



2022

MAY - JUN



USMS VOLUNTEER RELAY - FOCUS ON LMSC COACHES AND CLUBS

Submitted by **ROBIN SMITH** | SPMS Vice Chair | vicechair@spmasterswim.org

The first USMS Volunteer Relay Meeting was held on March 4-6, 2022 in Denver, Colorado. The main purpose of this in-person meeting was to assist and support local volunteers and coaches/clubs with promoting membership growth and club development activities within the LMSCs.

Around 150 LMSC Coaches and Club representatives from across the US attended, along with selected Local and National Volunteers. Members from the USMS National Office were also in attendance including CEO Dawson Hughes.

Workshops and Sessions ranged from Successful Administrative Structures, Club-Facility Relationships, and Supporting Coaches, to Growing LMSC Membership, Partnering with Marketing, and USMS Club Development Support.



There were also several guest speakers including Olympic Gold Medalist Nathan Adrian and USA Swimming's MJ Truex, Senior Director Team Services and Coach Development.

Finis, Inc. brought swag for the attendees and samples of new equipment. John Mix, CEO and President, was in attendance to answer questions throughout the weekend.

SPMS was well represented with eight delegates: Christie Ciraulo (Unattached/formerly UCLA), Tony Dual (La Mirada Masters),

Brandon Franklin (SCAQ), Maria Teresa Frias (GRA), Charles McPeak (SPP) / SPMS Coaches Chair, Karin Perissinotto (Santa Barbara Masters), Ming Robinson (NOVA), and Andrew Scherer (Unattached/formerly Santa Ynez Valley Masters).

In addition SPMS had several National Committee Members and USMS Board of Directors attend to present and facilitate some of the sessions and workshops including: Ken Brisbin – USMS Coaches Committee Chair, Jill Gellatly – USMS At-Large Director Southwest Zone, Arlette Godges – Southwest Zone Chair, Mary Hull – USMS LMSC Development Committee, Kris McPeak – USMS LMSC Development Committee, and Robin Smith – USMS Vice President of Programs.

SPMS participants were extremely positive of the Volunteer Relay Meeting. Some of their takeaways included: Learning how to integrate Adult Learn to Swim Classes with their clubs to increase membership; Building relationships with pool facilities, aquatics directors, and the local community to increase pool time; Motivating and connecting with team members and individual swimmers; Partnering with USA Swimming; The variety of USMS Resources for Clubs and Coaches; and All of the support available to local Coaches and Clubs from the SPMS LMSC.



THE SPRINT TO PALM SPRINGS: IGLA 2022

By James Ballard

It started with a race that could not be won alone. That was the truth. Four months was not enough time for one team to bring the 2022 International Gay and Lesbian Aquatic Championships to Palm Springs and Desert Hot Springs.

That celebration of swimming, water polo, and artistic swimming, which ran from April 6th through April 10th, required more. It required all the strength, innovation, tenacity, and mutual respect of two teams separated by 20 plus miles of freeway to bring IGLA 2022 to the desert a hundred miles in land.

It began with a leap of faith that proved to be a fantastic lesson for West Hollywood Aquatics and the Long Beach Grunions in working together and supporting each other. It was the first time the teams had worked together, and the circumstances were extraordinary. Both teams had been battered by the pandemic, pool closures, and financial loss. Membership was down, and both clubs were gripped by uncertainty, fear, and exhaustion just trying to keep their programs together. Worse, they knew they were not alone.

Every masters team on the globe faced challenges that put many on the brink of collapse. Then the question was asked in October 2021, as the pandemic seemed to be winding down: Was anyone willing to host IGLA 2022? Hong Kong had abruptly pulled out of hosting the 2022 Championships under the Gay Games platform. None of the teams that had previously expressed interest in hosting an IGLA stepped forward. There was too much risk.

It seemed like an insane ask until Jon Bauer of West Hollywood Aquatics threw out the idea of hosting the meet in Palm Springs. It was an ideal location, a perfect desert escape. It had a welcoming and supportive LGBTQ+ community. It was a dynamic city, but would the pools even be available? Would people be open to attending? Was there enough time to set up and deliver the four-day swimming and water polo program and an artistic swimming exhibition? And what about the Pink Flamingo celebration, that festive and campy tribute to the struggles of the gay community? Could it all be done?

