



the Chlorine Chronicle

~~~~~  
Nepean Masters Swim Club Newsletter  
Club phone line: 599-7166  
~~~~~

November 2004
Web site: www.nmsc.org
~~~~~

## From the editor

As promised in the last issue, this issue contains articles by attendees at World Masters championships two decades apart and a contribution for the Limerick Lane (or Sonnet Circle, submissions still, as always, welcome). We also have some membership statistics and an article about the club's Dragon Boat team. The success and quality of the newsletter depends on the submissions by our members, hence a special thanks to this issue's contributors (listed in reverse random order): Ian Button, Trent Peden, Frank Perks, Mike Sandoz, and Margie Bermel.

Charlie Colpitts  
Editor, Chlorine Chronicle

---

## First Meet Experiences from one of the old guys!

*by Frank S. Perks*

A little introduction, I joined NMSC September 82 and except for about a 5 year break when my son came along, have been a member since. Served on the MSO executive for a few years rising to President MSO. Now the baby of the 60-64 age group for competitions.

When I first joined NMSC I was gung-ho to get started with competitions. My first one was a local one just over in Hull in October of 82. What an experience; after watching a few events and not really paying attention, it was suddenly my heat coming up. So up to the starting area, then carefully watching what the rest of the heat was doing, I got on the starting blocks and no kidding, my knees were shaking like I never dove off the blocks before. Then I heard something like 'A vos marcs', as I looked to my side everyone was getting set...then the gun...same in any language.

This was a 100 free, I went like blazes – strategy what strategy – at about 75, I was wondering if masters were allowed to quit before the end of the race. Fortunately or unfortunately, I was in the outside lane and NMSC was right at the far end of the pool,

cheering me on! Well I finished, and walked back to the rest of the gang and Cathy M. asked me how I did and I said 1:09 and she congratulated me (Cathy was probably doing 1:05 or so at that time!)

Somehow later in the year a few guys persuaded me to go to the US Short Course (Yards) Nationals being held in Fort Lauderdale in May of 83. Well what a trip, 32 hours driving straight down there, stopping for donuts and coffee and change of drivers (there were five of us) every couple hours – not recommended for pre-meet nutrition. Was a memorable long weekend, outdoor facility, beautiful sandy beaches and oh ya, lots of competition. I was in awe half the time as each heat got up, there were announcements of swimmers who were former NCAA champions, or Olympic swimmers.

On one of my swims I got to the starting area and they really start fast, last swimmer touches and the next heat is off. Well on this one, I got on the blocks, started with the gun, hit the water – and couldn't remember just what event this was, I knew it was a hundred. I started flutter kicking and due to my slightly slow dive I happen to notice that the other swimmers were doing dolphin – a ah! – 100 IM. Guess there was too much splash for officials to catch me. You see Dave, sometimes a slow start is very strategic.

Next year, the 83-84 season I decided to really go for it, the 1st World Masters Swimming Championships – to be held in Christchurch, New Zealand. A few Toronto swimmers coordinated a 23-day trip for about 45 Ontario masters, including lots of sightseeing in NZ, Australia and a two-day stop in the Fijis. Since the entry forms & times had to be put in several months before, I used simple mathematics to calculate my expected times for that meet in April 84. As I said earlier, my first 100 free was a 1:09, since then I had swum a few other 100 frees and my time had gone down to about 1:06. Taking that large sample of about 4 swims, I figured I could do about :59!

As we were lining up for this event a nice guy by the name of Tim Garton, says hey you're Frank Perks, we've been wondering who this fast guy from Canada was. Tim held the current world record, something like :56 and I was in the same heat, he was in the middle and I was on his right. Well we went off and I was bound and determined to go for it – like 110%....Tim out touched me by about 6 inches at the fifty then we turned and he started pulling ahead on each stroke. I started to experience the fun of lactate acid build up at about 70 meters, my arms hurt with every stroke. But I did finish 3rd in a 1:04, Tim was first in :57.

