

A Bi-Monthly Publication of your Arizona Local Masters Swim Committee

Swim Arizona is published six times a year (January, March, May, July, September, November) by the Arizona Local Masters Swim Committee (AZ LMSC). If you are not a member of AZ LMSC and wish to receive a printed copy of *Swim Arizona*, please send a check for \$8.00 to Treasurer, AZ LMSC. *Swim Arizona* is also available as an Adobe Acrobat™ document. Send submissions to junehussey@msn.com in one of the following electronic formats: Text (*.txt), Microsoft Word™ (*.doc), or Microsoft Excel™ (*.xls) and Photos as .jpg files. Articles are due on the 15th of the month before the publication date. *Swim Arizona* reserves the right to edit or not publish submissions for publication. We welcome your widespread use and sharing of our materials, and ask that you give credit to AZ LMSC. Printed in the United States of America.

Visit our Web Log for late breaking News:
<http://azlmsc.blogspot.com>

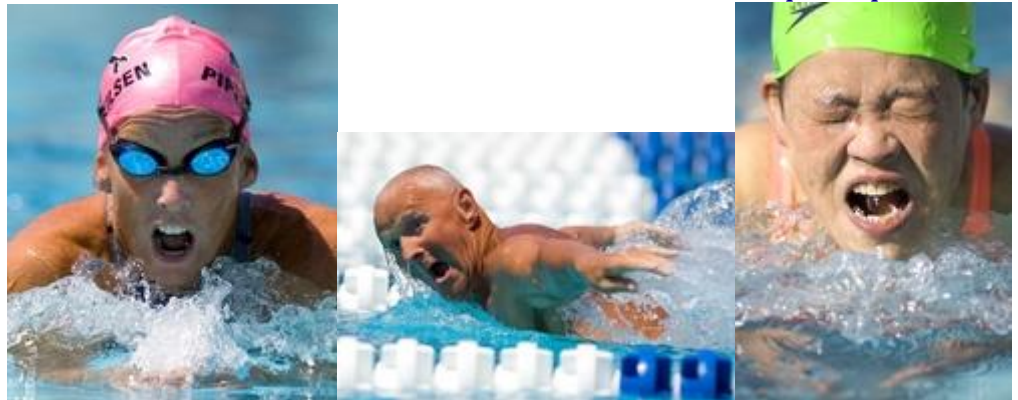
**Now You Can Reach
Arizona Masters
24/7 by dialing
480-365-0037**



“Brutes” of 2006 pose with Meet Director Judy Gillies at the 25th Annual Brute Squad Meet held in Tucson on June 11, 2006. To earn the Brute Award, swimmers must complete the 200 m. fly, 400 m. I.M. and 1500 m. Free. Ouch. Left to Right: Jim Stites, Jeff Ashbeck, Michelle Worden (holding shirt), Chris Fischer, Dana Hunter, Judy Gillies, Anna Ray De Lozier, Gordon Gillin. In all 39 swimmers entered the meet and seven earned Brute status. Meet Director Gillies reported “not a single D.Q.” The meet is named in memory of Rose Steward, one of Arizona’s original Masters Swimmers and the meet’s original race director. Rose passed away in 2002.

The Fastest in the World

Arizonans Break Ten Meet Records at FINA Masters World Championships at Stanford



Karlyn Pipes-Nielsen (left) breaks World Record for Women’s 400 M. I.M. at Fina XI Masters World Championships, finishing in 5:13.32.

Several Arizona Masters Swimmers were among the fastest to compete at FINA XI Masters World Championships held at Stanford University in August, 2006. In all, there were 150+ record-breaking performances at the meet. Five Arizona swimmers beat six individual meet records, plus four Arizona relays broke meet records. Congratulations to our meet record breakers: Henry Clark, 41 (4th in Men’s 200 Free and 1st in Men’s 100 Fly); Max Von Isser, 87 (1st in 50 Fly); Scott Shake, 48, 4th in 200 Back with 2:20.87; Caroline Kilian, 26 (1st in 100 Free); Evie Lynch, 54, 3rd in 100 back). Record-breaking relays included Lynch, Keough, Bly and Roth (7th in Mixed 200 Medley 200-239); Major, Keough, Wygal and Arredondo (10th in Women’s 200 Free 160-199); Lynch, Arredondo,

