

Dixie Zone Newsletter

Spring 2011

2011 ZONE SCY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 2011 Dixie Zone SCY Championships were held on Feb. 25-27 in Fort Lauderdale, FL. 244 swimmers from 25 different clubs participated, including groups from Canada and Costa Rica. Several national records were broken at the meet. The GOLD 55+ women broke the records in the 800 free relay and the 200 medley relay.

We hope to see everyone at the Dixie Zone LCM Championships June 10-12 in Sarasota, FL.

2011 USMS LCM NATIONALS

Auburn Masters Swimmers Getting Ready For LC Championships

Auburn Masters Swimmers (AMS) are getting ready to host the 2011 USMS Long Course National Championships, August 3-6, 2011. All races will take place indoors in the James Martin Aquatics Center, which many in the Dixie Zone know to be a fast pool with minimum 9 foot depth and a gutter system designed to eliminate turbulence. In addition, we will have three separate places for warm-up and warm down, including the diving well next to the competition course, an 8-lane 25 yard indoor pool immediately adjacent to the competition course, and an outdoor 10-lane 50 meter pool. I'm sure we don't need to tell Dixie Zone swimmers that it will be hot in Auburn in early August, or that afternoon thunderstorms might affect access to the outdoor pool. Short of hurricanes (anyone remember Savannah?) and tornados, however, the indoor water should be safe in virtually all weather conditions.

Auburn is located approximately 90 minutes down I-85 from the Atlanta airport and 2 hours from the Birmingham airport. Swimmers also can fly into Montgomery, AL or Columbus, GA, which are less than 60 minutes from Auburn, though you usually need to fly through Atlanta anyway. There is a shuttle service (Express 85) that runs between Auburn and the Atlanta airport. We will have shuttle service between selected hotels in the area and the pool and free parking will be available in select lots around the pool.

AMS is able to host the 2011 LC Championships because we enjoy an excellent working relationship with Sarah Stallkamp, Director of the Aquatics Center,

and with the Athletics Department at Auburn University. So good is our relationship, in fact, that Sarah will serve as Meet Director, sacrificing her own chance to race to make it possible for the rest of us to do so. Running the meet is not possible without the help and support of volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering please let us know at ses0032@auburn.edu or (334) 844-9622.

APPLICATION TO OFFICIATE

USMS 2011 Summer National Championships
August 3-6, 2011 – Auburn University, Auburn, AL

Please contact FGC LMSC officials chair Steven Goldman at goldman@comcast.net and he will forward the application.

Return applications via mail, electronic mail, or fax to the Meet Referee: Clark Hammond, 2729 Old Trace, Birmingham, AL 35243; hamm5690@bellsouth.net; 205-967-1346
Assignment preferences will be given to officials who submit applications by May 13, 2011.
All assignments will be at the discretion of the Meet Referee. All officials will be required to attend mandatory pre-session briefings. Meet uniform is white polo shirt over navy pants, shorts, or skirt; white socks, and shoes.

TEAM GREENVILLE MASTERS INVITATIONAL

South Carolina LMSC Long Course Championships
June 25-26, 2011
Greenville, South Carolina
Same Location * Same Southern Hospitality *
Brand NEW State-of-the-art Aquatic Complex

Introducing the NEW Westside Park and Aquatic Complex, a state-of-the-art aquatic center complete with an eight lane, 50 meter by 25 yards competition pool, a second five lane, 25 yard warm down pool, full service locker rooms and amenities, fitness room, viewing/game room, concessions, retail area and family dressing rooms. The competition pool is equipped with Kiefer Surge starting blocks, Kiefer Advantage II Wave Eater non-turbulent lane lines, and has a starting depth of 7 feet with an optimal racing depth average 6 feet 6 inches. When set up for short course competition, the pool becomes a 20 lane by 25 yards course or a 16 lane by 25 meter course. Both the