The next time I met Tim was the following year in Toronto, August 85 at the Masters Games (Several sports), I watched him do some warm-up 50 meter kicking at about :31 sec per. In one of my events he was in the next heat in the same lane and gave me some good words of encouragement.

One of my other memorable swims in NZ was the 1500 meters. It was my first time swimming two per lane with a staggered start, gee was I ever confused, always watching for the other guy so I didn't smack into him. There were a few humorous moments, I think three times the person holding the counters for me dropped them in the water and I

saw them at the bottom of the pool each time! I ended up in 2nd place with a time of 21:30, the first guy was 21:08. I often wondered if we had been swimming side-by-side could I have kept up and shaved about .7 sec per 50.

Overall this trip was one of those once in a lifetime ventures, my wife-to-be was with me and we were ready to stay in NZ, the people, food – who wouldn't like a bowl of whipped cream for your coffee in the morning. My wife (Françoise) was right at home the first night we went out to a local BYOB restaurant and our waiter turned out to be from Montreal.

On the way back, about 15 days after the first week of swimming in NZ, we landed in Edmonton for our Nationals in 84. I can't remember what kind of times I put on my entry sheet, knowing I would be traveling and not training for almost 3 weeks, eating good food and in the air for about 20 hours before landing. But it was a good meet, my wife got to meet my brother for the first time and we actually swam in the same heat on two events. One of them we were side-by-side. He is 2 years younger so this happens every few years. If you're wondering, he beats me at 50's and I move ahead on 100's...at least for free and back.

Well one thing that always amazes me is that after swimming hard in workouts for many months, it only takes about 30 seconds to feel wiped out. Oh ya if any of you new swimmers think that your non-swimming spouse will enjoy going to a meet with you, think again how great it is to sit in a hot, humid place with wet swimmers all around you and you only swim about 10 mins in total over a period of several hours.

---

## **World Masters Championships 2004**

*by Trent Peden*

Outdoor swimming. In June. In Riccione, Italy. With 14000 other registered participants. It could only be: The 2004 World Masters Championships. Thanks to a number of people who helped me along the way, I had the opportunity to compete in the largest FINA swimming competition ever.

About 5000 of those 14000 registrations were for the swimming competition. To handle this, FINA chose the city of Riccione, Italy which built a brand new 50 meter indoor pool beside their existing outdoor 50 meter pool (all World Masters competitions are long course meets). The swimmers were only able to use the pool for practice or warm-up if they competed on that day. This caused me some problems as I had my five swims on 3 of 7 days. Luckily, the "security" wasn't too hard to work my way through, and I was able to swim each day.

Prior to heading to Italy, Chris Smith and Pat Niblett had done a fantastic job organizing a Canadian contingent of approximately 40 swimmers, complete with Team Canada

jackets, pants, shirts and caps. We weren't allowed to make a fully Canadian team for relays, so we formed TOMS, the Team Ontario Masters Swimmers. This enabled me to swim the anchor leg on a 200+ mixed 4 x 50 free relay, which I completed in a personal best time of 24.96.

I really lucked out on my accommodation at the meet. Jim Wright from Technosport had arranged an apartment that turned out to be a 4 min walk from the pool. We immediately turned our apartment into "The Canada House". The Canada House was a place where people could rest between races (most of the other swimmers were a minimum 20 – 30 minute walk from the pool), see postings of who was swimming that day, or just relax with our fellow Canadians (and other adopted Canadians).

The meet itself was officially opened on June 1st with the Opening Ceremonies. About 15 of the Canadians had a great team dinner beforehand and then marched as a team down to the beach where the ceremonies took place.



June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004 – Opening Ceremonies

My first two events were the 200 IM and the 100 Free. I was using a Fast Skin, farmer john swimsuit for the first time that had been provided to me at a very nicely reduced price by Doug Perks of Team Aquatics Supply. When I dove in for my 200 IM I was a little worried about how weird it felt (kind of like sinking actually), but when I saw my 2:20.17, I knew I had found a new favorite racing suit. My next race was the 100 free that afternoon. I was a little tired at the end of it, but was happy with my 56.43.

