



Open Water Season is Here!

Nicole Vanderpoel—Long Distance Chair

It's time to dig up your UV protected goggles and your sunscreen open water enthusiasts, as of Saturday, April 29th, the gravel pond at Chatfield State Park officially opened with a balmy 50 degree water temperature. As a reminder, COMSA members are allowed to swim Mondays & Wednesdays from 4:30 to 7:00 pm and Saturdays from 7:30 to 10:00 am. You must bring your COMSA membership card to Chatfield every time you swim. It is recommended that you laminate your card and attach it to your swim bag, just in case the Park Ranger needs to verify your membership. If you are unable to show proof of membership, you may be ticketed. Please review the guidelines and regulations for swimming at Chatfield. They can be found on our website at www.COMSA.org.

This promises to be one of the most exciting seasons in Colorado Open water history, featuring the USMS Wingshadow Horsetooth National 10K Championship, August 12th in Fort Collins. There will also be a 2.4 mile Wingshadow Horsetooth swim in September, so watch for it on the COMSA website. In addition, the "Surf And Turf" Aquathon series will continue through the summer, with five open water swim/run events at Chatfield. Of course there also is a multitude of Triathlons to choose from this summer in Colorado, so it's time to prepare for some open water swimming! With the entire open water season ahead of us, now is the time to review and learn! Read on through the newsletter for tips on preparing, both in and out of the water, for your open water swims!

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Inverness Masters Take State

The 2006 Colorado State Championship meet was contested at the University of Denver, the weekend of April 7th – 9th. Scoring 1761 points, Inverness Masters took first place over second place University of Denver, scoring 1498 points. The remaining teams receiving trophies were Aurora Masters (3rd), Boulder Aquatic Masters (4th), Durango Masters (5th), and Thornton Masters (6th). While there were no National records set at this meet, there were a great number of very fast swims and exciting races. The results from the meet are all available at www.comsa.org. You can find the results of all races posted there, along with split times, and also the team and individual standings.

The meet attracted 314 participants, including a number of swimmers from Georgia, California, and Wyoming. We hope that they enjoyed the competition at altitude.

The University of Denver hosted the meet. COMSA is pleased to have such a great host for this event, allowing the COMSA volunteers to compete and enjoy the meet themselves. We hope that those of you who attended had a positive experience and hope that you will come back next year and bring some friends!!

Swimming the Catalina Channel

COMSA member Jeff Magouirk successfully completed the Catalina Channel Crossing in August 2005. Read excerpts of his exciting swim beginning on page 10. This summer, Jeff plans to conquer the English Channel. Good Luck, Jeff!

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Outside the Lanelines of COMSA

Heather Hagadorn—Chairperson

At this year's Annual Meeting in April, we elected one new officer and voted to put new ByLaws in action. Please see the website, www.comsa.org, for a copy of our ByLaws. Thank you to all of our volunteers who spend a tremendous amount of free time making COMSA work for you. Congratulations to Nicole Vanderpoel, our new Vice Chairperson, and thank you to Bob Patten for stepping in to help out with the State Meet!

It takes many COMSA volunteers working behind the scenes, to set up and coordinate the Chatfield Lake Swims, report your best racing times to the National Top Ten database, Register our 2100+ members, create this fabulous newsletter, organize postal and open water swims, gather our local records, set up stroke clinics, manage the budget, and much, much more. We appreciate everyone for their time and efforts.

This year we can send up to eight COMSA volunteers as Delegates to the National USAS (United States Aquatic Sports) Convention in Dearborn, Michigan. The 2006 Convention, covering Masters, USA Swimming, Water Polo, Synchronized Swimming and Diving, will be a forum for establishing the Rules governing our swimming. It is an opportunity to meet other Masters Swimmers from around the country, and it provides COMSA a chance to contribute to the future and growth of our sport.