competition and the warm down pools have UV filter systems and new evacuator systems for chloramines discharge along with a high velocity air system. Minimum spectator seating is 600 with maximum of 1,100. Ample parking is available. The complex is located just minutes away from Greenville's bustling downtown area with a huge selection and range of dining choices. Host hotels include your choice of the Hampton Inn Greenville-Haywood or La Quinta Inn & Suites; both are located downtown with special rates for masters competitors. **A Sunday brunch will be provided for all swimmers.** Meet highlights include classy high point awards for the top male and female in each age group, individual event ribbons for 1st-8th place in each age group, and team awards for the top three teams in and out of state. A championship t-shirt will be available by pre-order only. Visit our website at www.tgswim.com and personally view the construction photos. "OLD Blue" has been completely demolished and in its place is South Carolina's premier Olympic-sized pool waiting for you to establish brand new pool records. Please direct all questions and inquiries to Karen Alexander, meet director. She is available 24/7 at 864-506-2016 and pixabugg@bellsouth.net.

5 FOR 5 FOR 55+

The Gold Coast Masters team of Maureen Hughes, Peggy McDonnell, Danielle Ogier, Barbara Protzman and Pat Sargeant, in various combinations, have broken all five United States Masters Swimming SCY relay national records in the women's 55+ age group this year. The "GOLD"en Girls of Florida broke the five records by a grand total of one minute and 5.90 seconds.

Barbara Protzman lives in Coral Springs, FL; Danielle Ogier lives in Fort Lauderdale, FL; Peggy McDonnell is from Fort Pierce, FL; and Maureen Hughes and Pat Sargeant reside in Melbourne, FL.

This may be the first time that one team has broken all the relay records for an age group for one course within the same season, in fact in just two meets. Two records were broken at the Dixie Zone SCY Championship at the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Center on Feb. 25-27 and the other three at the Hammerhead Invitational at the Pompano Beach Aquatics Center on April 9-10.

The team had been waiting for a year for their final member to turn 55 to wage their assault on the record book. And they did it without the long, zippered, buoyant tech suits!

200 Free Relay – 1:53.58 (previous record 1:54.53)
400 Free Relay – 4:15.58 (previous record 4:24.31)
800 Free Relay – 9:27.53 (previous record 10:02.88)
200 Medley Relay – 2:08.83 (previous record 2:12.46)
400 Medley Relay – 4:43.19 (previous record 5:00.43)

OLDEST GUY ON THE TEAM

by Doug Holmes

The problem is what to do at a swim meet with the oldest guy on the team when it gets time to select relays. No one really wants that overweight 74 year old fellow on their 200 meter relay team in a USMS National or Zone Championship Swim Meet. The oldster with slow twitch muscles never swims short events, relays, or the 50 freestyle because it is his slowest relative stroke and he never comes close to Top Ten times. He swims his same slow pace in the longer events at about the same time per lap that he swims in practice. Reoccurrence of cancer last year, radiation, meds, and advanced age have added 25 to 50 % to his best times.

To set a new record at the Dixie Zone Championships in the 200 SCM Men's freestyle relay, the team needs four SMS men who can each swim well below 30 seconds in the 50 free. It would take four 50 year old men to average 24.5 seconds in the 50 M free to beat the Dixie Zone 200 M free relay record of 1:38.79 set by Rowdy Gaines' relay in 2010. But SCM (not SCY) national and zone meets only requires four SMS members whose ages total between 200-239 years (40 year team intervals).

So why even consider the oldest guy who just swam the 400 IM in 8:28 or an average of 63.5 seconds per 50 M? We have men ages 32, 42, and 58 who swim 50 M free in 26, 27, and 28 seconds, respectively. To humor him, they put him in the Men's 200 M free and the 200 M medley relays to make the minimum age threshold of 200 years (32+42+58+74= 206). He surprises everyone by swimming the 50 M free in 37.17 and 36.38 seconds in the two relays. It was an awesome team effort breaking each of the two existing Men's relay SMS records by about five seconds and placing third the Dixie Zone Top Ten in both relays.

