



THINKING ABOUT Planning an Open Water Swim Practice?

*Submitted by Robin Smith, SPMS Open Water Chair
(openwater@spmastersswim.org)*

Some pools are open now and some have not yet re-opened. We know that there are limitations on how much “water time” swimmers and clubs can get right now, even if they do have access to a pool. So, some coaches are thinking about continuing or adding open water swim practices to the calendar.

This article is not about long distance swimming or doing mega-mileage in the ocean. This is about how to use an open water venue to run a swim practice. Challenges for swimmers include no walls, no turns, no lane lines, and no places to stand. Benefits include strengthening the core and joints and improving stroke rhythm and technique.

Planning and Safety are key to any successful open water practice session. It is important to consider the comfort level and open water experience of applicable swimmers when selecting the open water venue (ocean, bay, or lake).

Here are some recommendations:

- Visit the body of water for the open water practice in advance to observe the venue, parking availability, bathroom/shower situation, actual swimming area, and any safety considerations (surf/swells, current/tides, boats, surfers/paddle boards, marine life, etc.).
- Check the local water quality website for recent/current status. Water quality should be “safe for recreational swimming or bathing”. Depending on the water temperature, swimmers may want to wear wetsuits during the practice.

- Review local requirements and any public health orders or recommendations that are in place.
- Using Google Earth (or other mapping application), create a “map” of the open water venue and proposed swim practice course with distances and landmarks. Depending on the swim buoy situation, may need to use landmarks including beach, pier, jetty, parking lot, and surrounding areas to set the course. The course can be rectangular, square, or triangular. Distances can range from 100-200 yds up to 300-500 yds.



- Assign swimmers and coaches to the open water practice. There should be no more than ten swimmers per in-water session at a time. The coach to swimmer ratio can be varied according to the open water ability of the participants. Coaches must be able to have “DIRECT” line of sight to each swimmer throughout the practice.

- Have a meeting with everyone to review and discuss the process and procedures for open water practices. Request volunteers to act as safety observers on the beach or on the water. Plan to take warm water, food, and extra towels/blankets to the practice.

- Write the practice sets for the swim course venue in advance. Plan for swimmers to come onto the beach in between repeats to rest and to hydrate. The sets can include all the strokes, sculling, and stroke drills. Equipment can include kick boards, fins, and paddles. Be sure to teach swimmers open water skills including sighting on landmarks, sighting in all four directions (ahead, behind, and each side), treading water, and going out/coming in through the surf line (ins and outs). Total time for the practice can range from 45 minutes to 1 hour or so.

- At the practice, take ROLL and count swimmers. Review the swim course, warm-up and practice sets along with safety procedures on the beach BEFORE entering the water. If there are lifeguards on duty, notify them about your open water practice and safety plans. Have FUN! Remember that depending on water temperature and conditions, the total practice time may be shorter than planned. Ensure ALL swimmers have exited the water safely.

- Evaluate how things went and what to do differently next time, any lessons learned, and plan for the next practice. Open water practices are fun and can assist swimmers with maintaining their “feel for the water” and improving technique while learning something new.

See you at the beach!



COACH CHRISTINE MAKI

Achieves Level 4 Certification

Submitted by Ken Brisbin SPMS Vice Chair (ViceChair@SPMasterSwim.org)

Please help me congratulate Christine Maki, who has achieved Level 4 USMS Coaches Certification. Only the highest level coach who has contributed at the local, regional, and national levels can obtain this status.

In her many years of coaching The Competitive Tri-Swim Masters team, she has led novice to elite swimmers to compete at local and national levels. Christine has volunteered as SPMS Coaches Chair for many years and has conducted successful clinics over that time.

She has also served on the USMS Coaches Committee, contributing her expertise and sharing her knowledge with other coaches.



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

-Skin Cancer-

Submitted by SPMS Registrar and Webmaster Dan Wegner (Registrar@SPMasterSwim.org)

Last month I noticed a slightly red, one eighth inch bump of skin on the top of my head. The bump was just inside my hairline and it was not going away over weeks.

What is it? Being 6'8" for the past 30 years, I have had more than my share of run-ins with low doorways, low ceilings and low-hanging tree branches. However, whenever I had a bump on my head before, it would go away after a week or two. This time it was slightly different. The bump didn't feel like a scratch or an ingrown hair. It wasn't itchy or a scab, but I kept noticing the bump day after day.

Swimming History: I am a life-long swimmer who had the benefit of wearing sunscreen, sun hats, sunglasses and swimming indoors for my college career and for the past 10 years in Las Vegas.