The Convention will be held in September. For more information, please visit <http://www.usms.org/admin/conv/>. If you would like to be a Delegate, please contact Heather Hagadorn at heatherlh@msn.com, or 303-744-6381. Delegates must be current COMSA members, who are willing to contribute time, implement ideas, and share the information with the rest of our membership. COMSA pays for airfare, ½ hotel (pairing up covers the whole cost) and airport transportation. Delegates will be selected in May.

We hope you have a great Spring and Summer – and I am looking forward to seeing lots of our members shine at Stanford, where Worlds will be held in August. (<http://www.2006finamasters.org/v2/>)!

2004-2005 Relay All-Americans

The following COMSA swimmers achieved All American recognition in relays for the 2004-05 Seasons. This is done by being a member of a 1st place relay team in at least one national championship in either short course yards, short course meters, or long course meters.

Richard Abrahams, Michael S Chapman, Cathy M Drozda, Kathy L Garnier, Mike S Gonzales, Richard W Hess, James E Lilley, Catherine L Metz, Michael M O'Brien, Craig R Petersen, Anna Pettis Scott, Kimberly Rathman, Karen K Rosener, Collette H Sappey, Paul L Smith, John C Smith, Schuyler A Smith, Susan Von der Lippe, and Stuart Waterbury.

Congratulations Swimmers!!

Take Time to Thank Your Volunteers

Marcia Anziano—Past Chairperson

United States Masters Swimming is one of the largest volunteer run organizations of its type in the US. Most members have no idea of the time spent by the numerous people devoted to the sport of swimming, in particular as related to the adult community, both nationally and here in Colorado.

COMSA is fortunate to have many very generous volunteers. Just recently at the State Meet, two of them were recognized by the organization for the work that they have done over the past few years. The Lt. Governor's Cup is presented annually at the State Meet. This year's recipients were Heather Hagadorn and Mark Plummer. Heather has served this past year as both Vice Chairperson and Chairperson. Prior to that she had served on the board as Secretary and is the Team Representative for the DU Masters. Heather also serves at the National level on both the Long Distance and Championship Committees. All of these duties together have Heather spending many hours each week on the business of Master's Swimming. Mark has served COMSA for the past several years as the Top Ten Chairperson. This job requires Mark process all of the meet results from Sanctioned meets held here in Colorado and provide this detail at the National level, thus allowing many of our swimmers to be recognized for their swim times. This takes a great deal of patience and time, as all of the results must be validated and all swimmers verified as USMS members. We want to thank both of these deserving individuals for the time that they devote to make this a better organization.

In addition to Heather and Mark, there are many others that spend a great deal of their personal time to continue to make this organization click. Given an opportunity, please thank them for all that they do for you and the swimming community. The following is a list of those that are currently serving on the Board or Chairperson positions and a brief summary of what their responsibilities are for the organization.