New SMS Men's 200 SCM free 200-39 relay record of 1:58.56 set by Jeff Maynor, Greg Ellison, Doug Holmes and Rob Cambias **breaking old SMS record of 2:04.67 set in 1987 by Dick Bower's team by 6.11 seconds.**

New SMS Men's 200 SCM medley 200-39 relay record of 2:11.54 set by Terry Jaynes, Rob Cambias, Jeff Maynor and Doug Holmes **breaking old SMS record of 2:16.11 by 4.57 seconds.**

But would you select the old fellow again? Who would you chose for your relay if you had a choice of: a 19 year old who swims 50 M free in 19 seconds, a 32 year old who swims 50 M free in 24 seconds, or a 74 year old who swims 50 M free in 36.38 seconds? If you said the 74 year old you would be right. The 19 sec by the 19 year old adds 1.0 sec per year of age; the 24 sec by the 32 year old adds .75 sec per year of age; but the

36.38 sec (converts to 32.60 sec for 50 yards) by the 74 year old adds only .49 sec per year of age. The 74 year old may be twice as valuable as the 19 year old (adding .49 not 1.0 sec/year) to achieve the minimum age in a relay in SCM meets. If a team had four swimmers who swam .49 seconds per year of age in the 200 M free relay they would have broken Rowdy Gaines' team Dixie Zone record of 1:38.79 (.491 x 200 years= 1:38.2). Of course, if Rodney Gaines is available chose him. He set the 50 M freestyle world's record at 22.96 sec in 1980. At age 50, he swam 23.38 sec in 50 M free, so he adds only .4676 seconds per year of age. Greg Ellison at age 58 swam a 27.78 sec time in the 200 free relay for an outstanding .479 sec per year of age. So next time you are looking for a fourth for your relay don't overlook the older folks on your team.

NOTES FROM THE FLORIDA LMSC

We held our 2011 Florida LMSC Awards Banquet on February 12 following the first day of the Valentine meet at Clearwater's Long Center. It was well attended, with 73 persons, including Mark Roberson, from the City of Clearwater.

Each year we award the Top Ten male swimmers and Top Ten female swimmers in two categories: Long Distance and Pool. This year our top swimmers in Long Distance were **Sara Holman** of Gator Swim Club and **Kern Davis** of St. Pete Masters. Our top swimmers in Pool were **Burwell "Bumpy" Jones** of Sarasota Sharks Masters and **Jean Troy** of Florida Mavericks. Visit our website (<http://floridalmsc.org/>) or see the May Florida LMSC newsletter for a complete listing of our Top Ten Swimmers of the Year.

The Sue Moucha Overcoming Adversity Award was awarded to **Ed Nessel**, who coaches the Cocoa YMCA Aquanauts in Brevard County.

The 2011 Coach of the Year Award was presented to **Rick Walker** who coaches and swims with the Sarasota Sharks in Sarasota.

Special Recognition Service Award were presented to **Sue Moucha** for six years of out-standing service to the Florida LMSC as our Sanctions Chairperson and to **Marly Wilson** in appreciation for three years of service to the Florida LMSC as our Records & Top Ten Chair.

This year we instituted our Club Service Awards for special service by an individual to their own club. Awards were presented to **Patricia Tullman** of the Florida Mavericks and **Marianne Bradley** of Sun Masters.

Our LMSC has a Leather Lung Award which promotes versatility, fitness, and motivation that encourages swimmers to participate in meets and events,

regardless of their speed or ranking; and recognizes them for their personal accomplishments. A swimmer may receive more than one Leather Lung Award per year. All 18 events in SCY or SCM, or all 17 events in LCM, or all five USMS postal championships must be completed at sanctioned events in a single calendar year.

Our 2010 Leather Lung Award Winners are: *Ellen Bennet - SCY; Joanne Campbell - SCY; Nancy Durstein - LCM; Jim Matysek - SCY; Don Puchalski - SCY; Steve Laugen - SCY; Linda Visser - SCY; Sarah Swoch - POSTAL; Flavia Zappa - POSTAL; Dawn Clark - POSTAL*

Joannie Campbell, A Florida LMSC and Florida Aquatic Combined Team member, is featured in the March/April 2011 edition of the AARP magazine, "Secrets of Super Athletes".

SWIM FEST 11 AND THE ASCA REGIONAL CLINIC Being offered in Florida!

