

July 2002 COMSA Newsletter

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Women Take 1st in Hawaii

By Marcia Anziano

A team of 65 Rocky Mountain Masters swimmers came home from Hawaii with 2nd place overall in the large team division. Led by four (4) National Records and thirty (30) National Championship swims, the men finished second while the women captured 1st place. Individual National Records were set by Paul Smith, 40-45 200 Free, 1:43.05 and 100 Free, 46.90; and Richard Abrahams, 55-59 50 Fly, 24.59. The Women's 35+ 200 Medley Relay, consisting of Collette Sappey, Sarah Lee, Julia Von Evig and Kathy Garnier, set a new record of 1:53.58.

The women began the first day with Heather Hagadorn swimming to a National Championship in the 1650 free, while the men's team saw National Championship swims from John Hughes (1000 free), Carl Selles (1650 free) and Paul McCormick (1000 free). Other swimmers seeing their best performances on this distance day were Patrick Kelly, Bruno Weber, Kimberly Geil, Teri Moen, Nicole Vanderpoel, Jennifer Shinn, Susan Nolte and Marcia Anziano in the 1650, while in the 1000 free it was Mike Wise, Manu Gahaffari, Cate Reynolds, Margie Yoder, Carolyn Roche, Trudy Klatt and Francis Holmes. Over the next three days of the meet, the RMM men swam for several National Championships with Mike Gonzales, the 50 back; Paul Smith, the 200/500 free and 100/200 IM; Richard Hess, the 100 IM; John Hughes, the 500 free; Lee McDonald, the 100/200 breast and 100 IM; Rich Abrahams, the 50/100 free and 50/100 fly; Paul McCormick the 500 free; Bob Patten, the 100/200 breast and Dennis O'Brien, the 100/200 fly and 400 IM. However, it was a team effort that allowed the men to achieve 2nd place. Contributing to that effort with finishes in the top three of other events were Aaron McCormick, 3rd in 100 IM; Robert-Paul Smit, 2nd in 50 free and 50 fly; Norman Paxton, 2nd 50 free; William Abbott, 3rd in 100 fly; and Bill Griffith, 3rd in 100/200 breast. Rounding out the team were Timothy Heiman, George Miller, Thomas Gould, Roger Knight, James Jordan, Marshall Lee, Luis Vargas, Tom McElhinney, Chris Nolte, Arnie Dowd, Bing Reynolds and Mark Plummer. All of these swimmers contributed with great swims and scored many points for the team. Complete results can be found on the USMS National web site. Sarah Lee swam to 2 National Championships in the 50 and 100 Breast events, while the 50 free saw an exciting tie for 2nd place between Julia Von Evig and Kathy Garnier. Again it was a team effort and top three
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Who Won?

By Steve McDanal

How do you know if you've had a good race? By placing high in the standings, setting a new PR, having a great start and hitting your turns perfect, negative split your race? Just as there are many categories that you can use to judge yourself as an individual, teams can use a multitude of criteria to see how they measure up against other teams.

By now you've had a chance to check your times and the team standings from the state championships in April. The only category in which a team is judged is by total points. However, there are other ways for a team to measure its performance. As they say, 'you can prove anything with enough numbers', so I dug up more numbers.

There were 318 swimmers affiliated with 30 registered teams and 27 unattached swimmers. The number of COMSA swimmers registered on each team was compiled about a week before the meet. Members joining after that would not be counted and others may have dropped off the team but are still carried in the COMSA database. So it's a given that the statistics could be slightly off.

Let's break down the team participation. If you divide the number of registered team members into the number that actually swam in the meet, only 1/3 (10/30) of all teams had more than half of their swimmers compete.

The first table lists the top teams with >50% of registered swimmers in the state meet.

