



Relay 2025
**“Coach Support and
Club Development”**

Kick Off

Welcome!

Ed



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COACH SUPPORT
— KANSAS CITY —

USMS Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission: Empower adults to improve their lives through swimming.

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

Values: Fitness, Camaraderie, Inclusion, Learning, Excellence, Competition, Fairness



Coach Support and Club Development

- Supporting Coaches through education and career path
 - Providing coaches with training and mentorship
 - Helping coaches with financial planning and career planning
- Supporting Clubs with team administration, scheduling and financial planning
- Developing Clubs by helping Owners to start, maintain, or grow their club or workout group
 - Provide resources and support to allow clubs to thrive in as many pools with as many workout time options as possible

Relay 2025 Planning Team - Thank You

- **LMSC Development Committee**
 - Doug Sayles (Chair)
 - Tom Moore (Lead, Relay Planning Team)
 - Ian King
 - Nicole Christensen
 - Arlette Godges
- **Coaches Committee - Chair: Molly Hoover**
 - Ken Brisbin
 - Aaron Schneider
- **Staff**
 - Bill Brenner
 - Bethany Burchill

Crystie



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Why is this meeting called “Relay” ?

- Hand-off of information from one volunteer to another
 - Just like passing a baton in a running Relay
- Volunteers with different expertise working together toward a common goal
 - Just like a group of swimmers doing a medley relay
- A group engaged in a task for a fixed period then replaced by a similar group
 - Just like our volunteer corps is reset each year
- Getting together and having fun as a team
 - Just like swimming a relay at a meet!

What is so special about the “Relay” format ?

- The “Relay” format involves 3 components:
 - An in-person meeting to foster camaraderie with an interactive format meant to engage, equip and energize volunteers,
 - A rotating focus (this year is “Coach Support and Club Development”), and
 - An emphasis on understanding and supporting the priorities of USMS.

Engage, Equip, & Energize Volunteers

- An in-person meeting to foster camaraderie with an interactive format meant to engage, equip and energize volunteers,
 - Relay happens every year and is always an in-person meeting.
 - Each volunteer presentation will include a “breakout” session for attendees to break into small groups and brainstorm / discuss the topic
 - Social events and icebreakers are built into the agenda for the weekend

Understand and Support Priorities of USMS

- USMS is focused on the general ongoing mission of promoting and growing the sport of swimming in the US and the specific current priorities in 2025 of:
 - Club Development
 - How do we start new clubs and how do we help existing clubs thrive?
 - Grown-Up Swimming & College Club Swimming Integration & bridge membership
 - How to attract and welcome college-age & other younger swimmers to existing masters groups
 - Lane Mate (independent swimmer support)

Participation & Interaction

- You are here as a participant, not just an observer
- Meet your peers, both within your own LMSC and from other parts of the country
- Many sessions will have small group breakout discussions for you to ask questions, generate ideas, and share your experiences
- Have Fun!

Presenters

- We have almost 40 presenters who have volunteered their time to create presentations and be here this weekend
- They are a **very** accomplished group!
- Each presentation will include a *very* brief intro of the presenters by a member of the relay planning team; we want to get right into the content
- Each presenter has an opportunity to include a more detailed biography as an addendum to the presentation materials; we do want to celebrate them and their accomplishments

Note Taking / Accessing Session Materials

- Each Session will have volunteers from the LMSC Development Committee to take notes
- For the sessions that include small-group breakout discussions, please assign a note taker within in group to take notes of your group's discussion, and provide a copy (or photo!) to the LMSC Development Committee volunteer
- After Relay, all session materials, all notes, and all breakout discussion notes will be posted to Community Forums on the USMS website

Next Steps / Call To Action

- Each Session will end with a “Next Steps” / “Call to Action” Slide
- As you participate in Relay sessions, think about what actions *you* can take when you get back home

Overview of Various Club Models

Moderator: Tom Moore - Minnesota LMSC

Coaches

Jason Weis - Boston University Masters, New England

Ed Tsuzuki - Somerset County YMCA Masters, New Jersey

Aaron Schneider - Riptide Masters, Southern

Jeff Commings - Dolphins of the Desert, Arizona

Ken Brisbin - Long Beach Grunions, Southern Pacific



Presenters



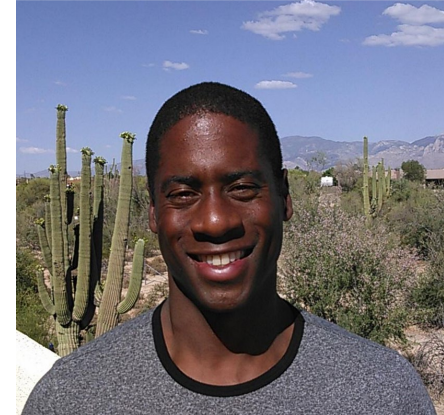
Tom Moore

Minnesota
LMSC



Ken Brisbin

Long Beach
Grונים
Southern
Pacific LMSC



Jeff Commings

Dolphins of the
Desert Masters
Arizona LMSC



Aaron
Schneider

Riptide
Masters
Southern
LMSC



Jason Weis

Boston
University
Masters
New
England
LMSC



Ed Tsuzuki

Somerset
County
YMCA
Masters
New Jersey
LMSC



Agenda

- Commonalities
- Club Differentiators

- Example Clubs: Pros & Cons
 - Long Beach Grunions - Ken Brisbin
 - YMCA Somerset County Masters - Ed Tsuzuki
 - Boston University Masters - Jason Weis
 - Riptide Masters Swimming - Aaron Schneider
 - Dolphins of the Desert - Jeff Commings



