for a day – 1 point
- Train with a teammate (safely in-person or virtual) – 1 point

At the beginning of the competition, we encouraged everyone to set goals for each week. We broke into teams of 5 people so that we could support each other. We are two weeks into the contest, and it is going even better than expected. We were never looking to make massive changes. We just wanted to make some incremental improvements that we could sustain once the contest was complete. Early results indicate that we have done just that. It has been very exciting!

If you are looking to reboot to your training, consider using this type of system. You could do it with a friend for as long as you like. You could adjust the scoring to address specific goals. The only limitation to making positive changes in your life is your own creativity.

USMS Summer Fitness Challenge - Sign Up NOW!!

by Dane Schwartz

Looking for a fun challenge this tackle summer? Checkout the USMS Summer Fitness Challenge! It is a 2K swim or dryland workout that takes place between June 1-15. This is a fun way to check your fitness level and support a great cause with all the net proceeds going to USMS Adult-learn-to-swim grants!

You can participate in the USMS Summer Fitness Challenge in any manner desired: in a pool or open water, straight through, as a member of a relay, or even with fins (and who doesn't love swimming with fins!). If you need help preparing

for this swim, USMS has [six-week training plans](#) for all types of swimmers. Don't have access to a pool? Don't worry! USMS has some great [dryland resources with articles, and workout suggestions](#)! Registration is open NOW for this awesome challenge so sign up today! Plus you'll score some cool swag to show off your participation! Want more info or ready to sign up? Visit the [USMS website](#) for more details and registration info! ***It's time to hustle for that muscle and get ready to get fit!***

Introducing Occoquan Swim Masters

By Liz Armstrong Hall

What does a USMS Masters coach do when she can't hold training sessions at her team's home pool because of Covid restrictions? She finds a new home! Enter Coach Abi. In July, she relocated the Freedom Aquatic Club (FAC) from the Freedom Aquatic and Fitness Center in Manassas to the Central Park Aquatic Center (CPAC) a few miles down the road.

Renamed Occoquan Swimming (OCCS), the team has 18 members to date. This winter, OCCS earned its Gold Club status, requiring a 30-day free trial, USMS membership, and participation in one Fitness Series event and Try Masters Swimming Week.

Coach Abi's weekly newsletters feature practice highlights for each person. So far, team members have taken part in the Washington Crossing Open Water Swim, One-hour Swim e-Postal Championship and the Swim.com USMS Winter Fitness Challenge to raise funds for the USMS Adult-Learn-to-Swim programs. And, they're just warming up.

