

MACA Annual Awards

Nominate Your Favorite Coach and Web Site



It is time to review the prospective candidates for MACA's annual awards. These awards will be presented at the 2000 United States Aquatic Sports Convention in Orlando.

The **MACA News Top Ten** website awards were inaugurated last year, with the idea of recognizing many of the outstanding webmasters who create and maintain websites containing information about Masters swimming. The MACA News Web Awards recognize local and regional web communication projects. Not only does the recognition serve to inspire prospective webmasters, it also serves as a resource for others who wish to improve existing sites. Aside from the United States Masters Swimming Newsletter of the Year Award, there is no other recognition for communications sponsored by any swimming organization in the United States.

If you are coordinating a web project, or know of an outstanding Masters website, please contact the MACA News with the URL of the web site. Your site could make the 2000 MACA News Top Ten.



MACA is currently accepting nominations for the prestigious **MACA Lifetime Achievement Award**. The award honors exceptional dedication and service as a Masters coach.

Nomination criteria:

- 1) Recipients must have a minimum service of ten years in the Masters coaching field.
- 2) The nomination letter must be submitted by a member of MACA. For MACA membership inquiries, contact Emmett Hines (information on page 2). Additionally, a maximum of two letters of support may be submitted by anyone with the nomination letter. Each letter is limited to one typed page.
- 3) A maximum of one award shall be presented per year. However, it shall not be necessary to present an award every year.
- 4) All nominations must be received by September 15th. Please submit nomination materials by regular mail to Ed Nessel (information on page 2).
- 5) The selection of the award recipient will be made by a five-member MACA subcommittee appointed by the current MACA president, who may be a member of the committee. Coaches who are nominated for the award may not serve on the committee.

MACA Website in the Works

The MACA News is pleased to announce that MACA is preparing to publish a website. This website will contain information about Masters coaching, including certification and articles, Masters coaching links, an archive of MACA Newsletters, and how to join MACA. The site is being developed by MACA News Editor Bill Volckening, and will be published before the October USAS Convention in Orlando. If you are interested in contributing to this project, please contact Bill (information on page 2).



Certification Committee Update

Greetings! I want to thank each of you who has expressed feedback into MACA's efforts to review and revise the Masters coaches certification program. In particular, I would like to thank Carol MacPherson, Ed Nessel, Lucky Meisenheimer, Brian Stack, and Bill Volckening for their willingness to be on the committee that is conducting the review.

When we meet in October at the Orlando USMS convention, we hope to present you with a report on our progress, and probably some ideas that will surely generate some lively discussion. We have learned many new and exciting things about coaching Masters swimmers, through our experience and through science, since the original certification process was instituted years ago. We need to define those things that allow coaches to most effectively and safely instruct Masters swimmers, and to adapt those definitions as the number of Masters swimmers and coaches continues to grow. We also need to encourage coaches to learn these lessons and become certified. These are our committee's primary goals.

Lucky mentioned that we might, and I say might, develop a coaching certification independent of ASCA as a result of this process. At this point, I would characterize such a move as an "alternative" from among many possible avenues. It will be up to you who are participating in the review process to decide which avenue to take.

I will, however, interject a thought of mine on Masters coaching certification and ASCA's participation in it. As Lucky clearly points out, the Masters certification program that ASCA currently has in place is completely a result of the work of Masters swim coaches. It was Masters coaches who saw the need to have a certification program that would be on par with other swim coaches. ASCA, as Lucky mentioned, was not about to do that on its own.

That is still true today. ASCA is not equipped to update the current certification process on its own. It must have the guidance of Masters coaches to do this. ASCA certainly has the administrative role in administering the current program: It handles the applications, mails out the courses, maintains the files, collects the money, and issues the certifications. MACA does everything else for ASCA: Writing and teaching the Masters School course, and developing the certification process (as Lucky mentioned).

All of us seem to agree that Masters coaches are the best people to decide what a certified Masters swim coach should be. Because ASCA's role in the certification process is strictly administrative in nature, I would add that Masters coaches, and MACA, are the ONLY people with the knowledge to do this. That is why I am hoping that each of our members would choose to make an input into defining our profession

and our profession's future. It is because only our collective knowledge will help produce a program that will improve your coaching skills and performance, and will best serve the growing number of Masters swimmers in the coming years.

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Certification Committee kickoff... comments from Lucky

I am in agreement that the coaches certification for Masters should be reviewed. There has not been a review of the process since its initial implementation several years ago. It would be a good idea to review the process every 2-3 years.