Commonalities

- Building Community
- Fitness
- Competition
- Fun
- Logistics: Lane management, coaching, communication & member engagement.
- Finances: Pool rental costs / lane availability, who sets fees, who pays coaches, insurance.



Club Differentiators - 1. Size / # of Swimmers

Size			# of clubs	% of clubs	# of members	% of members
“Small” (1-25) 603 clubs (49%) 8,290 members (11%)	Tiny	1-10	253	20.6%	1,747	2.3%
	Small	11-25	350	28.5%	6,543	8.6%
“Medium” (26-80) 421 clubs (34%) 19,939 members (26%)	Medium	26-50	291	23.7%	11,260	14.7%
	Big	51-80	130	10.6%	8,679	11.3%
“Large” (81-2200) 203 clubs (16%) 44,231 members (58%)	XL	81-250	157	12.8%	21,456	28.0%
	Ginormous	251-2200	46	3.7%	22,775	29.8%



Club Differentiators

2. Management Team (size and structure)

- Small - Self-Run (coach or volunteer)
- Medium - Leadership Team (partnership or small board)
- Large - Formal Structure (board & committees)

3. Number of pools

- Small - One
- Medium - Two to Three
- Large - Four or More



Club Differentiators

4. Ownership

- Coach-Owned
- Team-Owned
- Facility-Owned (eg Community Center)
- Institution-Owned (eg University, YMCA, school district / community ed dept.)

5. “Personality” / Team Focus

- Fitness / Training only
- Competition
- Triathletes



Example Clubs - “Largest” to “Smallest”

	Team	Size	Mgmt	# of Pools	Ownership	“Personality”
1	Long Beach Grunions	200+ Large (XL)	10 (Board)	3	Team Owned	Community & Support Fitness, Friendship, & Inclusion
2	Somerset County YMCA Masters	200+ Large (XL)	2	4	Institution	Fitness & Community Interval Training
3	Boston University Masters	100 Large (XL)	2	1	Institution	Challenging Workouts Younger (< 30) + Older (> 60)
4	Riptide Masters Swimming	77 Medium (Big)	2	2	Coach (Partnership)	Intense Training, Emphasis on Participation in Events
5	Dolphins of the Desert	62 Medium (Big)	1	1	Coach	70% Fitness / 30% Events



Long Beach Grunions - Ken Brisbin



Club Size: 200+ Members

Management Team: Established Board - 10 distinct roles, 8 Coaches

Number of pools: 3

Ownership: Team-Owned, Non-Profit Board Run

“Personality” / Team Focus:

The Long Beach Grunions welcome swimmers of all ages and skill levels. Our focus is on building community, offering supportive coaching, and celebrating improvement, effort, and team spirit—not just speed. We strike a balance between structured practices and competitive opportunities, fostering strong social connections. We value fitness, friendship, and inclusion in and out of the pool.



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Long Beach Grunions - Ken Brisbin



- **Strengths:** Resources, strong presence in the community, experienced, inclusive coaching; a large, supportive membership; consistent success in hosting event and competing; and a welcoming culture that attracts swimmers of all levels.
- **Challenges:** Managing communication, maintaining culture, pool space.
- **Being board-run** provides structure, transparency, and shared responsibility. A board helps distribute the workload across multiple volunteers, ensuring no single person carries too much. It creates checks and balances for financial and operational decisions, keeps communication consistent, and gives members a voice in how the team is managed. This structure supports long-term stability and keeps the team organized



Somerset YMCA (NJ) - Ed Tsuzuki

Somerset County YMCA Masters (SCYM) - founded in 2015



Club Size - 215 members (21% of NJ LMSC)
Approximately 120 workout at the YMCA

Management Team - 2 (all employees of the YMCA)
YMCA Aquatic Director + Head Coach/Team Manager/Meet Director (USMS Level 3)
12 Assistant Coaches (3 - Level 3, 2 - Level 2, 4 - Level 1, 3 - TBC)

Number of pools - 4 (10 lane 25m, 6 lane 25y (x2), 4 lane 25y)

Ownership - Greater Somerset County YMCA

“Personality” / Team Focus

Focus is fitness and camaraderie - all levels welcome (as long as they can swim)

About 55% fitness, 25% triathlete, 20% competitive

12 workouts/week - all with on-deck coach

Interval based training - (relatively) high intensity



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Somerset YMCA (NJ) - Ed Tsuzuki