Arizona LMSC BOARD MEMBERS

CHAIRMAN

Katy James
[katyjameswims@hotmail.com](mailto:katyjamesswims@hotmail.com)
480-897-6411

VICE CHAIRMAN

Doug Adamavich
dpa_az@cox.net
480-510-1224

SECRETARY

Kathi Lindstrom
klindswim@cox.net
602-923-1312

REGISTRAR

R.A. "Mitch" Mitchell
rammedd@hotmail.com

TREASURER

Gregg Smith
greggandrew@gmail.com
602-357-3448

ARIZONA MOUNTAIN MASTERS

Erin Eastwood
e_swims@hotmail.com

FORD AQUATICS

Jim Stites
swim1@qwest.net
520-529-9113

BROPHY EAST SWIM CLUB

Sam Perry
azperryys@hotmail.com
480-941-0232

SEDONA SWORDFISH

Paul Cate
pcate1@mac.com

SUN DEVIL MASTERS

Simon Percy
sundevilmasters@cox.net

AT LARGE

Dan Gruender
ediehg@cox.net
480-946-5805

Edie Gruender
ediehg@cox.net
480-946-5805

Gordon Gillin
Swimgordon@aol.com
520-825-8261

Wygal and Hobbs (4th in the Women's 200 Medley 160-199); and Kinney, Weinberg, Taylor and Bayly (7th in the Women's 200 Medley 280-319).

5,491 aquatic athletes representing more than 1161 teams throughout the world competed at Worlds, according to www.2006finamasters.org. The US had the highest participation with 3130 athletes. Japan's delegation was second largest with 324 aquatic athletes. Germany was represented by 237 competitors. There were 100 or more athletes from each of the following nations: Mexico (109), Brazil (118), France (122), Russia (136), Italy (153), Canada (156) and Great Britain (185). In all, 83 countries and six continents were represented. Only Antarctica failed to produce a single competitor, although the meet mascot did happen to be a seal of unknown origin.



Froth of "White Caps" Greet Open Water Swimmers at Worlds

A shallow in-water start, heavy on-shore wind and white caps, flooding tide, and all-around tricky course were but some of the challenges 670 swimmers from around the world faced in Alameda, California during the World Masters Open Water Championship race on August 11, 2006. Seven Arizona Masters finished the 3K course.

The event was won handily by Jeff Erwin of Boise, Idaho. The 42-year old breezed in nearly a minute ahead of his closest competitor, crossing the in-water finish line in 39:06. The first female finisher was Susan Preston of Menlo Park, California. The 44-year old went 41:33 to clinch 12th place overall.

From Arizona, 42-year-old Geoffrey Glaser finished in 42:31 for 7th in his age-group and 16th overall. Dorr McCall, 25, won her age-group to place 40th overall with 44:16. Jim Stites, 49, placed 14th in his age group and 101st overall with 46:39. June Hussey, 45, placed 17th in her age group and 288th overall with her time of 54:06. Chris Fischer's time of 55:47 earned the 41-year old 15th and 331st overall. Judy Gillies clocked a 1:07.54 to clinch 25th in the women's 55-59 age group and 557th overall.

Escape From Alcatraz *By June C. Hussey*

It was unusually temperate for an early August morning in San Francisco. That is to say, the sun was shining and I was comfortable in my swim parka and sweats. Last night's empty beer bottles adorned the otherwise vacant streets approaching Pier 41 near Fisherman's Wharf. Saturday Tourists had yet to begin descending in droves. Along the waterfront, a few Chinese-speaking elders were throwing their arms around in routine fashion, warming up for Tai Chi. We grabbed coffee and pastries at one of the few stores open and headed for the pier.