I would like to clear up any misinformation about the certification process by reviewing its history. As you may or may not remember, the entire process of the American Swimming Coaches Association (ASCA) developing levels of certification was not without considerable debate. At the

time of the implementation of the ASCA certification process, Masters was essentially left out of the picture and was only put in as an afterthought. Masters coaching did not fit the criteria for current levels of certification for general swimming. Masters coaches were delegated a level I and Level II certification only. Essentially Level I coaches were new masters coaches with little experience and level II coaches had experience but one hat had to fit all.

Masters coaches were very disgruntled with this certification because it was not recognized by hiring organizations that a USS Level II certification was not equivalent to Level II Masters certification. Masters coaches approached ASCA and asked for a change in the Masters certification to reflect a similar level of certification as the general coaching population. ASCA was very supportive and asked MACA to set up a committee to develop a certification process for Masters.

I was asked to chair this committee and we had several top Masters coaches serve on the committee. I may have left out some names but from my recollection the committee was: Judy Bonning, Emmett Hines, Bill Tingley, Michael Collins and myself. Four of the five committee members have received USMS coach of the year honors in the past. ASCA did not develop masters certification this MACA committee did. This was presented to ASCA and they essentially adopted our recommendations pretty much unchanged. This certification process has been in place for several years and currently a total of 92 coaches have received Masters Coaches Certification through ASCA. Of these certified coaches 52 have dual certification with Masters and some other organization: NCAA, USS, YMCA etc.

In reflection I believe it would be mistake for MACA to develop and administer a new independent Masters coaching certification. ASCA is impartial when reviewing applications and they provide the manpower and cover the expense. They are also very willing to work with MACA on any changes to the process. We already have a large number of Masters coaches certified through ASCA and many have dual certification.

Finally, I doubt that the American Swimming Coaches Association will stop certifying Masters coaches just because MACA decides to start its own certification process. I believe it is important to work with ASCA. I contacted John Leonard at ASCA to ask if there had been any problems or issues in the last few years with the Masters certification, he states that there have not been. I have always been impressed how willing ASCA was to work with us on the certification process. I am sure if we need to make changes to our process they will be of help to us.

I would appreciate any comments that you might have and I'll be happy to provide any help or assistance in reviewing the current certification process.

Sincerely,
Lucky J. Meisenheimer, M.D.
President, Team Orlando Masters Swimming



Outstanding Masters Coaching Opportunity

The YMCA Aquatic Center in Orlando Florida and Team Orlando Masters, Inc is conducting a search for a full time Masters Swimming Coach. The Coach will serve as the head coach of Team Orlando Masters, Inc and be in charge of adult swimming programs at the YMCA Aquatic Center, which will serve as feeder programs into the master's competitive team.

We are looking for a dynamic coach that understands not only the competitive and fitness aspects of Masters but also the importance of a strong social component. A highly desirable quality would be a coach that can demonstrate a past history of program development. A history of computer experience, web site development, newsletter production, Level 4 or 5 Masters Coaches certification, published articles in swimming magazines, demonstration of continuing education through coaches clinics, would be advantageous but not absolute requirements.

Benefits

Compensation (A dynamic coach should be able to make \$50,000.00 + per year with no upper limit on income) ***Florida has no State Income Tax****

The coach will be employed by the YMCA Aquatic center and receive additional coaching fees through Team Orlando Masters, Inc. Base salary of \$20,000 per year through YMCA Aquatic Center, plus: additional monthly coaching fee per registered YMCA Aquatic Center masters swimmer of \$15-20 a month (fee depends on the amount of administrative work that is done by the coach); Team Orlando Masters will **guarantee a minimum** of \$750.00 per month in coaching fees for the first four months; additional income opportunities available through meets, open water swims and clinics.



Additional Benefits - Pension through the YMCA after one year of employment. 12% of base salary, fully vested after 5 years. Health Insurance provided; United Healthcare Dental Insurance provided; Life Insurance provided 1 1/2 X salary; Disability Insurance provided Short and Long term 60% of salary; Annual Pay increases of base salary 4 to 6% per year; Credit Union.

Paid Holidays 10; Paid Vacation 1 week first year, 2 weeks 2-5 years, 3 weeks after 5 years

The YMCA Aquatic Center is the largest indoor swimming facility in Florida and has been the host site of multiple national and international competitions (www.YMCAAQUATICCENTER.COM) The facility includes a 50m X 25 yd competition pool. A 25m X 25yd diving well and a 25 yard teaching pool, 5000+ sq feet health club, physical therapy center, racquetball courts, aerobic rooms. The masters coach will be in charge of the masters swim team and adult swim programming at the YMCA aquatic center. Duties will be tailored to fit the qualifications and skills of the coach. The executive director of the center is a swimming coach and very pro masters. The center currently has approximately 1700 family memberships. Team Orlando Masters typically registers between 120 and 200 members per year approximately 50-100 of those are active members at the YMCA Aquatic Center. The masters coach will have his own office with computer, phone and photocopy machine.