I then had three full days off before my next race and took off to see the sights. The first stop was San Marino, an independent republic. It's an amazing mountain city that has never been taken over and apparently invented the crossbow. As you can see from the picture below, it is quite difficult to attack a city positioned so strategically. After San Marino, it was off to Firenze (or Florence). This was simply a fantastic jaunt and was a perfect way to spend a couple days off from swimming.



June 5, 2004 – San Marino



June 6, 2004 – View from Via Monte alle Croci

Upon returning to Riccione, I was able to continue my personal best streak with a 29.89 50 Back, 25.30 50 Free and finished the meet off with a 1:04.50 100 Back. All-in-all I was able to bring home 4 medals and 5 personal bests. This was much better than I thought I was going to do when I saw I wasn't seeded in the top 10 in any of my events going into the meet.

My entire trip would not have been possible had it not been for some very generous people and companies. Namely Somos in Ottawa, CGIS of Perth, and Town and Country Chrysler of Smiths Falls who all generously helped me with sponsorship money. In addition, a significant on-deck donation from the NMSC "A" group swimmers and coaches, as well as NMSC donating clothing and gear to help me show off my fantastic masters club all over Europe. Without these contributions, I wouldn't have been able to accomplish the things that I accomplished on this trip. I offer up my sincere gratitude once again to each of them. This was a trip of a lifetime.

Cheers and good swimming to all.

Trent

---

## Limerick Lane

### *or Sonnet Circle*

We may have to nominate Mike Sandoz as poet laureate of NMSC. You may recall his contributions from last season (check out the archives) and now, in response to my request for contributions to the Limerick Lane, he has penned a sonnet.

### **Sonnet to Commemorate Dave's Halloween Workout**

*by Mike Sandoz*

At Halloween it was, that spooky night,  
When A-group swimmers gathered, dark and grim,  
At poolside. Cold and shivering with fright,  
They asked about their dreaded deathly swim.  
But fears were cast aside by Dave's reply;  
The ghostly workout would be just a breeze:  
A warm-up, then more warm-up, followed by  
The warm-down, smoothly taken at their ease.  
And so it proved to be, at first, with three  
Two-hundreds warm-up (free then back then breast).  
Then more warm-up (combining back/breast/free):  
Eighteen one-hundreds with sufficient rest.  
But after Treat came Trick: Six hundred fly!  
A ghoulish warm-down ... even made spooks cry!

---

## **By the Numbers...**

*by Ian Button*

I decided I would share with everyone some information about our club. As an economist I love numbers and one day I was wondering, just how big is the Nepean Masters Swim Club? I'll save that for the end, first lets digest the club...

We are dedicated folk! Next to the cleaning staff, NMSC swimmers are usually the first ones at the Walter Baker Centre and the last ones to leave...7 days a week. The club offers four main groups (A, B, C and D) and two sub-groups (T and S). In total we have spots for 328 swimmers per week. Since groups D, T and S are not completely full, we only use 300 of those spots. Not bad. Last week I registered 241 swimmers with Masters Swimming Ontario, so that means 59 swimmers are doubling up. That is, they are swimming in multiple groups, for instance, C and D, or A and T, etc.

Of the 241 members for 2004-2005 so far, 56 are new to the club. Many of the 56 are (or I should say were) complete strangers to club swimming when they joined. I also expect that in January I will be registering even more as I already have several people waiting to join, and the waiting list for the full groups continues to grow.

And in case you didn't know, the club has a 14 member executive team who meet once a month to discuss all the technical details like washroom cleanliness and the latest fuss about lanes ropes...okay we do a little more, but I won't bore you. We also have 7 coaches dedicated to helping us improve.

Girls outnumber the boys.