TM	100
IM	87.8
VS	75
DAWG	71.4
AM	70.4
BB	60
GAC	57.1
BAM	56.3
RR	56.3
GG	54.5

As you can see, this ranking has little correlation with the actual team ranking using points. As an example, TM (Thornton) must have a very motivated/competitive team/coach to get everybody to the meet. Note that DU is not listed in the top 10 and BAM is way down on the list. One explanation for this discrepancy is that teams have different make-ups; some teams are fitness oriented, some are highly competitive, and others contain a high percentage of triathletes, and so the meet participation reflects the team's "competitive personality".

How much do the individuals contribute to the team? There are two ways to answer that question. First is to determine
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finishes were turned in by Collette Sappey, 2nd in 50 free; Laura Smith, 2nd in 200 back; Ellen Campbell, 3rd in the 200 breast; Kim Crouch, 2nd in the 100/200 breast; Lydia Young, 3rd in the 400 IM; Louise Wise, 3rd in the 200 breast and Peggy Buchanan, 3rd in the 100 IM. Rounding out the women's team, many contributing points with top ten finishes were Molly Gearke, Amanda Davis, Tracy Heiman, Heather Keaton, Christine Lipson, Jennifer Rocke, Patti Meeks, Lynette Washburn, Cindy Hawkinson, Karen Rosener, Mary Wohl Haan and Cynthica Anderson. The teams could not have placed as high, if it were not for the efforts of many on the relay teams. The same four 35+ women that brought home the National Record in the Medley Relay, also took first place in the 200 Free Relay with a time of 1:39.23. Showing the strength of that age-group, the relay team of Kim Crouch, Ellen Campbell, Jennifer Shinn and Heather Hagadorn took second place in the 200 Free Relay with a time of 1:45.56. The team of Laura Smith, Ellen Campbell, Kim Crouch and Heather Hagadorn took 3rd in the 200 Medley Relay. A 2nd place finish by the 45+ women's 200 Medley Relay team of Mary Wohl Haan, Cynthica Anderson, Karen Rosener and Carolyn Roche contributed even more points to the Women's team 1st place results. The women had 6 additional relay finishes in the top ten, all scoring points toward their win.

The men also saw many points scored by their relay teams. Among the 12 top ten finishes by men's relay teams, first place was achieved by the 55+ 200 Free Relay of Paul McCormick, Arnie Dowd, Carl Selles and Richard Abrahams. Topping off the 13 top ten finishes by Mixed Relay Teams were a 1st place finish of 1:32.67 in the 35+ 200 Free Relay of Paul Smith, Kathy Garnier, Mike Gonzales and Collette Sappey. In the 45+ bracket, a 1st place finish with a time of 1:38.71 in the 200 Free Relay was accomplished by Richard Abrahams, Karen Rosener, Carolyn Roche and Richard Hess.

All of the swimmers contributed to the success of Rocky Mountain Masters. Not all the times and placements can be covered in an article of this size, but check the web site of USMS for details on any of the events.

Next year the Short Course National meet is in Tempe, Arizona. Let's see even more Rocky Mountain Masters get together and attend this meet. With the strength of our swimmers, we can bring back 1st place in all categories! Everyone that attended this year had a great time and encourage others to

join them for this meet next year.

SPECIAL THANKS

A special Thank You to Jane Scott from Boulder for all her efforts at Nationals. Jane spent a great deal of time putting all the relays together.

Thanks so much, Jane, for your efforts. You were a great support in the results that were achieved!

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how many events each person enters. The meet average is 4.2 events per swimmer (it used to be closer to five, but has dropped the last few years). The following table lists teams with members swimming more events than the average.

Events per swimmer	
DUR	7.1
VS	6.3
MM	6
DAC	5.2
AF	5
CSST	5
SC	5
DAWG	4.9
HR	4.8
BB	4.7
BAM	4.5
FCC	4.5
BY	4.5
VOR	4.3
SS	4.3
TM	4.3

As you can see, some swimmers really like to get after it. However, just entering events doesn't get points for the team, so let's get to the nitty-gritty and see where the points come from. The average points-per-swimmer for this meet is 26.6. The next list is those teams with the most 'bang for the buck'.