Bob Patten: stepped up this year to fill the Vice Chairman's shoes and work as the liaison for the State Meet. His term was complete at the beginning of April. **Nicole Vanderpoel:** was elected as the new Vice Chairperson at the Annual Meeting held at the State Meet. Nicole also serves as Long Distance Chairperson. It was Nicole that worked to present (and win) the bid for the 10K National Championship which will be hosted here in Colorado this coming August. **Susan Nolte:** Treasurer of the organization for the past several years and will continue in that position for the next 2 years. Susan keeps us fiscally in shape!! **Kathy Garnier:** Secretary for the past 2 years will continue on as secretary for the next 2 years. Kathy not only keeps minutes of the meetings but also sends periodic communications to all the Team Reps. If your rep is not on her list, let us know. **Marcia Anziano:** Registrar. Marcia moved from Chairperson to the Registrar at the beginning of the 2006 official registration year. Besides taking care of all the paperwork involved with this job, Marcia has worked this year to provide swim clinics for our members. **Pete Schwenker:** Officials Chairperson. It is Pete that is responsible for scheduling officials for all of our meets. Pete is also working to expand our pool of officials, so let him know if you are interested in serving in this area. **Kim Crouch:** Sanctions Chairperson. Kim maintains the schedule of meets, insures that the paperwork is handled properly, and provides information to all meet directors on what has to be done for a valid meet to be held. **Ellen Campbell:** Newsletter Editor. Ellen is responsible for the Mastersplash newsletter that is now produced three times a year. She gathers interesting articles, meet information, and other news of importance; compiles the newsletter, coordinates its printing, applies labels, and mails the newsletter to all the swimmers that request it. **Will Amos:** Records Chairperson. Will is relatively new to this position and many of you are aware of the efforts to put the state records on the website. This effort was originally started by Chris Nolte, but has been passed on to Will who is doing a super job for all of you. **Chris Nolte:** Awards Chairperson. Chris's main responsibility is to oversee the annual awards presented at the State Swim meet. **Carrie Slover:** Coaches Chairperson. Carries is responsible for passing on information to all coaches in the Colorado LMSC. **Laura Smith:** Fitness Chairperson. Laura uses this position to provide us with great articles for the newsletters. **Mel Dyke:** Webmaster. Last on this list, but not least, Mel spends a great deal of time to keep our website up to date. As this is our primary means of communication with our membership, Mel is quite an important cog in our wheel.

The Board welcomes input from all of its members and also would love for more volunteers that are willing to step up and help with the various activities. Just let any of the board members know of your interests. They would be happy to have more support.

Open Your Mind to Open Water



Training in the open water is like taking on a whole new sport. Come on. Jump in!

Laura Smith—Fitness Chairperson

71% of the Earth's surface is covered by water. So why are we going back and forth in a stuffy, dank indoor pool staring down at a black line for an hour everyday? And ... when we get out, we have no tan. No bronze glow about us. All we have to show for our time spent in the pool is a lingering chlorine smell that doesn't even come off with scrubbing.

In the dead of winter, when the snow is falling, the air is bitterly cold, and the sky is grey....I don't mind going inside for a swim. And, if you're a swimmer in Colorado, that's about your only choice for aquatic entertainment. However, once summer hits, and the sun is blazing overhead, I find it nearly painful to exit the great outdoors to swim in a dimly lit lukewarm pool. The lanes are crowded with triathletes getting back into their competitive season, master swimmers getting ready for their next big meet, and fitness swimmers who want to stay in shape. I've been in workouts where the lanes are so crowded, that I've actually gotten lapped by the lane leader BEFORE I even push off for the set. It's insanity. If you're lucky, you find a space (hopefully one that accommodates your full body length) and join the train of swimmers following each other one after another like lemmings. You can't speed up, you can't slow down, you just hold on to your space and keep chugging along.

This type of swimming tends to put everyone on edge. The 'bad side' of good people comes out. Tempers flare, hostility arises, and an actual feeling of "road rage" is present. Then, to make things worse, you have the 'illegal aliens' crossing the borders. No, I'm not getting political. I'm talking about the slower swimmers who are adamant about getting in a lane too fast for them, and the faster swimmers who enjoy splashing around in a lane too slow for them. Everything gets thrown off kilter...and the workout becomes more of a stressful situation than a healthy athletic outlet.

So what's the solution? You want to swim. You want to stay in shape. But, you don't want to deal with the frustrations and limitations involved with indoor workouts in our far too short summer period. OPEN WATER TRAINING. It's phenomenal. You're outside! In the elements! You have a vast body of water at your disposal with no human trains dictating your speed! For a pool swimmer, making the switch to open water is like being reborn!

Training in open water versus pool swimming is almost like taking on a whole new sport. Distances are never exact in a reservoir like they are in a pool, thus you can't judge your effort 100% on time. Conditions change. There isn't a time clock or intervals based off your 100 pace. No one cares who 'goes first' because there's enough water for all of us! You have the openness surrounding you, allowing you to find an inner rhythm that isn't disrupted at the wall for your turn. The longer you swim, the better your tan!!!