I was surprisingly calm. For months leading up to this day, my nerves would erupt every time I thought about swimming from Alcatraz. It wasn't the distance that made me nervous. I'm an experienced ocean swimmer and 1.2 miles in open water is for me a piece of cake. But swimming from Alcatraz? Without a wet suit? The prospect of hitting those notoriously bone-chilling, current-churned, shark-filled waters in nothing but my Speedo was giving me nightmares.

But not today. Today it just felt meant to be. First, I found a lucky penny by the parking meter. I put it in my pocket. Later, I put my toes in the gently lapping waters at Aquatic Park. To my delight, it felt almost warm--nothing like the frigid waters of Cape Cod I'd trained in the week before. I looked on as several swimmers, members of San Francisco's celebrated Dolphin Club and South End Rowing Club, swam "laps" in the large, tranquil cove. In the distance, Alcatraz loomed large, but not too far away. It was a beautiful scene. The butterflies I'd been entertaining flew on their merry way. So much for the sleepless nights. I couldn't wait to get going.



By 7:30, other swimmers were gathering by the ferry dock. 160 of them in all had come literally from all over the world to participate in this "social event," as FINA described it in its literature for the World Masters Championships held earlier in the week at Stanford University. Yesterday, about 700 swimmers competed in the 3K open water world championship race in Alameda, a fun swim in strong wind, white caps and incoming tide. Today, there would be no official race clock, only the promise of an unforgettable experience swimming across one of the most fabled stretches of water in the world.

Moments before boarding the ferry, I stripped down to suit, caps and goggles, coated my arms and legs with Vaseline and handed over my gear to my "shore crew." I said goodbye to my sister, Barb, my swim coach from 35 years ago, Michael, and his young friend, an aspiring Alcatraz escape artist himself. All would stay behind and greet me at the finish.

We boarded the Blue and Gold ferry at 8:15. The event director, Gary Emich of the South End Rowing Club, reported the water temperature today was 60 degrees, balmy by Bay standards. The swim had been well timed to coincide with the slack tide, between the ebb and the flood, so if all went as planned, the currents would be negligible. At 9:08 a.m. the first swimmers would jump by threes off either side of the ferry and begin their 1.2 mile journey to shore.

On board the ferry, I sat with three other Master swimmers from Arizona, all of whom had done this swim before. A show of hands indicated that most of the other swimmers aboard, like me, were first timers. As we pulled away from the pier, nervous energy filled the air. I could hear conversations in French, English, Australian as well as a few languages I did not recognize.

At 8:30, we cruised out of the harbour and into the bay. The wind was slight and the waters calm. The view from all sides of the boat was post-card perfect. To starboard, the three-masted schooner Balclutha (built in 1886), and beyond it a giant naval ship guarded the harbour entry. Behind them, Coit Tower and the Transamerica Building



Throughout the year, Arizona Masters participates in several major events. These events generally follow this schedule, dates and times vary, however. For an up-to-date listing of upcoming events, please visit the official website.

January: USMS One-Hour Postal (SCY)
February: Polar Bear Meet (SCY)
March: Sun Devil Invite (SCY)
April: Short Course State Championship (SCY)
May: USMS Short Course Nationals (SCY)
June: Grand Canyon State Games (SCY)
July: Long Course State Championship (LCM)
August: USMS Long Course Nationals (LCM)
September: La Jolla Rough Water Swim
October: Fall Classic (SCM)
December: Southwest Zone Championship (SCM)

See entry forms in this newsletter or visit www.arizonamasters.org

Want to see *your* team featured in *Swim Arizona*? Have a photo or article to share? Just email junehussey@msn.com.

defined the skyline. To port, about three miles away, I could see the Golden Gate bridge, beyond which lay the Pacific Ocean. Full steam ahead lay the Marin Headlands and Alcatraz Island.

From the mid 1930's until the mid 1960's, Alcatraz was America's premier maximum-security prison, the final stop for the nation's most incorrigible inmates. Among the first to be sent to Alcatraz were Al Capone, Doc Barker (the last surviving son from the famous Ma Barker Gang), George "Machine Gun" Kelly, Robert "Birdman of Alcatraz" Stroud, Floyd Hamilton (a gang member and driver for Bonnie and Clyde), and Alvin "Creepy" Karpis.¹

After a brief safety and navigation meeting on board, the ferry circled the island clockwise to position itself for the start. Up close, the remnants of the decaying buildings looked ominous. As I looked into their pane-less windows, I imagined Al "Scarface" Capone peering out, dreaming of escape.