Swim Fest and the ASCA Regional Clinics provide a wonderful opportunity for even the most seasoned coach to learn a few new things. Through the generosity of the Florida LMSC and by recognizing that coaches really are the lifeblood of the sport, we are helping to lead the way in making sure that every athlete in the LMSC has exposure to quality coaches that are dedicated to the sport. The Florida LMSC has chosen 4 coaches to pay the expenses for in order to attend this unique event and they are Debbie Roberts of Daytona Beach Masters, New Coaches to the LMSC Michelle Apple of Ormond Y Swim Club and Denise Metts of Deland Y Masters and Mark Canterbury of WET (Water Exercise Technologies)

In conjunction with our partner ASCA, the USMS Coaches Committee has selected 4 regional sites to host the level 1 and level 2 certification clinics. I am pleased to report that Florida has one of those clinics and that certification courses will be offered at the USAS convention in Jacksonville in September. You do not need to be a delegate to the convention in order to attend the clinics and it is a great place and time to catch up with friends from around the country that you ordinarily only get to see at major meets.

THE IV UANA PAN AMERICAN MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Join the Pan-American Swimming Union for the 2011 Pan American Masters Championships November 8-15 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Swimming, open water, synchro and water polo will all be contested. Don't miss out on this opportunity to compete internationally.

Information and the meet website for the Pan Am Masters in November is now posted online at <http://www.uana-aquatics.org/html/English/2panmaster1.htm> and <http://www.panamericanmaster2011.org/>

EXPERIENCE WITH ON-LINE REGISTRATIONS WITH CLUB ASSISTANT

By Conner Bailey, Auburn Masters Swimmers

2011 was the 13th running of the Auburn Masters SCY Invitational and far and away the easiest and smoothest due largely to the ClubAssistant on-line entry system. Instead of manually handling all the entries, with the inevitable absence of USMS registration numbers, missing signatures on waiver forms, missing checks, and other assorted glitches, we let ClubAssistant (<http://www.clubassistant.com/>) handle all that. They are tied to the USMS membership database and can confirm or process USMS registrations as part of the meet entry process. The people who run Club Assistant are all Masters swimmers. I met Dan and Karin Wegner last summer while swimming with their home club in Santa Monica, California. Feedback from swimmers at our meet was uniformly positive. Swimmers were able to enter times on line, and look up times they had swum at other USMS meets. If they were not yet registered with USMS (which happens particularly for meets held early in the calendar year), they could register immediately online and then proceed with their meet entry. Entry fees were paid online through a secure server. Out of roughly 200 swimmers, we had less than a dozen who used the traditional paper entry. I think all of our swimmers over 70 years old used the online system! For me as Meet Director, working with ClubAssistant saved enormous amounts of time. I didn't have to handle checks. I didn't have to handle entries or have entry times manually entered. I could go online at any point and see how many swimmers had entered, how many social tickets had been purchased. Downloading meet entries was a snap, and when we did so, all USMS registration numbers of all swimmers were entered correctly, which made reporting of results that much easier. During the meet, swimmers with smart phones were able to monitor results, including graphs showing splits by 50s. Those who negative split their 200s saw a nice flat to descending line. Others saw an upward trending line. Very cool! Karin Wegner is the point person for working with people hosting meets, and she was unfailingly pleasant and supportive. As a first timer, I had lots of questions which Karin answered patiently. They were cool with the fact that host team registrations were free, meaning they received no income from such registrations. Initially I was reluctant to use the ClubAssistant service because I thought the cost would be too high. It was

not. They charged 5% of all credit card fees plus \$1.50 per entry. Smaller meets and larger meets may have somewhat different base fees. The cost worked out to be almost exactly what I had been paying people to handle data entry for me in years past. (A basic meet entry fee of \$50 plus \$15 for our social totaled \$65, and total ClubAssistant charges worked out to \$4.75, or 7%.) All the other advantages (registration, reporting, etc.) provided by ClubAssistant make their service something I will use again.