I've heard the analogy that "open water swimming is to pool swimming as trail running is to track running". There are just too many beautiful bodies of water outside to spend all your training going around and around in 50 yard circles like a rat on a running wheel. If you start getting addicted to open water training and want to begin competing, look at some of your location options for events: Australia, Fiji, St. Croix, Hawaii, Malibu. Any of those places sound like a far better way to spend a weekend than sitting on cold cement bleachers at an indoor swim meet waiting for your next event.



"open water swimming is to pool swimming as trail running is to track running".

COMSA to Host “Swimming on Track” Clinic

Marcia Anziano—Registrar

COMSA is please to be able to offer “Swimming on Track”, a swim clinic coached by the staff of the DU Pioneers Swim Team, Stacey Tobey, Alicia Hicken, and Mike Laitola. Stacey is in her sixth season of collegiate coaching with the University of Denver, and also has nine years of experience with the University of Utah. Stacey’s degree is in exercise sports science, she is a level 5 ASCA coach, a competitive masters swimmer, and a master’s coach. Alicia is in her 5th season with DU, having been an assistant coach at Washington State from 1997 to 2000. Alicia is a graduate of the University of Minnesota where she competed in the distance events. Mike is a graduate of and former swimmer for the University of Texas. Mike coached at North Texas State during the 2003-1004 season before joining the staff at the University of Denver.

Swimming on Track is learning faster, more efficient swimming through body position, leg drive and power. Finding the right track for your strokes and keeping that track during fatigue. Swimming on Track is understanding how distance per stroke and alignment can keep you swimming down hill throughout the whole race.

The clinic is divided into long axis strokes (free/back), short axis strokes (fly/breast), and starts & turns. Each session will follow the following format: 30 minutes of overview; 1 hour water time, drills, etc; 30 minutes of review and feedback; 1 hour of improved skills.

Session 1	Friday, June 9	6:30-9:30 PM (Free/Back)
Session 2	Saturday, June 10	9:00 AM-12:00 PM (Fly/Breast)
Session 3	Saturday, June 10	1:30-4:30 PM (Starts & Turns)

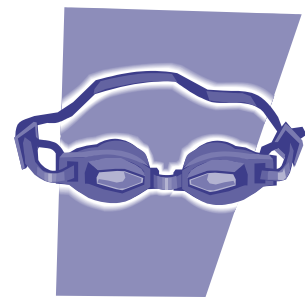
The clinic is open to all 2006 members of USMS/COMSA. The fee for the clinic is \$50 for one session, an additional \$45 for the second session, and \$40 for the third. The **maximum number of swimmers per session will be 20**. The clinic will be held at the University of Denver, El Pomar Natatorium. Plan to arrive a bit early, be ready to swim, bring warm clothes and towels, and plan on a great clinic experience.

For questions about the clinic, contact Marcia Anziano via email at marfer@att.net. To secure a position in one or more of the clinics, mail your check payable to COMSA, specifying the sessions that you wish to attend, your name, a copy of your USMS card, email address, and phone number to:

Marcia Anziano
4235 E. 7th Ave.
Denver, CO 80220

Receipt of payment will secure a space in the clinic. Spaces will not be held unless payment has been received. All checks must be received by June 2, 2006. Anyone still on the waiting list at that time will be notified of available spaces.

“Swimming on Track is learning faster, more efficient swimming through body position, leg drive, and power.”



Pool Training for the Open Water



Long swims are always more fun when training with friends.

Nicole Vanderpoel—Long Distance Chairperson

The following are some training tips which will help you prepare mentally and physically for long, open water swims. Whether you are a new or experienced open water swimmer, these tips will help your preparation.

Long Distance training must be done in the pool as well as open water. The goal is to increase your “endurance” level in the water. Endurance will help you build confidence, which will help you achieve your goals in a long open water swim. You can accomplish this by increasing your yardage and length of your work out sets.

