



Hello Katie,

The world of swimming seems to be on fire! World, US Open and American records are being set "in season"! The excitement around our sport seems to be contagious! Swimfluencers getting people excited for the upcoming championship season! Grown Up Swimming is one way masters swimming is tapping into the excitement and joy of racing and spending time with friends and family in a friendly swim meet! Stay tuned for new meets and locations for Grown Up Swimming of the Rockies! Be sure to continue checking the COMSA website for all upcoming events!

If you like podcasts, be sure to check out Colorado's own Missy Franklin and Katie Hoff's podcast Unfiltered Waters. They have interesting interviews with some of swimming's best!

Don't forget to renew your USMS registration for 2025! If you are a CMS member, see more information below about registering with Rocky Mountain Regional Masters, as CMS is no longer. At the USMS Convention, a fee increase of \$5 passed bringing the annual membership cost to \$75 for the year. This is designed to put USMS on the path to a balanced budget in the next few years.

Happy Swimming!  
Katie Glenn  
COMSA Secretary

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## Upcoming Events **SAVE THE DATE**

Thru Mar 31, 2025 [COSA Virtual Swim - World's Largest Lakes](#), Virtual  
Dec 7-8, 2024 - [Pikes Peak December Dash](#), Colorado Springs  
January 18, 2025 - Colorado Swimming Hall of Fame Meet, Denver  
January 25, 2025 - Polansky Sweetheart Meet, Loveland  
March 2, 2025 - [Breadbasket Zone Championship Meet](#), Papillion, NE  
April 4-6, 2025 - COMSA 2025 State Meet, VMAC, Thornton  
April 24-27, 2025 - 2025 USMS Spring Nationals

For a listing of events around the country, you can always check out USMS's [Calendar of Events](#).

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## Swimming for a Lifetime by FAST's Lee MacDonald

Stanford alumni and FAST Masters swimmer, Lee MacDonald recently talked to the Stanford swim team during his 50th reunion, and in this he shared his perspectives on swimming and lessons learned over a lifetime of swimming. Lee is no stranger to USMS with 145 Top 10 times dating back to 1984. He truly

### ***The Race has no Finish Line: Swimming for a Lifetime***

While this background provides some context, my main point is that swimming is truly a lifelong sport that I now know to be much more than exercise and doing laps. As you age, it gets more and more

embodies the USMS vision to “Foster a nationwide adult swimming community through lifelong fitness, competition, and education”, and he has done this both domestically and internationally. Following is a condensed version of Lee’s remarks, focusing on the benefits and strategy for lifelong swimming.

### ***Take Your Marks: Getting Started in the Pool***

I was born and raised in Walnut Creek, California. When I was about eight, my parents helped build a neighborhood swimming pool, so I swam summer league from age eight until high school. I was a good summer league swimmer, but it wasn’t until I was starting high school that I decided to wanted to take my swimming more seriously, a decision that was entirely on my own initiative given that my parents had minimal knowledge and familiarity with competitive swimming.

It was the winter of my freshman year that I first swam a meet where I did a 100 breast rather than a 50, and I was a good enough swimmer in high school so in my freshman year the coach told me to swim the 200 IM in the varsity meet rather than the 100 IM in the frosh-soph meet, and that was my first ever 200 IM! Ultimately the problem was that I was the best swimmer in my high school so there was no one to push me. My high school swim coach was primarily the head football coach, so we had no technique work, no dryland or weight training and we didn’t even have a weight room. Nevertheless, I was good enough that the Stanford coach, Jim Gaughran, saw potential in me and I’m pretty sure that I have swimming to thank for getting me into Stanford.

### ***The Race Is On: Building a Career, in and out of the Pool***

I showed up at Stanford and found myself swimming on the varsity team. As a breaststroke and IM specialist, I was mostly in the breaststroke lane with Brian Job, the American record holder and the 1968 silver medalist at the Mexico City Olympics and with another NCAA finalist. A few lanes over was John Ferris, a double medalist at Mexico City along with other Olympians and NCAA finalists. The much harder and more rigorous swimming led to a huge drop in my times, so I won the Most Improved Freshman award and missed qualifying for NCAAs in the 200 IM by just 0.4 seconds. But narrowly missing NCAAs didn’t bother me, as I had few expectations, nor was I intimidated by swimming with Olympic medalists as I was just happy swimming and being on the team.

After swimming varsity at Stanford for two years, I realized I was not going to make the Olympics and wanted to do other things with my life. Since I had only swum

important to push yourself, and for most people, swimming with a team does help. My times showed relatively little slowing until age 50, as exemplified by the recent performance of Masters swimmers who were aged 42 to 48 in the most recent Olympic Trials, with some swimming lifetime bests!

But time catches up to everyone, and you have to adjust your expectations. So as one ages you **cannot** compare your times with what you did in high school, college, or even what you did several years ago, or you will just get frustrated and quit! These days my criteria for success are not my times, but did I feel like I swam well, did I kind of have fun, and did I enjoy hanging out with the other swimmers?