Family History: My family does not have a significant history of skin cancer. My maternal grandfather, who was an officer in the Royal Australian Navy, had a couple skin cancer spots removed in his 80s. My dad, who worked weekends on my paternal grandfather's farm, also in his 80s, just recently had a couple of skin cancer spots removed.

The part which was confusing to me... "Why is this bump in my hair?" I don't have a family history of skin cancer. I try to avoid the sun. I sunscreen my forehead, nose, ears and neck, but why a bump in my hair? Finally, after about four weeks of noticing, I made an appointment with a skin disease doctor.

The moment he looked at the bump on my head, he diagnosed it as skin cancer and immediately recommended surgery to remove the cancerous growth. Whoa! Seriously? That fast? Apparently it doesn't take long for an expert to diagnose skin cancer.

He used a technique named "Cryosurgery" which was essentially having liquid nitrogen sprayed directly on the skin cancer. It is similar to the liquid nitrogen treatment for warts. It hurt for about 10 minutes and then I did not notice any more pain. The first few days I had a quarter inch sized blister. Since then, I have had a quarter inch sized scab. I have been told it will fall off in a couple of weeks, so by the time you are reading this article I should be healed up.

I have always put sunscreen on my face, ears and neck, but my thinning hair on my scalp was not protecting me enough for the times when I was not wearing a hat. I also think about the times I have swum outside without sunscreen on my scalp.

I am not a doctor, but a few things are completely clear to me after going through my experience:

- **Protect yourself:** wear sunscreen, wear a hat, if you have thinning hair, **put sunscreen on your scalp in the hair!**
- If you notice any unusual growths on your skin, make an appointment with a dermatologist or skin cancer doctor immediately.

I am not an expert, but I am more than happy to share my experience with anyone. Feel free to call, email or just stop me the next time you see me at a swim meet. PS, I will be wearing sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat. :-)

Stay Healthy!

Your friend in swimming,
Dan Wegner.



aquatalk

Burning Questions

I am interested in understanding how SPMS operates, and might want to get involved.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

There are several ways to learn more about how SPMS operates. The easiest way is to join in on the teleconference meetings, which take place on the third Thursday of most months. The meeting calendar can be found on spmasterswim.org (under calendar, select admin calendar). Meeting documents including agendas and committee reports are posted on the website (under admin, select committee meetings). There is a GoToMeeting link in this section for each meeting. Just click the link to join the meeting. In addition to the teleconference meetings, there are two in-person meetings each year, typically held in February and November. Meeting minutes are also posted on the committee meetings page.

If you want to take a really deep dive into the inner workings of our local Masters swimming committee (LMSC), you can read the governing documents (under admin, select bylaws, policies, and procedures). In this section you will also find a brief description of each of the committees' responsibilities.

Volunteers are critical to keeping the organization rolling, even during downtime like the quarantine. We may not have been swimming, but the SPMS committees have been busy ensuring that we are ready to hold meets and open water swims and to support coaches and swimmers.

JULY & AUGUST Pool meets

Submitted by Ken Brisbin SPMS Vice Chair (ViceChair@SPMasterSwim.org)

Pools are starting to open, and some teams can conduct practice to varying degrees with social distancing; this is a significant step for our members.

As far as meets go, we are still several months out. USMS has recommended no sanctioned events until after July 31st. Once meets have been scheduled, there will be new protocols with social distancing for swimmers, volunteers, and officials. Safety for all our members is the highest priority, so when you see the published meet form, it will be crucial to review the protocols.

As we receive updated information, we will keep you posted. And as always, if you have any questions, please contact me at vicechair@spmasterSwim.org

Thanks
Kenny Brisbin



Swimming in the ocean implies a drastically different stroke technique from swimming in the pool, and you typically have not been swimming other strokes but freestyle in the open water. Tethered swimming also changes our stroke reach and cadence when done as a “swim workout”. Getting back into a lap pool gives us the opportunity to stretch out our strokes, work on symmetry, and build swimming muscle endurance. Sport specific muscle endurance is key to injury prevention and sustainability.

More specifically, stay away from all out sprinting and ease into horizontal strokes. This is not the time for breaststroke- and butterfly-specific sets, our shoulders and knees are not ready for this type of stress. Introducing those strokes is done best with drill/kick/swim variations. Gently introduce paddles, and focus on distance per stroke while working on breath cycles. Increase your interval times by seemingly a lot build yardage steady. Think about doing a set of 150s or 200s with 10-second rest instead of an interval. Focus on perfect stroke, kick or drill (or stop) when you feel your stroke fall apart and you feel yourself compensating with other muscles.