Those were questions no one could answer. A core group of organizers, led by Jon, James Ballard, Mary Church, Kenny Brisbin, Liz Carlin, Chad Young, James Carameta, Audrey Kim, and Bart Parnes, convened over a zoom call in December to decide if they wanted to explore the challenge. Those questions still couldn't be answered in January as they moved forward and the website went live. They had to make it work. IGLA 2022 was on, and it became an exercise in reverse engineering. The budget grew by the day as the actual costs of the event started to materialize. The mantra was, "We got this" or "It will be great," even as the balance sheet could have headed to a \$30,000 deficit if things went south with a resurgence of Covid and the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The global instability forced the organizers to constantly revisit their budget and their plans. The consensus was that everything had to remain fluid until registration closed. The pithy emails and social media postings seemed to have stopped delivering a month out. Registration stalled, and it was clear that four hundred registrants were not enough to balance the budget. The question became how to cut the budget and raise more money? There were so many contingencies with the multi-sport event that no one could predict the financial impact on the teams. The goal was to produce a meet that didn't lose money and bring people back to the water. No one was looking past that as the organizers took stock. Would people buy the t-shirts, tank tops, and caps? Would people attend the social events that promised to generate a few dollars in donations from the bars? Would there be a last-minute surge in registrants? Was that possible as hotel and flight availability did not offer many options? None of the organizers could say how the event would go as hats and tables were painted orange, pink, and teal.

The local Palm Springs Swim Center swim team, the Elite Otters, jumped in to assist. It was a collective effort, and many thanks go to Laura and Josh Otteson from the Elite Otters. Lindi Mills from the City of Palm Springs and Lynne Paul from the City of Desert Hot Springs. Their contributions to making it work were material and greatly appreciated. Hosting four hundred twenty swimmers, one hundred sixty-five polo players, and twenty-plus artistic swimmers is never easy. Yes, the final week of registration exceeded all expectations. It confirmed that we all still want to stay connected to the water, whether swimming, water polo, or artistic swimming. These are the sports we love and make our lives better.

In the end, Making Waves (Canada) won the small team division, Swim Fort Lauderdale won the medium team division, and DCAC (Washington DC) won the large team division in swimming. West Hollywood won the competitive division, and Atlanta Rainbow Trout won the recreational sports division in water polo. Team New York Aquatics won the Pink Flamingo with a featured performance by Charlie Carson.

IGLA 2022 is now in the books, and if I learned anything, I realized that if you want to organize an event, especially a multi-sport event. Reach out to the most capable and positive people you can find because you'll need great people to put on a great event. I am thankful that so many great people made IGLA 2022 happen, a special thanks need to go out. It's about the water and more!





MARK STORI NAMED HEAD COACH OF SANTA BARBARA MASTERS SWIMMING

Santa Barbara, CA—Santa Barbara Masters Swimming Board of Directors has announced the hiring of Mark Stori as the club's new head coach as of April 1.

In addition to being the Head Coach of Santa Barbara Masters, Mark is an assistant coach for Men's and Women's Swimming at UCSB. Mark has been

involved with Masters Swimming since the 1990's when he coached for the Dallas Aquatic Masters Swim Club and helped develop a learn-to-swim program for Club. Mark moved to Santa Barbara in 2015 where he started coaching masters under the Santa Barbara Swim Club and helped lead the team to a combined top 10 finish at the 2017 Spring Masters Nationals. He helped relaunch Gaucho Aquatic Masters at UCSB starting in 2017. Mark has produced several Destination Masters Swim Camps in Santa Barbara in both pool and open water. Mark is a USMS Level 2 Coach and received the 2019 USMS Kerry O'Brien Coaches Award. He has been an accomplished Masters swimmer and has won 3 Individual Masters National Championships and achieved 67 individual top 10 times. Mark enjoys open water swimming and loves the Thursday night Reef and Run Series and swimming at East Beach with the Swim Wild Santa Barbara crew.

"I'm excited and humbled to be back with Santa Barbara Masters Swimming. Santa Barbara has such an amazing pool and open water community with a rich history and culture," Stori said. "I'm looking forward to working with all members and future members to help them reach their specific general fitness and swimming goals in an inclusive and welcoming environment."