Points per swimmer	
VS	44.7
DUR	43.4
SC	37.2
VOR	36.2
BAM	33.3
BY	32
HR	31.8
DAWG	31.6
EV	30.4
DAC	29.6
DU	28.6
AM	28.6

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FCC 28.5

MM 28

To go off track for a moment, why is the 'events per swimmer' considered an important factor in the individual's contribution to the team, since this factor doesn't actually produce points. Well, the first answer is—points are not important in this case. Secondly, consider this-- if you knew whom you were swimming against and their times, then you would accordingly adjust your events to maximize your points. The number of events per swimmer could change dramatically. Conversely, in a truly 'blind' meet (in which the competitor has no prior knowledge of his competition), he could assume that the more events that he entered, the greater possibility (not a guarantee) of placing. Hence, the 'events per swimmer' is a pre-competition action designed to produce post-competition results. Then again, it may be only an index of enthusiasm. Your call. Also notice that there are 11 teams common to both lists so there must be a close relationship between the number of events and the number of points per swimmer.

The team categories are split into three groups based primarily on the number of entries. Changing the number of teams in even one group would change the standings of many teams, such as a team dropping from the last place in the medium division to first place in the small division. So, if your team didn't place point-wise in whatever group it was listed in, consider other performance categories.

If you have a lot of free time, you can pursue this even more-- consider a breakdown of male/female categories, age groups or distance per team (is this a sprint team or a distance team?). Remove relay points from the standings (a real bonus for large teams) and re-figure. What is your teams' participation in triathlon events?

The bottom line: Teams excel in different areas, just as individuals do. Find out where your team performs best and use that as standard (or goal) to compete against other teams. Everybody wins!

THE WORLD'S in New Zealand

By Yvonne Wright

"EEEEEE-vone! EEEEEEEEE-vone Wright! EEEEEEEEEEEEE-vone Wright from the Stites, where are you?" the marshal screams.

I finish my conversation and wave my cap, "Over here!"

I saunter over. The marshal rebukes me, "What are you trying to do, psych out your competition?"

"What's the rush? There's ten more heats before mine," I reply.

Shaking his head, he points to a number 8 on a bench and tells me to sit down.

Sitting there on the hard bench amongst 20 more just like it, I feel kinda like Arlo Guthrie on the Group W bench in "Alice's Restaurant."

"Whatcha in fer, kid?"

"Litterin." Oh, you remember.

We move up to the next bench and a lady calls out our names and looks at our badges just to make sure we are really who we say we are. "Where's number 9?" she yells.

"She chickened out!" I reply. This comment is met with gales of laughter from my heat-mates and the stern official. I don't know what is so funny. The way I talk, I guess; a different English language.

Actually, on that second day I had decided that I had better get down to the marshalling area early, because I had nearly missed my first event, the 800 Free, entirely.

There was a huge movie screen set up on the floor above the pool to accommodate more people. So on the first day of the meet, Joe, my sweet husband and best friend, and I are just sitting around up there having a good time--eating crackers, drinking juice, listening to Led Zepp and the Doors on the jukebox, watching the meet begin. I am in heat 10, so I figure it will be about 3 hours before I swim. I watch heat one go by. The cameraman is following a pimple on the nose of the lead swimmer.

I go look at t-shirts and come back. Now they're swimming heat 3. I visit with some Australians for ten minutes. I sit down and drink some juice. I look up at the screen and, "What the!!!! It says heat 6. Is this a mistake?" I run over to information. They know nothing, as usual.

I look closer. The cameraman finally pulls back a bit. "Oh, shit, they're swimming two to a lane! It would have been nice if they had told us this fact. My suit's out in the van a mile away!"

Shift into high gear and start running. Get to the van and don the suit.

Yesterday I popped for the special "Speedo fastskin" with long arms and long legs that takes 45 minutes to put on properly. Getting it on is a warm-up in itself. Putting it on is the only reasonable warm-up anyway, because with 3000 competitors and only a 5-lane 25 yard pool for warm-ups, swimming isn't much of an option. I usually wear a 32 but the couple who sold me the suit said I need a 27. So in a desperate rush, I squeeze into it as best I can, sprint for the QEII and ask an official, who has stepped out front for a smoke, to zip me up.