Team Orlando Masters, Inc has been in existence since 1988 and has produced more than 15 masters national champions and 60+ swimmers with top ten rankings. Only part time coaches and volunteers to this date have coached the team. We are ready to move to the next level. Unlimited growth opportunity

Send CVs to Coach John Vasbinder, Executive Director YMCA Aquatic Center, YMCA Aquatic Center, 8422 International Drive, Orlando, FL 32819; Or you can email CVs to Lucky Meisenheimer, President of Team Orlando Masters, Inc. LuckyJ@MSN.COM

How to Drive a Meet Director Crazy

By Meg Smath

Does it seem to you that meet directors are the grouchiest people on the planet? Or maybe you don't think they're grouchy-you just think they're space cadets! You may be surprised to learn that you may be responsible for making them that way! Most swimmers have no idea how complicated organizing a swim meet is-they think it just sort of happens. There's a lot more to it than just picking a date and asking people to come. Sometimes just picking the date is an ordeal in itself. Here are some guaranteed ways to drive a meet director crazy.

1. Mail your entry form two or three days after the deadline.

Why is this a problem? It should still get there before the meet. Well ... maybe, maybe not. You just never know about the mail. I've received entries that were mailed a week and a half before the deadline, but didn't arrive until several days AFTER the meet was over! Most of the meets in our LMSC (Kentucky) set a deadline of the Monday before the meet. This may seem like too far in advance to you, but it isn't. In order to plan a meet properly, a meet director needs to know well in advance who's coming and what they're swimming. Many swimmers say they wait till the last minute to enter because they're not sure they can come. I can't speak for all meet directors, but I can tell you I'd rather you go ahead and enter, and if you find out at the last minute that you can't make it, let me know and I'll refund your entry fee. It's much easier to delete you from the meet at the last minute than it is to add you.

2. Just swim in any old lane or heat.

Why is this a problem? It's a problem because the computer thinks you're someone else. If no one notices you swimming in the wrong lane or heat, then you don't get credit for your swim and someone else does. Often swimmers swim in a later heat because they've missed the heat they were supposed to be in. That's OK; I've done that myself. But you need to clear it with the referee first. The referee will then tell the computer operator who you are and what lane you'll be swimming in. Of course, sometimes swimmers don't even realize they're in the wrong lane or heat (I confess that I swam in lane 7 instead of lane 2 at the last mini-meet). This can be avoided if the timer verifies the swimmer's identity before each race. But this doesn't always happen, of course. Mark Rogers, meet director for the

Barbara Stevens Memorial Meet held every January in Bowling Green, suggests that swimmers take it upon themselves to identify themselves to their timers just before they step up on the blocks.

3. Argue the rules with the officials.

Why is this a problem? *"I know what I'm talking about."* No, you probably don't. Trust me, the officials have been through a rigorous certification program, and they know what the rules are. As Bill Tingley, meet director for the Lakeside Invitational, says, "In Kentucky, our meet directors work hard with our officials to be sure they are aware of the differences between our rules and those of other organizations. Swimmers should feel secure that a KY-LMSC sanctioned meet is officiated fairly and according to ALL USMS rules.... Most good referees will listen to an argument based on the rules; however, an argument based on opinion is a lost cause." There IS a rule book.

It's available online at www.usms.org, and you can order a copy from the national office. Remember, it's the swimmer's responsibility to know and follow the rules.

4. Take your time getting out of the pool after you've swum your leg of a relay.

Why is this a problem? I'm out before the next exchange. It's because you mess up the automatic timing. The timing system expects the touch pad to be touched four times, once for each swimmer. It will stop after the fourth touch. As Mark Rogers explains, "After each swimmer's touch, the pad stays dead for about 15 seconds (which is really a very long time) to allow the swimmer to get out. Then the pad reactivates to pick up the next swimmer's touch. If the first swimmer is still on the pad

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USMS Mentor Coach and Swimming Clinics: Atlanta, GA

By Marty Hamburger
Head Coach, Dynamo Masters

On Saturday, April 8, the Dynamo Swim Center in Atlanta, GA, was the site of a USMS Mentor Coach and Swimming Clinic.

Coaches' Clinic

Nine coaches attended the clinic with featured speaker Coach Emmett Hines of H2Ouston Swims. The first thing Emmett did was to go around the room and find out why we were all there. He quickly assessed that everyone was in the sport for the right reason. Translation: no one was in it for the money! Emmett quickly added that despite that fact, there wasn't any reason we couldn't make a living as professional swimming coaches.