As a student-athlete Stori was a four-year member of the University of Iowa Swim team, where he was team captain during his senior year. He graduated with a BBA in Accounting. He achieved All Big Ten Academic honors and swam at the national level in the IM/Back/Breast.

Santa Barbara Masters Swimming (SBMS) is a nonprofit 501c3. The mission of SBMS is to provide the Santa Barbara community with year-round access to swimming instruction and training, and to promote health, wellness, fitness and competition for adults 18+ through swimming.

Santa Barbara Masters Swimming offers year-round coached swimming workouts for adults. SBMS is a registered U.S. Masters Swimming Club and welcomes all levels of swimmers aged 18+ and older to join the team. The Masters swim program will help you reach your goals, whether you are new to swimming, an avid fitness or competitive swimmer, triathlete or multisport athlete. SBMS offers an inspiring team atmosphere with organized workouts, competitions, clinics, and social functions. Highly qualified coaches on deck provide instruction to help swimmers of all skill levels and ages improve their technique and train for personal goals.





MARKETING MATTERS! WE WANT TO HELP COACHES & CLUBS

Submitted by ANITA COLE | Marketing@SPMasterSwim.org

The SPMS Marketing and Club Development Committee is composed of Anita Cole, Kris McPeak, Megan Johnston, and Karin Perissinotto. We want to help clubs grow their membership.

Please reach out to us if your Masters Club needs assistance in setting up club social media platforms or if your club could use free marketing materials.

We have free stickers, decals, caps, and luggage tags. These items make excellent goodie bag stuffers for new members. Stickers should be left at the pool offices to promote Masters Swimming. Please order a free co-branded banner to display at your pool.

We have been visiting club websites. Please make sure your website is still functioning with easy to find contact information, schedule of workouts, cost of monthly dues, description of your membership, and other relevant information to keep the visitor engaged. Verify that USMS information on Club Finder is still accurate and relevant. Also, please view list of clubs on SPMS Website and make sure that the location stated is that of the pool and not the address of club contact. We don't want to mislead a possible new member as to what town the workouts are in.

A reasonable goal for 2022 might be to increase your club membership by 10% over the 2021 number by welcoming new swimmers to try out your workouts at no charge for a brief period of time and making that first workout magical in any way that you can.

Email us if you just want to share ideas during this stressful time of Covid-19 or if we can help you in any way.

Don't forget about the SPMS Grants that are available for clubs! Maybe you need funds to pay for volunteers to become certified coaches to help out on deck or maybe you need funds to hire a professional to set up a website for your club. You can find the grant application on our SPMS Website. Please use it if you need it!





A TALE OF TWO CITIES FROM MOSCOW TO SANTA MONICA

Submitted by **CHRISTIE CIRAULO**

“I swam as a child, and loved it, but turned away from it in my teens and didn’t want anything to do with a pool,” says Anastasia Kurteeva, 38, of West Hollywood Aquatics (WH20).

This sounds familiar, right? It’s starting out like a typical U.S. masters swimmer’s story. But the path Anastasia takes to today’s masters workout at Santa Monica College is wildly different than most.

Her mother is Ukrainian from Kazakhstan, and her father is Russian from Siberia. Her parents met as teenagers when they were ordered by the communist government of the then Soviet Union to attend the same telecommunications college. They married upon graduating and moved back to Kazakhstan to be near family. Anastasia was born in Kazakhstan.

“When my best friend decided to swim, I wanted to swim, too. And then the worst thing happened,” Anastasia admitted. “My mom became enthusiastic about swimming, and like the typical rebellious seven-year-old, I said ‘NO, I’m not doing it!’”

“But my parents were always into sports and in the summer of 1990, we watched swim races on TV and I was psyched to go back to swimming,” continued Anastasia. “In Kazakhstan all the hot water is turned off in summer and the indoor pools are closed. It seemed like an eternity waiting for school to start and the pools to open back up again. I was really fired up.”

Anastasia spent her childhood swimming for Kazakhstan. Then politics came into play – in 1990 the Soviet Union collapsed, and Kazakhstan became a separate country. By 1998, there was a rise in nationalism and once again, politics intervened. Russians were no longer welcome in Kazakhstan and Anastasia’s father took a job in Moscow.

