



Community via Competition

Presenters
Bob Bruce, Karyn Austin, Ed Tsuzuki

Agenda

- Introductions
- Overview
- Community through Pool Meets
- Community through Open Water Events
- Community through Virtual (“Postal”) Events
- Breakout Exercise: Small Group Discussion
- Q&A / Wrap-Up Discussion
- Resource Links

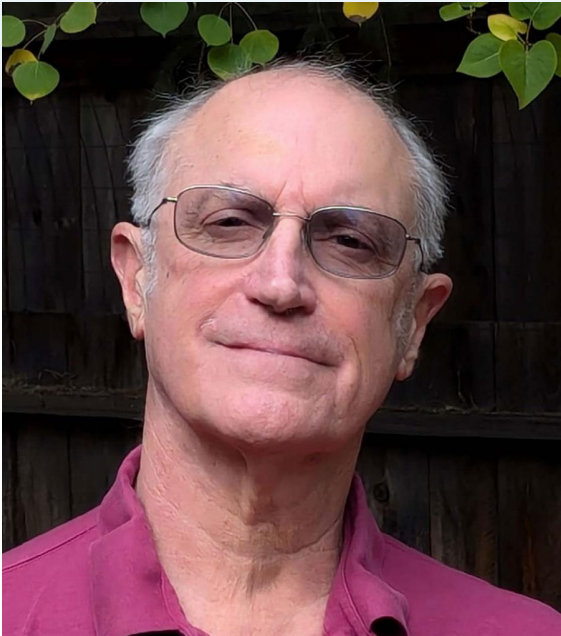
USMS Vision Statement:

Foster a nationwide adult swimming community through lifelong fitness, competition, and education.



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Bob Bruce

- Head Coach & Event Manager, Central Oregon Masters, Bend, Oregon
- Oregon LMSC Long Distance Chair since 2001
- Former Chair, USMS Coaches and Open Water Committees
- USMS Long Distance Committee member since 2004
- USMS National Coach-of-the Year in 2003 and Ransom J. Arthur Award in 2021



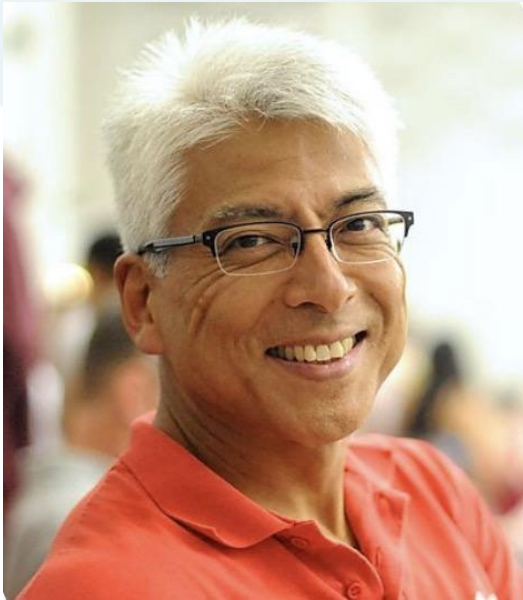
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Karyn Austin

- Head Coach/Founder of Swamp Water Aquatics Gainesville (SWAG)
- Florida LMSC Coach of the Year 2023
- USMS Kerry O'Brien Coaches Award 2020
- USMS Level 3 certified coach
- USAT Level 2 certified coach
- Full time triathlon and swim coach for over 20 years
- Swim Smooth certified coach

Presenters



Ed Tsuzuki

- Coach, Team Tsunami Masters (Greater Somerset County YMCA) in Basking Ridge, Bridgewater, Hillsborough, and Princeton, New Jersey
- Top Ten/Records Chair, New Jersey LMSC
- Numerous national USMS roles over 20+ years
- Ted Haartz Staff Appreciation Award in 2012
- Ransom J. Arthur Award in 2018



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Overview

When building communities, we hold these truths to be self evident:

- The world belongs to those who show up.
- Teams that do things together become communities.
- You can build team communities by hosting good events.
- Big communities are built from smaller communities.
- What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.