In closing, here are the lessons that I have learned that will hopefully keep you in the pool for a lifetime:

- 1) Swimming is great in that it stretches you out, so that at the end of a workout you feel tired but your muscles are stretched out rather than being all tight;
- 2) Swimming is low impact so one can keep doing it! At the last nationals I attended there were three 100-year-old swimmers, with one woman still doing flip turns, and one man swam a 50-m long course freestyle in under a minute, breaking the world record by about 40 seconds!
- 3) Swimming is tremendous for your health as it is a strong cardiovascular exercise and uses nearly all of your muscles. As a type 1 diabetic I can quantify exactly how a swim workout helps me to control my blood sugars for up to 24 hours after a hard workout;
- 4) Swimming is meditative, as you are immersed and doing rhythmic breathing. I often close my eyes when swimming to enhance this effect;
- 5) Swimming also can be sensuous, as you can feel the water gently flowing against your skin, and again closing your eyes can enhance this sensation;
- 6) Swimming reduces stress. I can tell how stressed I am by how long it takes me in a workout until I forget whatever was on my mind when I got in. Seldom can I remember getting out of the pool with the same concern(s) that I got in with;
- 7) Finally, I have repeatedly found that swimmers all over the world are inherently good people. If you go to a pool you will immediately have a tribe and people with similar values.

### ***Coming Soon: The COMSA Swimmership***

Everyone should have the experience of

year-round for six years I wasn't burned out and I just kept swimming and training for fun, rarely swimming with a team but still competing wherever I was. So I swam in the German University championships when I had a fellowship at the University of Freiburg, the Shibuya-ku ward championships when I lived in Tokyo, I swam regularly at UC Berkeley when doing my Ph.D. and did my first masters meet in 1984. When I moved to Fort Collins in 1990 to work as a professor in watershed science at CSU I competed more regularly and swam in my first national championships at age 40. I've been going every five years since then, since when one ages up you have some advantage over all the old people!

competing at USMS Nationals if they want to pursue it!

To help others experience, this we are starting a new COMSA Swimmership Fund! The Swimmership is a scholarship designed to cover some or all of the travel costs for one man and one woman from Colorado to attend USMS Nationals who otherwise could not afford to attend.

Look for more information about how you can support the Swimmership – coming soon. We appreciate your support!

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## Top Five Reasons to Swim in a Meet Masters competitions are fun for everyone!

Are you thinking about swimming in a Master meet, but always seem to hesitate before you sign up? Here are the top five reasons you should follow through for that next event and start competing!

### 5. Attitude Adjustment

If swim meet experience from your youth has soured you on competitions, you need to recognize that Masters meets are a whole different animal. Attitudes from bygone days no longer apply, and incorrect assumptions should be cast aside. Here are the most frequent excuses for nonparticipation, along with the reasons they lack validity:

***I'm not fast enough.*** Everyone is welcome at Masters meets, regardless of speed or ability, and regardless of age, body type, or fitness level! There are just as many high-fives and cheers for the slower heats as there are for the fastest swimmers. The Masters community is universally encouraging to newcomers, and is always delighted to see people try something they haven't done before.

***I can't do flip turns (or dive off the blocks, etc.).*** While there are rules regarding proper stroke performance, there is plenty of latitude for style (including encouragement for swimmers with disabilities). And it's fine to start in the water, do open turns, and even to stop at each end of the pool. The point is to finish the event in whatever way works for you.

***I'm not in good enough shape/ I can't hit my best times.*** Though many swimmers do achieve lifetime PRs as Masters swimmers, the truth is that for most of us, life has intervened. Jobs, families, and the aging process have combined to put a dent in our superpowers. But that's no reason not to get out there and give it your best shot. There's no better way to maintain health and speed than to continually work on it.

***There's too much pressure.*** Dude, relax. There are no college scholarships on the line, nor any possibility of being cut from the team. Sure, you want to do your best, but any pressure you feel is self-generated. All you need to do is watch one Masters meet to see how friendly everyone is, and how much fun they're having. You'll see people race with intensity, but also with huge smiles! It's the perfect example of high performance in a low-stress environment.

***There's too much time between events.*** OK, this one may have some validity, especially at championship meets. But you can put that time to good use by taking advantage of the next three of our top five reasons.

## 4. Connections

Most of my best friends have been found through Masters swimming. Obviously, teammates form the closest connections because we're in the trenches together, sharing the hard work and joy found in practice. But the connections we make through competition are no less enduring. It's always fun to meet new friends through rivalries, time spent together on the pool deck, and even when counting laps for Brute Squad participants. Each meet provides an opportunity to catch up, to share memories, and to look forward to the next reunion.

## 3. Education

Swim meets provide opportunities to watch elite swimmers and to learn from them. Almost every race provides lessons on technique, pacing, or race strategy. Your own results provide feedback about the effectiveness of your warmup, nutrition/hydration, and other race planning.

## 2. Inspiration

Everyone who attends a Masters meet (whether competing or not) comes away inspired and feeling good about life. You see folks of all ages cheering each other on, and people making courageous comebacks from injuries or accidents, as well as those enthusiastic rookies who are competing for the first time. Hanging around people who are giving it their best makes us better, too.

## 1. Assessment

The best way to find out if your workouts are effective is to test your speed, and swimming in a meet provides the optimal conditions to elicit your best effort. After each race, you and your coach can review how the race felt, what corrections you can make, and what sort of new training you might want to incorporate. Even if your performance wasn't what you had hoped for, the lessons from the experience make you better in the long run.

This list is not comprehensive. There are endless reasons to swim in a meet, so I hope to see you at an upcoming competition!

by: Terry Heggy  
12/30/16

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### COMSA To Reimburse Club/Workout Group Registration Fees for Clubs/Workout Groups of 10+ Swimmers

COMSA's Executive Board voted and approved that COMSA pay the 2025 club/workout group registration fees for all clubs/workout groups with a 2024 membership of 10 or more swimmers.

Club/workout groups with less than 10 members, should contact the COMSA Chair for reimbursement requests.

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