What works

- Don't have to manage finances (setting and collecting fees)
- The Y pays the coaches (hourly)
- No pool rental costs (workouts and meets)
- Solid reputation / Central location
- Availability of officials and volunteers

Challenges

- Masters monthly fee
- Recruiting coaches
- Social events
- Social media presence
- Competing with lap swimmers (temp) and age group club team for (time)



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Boston University Masters - Jason Weis



Club Size: ~100 swimmers

Management: Aquatics Director + Head Coach

Number of pools: 1 (~5 lanes of 15 lane pool allocated for practices), ~12-14 Practices/wk

Ownership: University Owned

“Personality” / Team Focus:

Challenging workouts which cater to both younger (18-30) and older (60+) members

- Atypical demographics (40% 18-35 y/o)
- 50% Fitness, 50% Competitive (including Tri/other events)



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Boston University Masters - Jason Weis



Pros:

- Lane Space is almost always guaranteed
- Great team culture
- Metro Boston Location, easily accessible
- Relatively social team out of water
- We are a workout group under NEM (New England Masters), so lots of friends for nationals!

Cons:

- Leadership/Management can rapidly change priorities
- Masters Swimming is a small piece of the overall aquatics portfolio
- Slow change and added red-tape to cut through, especially with marketing
- Programming cost can vary suddenly



Riptide Masters - Aaron Schneider

Club Size - 77 swimmers (26% of LMSC)

Management Team

Aaron Schneider - CEO/Co-Head Coach/Partner - USMS Level 3 Coach

Stephen Kernion - COO/Co-Head Coach/Partner - USMS Level 3 Coach

5 Independent Contractors perform on deck coaching only - USMS Level 1 & 2

Number of Pools - 2 leased facilities

8 lane 50 meter/16 lane 25 yard indoor pool - University of New Orleans

8 lane 25 yard indoor private K-12 school pool - St. Martin's Episcopal School

Ownership - Riptide Masters Swimming LLC

Partnership Treatment for tax purposes

50% ownership of each partner

“Personality” / Team Focus : $\frac{1}{3}$ competitive swimmers, $\frac{1}{3}$ triathlete, $\frac{1}{3}$ fitness swimmers
strong emphasis is placed on participating in local, regional, and national competitions both OW and pool.
intense training program (higher volume - 75-90 minute workouts)
11 coached workouts offered each week



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Riptide Masters - Aaron Schneider



What works

- With ownership comes complete control (no board, no boss, everyone is a customer)
- We have the largest and most diverse group in our LMSC
- Swimmers just show up and participate - no volunteering necessary
- Riptide Masters Swimmers and Coaches represent over 50% of our LMSC Board
- Our group is very social - fun social activities every month
- We have a core of very competitive swimmers who push each other at every practice
- Partners have specific roles and responsibilities with team management

Challenges

- Pool rental situation and costs increasing annually
- Events closing down the facility (Festivals, Concerts, Graduations, etc)
- Partners bear all the burden of the operating the business
- Time commitment/last minute coverage of workouts
- Competing with age group team for space at private school
- Getting people to participate in meets - would like to see us shift some of the fitness swimmers to meet swimmers



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Dolphins of the Desert - Jeff Commings



Dolphins of the Desert
MASTERS

Club Size: 62 swimmers

Management: Coach-run with one head coach and two assistant coaches; Facility is a private country club that rents lane space to Masters team

Number of pools: 1

Ownership: Under the umbrella of Dolphins of the Desert Swimming Academy (not owned by country club)

“Personality” / Team Focus:

The team's focus is on building a community of swimmers that expands beyond the pool deck. 70 percent of team fitness focused, 30 percent competitive (triathlons, open water and pool events)



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Dolphins of the Desert - Jeff Commings



Dolphins of the Desert
MASTERS

Strengths:


More personalized attention,
Coaches and swimmers know everyone on the team

Weaknesses:

Not enough pool space,
Not able to expand workout times or add workouts



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Wrap-Up / Questions & Answers

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

Next Steps

- As you attend sessions this weekend and participate in discussions, think about how your club's size, structure, & personality affect different issues





**Next Up:
9:15am-10:30am**

**Supporting Local Coaches
Salons A-E**

**Club Operations –
Finances & Staffing
Arkansas/Illinois/Iowa/Kansas**

Presenter Bio

Jason Weis - Boston University Masters, New England

Ed Tsuzuki - Somerset County YMCA Masters, New Jersey

- Our Y Masters home page: <https://www.gscymca.org/programs/aquatics/masters-swimming/>
- Our Instagram page: https://www.instagram.com/scym_tsunami_masters_swimming
- My USMS info page: <https://www.usms.org/people/01Y6M>

Aaron Schneider - Riptide Masters, Southern

Jeff Commings - Dolphins of the Desert, Arizona

Ken Brisbin - Long Beach Grunions, Southern Pacific



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