PRE-MASTERS SWIMMING

Pre-Masters Swimming will be taught ("Miracle Swimming") to residents of Sarasota, FL this summer by a new non-profit organization, 21st Century Swimming Lessons, Inc. of Sarasota. Many adults wish to be masters swimmers but they're afraid in water or afraid to join a masters team on account of having no strokes besides "crawl," or being intimidated by the workouts and the specter of competition.

Miracle Swimming is a class that's been taught by Miracle Swimming Institute since 1983 for adults who are afraid or terrified in water. It uses a new paradigm of teaching and learning that's successful 100% of the time. The non-profit is offering scholarships to coaches and instructors who wish to become trained in Miracle Swimming to make it available in their communities. Instructors who are eligible pay the training fee and the scholarship pays the air fare and hotel.

For more information, go to <http://www.conquerfear.com/v/vspfiles/training/indextraining.shtml> or call 941-921-6420.

OPEN WATER SAFETY CONFERENCE REPORT

by David Miner,
Florida LMSC Open Water and Long Distance Chair

The Open Water Safety Conference took place in San Francisco, March 18-20, 2011. The conference was sponsored and put on by USMS and Pacific Masters Swimming. Steven Munatones from the Open Water Source and open water guru was the conference coordinator pulling together over 130 open water swimming race directors, administrators, lifesaving professionals, doctors, writers, athletes, and officials from over 26 U.S. states and seven countries. The conference was designed to bring light to the fact that safety must be the primary goal for every open water swim around the world and to address how the open water community could better protect its athletes going forward as the sport grows by leaps and bounds.

Below are summaries of the lectures I was able to attend. The entire event was video taped and will be available on USMS's website for everyone to view.

Keynote Speech – Shelley Taylor-Smith (7-time World Professional Marathon Swimming Champion and one of the 50 iconic women of Australia)

- Shelley was an amazing swimmer in her time marveling not only other female competitors and her native country of Australia but also her male competitors that at times she would beat. Shelley's unparalleled determination, focus, drive, and sheer guts in swimming has led her to a career in motivational speaking. Some of her motivational thoughts include:
- Your mindset should be: Focus, Attitude, Self Belief, and No Excuses.
- "When it's too tough, too hard, too cold, too too too, you keep going!
- Desire + emotion = movement

What To Consider, Plan And Do In Open Water Events: An Overview From Lifesaving Professionals – B. Chris Brewster (President U.S. Lifesaving Association) Lt. Greg Buchanan, (San Diego Lifeguard Service and San Diego Fire Rescue), Ralph Goto (Administrator, Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division, City & County of Honolulu)

- The need to hire professionally trained lifeguards for all open water events.
- A need for a command system with excellent communications during an event.
- The ability to account for all swimmers starting and finishing the event no matter what.
- The ability of the lifeguarding command system to create the safety planning, logistics, financial requirements (for safety), and operations.
- Have qualified lifeguards for the area with which the event is taking place (e.g. ocean trained lifeguards for events taking place in the ocean).
- Equipment readiness for an event including radios, vehicles, rescue boards, other vessels, rescue tubes, etc.
- Safety should be a lifestyle not an option.
- Even though USLA doesn't support this due to every area/event being different, the possibility of using one lifeguard for every 10 swimmers was discussed.
- Visit and use websites: www.usla.org and www.lifesaver1.com for lifeguard information.

The Inherent Risks of Open Water Swimming: Setting The Stage, What To Prepare For And Look For – Chris Sheen (Race Director, Big Shoulders 5K), Eric Juneau (General Manager, Traversée internationale du lac St-Jean), Ralph Goto (Administrator, Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division, City & County of Honolulu), Jim Wheeler (Total Aquatic Management)

- Open water races have many risk factors for athletes, and race directors, safety coordinators, race officials have a big responsibility to get safety right for their event.
- Volunteers: Instructions must be provided to safety event volunteers so that they understand their roles, must be there but not in the way, must be able to recognize conditions of a swimmer, must have good surveillance skills, must be able to recognize a critical versus a non-critical event, know how to communicate to and with the established event communication system, should have rescue tubes with them, and know what to do with a swimmer when they rescue them.
- Race directors and/or safety directors must have the ability to cancel or postpone a race due to safety concerns.

