



A Safe Return to Open Water COMPETITION IN THE FUTURE?

Submitted by Robin Smith | SPMS Open Water Chair
(openwater@spmasterswim.org)

Many National Governing Bodies (NGBs) including U.S. Masters Swimming, USA Swimming, and USA Triathlon are starting to think about what a “live in-person” competition might look like in the future. As some club, high school, college, and professional sports are starting to return, and group gatherings are now allowed in various states across the U.S. these organizations are in the process of drafting guidance for Event Hosts and Event Directors, Officials and Volunteers, and Athlete Participants.

There were two sanctioned USA Swimming Open Water Events held in Southern Nevada during September and October of 2020. Nevada currently allows limited group gatherings. The race venue, along with the city, approved the special event permits and the safety plans for these open water events. All local and state public health requirements were enforced throughout the two different events including physical distancing, enhanced hygiene measures, and mandatory wearing of face coverings at all times when not swimming. Everyone had a really fun and safe experience and the swimmers got to race each other “live” in person!

So what could SPMS Open Water Events look like in the future?

The initial decision to host an event will be based on the size of public group gatherings allowed by the state, county, city, and venue, and whether or not special event permits for the venue are being issued.



The total number of entries and the number of competitors in each race distance or event heat/wave will be based on the gathering rules. And these requirements may extend the timelines for the different race distances and increase the number of event heats/waves.

All those in attendance at the event may need to have temperature checks and health questionnaires completed when entering the venue/race area depending on the local public health guidelines.

Race check-in and body numbering may be done with physical distancing and enhanced hygiene procedures in place.

Everyone may be expected to wear a face covering at all times – including event staff, volunteers, officials, lifeguards, spectators, and participants. And everyone may need to follow the specific physical distancing rules and requirements for the venue.

Swimmers may be given a disposable mask at check-in to wear until entering the starting area for their race/heat/wave before disposing it in a trash container. Then they may be given another disposable mask when they exit the water to wear as they go back to their personal belongings.

Event timing and race results will be more about the order and the place of finish rather than the actual time. Hosts may choose to use disposable timing chips or a timing App, or wooden single-use popsicle/craft sticks.

While all of this may seem overwhelming, these requirements were actually in place during both of the recent open water events in Nevada. There was a lot of advance planning and many volunteers, officials, and lifeguards at the events to ensure that these races were safe, fair, and were run efficiently. Feedback from the participants and attendees was overwhelmingly positive.

So, depending on how the public health guidelines and local and state requirements change as we move into next year, we now have a preliminary roadmap to follow for a safe and fun return to “live” in-person open water racing. In the meantime, stay safe and stay well!



Pool Competition ARE YOU READY

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

Are you tired of dryland training or swimming on your own. Do you miss competition? The feel of the rough starting block on the bottom of your feet? The sound of the “beep” at the start of each race? Well, let us try to help you with your longing for competition.

USMS Board of Directors approved Phase 1 of a return to sanctioned in-person events starting November 1st. State and local health guidelines, along with facility requirements, supersede all recommendations from USMS. Currently, the suggested limit is 50 swimmers maximum 100-mile radius.

Besides the usual process to sanction an event, there are new safety guidelines required, including, but not limited to, Safety/Protocol plan, participant screening forms, temperature checks, and masks while not competing.

The Meet Operations Committee is open to working with any club or facility wishing to host a meet.

Please contact ViceChair@SPMasterSwim.org if you would like any more information.



USMS 2020 ANNUAL CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

Submitted by Diana Dolan LaMar SPMS Secretary

Although the annual USMS Convention was not as much fun this year due to travel restrictions, more than 300 USMS voting and non-voting members participated in a variety of virtual meetings prior to the three days of House of Delegates (HOD) meetings. HOD meetings were held over three days from September 25-27, included 284 voting delegates representing various LMSCs.

SPMS was well represented with 21 voting delegates and was presented with various awards as described by Becky Cleavenger on page 4 of this newsletter. Congratulations to these well-deserving SPMS volunteers. Their time and energy is what helps SPMS to be the *best*. A special congratulations to Jill Gellatly, our own SPMS Conejo Valley Masters swimmer, who was re-elected as a Board Representative.

Please note that if you have some pressing issues and/or concerns you should reach out to Jill at

Jill.gellatly@gmail.com

As expected, the HOD meetings held some entertaining, thought-provoking, arduous, and time-consuming conversations. While several of the voting issues were “house-keeping issues pertaining to grammar, minor changes, etc.,” some of the highlights were:

- The adoption of the USMS Unified Fee. Beginning with this year’s USMS registration that starts on November 1, 2020, all USMS swimmers will register with a \$60 fee. This is a change from the past when LMSCs could charge additional fees along with the USMS fee of \$45. SPMS members will see no change since SPMS was an early adopter of the unified fee in 2020.
- In a lively debate, it was voted that previous USMS Presidents will no longer sit on the USMS Board of Directors. While they were previously non-voting members, extra time was taken up at Board meetings to listen to their input, as well as expenses incurred for travel costs to Board meetings and conventions.
- In another close vote, once again, the change from a 60-day transfer window to a 35-day transfer window was defeated. At the 2019 USMS Convention there was a motion to move from a 60-day transfer window to a 30-day transfer waiting period. Although it was soundly defeated, it was brought forward again from New England Masters with the thought that a 35-day waiting period could sway the vote.