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(THE WORLDS – cont. from p. 3)

Finally arriving at the pool, I am told I can't get in. "Well how am I supposed to race?" They point to the marshalling area and I hustle over there. It is empty.

An official sees me and yells, "What heat?"

I frantically scream, "ten." She grabs my arm and gets me out there with 3 minutes to spare. "Whew!"

With my adrenaline surging, I swim like there is no tomorrow and lap everybody in my heat. I beat my time from last summer by a minute and a half. Why? The new suit, the adrenaline, the pool, the altitude, but mostly I think it is the rest.

My work as a Rolfer is extremely physically demanding, and I am usually dog-tired at the end of the day. I used to swim nearly every day, as well. For the previous few years, I have existed in a state of perpetual exhaustion. But, after our trip to India, Nepal, and Tibet last April, I started to cut down on my workouts considerably. Three times a week is a lot for me now. I haven't swum for a week before the meet because we were travelling. And before that I really wasn't swimming very often. So now I am in the taper of my life.

For the next three events, I piss the marshal off more and more by showing up later and later. I actually swim a warm-up in the little pool before my last event and show up to marshalling just 3 heats ahead.

Eventually, Easter Sunday, the day I had been dreading, dawns. Joe and I go down to the ocean and watch the sun rise. Then we head out for Lyttlton Harbor, the site of the 3K open-water swim.

They are setting up a bunch of tents. I walk down and feel the water. "Well, it's not frozen solid, anyway." I have not been able to get a straight answer out of anybody about how cold it really is. Just stuff like, "Well, last summer was unusually cold." And now it's fall! I think they're scared to let us know.

I go back up to the parking lot and eat some breakfast. People are starting to arrive so I go down and get numbered. "To identify the body?" I inquire.

"Yes," is the solemn reply.

I'm getting a bad feeling about this.

I come back up and sit in the warm van. After a while I hear somebody yelling into the loudspeaker. "Stay to the right of the buoys. Raise your hand high if you need assistance. You will have a 30-minute warning and a 15-minute warning before the race. Then you will have a 2 minute and 1 minute warning before each heat."

I laugh deliriously at the use of the term "warning."

The truth is, they are really warning us not to go in because the water is so fricking freezing. After all, we are awfully close to Antarctica.

I warm-up by putting on my suit, 3 caps, and earplugs.

I ask Joe to have two cups of tea and rice porridge

waiting for me when I get back. Then we make our way back down to the beach. I give him my wedding ring, so that I don't lose it when my fingers shrink in the cold. I question my sanity.

Heat one takes off, going way to the left of the buoy.

All are subsequently disqualified.

Heat 2 takes off, half to the left, half to the right. Heat 3 totally scatters in any direction.

I'm getting a bad feeling about this race.

After heat 6 takes off, I kiss Joe good-bye and wander in with the rest of the turquoise caps. Now I know how cold the water is. As in absurd! I guess it's about 50 degrees. Some people have turned around and are wisely throwing in the towel.

At last, my heat receives the last of our warnings and the gun goes off. As I dive in my head aches like a toothache all over for a few minutes until my brain drops into a state of numbness. I get kicked in the face and breaststroke a bit. Ah, finally I have some swimming space to myself. I may be freezing to death, but at least I have my space.

"OK, where are we going? I don't see any buoy."

So I just follow behind. I think, "Be the Buddha. Take the middle way."

Sure enough the strategy works and I see the buoy looming ahead and I get to the right of it. After cornering, again I see no buoy and just follow people in some general direction for the second third of the race.

I pray a lot and think about the porridge. I kick harder.

After zigzagging around I finally see the second buoy and round the corner while being smacked by another swimming fool.

Now I have absolutely no idea where I am going. Soon I am very much alone. I breaststroke along trying to get my bearings. I see some green off in the distance. I remember trees on the parking lot so I head that way. My zigzagging gets worse. I see boats heading off behind me to rescue someone. My breaststroking is increasing.