Current Rules and Guidelines Used in Open Water Swimming: What Rules To Follow and What Guidelines To Use – Lynn Hazelwood (Open Water Swimming Committee Chairperson, USMS), Shelley Taylor-Smith (7-time World Professional Marathon Swimming Champion and one of the 50 iconic women of Australia), John Dusliere (USA Swimming 2008 Olympic open water coach), David Robinson (Aquatic Specialist, Sonoma County Regional Parks), Marcia Cleveland (author of Dover Solo, Race Director and Long Distance Swimming Committee Chairperson, USMS)

- Each event is different so having strict guidelines for events may be problematic.
- Create your own event guidelines and rules as needed for your event.
- Use the current USMS guidelines for open water events.
- Establish some "best practices" of different kinds and types of open water races for distribution online. These could be used by race directors and safety coordinators to get started in planning their race.
- Avoid using the terms "rules" and "guidelines" and in turn use words like "best practices" to describe the tools available.
- Provide training for event directors and safety coordinators as opposed to writing and publishing guidelines. USA Triathlon has done this and it has been very successful.

Emergencies and Contingencies: What Should You Do When Disaster Strikes - Preparation, Communications, Logistics and Medical – B. Chris Brewster (President, US Lifesaving Association), Bob Placak (Founder, RCP Tiburon Mile), Mike Carr (Safety Director, RCP Tiburon Mile), Kate Alexander (Safety Officer, Flowers Sea Swim), Dale Petranec (Honorary Secretary, International Marathon Swimming Hall of Fame)

- The key take away here was to “have a plan.” When disaster strikes and there is no plan or no one understands the plan, things get much worse very quickly. Plan for contingencies of all kinds and know what to do when things go bad.
- Communicate the plan to the entire event team. Make sure they understand.
- Evaluate the plan after the event ends. Make changes as necessary for the next event.

Safety in Ocean Swims: Things to Consider in Ocean & Sea Events – *Kaia Hedlund (President, Waikiki Roughwater Swim), Malcolm Cooper (Safety Officer, Maui Channel Swim), Lt. Greg Buchanan (San Diego Lifeguard Service and San Diego Fire Department), Joel Wilson (Race Director, Santa Cruz Cruise Swim), Dale Petranech (Honorary Secretary, International Marathon Swimming Hall of Fame), Ralph Goto (Ocean Safety Administrator, Ocean Safety and Lifeguard Services Division, City & County of Honolulu)*

- Perform a risk assessment of the event location.
- Have lifeguards trained in the ocean environment.
- Don't sacrifice safety because of the budget for the event.
- Evaluate using online tools and local officials for information on the tides, currents, water temperatures, winds, make-up of the bottom, etc. of the event location.
- Know that ocean event locations can quickly go bad due to weather and have a plan if such a thing happens.

Safety in Cold Water: Things to Consider: Hypothermia – *Paul Asmuth (Open Water Swimming Advisor to USA Swimming National Team Coach and 7-time World Professional Marathon Swimming Champion), Eric Juneau (General Manager, Traversée internationale du lac St-Jean), Marcia Cleveland (Author of Dover Solo, Race Director and Long Distance Swimming Committee Chairperson, USMS)*

- Hypothermia is a very real and dangerous result of being in cold water that can come on very quickly.
- Knowing what the signs of hypothermia are (slurred speech, confusion, etc.).
- The low water temp for elite swimming competitions is 16 C (60.8 F).
- The low temp for masters swimming competitions is 18 C (64.4 F).
- Acclimation is the only way to get accustomed to swimming in cold water.
- Must train in cold water to race in cold water.
- Must have an accurate way to measure water temperature for a race and a specific location to measure it. Measuring in the shallow water at the shoreline may be different than the

water temp out beyond the surf, where swimmers will be swimming.

- Use silicone caps or wear two caps to insulate your head when swimming in cold water.
- Use silicone earplugs.
- Hypothermia can happen even in warmer water conditions.