If you are swimming with a group, add a continuous 10 – 20 minute swim once a week, either before or after practice. By continuously keeping your heart rate at a fairly constant level without rest or recovery, you will develop endurance and condition your body to maintain faster speeds for longer distances. This is easy to accomplish. When you warm up, swim a longer distance without stopping. For example, if your warm up is 400 yards, start practice a little early and increase that distance to 600 or 800 yards. Then, to make it a little interesting, change the intensity throughout the continuous swim. You could accomplish this by increasing your level of intensity during the even 100’s. For example, swim the odd 100’s at 70% and the even 100’s at 80%.

If you wish to extend your workout after practice, challenge yourself to a long pull. The distance could vary between 600 to 1,000 yards. Once you have built some confidence swimming a longer distance without stopping, challenge yourself to a 1,500 yd. swim or pull.

“Long Distance training must be done in the pool as well as open water. The goal is to increase your “endurance” level in the water.”

Once you have added just 15 to 20 minutes extra per week in your training schedule, push yourself to swim the length of your goal-distance race or longer in one nonstop “workout”. This is as important to do for your mental confidence as it is for the physical preparation of your race. Challenge your training buddies to do the same. It certainly is a lot more fun to train with friends and you can help pace each other. Accomplishing a really long-distance swim in the pool is a great way to boost your confidence and leave you feeling great about yourself!

Finally, there are some great drills you can try in the pool. A personal favorite is to swim like Tarzan, with your head above the water. You will feel the effects of your hips dropping which makes it harder to swim. Try to keep your hips high while swimming with your head above the water. Tarzan drill is also beneficial, because you have no choice but to “spear” your fingertips forward in the water and “catch” the water with your hand and forearm. After your hand enters the water and reaches forward, your fingertips should point downward upon your catch. Your elbows should remain high in the water.

Another drill is to swim in a lane by yourself with your eyes closed! The outcome could be quite surprising! You will soon find out which direction your pull will lead. This will help you tremendously with your navigation skills, as well as inspire you to work on your pull. If you are veering to either side, then it’s time to make some adjustments. Your hand should not be crossing over to the opposite side on either your entry, or your underwater pull. If you swim in a straight line, then you will complete your open water swims faster. In addition, the pool is a great place to practice your sighting method and bilateral breathing, both of which are discussed on the following page.



After some long workouts in the pool, you’re ready to hit the open water.

Making A Splash in the Open Water

The first rule of Open Water Swimming is to come prepared. Bring 2 pairs of goggles, one light and one dark with UV protection. The weather can change quickly and you may need to change your goggles due to bright sun or dark cloud cover. Next, make sure you are properly fueled for the task ahead. Swimming in the open water may “burn up” a bit more energy than you may think! At the very least, bring yourself some Power gel or granola bar just in case. As always, make sure you have water or sports drink to hydrate with. Lastly, as part of your preparation, bring a friend to swim with or hook up with someone at the gravel pond. Why? Because it’s fun to swim with fellow open water swimmers and it’s much safer to swim with a buddy. Here are some helpful tips for training in the open water.

Maintain a steady rhythm or cadence with your stroke rate. It is most helpful to count a rhythm to yourself while swimming a long distance. This can be as simple as counting to four or six at a steady beat. Counting in rhythm will also help you achieve a steady heart rate, while giving you something to think about during your swim. An additional benefit to maintaining a steady stroke rate is that it helps you relax, focus and stay in control.

In keeping with the steady stroke rate, try to maintain a steady breathing pattern. This will produce the same benefits as a steady stroke rate. In addition, practice bilateral breathing as it is most beneficial to navigation. When you breathe on both sides, keep your ear in the water so that your head stays low and hips stay high. If you lift your head out of the water when you breathe, your hips will drop creating unwanted “drag”.