"3K? More like 5K! Why did I choose to come to New Zealand, anyway? I should have chosen nationals in Hawaii instead!"

I cannot seem to get oriented. Finally a guy swims past and I get on his feet. Then he is gone. A kayak pulls up beside me and I vaguely hear him yelling something at me, but I have earplugs in to keep out the cold and can't understand him. I swim for the green. Gradually I see the bay. I can feel my brain freezing solid. Everything is becoming foggy. It is very hard to swim now. I breaststroke more. "Swim to the people!" the guy in the kayak orders.

Yes, I think I see people. Someone else goes by and I follow. I bump over a buoy line and somehow manage

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to keep stroking. Now I can make out a dock with people on it. I go back and forth over the buoy line again. I swim for dear life, hoping to make it before I can't move my arms and legs anymore.

Finally, finally I make the dock and get my numbed feet into the mud. I see them pulling a guy out on a stretcher. A kind man grabs my arm and pulls me up. "Are you OK?" he asks.

"Yeah.... Did you swim the race?" I reply.

"No dear, I'm just helping people out," he shivers.

The mood is somber among the spectators. The air hangs heavy with the threat of death. More people grab me and throw a wool blanket around me. There is a tent full of people on cots with heaters in it. The ambulances are pulling in and out.

The whole right side of my neck is bleeding from rubbing against my suit in the salt water, so I keep pulling the blanket away. A woman holding me keeps putting it back. I am too cold to say anything.

Joe is very glad to see me. He was afraid I checked out into the sea, because I have come in 8 minutes later than my seedtime and he had seen the boats going after people. He is an angel, handing me a cup of hot tea. I just want to get warm again. The cold is unbearable now with the wind blowing up against my

suit. I think about just getting my clothes on, but decide to wait in the shower line to rinse the saltwater out of my neck wounds. The 3 minutes in line is unbearable. Finally I make it under the hot water. Oh, blessed relief. I get my two minutes under the water, then head for the changing tent and put on my fleece stuff.

Shivering uncontrollably, I make my way up to the van, put on my hat and down coat, wrap myself in down bags and eat 3 bowls of porridge. Forty-five minutes later I begin to feel warm again. I have lived to tell about it.

These were my results: Long course meters: 800 Free – 13:28.01 19th place

200 Back - 3:18.09 13th place

200 Free - 3:04.33 18th place

50 Back - 41.56 11th place

100 Back - 1:29.91 11th place

3K openwater 1:04.00 6th place

These times are faster than I have swum in 15 years.

The pool times are official but the open-water time was what Joe clocked me at. They screwed up the results for it. I guess the computer froze. Oh yeah, if I ever try to swim in cold water again, somebody please stop me!



VISIT THIS COMSA SPONSOR AT CHATFIELD... TRY COOL GEAR!

Hi all! This is Tim Hola and if you haven't seen me yet around your pool or at Chatfield, you probably will soon. I just wanted to have a chance to officially introduce myself to all of the COMSA members. I am the Aqua Sphere Representative for all of Colorado and Utah. Aqua Sphere is a brand name under Aqua Lung/US Divers that specifically makes fitness-swimming equipment. We are most widely known for making the popular Seal Swim Mask. My fiancé, Nikki, and myself moved from Chicago to Denver on New Year's Eve and are really enjoying your wonderful state!

As many of you know, Aqua Sphere is now an official sponsor of COMSA. This means that at the Chatfield weekly swims, various practices in pools around the city & state, triathlons, and swim meets, you might see me giving demonstrations of the Aqua Sphere line of products, including the Seal, Seal Kid, Kaiman goggles, paddles, and fins. If you have a chance, check out www.comsa.org. Click on the Aqua Sphere logo at the bottom of the page for more details on our company.

In addition to giving demos of our products, I also set up accounts with stores in the area. So if any of you have any leads on where our products could be sold or where you would like them to be sold, please drop me a line at 303-619-1080 or at timhola@yahoo.com

Thanks & see you all soon,

Tim Hola

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