



“Go the Distance” July, 2008 Highlights

GTD July “Deep Thought on Fitness” (Linda Shoenberger)

Swimming for fitness improves endurance which in turn improves one's quality of life. Since swimming is a non-impact sport, it can be enjoyed for a lifetime.

July Highlight # 1: Meet your new GTD Pals!

The USMS Fitness Event “Go the Distance” (GTD) is sponsored by the USMS Fitness Committee. I’m tickled to introduce you to your new GTD pals that will be helping with GTD and greatly contributing to our event.

Marcia Anziano (60-64, 247.27 Miles Year to date)

Marcia is the chair of the USMS Fitness Committee. Behind the scenes, Marcia has been very generous with her energy and extremely supportive of our event. She has ensured that we have enough folks to help and to make sure that this event continues to be run smoothly. She has even graciously offered to tackle the issue of “what happens if Mary gets hit by a speeding beer truck”? Therefore, she will be maintaining a “back-up” of our data so that she can take over if this unlikely event occurs (yikes!). She also knows where to find the GTD awards (caps, patches and certificates!) in my house (closets, spare rooms etc.) should she need to retrieve them for distribution!

Greta van Meeteren (60-64, 223.34 Miles Year to date)

Greta has graciously offered to help us with the really fun new GTD feature “Meet GTD Swimmers”! This feature is designed to meet you – the GTD participant! We strongly believe ALL GTD participants have a story to tell - no matter how far or how fast you swim! Whether you are completing your first 50 miles or nearing the 500 distance milestone – we would like to meet you and hear your “real life story” and why you are “going the distance”! Participants will be selected on a random basis (geek that I am). Of course, you will be asked for your approval first. If and when you do agree to participate, Greta will be your GTD pal that will get in touch with you and “interview” you.

Linda Shoenberger (60-64 and still needs to be convinced to join the GTD fun!)

Linda will be providing us with the GTD monthly fitness tip fondly called “Deep thoughts for Fitness”. The July fitness tip is a good one!

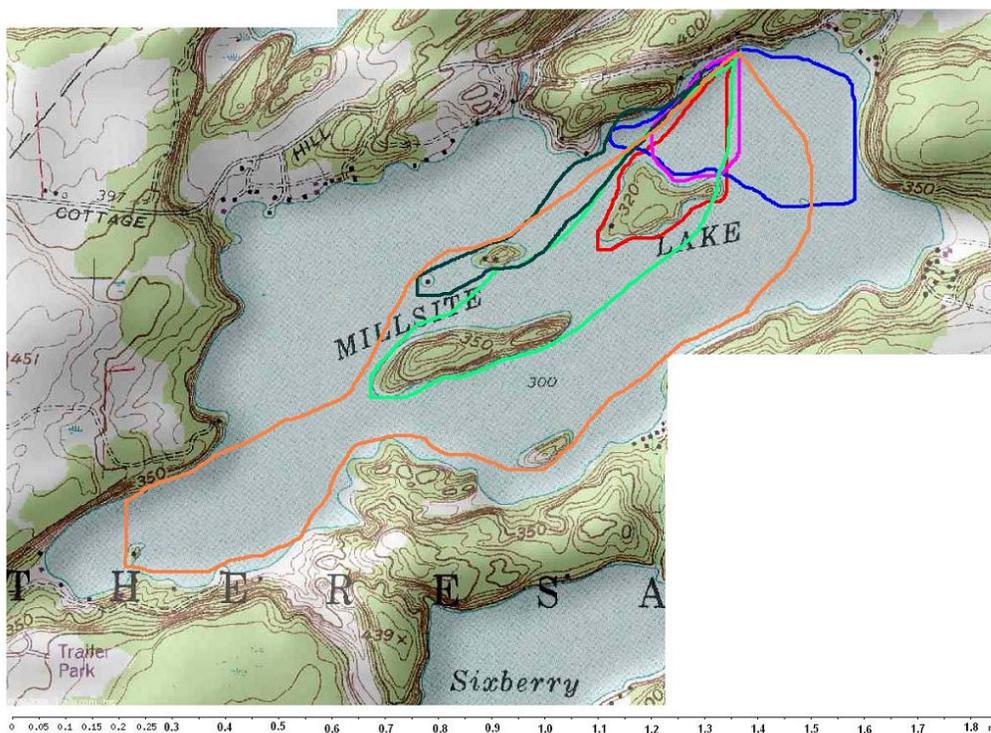
***Please join me in welcoming these ladies to the fun of GTD
and help me thank them for all of their help!***

July Highlight # 2: “Tracking your Distance”

Bob Adams (45-49, 240.92 miles year to date) sent me this very cool map of some of the routes he swam while enjoying the summer in New York. His description of his “training partner” is pretty neat too!