Incorporate your sighting pattern into your breathing pattern. Practice sighting in one of two ways. Either, raise your goggles (not your entire head) out of the water before you breathe and then turn your head to breathe during your stroke cycle. Or, you can breathe during your regular stroke cycle and sight afterwards. You can accomplish this during one stroke cycle by turning your head forward after you breath. Keep it low, sight and place your face in the water. Remember the trick is to keep a continuous stroke cycle during your sighting. You never want to stop forward progress by lifting your head too far out of the water. When you do sight, keep your hips “high”. Be careful not to let your hips drop when you lift your head. Try your best not to stop during an open water swim. Remember, the goal is to maintain a steady and controlled heart rate. This can be difficult to do if you are starting and stopping your progress.

Practice a race start with your friends in open water. Understand that your heart will be pumping a bit harder at the race start. Therefore, practice entering the water with a group of friends, very close together. It is best not to try to sight too much at the start, so that water doesn’t get kicked into your face! Be aware of where you are, but try to take at least 4 strokes before you sight. You will need to use your legs and kick a bit until you find your “spot” within the group.

With regards to kicking, there is a definite need for kicking at the beginning and certainly the finish of a race. The reason being is that kicking will create more speed for a short period of time. However, after you have successfully “muddled” through the “masses” at the start, it’s time to conserve energy by kicking for balance and body position, as opposed to speed. Simply said, kicking takes oxygen away from other muscles that may need it during a long swim. Therefore, hold your feet close together when you kick so that they don’t create “drag” during your swim. Maintain a steady two to four beat kick. Then, when the end is in sight, you can start kicking for speed again.



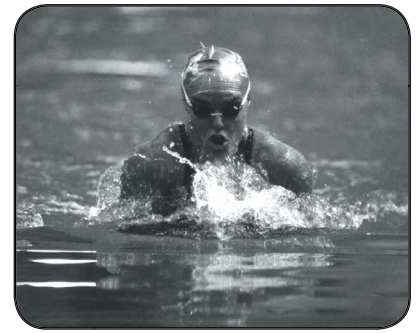
Many Colorado lakes and reservoirs are calling your name this summer.

“Perhaps the most important tip to remember about open water swimming is to maintain a positive attitude, take care of each other and have fun out there in the Colorado sunshine!”



Get Stroked

Colorado's New SwimLabs



The innovative solution to a better stroke and faster swimming.

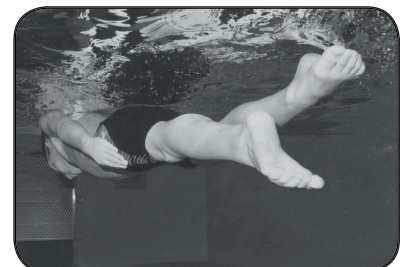
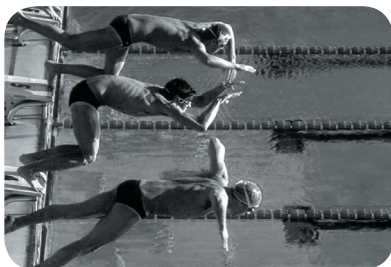
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Improved Swimming, Faster

SwimLabs comes to Colorado

Becoming a better, faster swimmer just got a whole lot easier. And with SwimLabs, Colorado's newest and most innovative entry in swim instruction, it'll take a whole lot less time. SwimLabs, the brainchild of two long-time Colorado swimmers and businessmen, Mike Mann and Giff Cutler, both originally of Littleton, relies on the uniquely controlled environment of the Endless Pools and an array of high tech diagnostic tools to create the optimal learning situation. With a mirrored bottom, video and computer analysis, and a certified coach who is never more than a few feet away, SwimLabs instructional programs provide instant and constant feedback. The result is that SwimLabs students learn better stroke technique in less time than with traditional methods.