During the twenty-nine years of the federal prison's operation, there were over fourteen attempted escapes from Alcatraz, in which thirty-four different men risked their lives to flee from The Rock. Almost all were captured. The most famous attempt at escaping from Alcatraz was carried out by Frank Lee Morris and brothers Clarence and John Anglin. In 1962, a fellow inmate named Allen West helped the trio to devise a clever plan that involved constructing a raft and inflatable life vests to navigate the Bay waters, and human decoys to fool the guards during the routine counts. Decades later, it is still unknown whether the inmates ever succeeded in making their escape. The story was dramatized in several books, and in the famous motion picture "Escape from Alcatraz," starring Clint Eastwood and Fred Ward.²

By 9:02, the ferry was in position. We could see the bright orange Zodiak that would lead the way. Assorted boats from the rowing club were positioning themselves along the course to assure swimmers' safety. Peering back towards shore, we could just make out the landmarks. First, we'd head for the naval ship. Then, a right turn toward the three-masted schooner. And finally,

another right toward the large yellow buoy marking the entrance to the Aquatic Park cove and the final stretch "home."

The race director's warning rang in my ears. "If anybody's still in the water after an hour and a half, we'll pull you. By then the flood tide will be too strong. It brings six feet of water with it. And whatever you do, don't wind up by those big yellow buildings over there." He pointed to Fort Mason, just to the right of the Aquatic Park. "Because if you do, you might as well let the flood tide carry you all the way back to Stanford." Nervous laughter ensued.

"You will jump by threes in rapid succession, just like the parachutists you see jumping out of planes in old World War II movies," he continued. The fathers of half this crowd might have fought for the other side, I thought. In fact, at their advanced ages, some of these swimmers could have fought in that war themselves.

In three minutes the horn would signal the first groups to commence. The swimmers began to make their way toward the exit doors like so many seals in shiny black skins. About three-quarters of the swimmers donned full wet suits.

Under normal circumstances, a jump from such a ferry would set off a series of alarming sounds and life-saving maneuvers. Today, it would be accompanied by whoops and cheers. My voice would be among them. For me, this was the swim of a lifetime. And I only planned to do it once.

Not wanting to be first to jump, and not wanting to be last, I positioned myself near the front of the crowd by the starboard portal. The crowds were orderly and polite. No elbowing or pushing. Afterall, it was a social event.

The signal came and I watched the first three swimmers hold their goggles firmly to their faces and jump in unison. The water of the Bay closed over their heads momentarily, then

amidst a boil of bubbles they emerged, quickly clearing the way for the next group. Five seconds later, the second group received their signal. Some swimmers hesitated and needed to be prodded a second time. New swimmers stepped up. It looked as though I would be going in the fifth group. As I neared the platform, I inhaled deeply and said to myself and anyone else who was listening “Oh, man, here we go.”

No time to hesitate. The signal came and I jumped. The jade-colored Bay enveloped me as I submerged all at once from my toes to my three-capped head. To my sweet surprise, my body acclimated instantly. No ice cream headache. No hyperventilating. No cramping of foot or calf. No throbbing ache in my ears. Remembering to get out of the way quickly, I surfaced and started stroking to shore.

After the adrenalin rush subsided, my stroke count slowed to a steady, strong pace, and I sighted on the lead boat, 100 yards ahead. Since we didn't all start at once, there was very little interference from other swimmers. Everybody had their own water. Every 30 strokes or so, I'd lift my eyes to sight on the lead boat. It was always there.