Hopefully next year we will be able to meet in person in Atlanta, Georgia.



2020 USMS Awards

*Submitted by Becky Cleavenger | SPMS Member at Large
(MemberAtLarge@SPMasterSwim.org)*

U.S. Masters Swimming held its 2020 annual meeting virtually last month. In addition to committee meetings and rules and legislation reviews, USMS held at-large director elections and honored many of its deserving volunteers with service awards.

Jill Gellatly (Conejo Valley Masters) was re-elected as Southwest Zone at-large director, a position she was appointed to in 2019. In her role as at-large director, Jill represents our zone on the USMS Board of Directors.

The U.S. Masters Swimming June Krauser Communications Award is presented annually to an individual or group whose communications efforts have contributed to the growth, improvement, or success of U.S. Masters Swimming.

The award is named for June Krauser, the author of USMS's first official rule book and a prolific writer and editor of many

newsletters and other publications in the Masters swimming world. This year's award recipient is Jorge Ferrero, editor and designer of the SPMS newsletter.

The U.S. Masters Swimming Coaches Committee recognizes coaches who are building our membership in communities throughout the country. The U.S. Masters Swimming Kerry O'Brien Coaches Award is named to honor Coach Kerry O'Brien of Walnut Creek Masters, who embodies the passion, dedication, and heart that these coaches bring to the pool deck. Among this year's eight recipients is SPMS Coach Christine Maki (Competitive Tri-Swim Masters).

U.S. Masters Swimming honors volunteers whose service stands out in scope and impact with the U.S. Masters Swimming Dorothy Donnelly Service Award. Recipients of this award have made significant contributions on the local, regional, and national level. The award is named after Dorothy Donnelly, one of USMS's first super-volunteers. This year, two of the 14 awards were awarded to SPMS members Arlette Godges (Sports Medicine Chair) and Becky Cleavenger (Member at Large and Awards Chair).





UCLA Masters Swimmer ANDREA GHEZ WINS NOBEL PRIZE IN PHYSICS

Submitted by Becky Cleavenger | SPMS Member at Large
(MemberAtLarge@SPMasterSwim.org)

UCLA professor and Masters swimmer Andrea Ghez was announced in October as a recipient of the 2020 Nobel Prize in physics.

Nobel award winners, known as Nobel laureates, receive a gold medal, a diploma, and prize money that is decided annually. For 2020, each full laureate (some awards are shared) receives 10 million Swedish kronor, which converts to about \$1.1 million US dollars.

Ghez shares half of the 2020 Nobel prize with her colleague Reinhard Genzel of UC Berkeley and the Max Planck Institute for Extraterrestrial Physics.

The pair were honored for their work in the discovery of a “supermassive compact object at the centre of our galaxy,” likely a black hole. The other half of the award went to Roger Penrose of the University of Oxford “for the discovery that black hole formation is a robust prediction of the general theory of relativity.”

Ghez is only the fourth woman to win the Nobel Prize in physics. The other women were Marie Curie in 1903, Maria Goeppert Mayer in 1963, and Donna Strickland in 2018.

Ghez balances her scientific pursuits with a healthy dose of athleticism as a member of UCLA Masters Swimming. She swims there with Coach Erika Stebbins, who was recently selected to be inducted into the University of Texas Athletics Hall of Honor. Stebbins is a two-time Olympian, a NCAA individual champion and nine-time All-American who guided UT to NCAA team titles in 1990 and 1991.

Ghez was one of the first members of the team when it formed in 1995, when she joined along with her husband. The pair met as graduate students when they both joined the Masters team at MIT.

From the October 6 SwimSwam article by Braden Keith:

“It’s been really fun to see the team grow into this enormous endeavor at UCLA,” said Ghez, who says this team and its members are an important part of her life. “I have to say it’s one of the wonderful things that allows campus to connect with itself in interesting and unusual ways in the sense that I get to meet not only other faculty, but also students and staff and people in the community. It’s a very leveling activity because you’re all in the pool. There’s no hierarchy, with the exception of how fast you are. In terms of what you do for the university, that’s erased.”

Ghez says that swimming helps her look at the super-massive questions that her work tries to answer from a different perspective.

“Often you can solve problems when you’re not looking at them directly, so I often find that I can work things out in the pool. It’s almost like my form of meditating.”



For the Love OF SWIMMING

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

I struggled focusing on this article. It is our last newsletter of the year that has changed every thing. We started out in January looking at a swimming year filled with excitement. The plan was to start the decade with celebrating 50 years of USMS in San Antonio, followed by Pan American UANA Championships in Medellin, Columbia and LC Nationals in historic Richmond. The gravy was the Olympics to inspire the inner swimmer in all of us! The year shaped up very differently and challenged us in many ways, including being Fish on Land.

This year has taught us that we love swimming and in that spirit I want to remind everyone to have fun, stay fit, support each other and relish all we love about being a swim community. In the pool or in open water, supporting our pod and encouraging each other to just keep swimming is so important.