SwimLabs highly trained coaches rely on the latest in computer software and video technology to provide additional immediate feedback for their students. Using video imagery and Dartfish, the powerful software program utilized at the US Olympic Training Center, SwimLabs can instantly compare your stroke to one that exhibits "perfect" technique, allowing you to make the minor, or major, adjustments necessary to perfect your own technique. Students can have their stroke and/or position in the water compared directly and immediately to that of Michael Phelps, Ian Crocker, Katie Hoff, Aaron Piersol or other national or world champion. SwimLabs coaches can then utilize special diagnostic tools to highlight even the most minute, technical flaws in each student's stroke, making for more immediate and corrective action. Students' video analysis can even be uploaded and viewed later via the internet.

For the triathlete and competitive adult swimmer, the Endless Pools environment also closely simulates open water swimming. Unlike traditional pools, SwimLabs Endless Pools provide an unrivaled opportunity to experience distance swimming without the usual walls and turns. Add in the mirrored bottom and the video and computer analysis, and you've got the best possible environment to prepare for Danskin, Kona and everything in between.

According to Mann, holder of two National Masters records and a swim coach for Littleton High School, Inverness Masters and the DU Masters program, SwimLabs is the ideal place to learn or perfect your stroke. "We're not trying to compete with swim clubs or teams," says Mann. "We are trying to support their work by providing their students with the individualized instruction that can help them be better participants for their club or team. In fact, we offer coaches a special arrangement so they can bring their swimmers to SwimLabs and we can help them improve their technique. That's the perfect win-win."

At its Highlands Ranch location, SwimLabs houses three Endless Pools and offers a menu of instructional programs for swimmers of every age and ability – from infant to youth to adult swimmers. Any student, at any time can also take advantage of SwimLabs "stroke check," a unique opportunity to have a stroke videotaped and analyzed using SwimLabs powerful Dartfish program.

Adult and youth swimmers can become full-time members of SwimLabs (both 6- and 12-month memberships are available), affording them the opportunity to participate in regular stroke checks at a reduced rate, ensuring steady improvement of both technique and times. Then, when putting in the yards or meters in practice, their stroke technique is right, making practice better preparation for what's to come.

The bottom line is this: Swimming these days is a highly competitive sport for both youth and adults and, if you want the competitive edge, SwimLabs can give you a leg, and arm, up on your competition.



Paid for by SwimLabs, Inc. For more information visit www.swimlabs.com or call 303..798.SWIM.

Swimming the Catalina Channel

We left Berth 55 in Long Beach, California for Catalina Island on the boat *Bottomscratcher* at about 8:30 pm on August 22, 2005. This was the starting point of my swim from Catalina Island to Vinences Point on the Palos Verde Peninsula on the Southern California coast. The distance between these two points is just short of 21 miles. The *Bottomscratcher* was my escort boat for this swim. There were three kayakers who would be in the water with me, plus an observer who made sure that I followed the rules of channel swimming. Also on board were my father, step-mother, Debi my wife, and our two boys Kevins and Kenneth. The last two members of my crew were friends Henk and Jack.

Arriving at the island, I began to ready myself for the swim. I began the process by eating a bowl of oatmeal and an avocado. Next, I had Jack spread a sunscreen that would protect me from jellyfish stings on my back and shoulders. Last, I made sure that my feedings were all arranged for the swim. I was ready to go, but I could not. Another swimmer was ahead of me. So, I sat on the back of the boat until he had started and had about a ten minute head start. I was given the okay to go. I jumped into the water. The temp was only 68 degrees and my breath came in short gasps. I caught control of my breath and swam to the shore. I lifted the swimming area rope and continued the few yards to the beach. I waded from the surf until I was past the water line. I looked to *Bottomscratcher* to start. The bagpipes were playing as I was on the beach. I was given the signal to start and went back into the water. Doing breaststroke until the rope, I lifted it and started my freestyle. I caught up with the kayaker and was swimming over the first of many kelp beds. This was a very unnerving feeling swimming over kelp, since I knew the waters had sharks. I also knew of least two swims that were called off due to sharks so this was in the back of my mind.