54% of members are female, with Group D comprising the largest percentage of women at 64%. Group T has the largest percentage of men (59%). Interestingly Group C is split 50-50. The Female to Male percentages for each group is as follows:

A: 47% - 53%

B: 58% - 42%

C: 50% - 50%

D: 64% - 36%

T: 41% - 59%

S: 57% - 42%

As this is a masters group, I can't move on without discussing our age. Our youngest member is 18 years old and our two most experienced are 62 years of age. The club average age is 41 years with a median age of 41 as well. The oldest group is...okay okay I'll spare you guys. The youngest group is Group D at 37 years. The age distribution by Masters Swim Canada 5-year age cohorts for the entire club is as follows:

U20 - 0.4%;

20-24 - 1.7%;

25-29 - 8.3%;

30-34 - 14.2%;

35-39 - 18.8%;

40-44 - 22.5%;

45-49 - 18.3%;

50-54 - 8.8%;

55-59 - 4.6%;

60-64 - 2.5%

So for those of you who are not 'numbers' people, here is your reward for making it to the end of this article. Last year NMSC registered 249 swimmers with MSO, the next largest club in Ontario registered 115 swimmers. So not only are we big, but we are the biggest.

Your registrar,

Ian

---

## **Tidbits**

### ***Kingston Meet***

The Kingston meet in November was lots of fun. There were 118 registrants with 24 from NMSC. Good fun, good times, and good food were enjoyed by all.

## ***Winterlude***

Check out the club website for all the information you'll need for our annual long course meet in February. On-line registration starts soon.

---

## **22 HEARTS, 1 SOUL ON FIRE!**

*by Margie Bermel*

For the 7th year, a fantastic group of 22 people from NMSC entered the National Capital Dragon Boat Festival in Ottawa. For those who haven't heard of Dragon Boating, a team is made up of 22 people: 20 paddlers, 1 steersperson, and 1 drummer. The festival is held at Mooney's Bay each June. 170 teams paddle (hopefully in sync) a 500 meter course to the finish. It's just over 2 minutes of pain and a whole weekend of fun.

The skills for paddling and swimming are very similar, so we are fortunate that we have had a lot of success in this fast growing sport. We are competitive, aiming for a top ten finish each year, and we always have a fun, sun, and friendship filled weekend. Our unofficial motto has been "It's just a festival." This year we reminded ourselves of this many times as we proved anything can happen and it did!

At the end of the day Saturday, we were in 14th place out of 170 boats. A good placing since our team tends to get better as the weekend progresses (something about all that swim conditioning must give us endurance!). We won the Education Cup, which was the category we were entered in.

On Sunday, while racing in high winds, our boat was rammed by the boat in the lane beside us. Despite a bit of panic and a few of our paddlers needing to stop paddling, we managed to finish in 7th place. I'm not sure who was more shocked, our team members or our young coaches who were pleasantly surprised that this boat full of swimmers, with an average age of about 40, could compete with the best of them. We were delighted and pumped to participate in the Championship Final race against many teams who train all winter just to paddle and who participate in many festivals over the summer.

Our Championship Final race got off to a great start, but then all of a sudden our steersperson, Nancy Binnie, was doing some impromptu aquatic research at the bottom of Mooney's Bay! The clasp that holds the steering oar broke and poor Nancy was launched over board! Thankfully, she's a good swimmer. The rescue boat picked her up (more like hauled her in), John jumped back to steer the boat, and we continued the race short one body. We crossed the finish line to the cheers and applause of a beach full of fans! What a hoot. Nancy was bruised and shaken, but was a really, really good sport about the whole thing. Technically, we got a DNF, but our fabulous team is number one in my heart.

It takes a lot of people to pull the team together, so thanks to everyone on the team for making it a festival to remember. A huge thanks to John Burrows for his continued leadership of the team. As well, we owe a lot of our speed to John and his wood craftsmanship. John hand-made a light, custom-sized paddle for each and every team member – the paddles were they envy of other teams and really gave us the edge on the water. And special thanks to the members of our swim club for sponsoring the Breast Cancer Survival Trophy.

Paddles Up!

P.S. check out more photos of the team in action at [www.nmsc.org](http://www.nmsc.org)