“I was 15 and I didn’t move to Moscow with my family. I stayed in Kazakhstan with my grandmother because I wanted to swim for Kazakhstan in the Junior Olympics,” said Anastasia.

“I did great at JO trials. I made it – I was the one girl along with 12 boys on the national team going to Moscow. It was a huge event, with opening ceremonies and athletes from all over the world. It turned out that it was my last competition for Kazakhstan. I didn’t swim well. I had a terrible meet and then I had to tell all my coaches I was moving to Moscow to be with my little brother and parents.

“Life became very difficult. I had to find a new coach. I was a teenager, and I couldn’t connect with anyone. I missed my friends and extended family. I was dealing with moving from country to country, in a difficult political time. Life was so different for me. Imagine moving from Bakersfield to New York. That is the culture shock I suffered.”

Today’s political situation resulting from the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, has brought distress to many of Anastasia’s friends and family. She is asked about this daily.

“It is a terrible time for the former Soviet Union countries. It is brother against brother, just like America’s Civil War. We are really all one people, but this is a total aggression against Ukraine.

“In America, you have CNN, Fox New and CNBC and you may choose to listen to one channel – or all of them. But in Russia there is an illusion that you have a variety of different channels, but all of them have the exact same narrative, created and controlled by the government,” explains Anastasia. “Unless you are a skilled computer person, you have no way of seeing around the propaganda.

“Many older Russians go to work every day, come home, cook dinner, and sit down to watch TV...government-controlled TV. They don’t have the time, the energy, or the inclination to search out other points of view. There is great general apathy. Besides, if you exhibit activism or try to organize a protest, you are risking your life. Russian public figures who post on media in support of Ukraine suffer greatly. It costs them their career, canceled shows, and negative publicity by the government-controlled media.

“In America there is the belief that individuals can rise together, organize and demand changes and freedoms. This has been proven with the Civil Rights movement, the Women’s Rights movement, and the LGBT Rights movement. If you’re not happy about something, you organize and protest.”

Anastasia feels that Russians have a very different mentality towards change and freedom, having lived many decades under authoritarian regimes. It makes it very difficult to imagine a different Russia, a different way of living.

“Women are marginalized,” Anastasia explains. “I am very ambitious about everything, not just swimming. I want a career. For this to happen in Russia you must be connected to powerful people. Good grades and hard work aren’t good enough to succeed, especially for women.

“Feminism, feminist movement, women’s rights – those words have no place in Russia. Women exist to support their husbands and take care of their kids. More like America 100 years ago.”

After long consideration Anastasia decided to come to the United States to study English.

“I thought, I’ll go to America, get a university education, work hard at something meaningful and succeed. I’m not afraid to work hard. Plus, Los Angeles is like paradise to the Russians. I think I decided on L.A. because of the weather,” Anastasia laughs. “I had never seen an ocean in my life, and I wanted that experience. I fell in love with the lifestyle in L.A. Every day is vacation day.”

There was one slight problem with this plan. Anastasia’s total English vocabulary consisted of “OK” and “thank you!”

Did she say she wasn’t afraid to work hard? Starting at 18, she dealt cards in a Moscow casino for two years and saved her money. With the help of her parents, Anastasia enrolled in a nine-month program of English total immersion and landed in Los Angeles in 2004. She attended classes five hours a day, every day, then went home to study for two to three more hours. Flash cards filled every spare moment. She completed the program and was awarded “Most Improved” for her efforts.

Swimming wasn’t even a vague thought. Running yes, the gym, yes, but no swimming.

It was time to start a college program. Working as a waitress to support herself, Anastasia spent three years at Santa Monica College. There she took an accounting class that set her professional path. “I had a teacher who told me I was good at this, and I should think about it as a career. That’s always

the way, right? A teacher who encourages you to succeed. Accounting always made sense to me. It’s like a big puzzle and you must put all the pieces in the appropriate places.”

Also, during this time, she met her partner, Maria. “We met at a party for gay Russian women in Studio City. Let me tell you, it was a very small party!”

She moved on to Cal State Northridge to finish her degree. “It was tough because I had to take a pay cut to become an accounting intern. For a while I was working as a waitress, interning, and taking a full academic load. It was the toughest time of my life.”