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Overview

Identifying constituent communities

- Swimmers of all varieties
- Families of swimmers
- Officials & Volunteers
- Sponsors, Donors, and Vendors
- Others in our larger communities



Overview

Keys to success when hosting community-building events

- Organize and Plan
- Pay Attention to Detail
- Communicate & Be Responsive
- Give Back
- Make it Fun - Swim events are parties!



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Building community - pool competitions

- Karyn - Swamp Water Aquatics Gainesville (SWAG)
- What makes a good event?
 - Theme & Logo
 - Awards & Recognition:
 - High point scorers
 - King / Queen
 - ALTS
 - Overcoming adversity
 - Post-meet social gathering



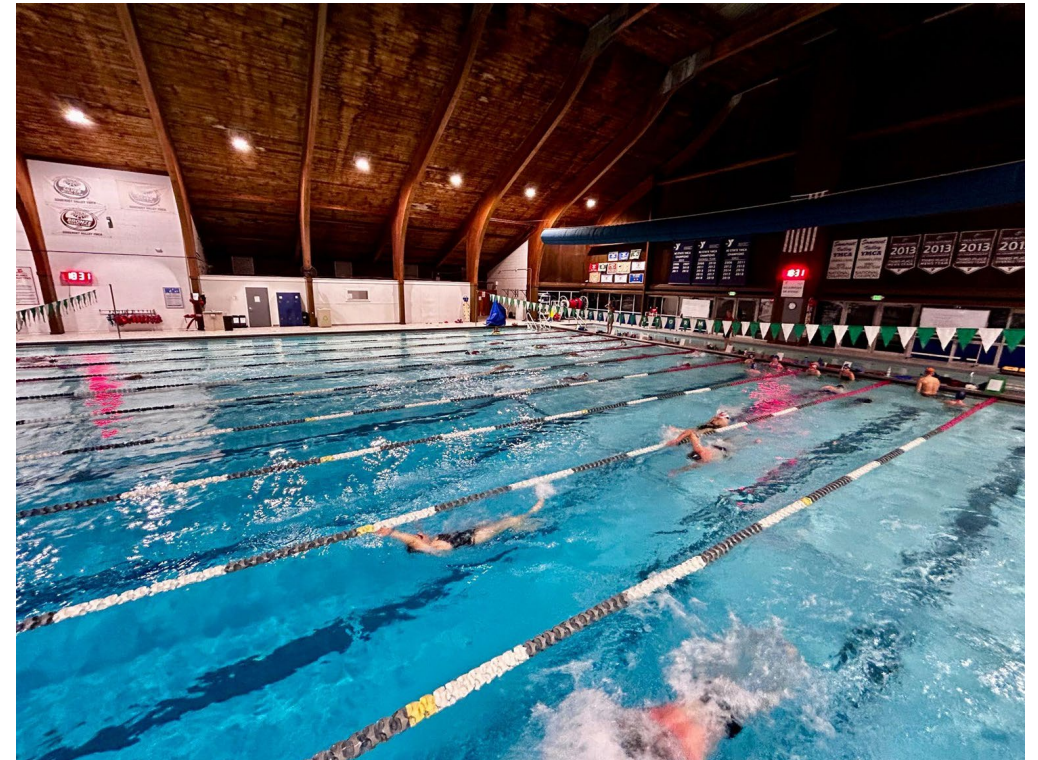
Building community - pool competitions

- Ed Tsuzuki - Somerset County YMCA Masters (SCYM)
- Started SCYM club in 2015, after retiring from the corporate world
 - 208 members
 - 8 coaches
 - 4 workout locations
- Employed by the Y
 - Y collects all revenue
 - Pool time is “free”
 - “New” meet director



Building community - pool competitions

- Somerset County YMCA Masters
 - 2 sanctioned meets a year (SCY & SCM)
 - 100 to 140 entrants
- Community Building
 - Swimmers
 - USMS
 - Local Club and High School
 - Families
 - Officials
 - Sponsors
 - Donation Recipients



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Building community - pool competitions

What makes a good event?