I'm swimming from Alcatraz, I reminded myself. Breathing off my right shoulder, if I hesitated long enough, I could see the outline of the Golden Gate Bridge, bright orange in the morning sun. I glided easily over the surface of the San Francisco Bay, buoyed by its bright aqua waters with a somewhat chalky hue. I couldn't see further than my fingertips. Only a few times did I let thoughts of what might be lurking below creep into my head. “For every shark you see, mate, there are a thousand that you don't see,” an Aussie swimmer once told me, “so you might as well forget about them and just have fun.” I was having fun, all right. To be truthful, I didn't really believe there were any sharks in these waters. It was all just part of the mythical lore. That was my mantra.

As anticipated, there were two slight turns to the right. The lead boat was now 200

yards ahead of me, but I could still see it clearly. Finally, the lead boat stopped. I passed it on my right as it idled near the yellow buoy, and started my 400-yard final sprint to shore.

Thanks to good planning on the part of the race director, I felt no current to speak of. 30 minutes had flown by and suddenly I found myself standing in the silty shallows. Before me, a welcoming crowd applauded and reached out to help swimmers stand on their wobbly ankles. I turned back to check the course. Yup, Alcatraz was still there. And I was here. That must mean my mission was accomplished. After months of anticipation, it was over all too soon.

I found my shore crew and reunited with my towel. They reached out and felt my skin. “You're warm,” they said. I was indeed. Around me, swimmers clutched bowls full of hot soup. Some of their hands, I noticed, were shaking.

Like many mentally-daunting challenges, swimming from Alcatraz proved to be so much easier than I had feared. Conquering my fears, and accomplishing this feat, reminded me, once again, why I love open water swimming so much. Like the great Jack LaLanne once told me, “it's amazing what your body can do, when you push your mental limits.”

Following however distantly in Jack's giant footsteps (or trailing in his bubbles, as the case may be), I realize there will never be a shortage of swim challenges on this Earth, many of which are far more daring and distant than I will ever experience. For now, I'm content to check Alcatraz off of my ever expanding list.

¹ www.alcatrazhistory.com, Ocean View Publishing. Copyrighted: 2000, 2002, 2005, and August 2006.

² Ibid.

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PHOENIX, AZ
PERMIT NO. 5569

Swim Arizona Subscription and Change of Address Form

Change of Address
New Subscription
Subscription Renewal

MAIL TO:
AZ LMSC Registrar
R.A. Mitchell
2529 W Cactus Rd.
#1103
Phoenix, AZ 85029

Please include your email address if you wish to
receive *Swim Arizona* electronically.

EMAIL _____

Old Address:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ USMS # _____

New Address:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ USMS # _____

Important--Swim Arizona is sent via bulk mail
and is not forwarded by the US Postal
Service. Please inform us of address
changes, or if you prefer to receive this
newsletter via email.

Arizona LMSC

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

TOP TEN Barry Roth
wbroth@earthlink.net 520-296-4908

STATE RECORDS Hop Bailey
hbailey@as.arizona.edu

PHOENIX EQUIPMENT Katy James
katyjameswims@hotmail.com
480-897-6411

PHOENIX SAFETY Peggy Finch
480-496-9157

LONG DISTANCE/NEWSLETTER
June Hussey junehussey@msn.com
520-577-0032

WEBMASTER Mike Carey
mike@carbboom.com

PARLIAMENTARIAN Gordon Gillin
Swimgordon@aol.com 520-825-8261

OFFICIALS REPRESENTATIVE
Judy Gillies jgillies@mindspring.com
520-622-4129

USMS COACHES REPRESENTATIVE
Jim Stites swim1@qwest.net
520-529-9113

HISTORIAN Edie Gruender ediebg@cox.net
480-946-5805

ASSISTANT HISTORIAN Helen Bayly
hbbb@verizon.net

SANCTIONS Laura Winslow
winslowl6@yahoo.com

SENIOR OLYMPICS Dan Gruender
ediebg@cox.net 480-946-5805

HOSPITALITY

IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIRMAN
Sam Perry azperrys@hotmail.com 480-941-0232

PAST CHAIRPERSONS
Edie Gruender ediebg@cox.net
Judy Gillies jgillies@mindspring.com
Jack Salvatore
Helen Bayly hbbb@verizon.net