

## Michael Heather - Candidate for President



The Election Committee has deemed that Michael Heather is a member in good standing of USMS. The candidate has indicated he is planning to attend the USMS National HOD Meeting for this election year and, if elected, is planning to attend all HOD Meetings during his tenure in office.

The candidate was nominated and recommended by *C.J. Rushman* and received a letter of recommendation from *Skip Thompson* in accordance with the USMS Election Operating Guidelines.

The candidate provided the following responses on the Candidate Questionnaire/Consent-to-Run Form:

### Section Two: Candidate Qualifications

- I am a member in good standing of USMS in this election year:* X Yes \_\_\_ No
- I am planning to attend the HOD Meeting for this election year:* X Yes \_\_\_ No
- I am planning to attend all HOD Meetings during my tenure in office:* X Yes \_\_\_ No
- I have attended 1 or more HOD Meetings in the past five years?* X Yes \_\_\_ No

***Please list the USMS National HOD Meetings you have attended, including the dates of attendance:***

1986-2020 inclusive. Every day of every meeting.

### Section Three: Questions

***Why are you interested in this position and why do you believe you would be a good candidate?***

I have extensive experience in national committees, was a member of the bod for 23 years, including 8 years as an officer. USMS has lost its way and needs leadership now like no other time in its history. I am a great candidate because I know how all the committees are supposed to work and I will not ask them to do things outside their mandate. I also know how how staff is

supposed to interact with volunteers and will ensure there is cooperation and excellent communication.

***What do you consider to be the major issues facing USMS now and in the future? As a person holding an elected position within USMS, how would you address these issues?***

(1) Volunteers need to be appreciated and recognized regularly (delegate/LMSC/special awards). They are too precious to treat badly or take for granted. (2) Board of Directors need a leader (will seek strengths and appoint appropriately) to drive it toward positive and correct future policies and actions. (3) USMS needs to grow to 100,000 (new clubs and members) in order to attract serious sponsor money. (4) Humor seems to have been lost, I hope to help USMS find once again. It should be fun to serve your sport, I have witnessed little of that in the past few years. (5) Local meets need support and motivation. A few of our committees and LMSCs could be a great help getting more meets to happen, especially in new pools with new clubs.

***Please list USMS committees on which you have served. Include the dates you were on the committees and the names of the committee chairs under whom you served:***

I have served so long and in so many levels, that it would be easier to list the committees on which I have not served. That being said, I chaired the convention committee for 12 years, cochaired for 4 years. Was a member of Marketing (Rich Burns), Rules (June Krauser), Legislation (Kathy Casey), Long Distance, and a couple others that no longer exist. I was on two task forces, chair of one that examined membership dues, I was on the governance task force that created the very governing style we now use. As an officer, I oversaw (ex officio) 8-10 committees, including: Coaches, Championship, Fitness, LMSC Development, Officials and a few others.

***Please list any other experience that relates to your qualifications for the position.***

Six year American Red Cross volunteer, Disaster team leader for 3 years. Owner of a successful business for 37 years.

***Please list any other information you would like included.***

USMS is a sporting organization that should keep a narrow focus on health, education, growth of the organization and social opportunities for its members. Virtual and Zoom meetings do nothing to help the members meet and learn about one another in a way that face to face meetings can. It is all too apparent that the disastrous effect of the health panic of 2020 has hurt USMS a great deal and we shall work hard to overcome latent misery and exclusion. USMS has a long history of social networking that has been set aside for no good reason.

***Please write a short summary statement that will be posted on the display board with your photograph at the HOD Meeting***

Volunteers are a precious resource that cannot be misused, ignored or polarized. You all are meaningful participants in a great effort to bring swimming to every adult in the country, if not the world.

Your vote for me shall not be wasted. I will work hard to recreate the fun and energetic atmosphere we have all come to expect and treasure. I seek only to make USMS a great organization of which one would want to be a member once again. New growth does not mean more people in your lane, it means more opportunities for meets and friends that you have not yet met.

If we set and reach a goal of 100,000 members in the next five years, we will have returned all of the missed opportunities of the last 10 years. USMS has in the past seen 10-20% year after year growth. We can not expect to stay healthy and thrive as an organization if we do not begin to grow again. Growth is fine and well but not the ultimate goal. Adult swimming is a good source of healthy living for society. The more we grow, the more we help keep Americans healthy and drowning resistant!

In 2010, when FINA added several relays to Masters world record keeping, I was able to coax two clubs (Rose Bowl and Mission Viejo) to sanction relay meets and set almost 60 new World records. Although many have been eclipsed in time, they all have a first spot in the record book. Please look them up! I did not participate on any of those relays, being out of town at a USMS Board of Directors meeting.

In 2009, I created a round table for all US Masters aquatic sports to find common ground upon which we all could interact and grow our sports. Nearly everyone in Masters Synchro, Diving and Water Polo are USMS members! In 2010, there was a Masters diving exhibition during the SC Nationals in Washington.

Letter of Nomination and Recommendation

From: C.J. Rushman

Date: April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Subject Line: Nomination of Michael Heather

To: The Elections Committee

I nominate Michael Heather for the office of president of USMS. I also recommend him for this office.

I first met Mike in 2009, and know him to be a devoted and impassioned advocate for the organization. We do not always agree on the issues, but his position is always the result of thoughtful deliberation, and he respects my opinion when we disagree.

I worked most closely with Mike on the Board of Directors, and found him to be unflappable in the face of ever-changing situations. He always came through, no matter how difficult or odd the request. In fact, he usually anticipated the needs of the committee chairs or delegates, and already had just what was needed in his handy briefcase. This is a quality that would serve him well as president.

Mike was a member of the Board of Directors for more than 20 years, worked long and hard in every position he has held and with every task he was given, and wants to continue to serve the organization.

Sincerely,

*Christopher J. Rushman*

C.J. Rushman, Rules & Investment Committee Member

**Letter of Reference:** For Michael Heather to the position of President USMS

**To:** USMS Elections Committee

**Date:** 4/25/23

I am happy and honored to recommend and endorse the nomination of Michael Heather for the position of President of United States Masters Swimming. I have known Michael since 1988 and have found his service to USMS to be without equal and without blemish. Over the years he has proven to be a loyal and determined board member, officer, national committee chair (and member) and task force chair (and member). He is always working and striving to improve USMS within its boundaries and policies. I believe he will be an excellent candidate and will add a great deal of institutional knowledge as well as perspective to the growth process.

Michael started his membership in 1976 and has contributed to the growth of Masters Swimming in Southern California through his participation and leadership with Southern Pacific Masters Swimming. On the National level he was a member of the Convention Committee for many years and then became Chair of that Committee from 1993 to 2005. From 2006 to 2009 he was elected Vice President of Community Service and from 2010 to 2013 he was elected Vice President of National Operations. That is a total of 20 Years on the United States Masters Swimming Board of Directors.

Mike has worked long and hard in every position he has held and with every task he was given, and wants to continue to serve the organization. He has made significant contributions in all leadership areas of US Masters Swimming and works diligently to create a positive result for all involved. He truly shows a lifelong passion for swimming by going above and beyond in his commitment to USMS.

I am pleased to endorse his candidacy give my permission for this letter to be published to our USMS delegates in the Convention packet.

Sincerely,

Skip Thompson