Emmett showed that, by his estimation, there were five million swimmers, between the ages of 20-60, with some kind of competitive experience living in the United States. That equaled almost 1700 swimmers apiece for each of the total of 3000 "entrepreneurial" coaches working in the U.S. He pointed out that, borrowing the words of General Norman Schwarzkopf, we were living in a "target rich environment."

Emmett used himself as an example, saying that he began coaching with the attitude that "I don't believe the world owes me a living, but it certainly owes me an apology." The turning point for his career and his ability to make a viable living, was when he started thinking of coaching as a business.

He went on to point out that each of us had a commodity valued by the adult swimming community: knowledge. And just as with other professionals there were people willing to pay us for sharing that knowledge.

Emmett outlined his programs for one-on-one and group video lessons. With a minimal investment into some quality equipment (Snooper underwater camera, portable 8mm video recorder, etc.) he could charge a premium price for a premium service. By giving quality in-water instruction, extensive video feedback and consistent follow-up, he had built a prestigious program with a constantly growing waiting list. With the outlining of his program it was very easy for all of us to envision like-programs of our own.

Swimming Clinic

After a brief break for lunch, about 35 swimmers gathered for Emmett's presentation, "Well-balanced for Success."

Emmett challenged the gathering to come up with the definition of balance. After some prompting, they came up with "body mass properly distributed over a support base." He demonstrated that the same forces acting on a person standing up were present in the water.

Emmett emphasized that the pursuit of balance while swimming freestyle and backstroke should be in the interest of avoiding, not overcoming, resistance. He created "dire consequences" for not being well-balanced. The first was in the possibility of expending more energy to go the same speed/distance and the second was in vanity ("you don't want to be that guy!").

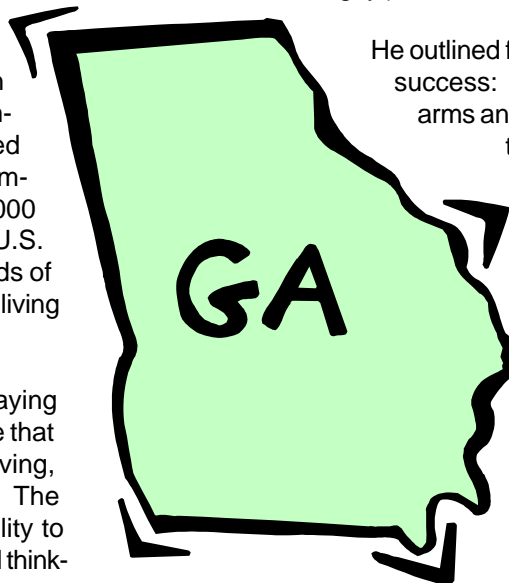
He outlined four primary elements in achieving balance success: head position, buoy pressure, weightless arms and minimal kicking. By being aware of maintaining a consistent waterline on the head and arms and constantly generating "patches and cheeks" as the hips rolled and stayed near the water's surface, swimmers were able perform self-checks.

After the verbal explanation of techniques and drills, the swimmers watched some video tape of other swimmers in both balanced and unbalanced positions. The group then headed out to the pool where Emmett and the other coaches worked them through several drills and some basic slow swimming. Each swimmer was video taped underwater

and when the group returned to the classroom, Emmett evaluated their performance. The formal session ended with a "Self-Graded Quiz" of 15 questions concerning long-axis balance.

Coach Hines was then gracious enough to spend more time with the athletes in an informal session in which he invited any and all questions about swimming technique and training.

The clinics were ruled an absolute success by everyone attending: Emmett challenged the coaches not to settle for "just getting by" on minimal salaries; we are a valuable resource and need to be compensated as such. He also challenged the swimmers to rethink their body position and their approach to swimming faster. In fact, the approach to "balanced swimming" is still generating a buzz on the pool decks of Georgia!