Still no swimming! Weights and running, only.

As ten years passed, she worked her way up from intern to principle in a boutique accounting firm in Century City, earning her CPA along the way. Then she made the big move in 2019 to start her own accounting firm, Kurteeva & Associates, CPAs, Inc., Beverly Hills.

“It’s amazing and I love it. I love working on my own, on my own schedule, making my own money. It was a great decision,” Anastasia says.

Then fate intervened. Swimming fate! Mary Church and Jessica Seaton, long time West Hollywood Masters members were looking for an accountant and found Anastasia and her new company online.

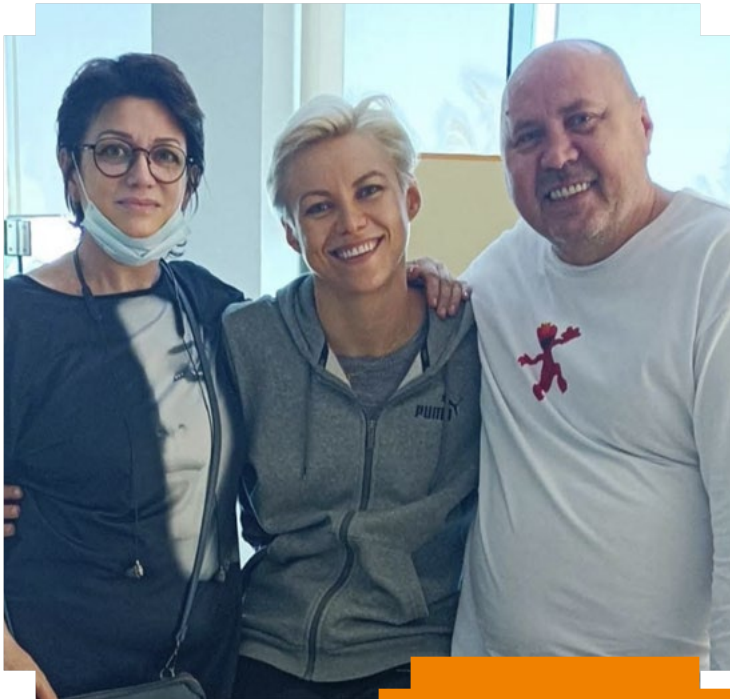
“Jessica asked me to come and swim with WH20. At that point I was still avoiding swimming, but she encouraged me to watch the documentary, Light In The Water. Covid had closed all the gyms and running on the road alone was just not fun. I was so inspired by the film, I came to a workout at Santa Monica College. I just fell in love with swimming again. I joined in October 2020.”

When meets started up in 2022, Anastasia was ready to sign up. “I got hooked on racing again. Meets keep me motivated as I need to see results. Meets give me motivation to work harder in the workouts.”

San Antonio will be Anastasia’s first master’s nationals. She will be swimming the 50, 100 and 200 freestyle and the 50, 100 and 200 Breaststroke.

“I became an American citizen in 2012 because the moment I stepped on American soil I felt at peace. I knew I wanted to be here forever. The way of life, the pace of life -- the opportunity to choose and follow my own path -- this is totally my kind of environment.

“In Kazakhstan, as a little girl, I was told ‘we need a breastroker, you will swim breaststroke!’ but I love freestyle, too. In America, I get to choose my own events – in the pool and in my life!”



MISSION VIEJO NADADORES MASTERS LCM SWIM MEET

SUNDAY, MAY 22, 2022

Sanctioned by Southern Pacific Masters Swimming for USMS, Inc. #332-S007

NOTICE: All local, city, county, and state COVID-19 safety mandates at the time of the meet will be strictly followed. This includes mandates on masks, gathering sizes/capacity limits, and spectators for events at the pool facility. If necessary, we will adjust the meet to adhere to these mandates per our Safety Plan.

Facility: Mission Viejo Pool is an outdoor 50m by 25yd competition pool at the Marguerite Aquatic Center, 27474 Casa Del Sol, Mission Viejo. The length of the competition course without a bulkhead is in compliance and on file with USMS in accordance with articles 105.1.7 and 107.2.1.