Let's all have fun returning to what we love to do, let's optimize our technique, stay injury free and healthy to be ready for 2021! Think sustainability, lifestyle and fun!

FEEL THE WATER

*Submitted by Arlette Godges SPMS Sports Medicine Chair
(SportsMedicine@SPMasterSwim.org)*

Many swimmers in Southern California have returned or will soon be returning to some kind of pool swimming. Take this opportunity to reflect how much you love swimming and how much of a lifestyle it is to you.

You may be a workout swimmer only, and be part of this USMS community for staying fit, friendship and group activities. You may be part of USMS for competition and friendship, there are so many reasons to be part of your team. The point is, we all missed it terribly, and want to do it for many decades to come, it's a lifestyle.

I urge you to go back slow and take this opportunity to fix stroke techniques by slowing down your intervals, working on drills and focusing on building swim endurance in a steady way. There is no rush, and no one wants to get back and be injured because you did too much too soon.



Our bone mass starts shrinking after the age of 30 in both men and women. We then progressively lose bone density throughout our lives. Of course, this loss of bone density is vastly accelerated for women after menopause. The best way to combat osteopenia/osteoporosis is with loading our skeletal system. Weights, walking, running, yoga are ways to load our bones and help maintain and build density. In combination with a healthy diet you are caring for your bones.

Swimming keeps our cardiovascular system fit, allows our muscles to be strong, and is forgiving of structural challenges and joint aches and pains. A healthy balance is a great way to keep your whole body healthy and a strong land program will make you stronger, faster and fitter in the pool.

Instead of fretting that you are “only” swimming three instead of five days a week, take your “Quarantine” workout to balance two days a week on land! We may all be surprised with the benefits and results from “changing it up” and improving muscle balance, flexibility, leg strength and applying it to the pool.

Here is to strong bones!

KEEP YOUR LAND SHAPE as we re-enter the water

*Submitted by Arlette Godges SPMS Sports Medicine Chair
(SportsMedicine@SPMasterSwim.org)*

You worked very hard and were committed to staying fit on land while the pools were closed. You might have reached a hiking goal, running goal, started running, increased or started cycling, spinning or more yoga or dynamic fitness classes. As we re-enter water workouts and coached workouts, it is important to maintain a basic land fitness.

Why, you ask. Well, the COVID era has not passed, we are still fighting the “first wave” and are realistically looking at many months ahead. The option of temporary closures of pools is not out of the question, the limited access to pools will linger much longer than expected, you did the hard part and get to be “land mobile”, and most important; our bones thank us!

UPCOMING SPMS EVENTS



Thursday, Jul 16th

SPMS Committee Conference Call 7:30P



Friday, Jul 31st - Aug 2nd

2020 SPMS and SW Zone Summer Championships



Wednesday, Aug 12th - Aug 15th

2020 USMS Summer Nationals



Thursday, Aug 13th - Aug 16th

2020 Dolfin Fran Crippen Memorial Swim Meet of Champions
- rescheduled from June



Saturday, Aug 15th

51st Annual Seal Beach Rough Water Swim



Thursday, Aug 20th

SPMS Committee Conference Call 7:30P



Saturday, Aug 22nd

Corona Del Mar Don Burns One Mile Open Water Swim



Friday, Aug 28th - Aug 29th

Santa Barbara Long Course Meters Swim Meet



Saturday, Aug 29th - Aug 30th

USMS Open Water Sprint National Championship Weekend

SPMS OFFICERS

Chair:



Mark Moore

chair@SPMasterSwim.org

(949) 233-6521

Vice-Chair:



Ken Brisbin

vicechair@SPMasterSwim.org

Treasurer:



Bob Eberwine

treasurer@SPMasterSwim.org

(949) 933-7100

Secretary:



Diana LaMar

secretary@SPMasterSwim.org

Member At-Large:



Becky Cleavenger

memberatlarge@SPMasterSwim.org

Registrar and Webmaster:



Dan Wegner

registrar@SPMasterSwim.org

3773 Price Ridge Ct

Las Vegas, NV 89147

(310) 564-6958

Top Ten Recorder:



Judi Divan

TopTen@SPMasterSwim.org

Newsletter Editor:



Jorge Ferrero

newsletter@SPMasterSwim.org



For archived newsletters, please go

<https://www.spmasterswim.org/newsletter-archives/>