How to Drive a Meet Director Crazy

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when it reactivates, it looks to the computer as if the next swimmer has come in already. Plus, the pad goes dead again, so it will likely fail to respond when the next swimmer really does come in. So the computer is ahead of the swimmers by one leg, the splits are all screwed up, and it is up to the timing operator to see it and make the correction.” Mark goes on to say that Masters swimmers really aren’t too bad about this, at least not compared to high-school girls, who he says are the worst. Here’s a typical scenario: “After finishing her swim in lane 6, Heather takes a couple of seconds to check the scoreboard for her time (OK, no problem there). Another couple of seconds to catch her breath. At this point she pauses to joke with one of her buddies on the deck. Three more seconds. Then she takes off her cap, shakes her hair down, dips down into the water to wet her hair and sweep it back off of her face, gives it a shake, and stands up again. Four or five more seconds-still no sense of urgency about getting out of the pool. Finally she moves to the wall, tests it to see if she can hoist herself out frontwards. No luck-another second gone. So, at long last, she turns around and gets out backwards in two stages-sitting first on the pad, then hoisting up to the edge of the pool. Finished, right? No! She remains on the pool edge, feet on the pad, while she squeezes the water out of her hair. Meanwhile, the timing operator is gesturing madly-GET OFF THE PAD!-but no one sees or hears. Finally, Heather stands and moves off. The timing operator, a nervous wreck by now, has been so preoccupied by this process that he has completely lost track of the other five lanes. A U-boat could have surfaced in lane 1 and he would have missed it. (I hope this doesn’t sound sexist. I love high-school girls. Really.)” All kidding aside, you will make meet directors very happy if you’ll just get out of the pool as quickly as possible after your leg. If you can’t get out that quickly, then don’t. USMS rules allow you to stay in the lane after your leg if you can’t get out. Just move to the side of the lane and hold on to the lane line. Then when the race is over you can swim to the ladder to get out. Make sure all relay teams are finished with the race before you swim across other lanes, though. You will be disqualified if you interfere with another swimmer.

5. Dive into the warmup pool.

Why is this a problem? I was being careful. Yeah, sure you were. And you also always buckle your seatbelt and look both ways before crossing the street! Bill says, “Former college and competitive swimmers have a tendency to dive into the pool during warmup without thinking. USMS rules forbid this kind of entry. The only allowed entry, except in sprint lanes, is FEET FIRST IN A CAUTIOUS MANNER.” Please pay attention to “IN A CAUTIOUS MANNER,” too. This does not mean you can do cannonballs or try to reach the flags when you jump in. Remember, a lot of people are sharing the warmup pool with you, and safe is much better than sorry. And while we’re on the subject of safe warmup procedure, please remember to CIRCLE

swim in the warmup lanes. Don’t swim right down the middle or up and down the same side. You never know when several people may get in the lane with you. If everyone always circle swims, we should not have any collisions.

6. Don’t bother to read the meet information.

Why is this a problem? I’m a busy person! I don’t have time to read all that meet information. Bill Tingley acknowledges that this is a problem at all levels of swimming, not just Masters swimming. He says, “I cannot count how many times I have been asked, ‘What time is warmup,’ ‘When is the heat sheet posted,’ ‘can I deck enter this event,’ ‘Why can’t I enter more than five events a day’. Such questions are answered in the meet information. All you have to do is read!”

7. Strike up a conversation with a timer, computer operator, or meet official in the middle of the meet.

Why is this a problem? I’m just being friendly. And we WANT you to be friendly, we really do! But remember, all these meet workers have jobs to do, so just try not to strike up a conversation when they’re obviously busy. Swimmers should not be talking to the computer and timing operators AT ALL, though. Don’t ask them for your splits for the 1650 while they’re busy running subsequent events. The meet results will have your splits-just be patient. If you need to tell the computer or timing operator something, tell the meet director or referee, who will relay the message at an opportune time.

8. Wait until the last minute to renew your USMS membership.

Why is this a problem? I didn’t need to renew until I was ready to compete. Mark explains: “You know you have to be USMS-enrolled in order to swim in the meet, so the Monday before the meet you mail your meet entry to the meet director, and at the same time you send your \$22 off to your LMSC Registrar for your USMS registration. Result: the Registrar and the meet director have to go back and forth by e-mail or long-distance phone to make sure it’s all there. It’s a big time-waster. Here’s the better way: If it’s three weeks or less before the meet, DON’T send your USMS form to the Registrar; enclose it with your meet entry instead (use two separate checks-one made out for the meet, the other to the LMSC). That way, the meet director has everything in one place. Afterward, the meet director will forward your form and check to the Registrar.”

We don’t mean to sound crabby. But meets would run a lot more smoothly, and meet directors would also be a lot more cheerful, if you would try NOT to imitate the behavior outlined in this article!

Meg Smath is Chair of the USMS Rule Book Committee and Meet Director of the Wildcat Invitational in Kentucky. This article was written with contributions from Mark Rogers and Bill Tingley.



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INSIDE: Great Resources for Masters Coaches

MACA ANNUAL MEETING:

The Annual Meeting of the Masters Aquatic Coaches Association will be held during the USAS Convention in Orlando.....