- Great organization / good communications (participants & volunteers)
- Heat sheets published in advance; results published immediately
- Meet records
- Start on time / reliable timeline
- Experienced officials & volunteers (schedule in advance)
- Good sponsors

Fun Ideas / Giving Back

- Giveaways: equipment bags, insulated water bottles, silicone caps, yoga mats
- Take care of your volunteers!



Building community - virtual events

Bob's unique situation:

- Central Oregon Masters Aquatics, a workout group within the regional Oregon Club, incorporated in 1997
- Located in corridor along U.S Route 97 in seven sites
- 250 active swimmers
- High interest in open water swimming & triathlon
- 130 miles and a mountain range from the nearest Masters group



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Building community - virtual events

Building community through Virtual Swims (once called “Postals”)

- What are they? Virtual Swims are swims done locally then collated and scored nationally
- What kinds of swims?
 - USMS Long Distance Championships: One-Hour Swim, 5/10-km Swims, 3000/6000-yd Swims
 - Other (non-championships): Two-Mile Relay, 400-yd Kick for Time, Pentathlon, etc.



Building community - virtual events

Particular communities to build through Virtual Swims:

- Local swimmers
- LMSC swimmers
- Competitive and fitness swimmers
- Volunteers and families



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Building community - virtual events

We build community through Virtual Swims by...

- Connecting open water success to virtual swim success
- Appealing to and motivating ALL swimmers to participate
- Hosting enticing group swim sessions, the livelier the better
- Striving for national club placement and strong relays



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Building community through themed swims

Themed swims to help with TEAM BUILDING:

- Annual "Trick or TREAT" Swim
- Ho, Ho, Holiday themed practice
- Ugly swimsuit/cap contest for holidays and brunch after
- Postal Swims as a team
- Turkey Buster Swim (longer practice Friday after Thanksgiving)
- New Year 5K swim
- Send off treats (custom cookies, gift basket, etc.) for athletes doing BIG event (Ironman, long OWS, etc.)



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Building community - open water events

Swimming the way that God intended. What variety we have!

- Lakes, reservoirs, rivers, bays, open ocean, and even in the pool.
- Point-to-point, single loop, multiple loop, and cable
- Short, medium, long, very long
- Competitive or non-competitive



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Building community - virtual events

Particular communities to build through open water swimming:

- Local swimmers
- LMSC swimmers
- National swimmers (when hosting national championships)
- Competitive & fitness swimmers
- Volunteers & families
- Sponsors & donors
- Vendors



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Building community - open water events

We build community by...

- Hosting 3-4 open water events (7-10 swims) each year
- Appealing to ALL swimmers on the continuum of open water enthusiasts
- Offering a wide variety of distances and formats
- Offering unusual and novelty opportunities
- Recognizing ALL participants



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Building community - LMSC support

- What is the role of the LMSC Leadership?
 - Manage the event schedule throughout the year
 - Pool meets of various courses (SCY, LCM, SCM)
 - Open water events based on weather
 - Virtual events during otherwise slow times
 - Provide financial incentives / assistance where needed
 - Provide communication and promotion



Breakout Session

- Small Groups of 2-4 people each
- Introduce yourselves (name, club, location), your LMSC, volunteer role, why are you attending this session

What are creative and innovative ideas to further build community within your constituent group?

(we will assign a topic to each breakout group)

- Swimmers that swim with the host club
- Swimmers that swim with other clubs
- Families of swimmers
- Officials & timers
- Volunteers
- Sponsors & partners
- Vendors





Questions & Answers

Don't be afraid. Ask away.
(If you're thinking it, someone else
probably is too!)

Resources

- <https://community.usms.org/volunteers/lmsc-officers-administration/f/event-directors/32604/creating-a-new-meet---basics>
- <https://community.usms.org/volunteers/lmsc-officers-administration/f/event-directors/32605/example-event---trick-or-treat-swag-swim>