Safety in Warm Water: Things to Consider:

Hyperthermia – *Dr. Jim Miller (multi-time USA Swimming National Open Water Swimming Team physician), Lori Bosco (Race Director, FKCC Swim Around Key West), Liz Tucker (USA Triathlon Race Director Certification Manager)*

- There is no hard upper temperature limitation for race events.
- Work is being done to come up with an upper temp limitation.
- Training in warmer temperatures is a must to race in warmer temperatures.
- Must have an accurate way to measure water temperature for a race and a specific location to measure it. Measuring in the shallow water at the shoreline may be different than the water temp out beyond the surf, where swimmers will be swimming.
- The surprising thing to me was that there was much less information and desire to create an upper limit temp and that much less discussion took place in this lecture. I was hoping since the death of Fran Crippen that this would be a lively and very productive discussion, but it wasn't.

Tools of the Trade: Equipment Used in Races – What Equipment To Purchase, Borrow, Prepare And Use – *Bruce Wigo (CEO, International Swimming Hall of Fame), Dick Sidner (Race Director, USMS National 25K Championships), Bob Placak (Founder, RCP Tiburon Mile), Mike Carr (Safety Director, RCP Tiburon Mile), B. Chris Brewster (President, US Lifesaving Association)*

- A new safety tool dry bag/float is being created by the International Swimming Hall of Fame. The float clips around your waist and floats in the spot just below your waist but out of way for kicking. It's colored in bright orange for visibility and is easily seen. Recommendations were brought up that this could be used in every open water race where lifeguards could easily see if a swimmer stopped swimming. It can also be used as a float the swimmer can hold onto. The dry bag version opens to hold a towel, shoes, etc. for swimming from point-to-point or for security reasons. I really liked this idea and feel it could be very useful as a safety tool for open water swimmers when training or racing.
- Having paddleboards and jet skis with rescue boards, not just kayakers.

- Make sure every safety person on the water has a float tube that can be given to a swimmer. Actual lifeguards could have red ones and volunteers could have yellow ones to distinguish between them.
- Have radios for all safety and event personnel with a reserved safety channel and event channel. Make sure all radios have fresh batteries and that people know how to use them.
- Using a timing chip system to help in accurate timing and accounting for athletes.
- Using some stand up paddleboards is good because they can look down on the course/swimmers.
- Have binoculars for safety personnel for spotting athletes that need help.
- Use specific turn buoys and course buoys (e.g. triangle buoys for turns and round buoys for in between turns).

Closing Speech – Maddy Crippen (Fran Crippen Elevation Foundation)

- Maddy gave a great speech about her brother, her exposure now to open water swimming, and her goals (and the foundations goals) to make events safe for all athletes.

Initiatives for the Coming Year

The following are ten key points discussed by everyone during the last session. These items are things we all decided were important to implement as soon as possible for the open water community. Others may be added during the year, but this was the first set compiled.

1. Create and utilize an independent Safety Officer position that is separate from the Race Director with the responsibility to plan and execute the safety aspects of a race and the authority to postpone or cancel a race.
2. Establish educational and certification programs for key positions responsible for open water swimming events.
3. Set and make uniform race safety standards and check lists.
4. Create an online repository of information with shared documents and content.
5. Collaborate across events, borders, and organizations.
6. Offer pre-race and regularly scheduled clinics to help elevate the awareness and

increase the education of swimmers and coaches.

7. Create a mindset and lifestyle of safety at all levels of open water swimming – training and racing, solo and mass participation, fitness and competitive.
8. Establish, formalize, and annually review risk assessment before races are approved or sanctioned.
9. Interact, incorporate, and defer to the knowledge and experience of professional safety personnel (lifeguards, Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, etc) in the pre-race planning and execution of safety before and during the race.
10. Establish standards and recommendations for athlete education for training and racing so athletes learn themselves what is required.

Final Comments

Overall this was a great event. There was a tremendous amount of experience present and this was very obvious with the amount of information that was discussed. At times it seemed a little overwhelming, but Steven and team kept things moving and well organized.