Timing System: The primary timing system will be fully automatic. Times from this competition will be eligible for world record, USMS record, and Top 10 consideration. Colorado Timing will be used.

Directions: From the north or south, take the I-5 Freeway to the Alicia Parkway exit in Mission Viejo. Go east (away from the ocean) to Trabuco Road. Turn right on Trabuco to Marguerite Parkway. Go left on Marguerite to Casa Del Sol, turn right onto Casa Del Sol, and turn into the driveway for pool parking. No parking in reserved tennis spots or YMCA lot.

Rules: United States Masters Swimming rules will govern. Current SPMS meet procedures will be enforced and take precedence over any errors or omissions on this form. The meet referee will be in charge of the meet. Any questions regarding the conduct of the meet should be directed to that person. Swimmers are limited to a total of 5 individual events, not including relays. Age on December 31, 2022, determines age group for the meet. You must be at least 18 years of age on May 22nd to compete.

Deck Changes: Deck Changes are now prohibited during ALL MEETS at the Marguerite Aquatic Center Facility.

Entries: All swimmers must be registered with USMS for 2022 or foreign equivalents. On-line entry fee is \$35.00, deadline is Wednesday, May 18, 2022, at 11:59 PM. Deck entries will be permitted for \$45.00. Deck entries will close at 7:30 AM for the 400m Freestyle and 400m Individual Medley, 8:00 AM for the 1500m Freestyle, and 9:00 AM for all other events. Entries are limited to 3 heats for the 800m and 1500m Freestyle Events.

Seeding: All events are timed finals and will be deck seeded slowest to fastest by entered time, ages and sexes combined. Check in is not required in order to be deck seeded, except swimmers must check in to swim the 400m, 800m, and 1500m Freestyle, and the 400m Individual Medley.

Relays: All relays will be deck entered on SPMS relay forms available at the meet. Relay fees are \$5.00 per relay due upon entry. For each relay swimmer who is not entered in individual events, a fee of \$10.00 and a signed liability release must be submitted with the relay entry. Swimmers may only swim on ONE relay for Event 10 and ONE relay for Event 18.

Awards: Individual: MVN ribbons for places 1 to 3. Relay: MVN ribbons for first place.

Questions: Meet Director, Mark Moore (949) 233-6521 mvnswimcoach@gmail.com

Meet Referee: Paul Szuszkiewicz, pszsz@hotmail.com

Meet Admin: Judi Divan, divanj@cox.net

Snack Bar: Hot and cold drinks, snacks, and food will be available for purchase.

Sunday, May 22, 2022

- Warm-up at 7:00 AM
- Meet starts at 8:00 AM

1. 400m Freestyle (check-in required)
2. 400m Individual Medley (check-in required)
3. 1500m Freestyle* (check-in required)

** entries limited to 3 heats*

Additional warm-up after 1500 Free Event #4 will start no earlier than 10:00 AM

4. 200m Backstroke
5. 50m Butterfly
6. 50m Breaststroke
7. 100m Freestyle
8. 200m Butterfly
9. 200m Individual Medley
10. 200m Medley Relay (men, women, or mixed)
11. 50m Freestyle
12. 200m Breaststroke
13. 50m Backstroke
14. 100m Butterfly
15. 200m Freestyle
16. 100m Breaststroke
17. 100m Backstroke
18. 200m Freestyle Relay (men, women, or mixed)
19. 800m Freestyle* (check-in required)

** Entries limited to 3 heats*

UPCOMING SPMS EVENTS

MAY
14

MAY 14 - SATURDAY

- USMS Level 2 Masters coach Certification 11:30A-3:15P
- USMS Clinic Course for Coaches - Classroom 3:15P-5:30P

MAY
15

MAY 15 - SUNDAY

- OC Riptide Masters SCY Meet
- USMS Clinic Course for Coaches - Pool 7:30A-12:30P
- USMS Stroke Development Clinic for swimmers 7:30A-12:30P

MAY
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MAY 19 - THURSDAY

- SPMS Committee Conference Call 7:30PM

MAY
22

MAY 22 - SUNDAY

- 2022 Mission Viejo Masters May LCM Meet

JUN
16

JUNE 16 - THURSDAY

- SPMS Committee Conference Call 7:30PM

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