Talking to our members, I have learned that swimming has been an anchor to many for mental health, fitness, friendship, and a sense of purpose and normalcy in the monotony of these past weeks and months.

We adapted as a group, we pivoted and we committed to stay healthy, fit learned new ways, and we maintained mental health. Take a moment and reflect why you swim. Yes, we love competition (some of us), we love being able to have cocktails with friends and eat dessert, but, in the end we do it for much more than immediate gratification. Some may say we are addicted, well, maybe we are; addicted to health, happiness and a community that screams support. Let that sink in.

So, while we look forward to some more normal times around the deck in the (hopefully) near future and more normal schedules of competition and events, let's remember all those are code for: "I get to see my friends", "I get to be so impressed what people can do", "traveling with best buds and learning from friends about things you know nothing about (oh, come hang out with us)", "I get to have a passion so I can be a better person at home". While we wait for this, we can: stretch, foam roll, run/walk, spin, ride a bike, walk stairs, do squats, do core work and get in the pool as much as we can; it's OK if it's only 1-2 x per week, 3 is amazing and 4 is major bonus. While we wait, stay in touch on social media, reach out with questions and with encouragement. While we wait, let's Zoom or get together socially distanced and safe. We are family; swim family.

I know, maybe you did not expect this from your Sports Med Chair. What falls into my wheel house is mental health and grit; those are building blocks of athletes. We are all athletes, we are lucky to have each other, the pods that have formed in pools and open water are simply amazing! You all *rock*, we will make it and we will be stronger and more powerful as a group and as individuals. You all know where to find me for details on stretches, foam rolling, strengthening, injury prevention and help with aches and pains! I look forward to keeping USms moving!

Swimmingly into 2021.



2020 SmartyPants Vitamins USMS FALL FITNESS CHALLENGE

Submitted by Anita Cole | Marketing Committee Chair | (Marketing@SPMasterSwim.org)

Finish the year strong by tackling this 1-mile swim challenge

Is your Turkey Trot canceled this year? Try the Fall Fitness Challenge, a 1-mile swim that takes place from November 15 -30, which is the third event in the **SmartyPants Vitamins USMS Fitness Series**.

Whether you're just getting into swimming, starting back into it after a COVID-forced break from the pool, pushing to see how fast you can go, or just wanting to donate to the **USMS COVID-19 Relief Program for clubs**, the Fall Fitness Challenge is the perfect event for you to finish the year strong. The Fall Fitness Challenge can be done in any manner desired: straight through, as a member of a relay, or even with fins.

If you need help preparing for this swim, we have **six-week training plans** for all types of swimmers.

Swimmers who cannot swim safely are encouraged to participate with a 30-minute dryland workout. Visit our COVID-19 resource page for more information, articles, and workout suggestions.

New for USMS members in 2020!

We partnered with Swim.com so that you can input your results on their app to benchmark your time for the future, compare against other swimmers, and join in on the social fun. Swimmers can upload swims or workouts using a compatible device (Garmin, Apple Watch, etc.), or they can be manually uploaded, so don't worry if you don't have a smartwatch!

Here is how it works:

1. **Link your My USMS account and Swim.com account** (this is required as the challenge is a USMS member benefit)
2. Find and join the challenge on the Swim.com app (**here is how**)
 - If you are on your phone, click these links to go right to them:
1,650-Yard Swim | 1,500-Meter Swim | 30-Minute Workout
3. Complete your swim or workout
4. Log it on the Swim.com app
5. Bask in the glory of your accomplishment, receive your badge on Swim.com, and maybe see where you rank against others :)

[Click here for more information](#)



She Would Swim 100 Miles... AN ALTS GRADUATE COMPLETES A MAJOR MILESTONE

Submitted by Kris McPeak

I recently learned that one of my teammates at SilverPeak Performance just completed a 100 Mile Challenge that came out of Active.com. Her name is Pat Luangeaktrakul and she was an ALTS student of ours before officially joining our team. She has competed in several meets since June 2019 including SPMS SCM Championships in 2019. I am proud that Pat and I (along with two other amazing SPP women) just received our first USMS Top Ten designation for a relay during the abbreviated Short Course Yards season this year. This is a true testament to the benefit of ALTS and the Swimming Saves Lives Foundation.

In her story, Pat said, "My first swim meet was UCLA Long Course, during which I signed up for the 50 meter freestyle. I was very nervous, but Coach Charles said, 'just go do your best, and most importantly, have fun.' I did and received a 2nd Place finish. That encouraged me down this path and in 8 months, I completed five USMS swim meets, and three sprint triathlons... working my way up from swimming in the pool, lake, and then the ocean increasing distances at each race. Now I am able to swim 2000 meters in open water in an hour."

You can read more about Pat's accomplishment [HERE](#) (link below). The attached photo was from the Rose Bowl SCY meet earlier this year.

<https://www.facebook.com/100MileSwimChallenge/photos/a.121150459426720/213763873498711/>

UPCOMING SPMS EVENTS



Thursday, November 19th
SPMS Annual Meeting Conference Call 6:30PM

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