After the first half hour, I took my first feeding. My stroke count was in the high 60s. It felt good to be swimming at night under the moon. At hour one I completed my second feeding and continued. It was not long after this feeding that I felt something peck the bottom of feet swimming through another kelp bed. I turned around quickly ready to hit what had pecked me. I was frightened. It is pitch-black and I could not see what had done this. Again the thoughts of sharks entered my head; especially, after thinking something had just tried to taste me. Quickly, I turned around and sprinted as hard as I could towards the kayak. For a while I stayed right next to it. At the third feeding I told the kayaker that something had pecked my feet. He said cleaning fish live in the kelp beds. These fish would at times peck swimmers. This sounded plausible to me and I went back to swimming with my concerns nearly laid to rest.....

The sky turned from black to gray. It was dawn. There have been few mornings in my life that I was more grateful to see this happen than this one. This boosted me more than anything else. I had made it to the morning and was very glad for it. I have been swimming for about six hours and the kayakers need to change again. I treaded water and asked my friend Henk how far we had traveled. He ran to the boat house and found out we had gone about 12 miles. The observer would not tell me incase this would demoralized me. It did not, but made me realize that I would not break the time goal that I had set for myself. The kayakers finished changing and off we went towards the coast....

The time is close to 9:00 am or so I think. I am trying to keep track of time from each feeding. I am to be feed about every half-hour, so it is fairly easy. I can see in the distance the coast of California. Seeing the coast sends a surge into me that takes my stroke count per minute to about 72. The observer later tells me that she is surprised by this, since before my stroke count in is the low 60s. It is not to long before my stroke count falls to the lower 60s again. The surge from seeing the coast has burned out....

I took my last feeding at about 10:30 or so, since I can see the shore clearly. Shortly after this, my son Kevins and our friend Jack jumped into the water so we can finish the swim together. Kevins gets in and feels the cold water and wonders what he has gotten himself into. Jack being from Southern California knew this was coming. The three of us finished together and I crawled up the rocky beach past the water line and find a rock to sit on. We finished the swim after 11 hours, 43 minutes and 2 seconds. And it was really a "we" swim, my folks, wife and kids, friends, boat crew, observer and kayakers. I may have physically made the swim, but all of us were on the boat. They were either feeding me or guiding me or making sure that I was safe or finishing with me. I thank them all.



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Colorado Masters Swimming
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USMS National 10K Championships August 12 in Ft. Collins

Colorado Masters Swimmers, it won't be long now before the National spotlight shines upon us. Registration for the USMS National 10K Championship is officially closed. Registration opened on March 1st and as of April 2nd, the race is completely FULL with 100 Participants, including 58 men and 42 women from all over the country. This will be one of the largest numbers of registrants in the history of the USMS National 10K Championships! Congratulations to all of you Colorado open water swimmers who have registered and congratulations to George Thornton, Joe Bakel and the entire Wingshadow 10K Committee on a very successful registration.

We now have a wonderful opportunity and responsibility to show off our beautiful State and extend our hospitality to all visiting swimmers. What can you do to help? There is an immediate need for 25 additional "paddlers". These paddlers need to have their own kayak. The paddler provides support for one 10K swimmer. He or she will guide the swimmer in the right direction, carry the swimmer's food and beverage and be there to ensure that the swimmer is safe! You will be expected to participate in a mandatory pre-race meeting on Friday evening, August 11th.

In addition, volunteers are needed to greet travelers at DIA and transport them to Fort Collins Friday morning and/or afternoon.

Last, but certainly not least, volunteers are needed to help with the preparation and organization of certificates and awards at the announcer's/ officials' table.

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering for any of the above responsibilities, please contact nicolevan-derpoel@msn.com as soon as possible. For information and updates regarding the USMS 10K National Championship, please check out the website at www.whswim.com.