The key here will be what happens with all of this information and what we as an open water community will do with it. A representative from USA Triathlon was present and made the comment that this conference reminded her of where USA Triathlon was ten years ago. A humble wake up call in my opinion. Open water swimming is growing very quickly and the opportunities for issues also grow along with it. It was good to hear that USMS and USAT were going to have a meeting and discuss ways to work together in open water swimming. If some of USAT's best practices can be adopted in open water maybe we'll have a shorter learning curve, which will result in fewer safety issues and better events for all open water athletes. I truly hope so.

The goal is to have this open water conference every year going forward. I think it is a great idea and something the open water community really needs. USMS is very focused on open water swimming, which is great for all of us. I look forward a year from now to see where we are and what steps have been taken to make our sport better and safer. What will next year's topics be? I look forward to finding out.

DIXIE ZONE CALENDAR

Apr. 28 – May 1	SCY	USMS SCY Nationals – Mesa, AZ
Apr. 30	LCM	May Day Sprint Meet – Ft Myers, FL
April 30	OW	Lake Weir Open Water Swim – Ocala, FL
May 7	OW	Hurricane Man (1000 yd, 2.4 mi) – St Pete Beach, FL
May 21	SCY	Coral Springs Last Chance Meet – Coral Springs, FL
May 22	LCM	Ocala Marlins Summer Splash – Ocala, FL
May 28	OW	Dixie Zone Open Water Championship/Ed Gaw Amelia Island Open Water Challenge – Fernandina Beach, FL
June 3-5	LCM	Southern Masters LCM Championships – New Orleans, LA
June 4	LCM	Classic City Masters Meet – Athens, GA
June 10-12	LCM	Dixie Zone LCM Championships/Bumpy Jones – Sarasota, FL
June 11	OW	Death Valley Open Water Swim – Lake Hartwell/Clemson, SC
June 11	OW	USMS 10K Open Water Championships – Fort Myers Beach, FL
June 18	OW	Swim Around Key West (12.5 mi) – Key West, FL
June 18-19	LCM	June Krauser Summer Splash – Ft. Lauderdale, FL
June 25-26	LCM	Team Greenville Invitational/SC Championships – Greenville, SC
July 6-10	LCM	IGLA Championships – Honolulu, HI
July 9-10	LCM	St. Pete Masters LCM Championships – St. Pete, FL
July 16	LCM	Ocala Marlins Summer Splash – Ocala, FL
July 16-17	LCM	Upper Keys Summer Invitational – Islamorada, FL
August 3-6	LCM	USMS LCM Nationals – Auburn University, AL
Aug. 27	OW	Hickory Nut Gorge Olympiad VII – Lake Lure, NC
Sept. 24	SCY	Ocala Marlins Fall Splash – Ocala, FL
Sept. 24	SCY	Peachtree City Penthalon – Peachtree City, GA
Oct. 1	OW	Daiquiri Deck Tropical Splash(1, 2.5, 5K) – Sarasota, FL
Oct. 8-9	SCY	Gulf Coast Fall Splash – Ft Myers and Naples, FL
Oct. 14-16	SCM	Rowdy Gaines Classic – Orlando, FL
Oct. 15-16	SCM	Dixie Zone SCM Championships – Charlotte, NC
Oct. 16	OW	Annual Bermuda Round the Sound Swim - Bermuda
Oct. 29	SCY	3 rd Annual Spooktacular Development Meet – Mandeville, LA
Nov. 5-6	SCM	Upper Keys Fall Invitational – Key Largo, FL
Nov. 12-13	SCM	Bridge the Bay – Sarasota, FL
2012		
Apr. 26-29	SCY	USMS Short Course Nationals – Greensboro, NC
July 5-8	LCM	USMS Long Course Nationals – Omaha, NE

For more calendar details, check out www.usms.org and www.dixiezone.org.

It is recommended that meet directors post their meet information on the main USMS Calendar as well as on the Dixie Zone Calendar.

Zone Website: www.dixiezone.org	Zone Chair: Debbie Cavanaugh cavdeb@juno.com	Newsletter Editor: Barb Protzman swimbarb@hotmail.com	USMS Website: www.usms.org
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