"Have been swimming every day. There is an outdoor public pool within walking distance. Spent last week at my parent's lake cottage. Swam several times a day. The lake is about 2 miles long with 7 islands. So there is a wide variety of possibilities for different swim routes. A map of my swimming routes is attached. The water is clean and very pleasant to swim in. Often Rosie, my parent's Labrador retriever, swims along with me. Early in the morning the lake is very still, perfect conditions for open water swimming. Sometimes there is a stiff breeze and the waves are quite rough. Rosie really hates it when I swim into the wind. The waves splash water down her nose. She tries to bite my elevated hand in the crawl stroke to get me to turn back. Sometimes I will take a long swim around several islands. Rosie walks along the shore while I swim, then joins me in the water between islands".

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“Meet GTD Swimmer”: Kathleen Tokuda (45-49,154.59 miles)

Kathleen was a bit hesitant when I asked if she would be willing to let us meet her ... I'm not sure why as she has a delightful story she has to tell! I'm sure it will make you smile too as I'm guessing we can ALL relate to some of her swimming experiences and situations! She is very generous with her kind words about the group she swims with ... but I'm guessing she's the one that is the real inspiration to the others!

My parents drown proofed me as a youngster - I think I might have had a few "tadpole" lessons at the community pool - but that's about all the formal swimming experience I had. Then, in college a friend dragged me to a pool until I could swim a mile in an hour (non-stop) - which I took as further evidence that I was a good swimmer. Hey, being able to swim for an hour OR a mile was a big deal. It was after all, a dramatic improvement over swimming the length of a pool and clinging to the edge, or the ropes mid-way if no one was looking. I did not discover that I didn't know how to swim until a few years ago, on a date with a triathlete - who insisted, in spite of my bragging, that a 1-mph PR sucks. We argued (in good fun) for a couple years about that. But in any event, when that triathlete signed up for an Ironman, I agreed to do the swim training with him, which for me meant joining a masters team, and quickly confirmed that I in fact did not know how to swim. I've been swimming with the Southside Seals (GAJA) since March 2007. Although their focus is generally on fitness (due perhaps to the high proportion of triathletes in the mix), they have worked hard (patiently) to teach me how to swim all strokes. I've moved up to the middle lane. And I no longer think about sinking to the bottom of the pool (to rest/die, whatever) in the middle of a masters work-out. It hasn't been officially documented yet but I think I've doubled my mile swim pace. And incidentally, I now swim faster than the Ironman! When I watch "real" swimmers, I am still aware that I really don't know how to swim, but I did do a 300-yard IM as part of a masters work-out recently. I won't brag about how long it took me, but it is a testament to the strong support, dedication, and collective teaching skills of the Southside Seals.

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p.s. I am participating in GTD because it has always been posted on the Southside Seals bulletin board (it was easy enough since I keep track of yardage anyway) and I've over-heard hints that increased participation in masters events would be considered a good thing.

p.p.s. I am unemployed, (er, a self-employed student) so have the scheduling flexibility to go to all 3 weekly masters work-outs. If there was an attendance award - I'd get it.

Additional Comments

Yes, I'm very happy that I've improved a bunch. But very often, I feel like I just don't know how to swim - and it's VERY discouraging. That's why I love the technique articles in USMS Swimmer magazine: my favorites were "Size and Timing" and "Face Down Drill" by Dennis Baker because I was able to apply the drills and (I think) improved my strokes. I also found "Activating the Core" by Mo Chambers and "Pilates Power" by Karen Rodman particularly useful. I haven't tried "Flip Turn Drill" by Beth O'Connor Baker yet but it looks great. And I'm on my 2nd batch of Bronwyn Lewis' recipe for waterlogged ears.

Ok-I got off on a tangent above. I suppose I should send that to the editor of Swimmer.

Anyway, thanks for your support. If it makes my story any more interesting to drop a name, tonight I shared a lane with USMS President Rob Copeland, SouthSide Seal regular. (And I didn't get lapped. Of course, that was mostly due to Rob's gracious choice of strokes and just the right sets, but I do remember a time when it would have been impossible, no matter how hard Rob tried. Yet another sign of improvement.)

“Meet GTD Swimmer”: Lindsey Urbatchka (25-29 age group; 339.70 miles to date).

Greta van Meeteren: *I asked Lindsey to participate in our “Meet the GTD Swimmer” and Lindsey sent me a great story about herself and her swimming (and running) lifestyle. I’m sure you’ll be just as delighted to “meet” her as I was. This is what Lindsey says:*

I asked Lindsey to participate in our “Meet the GTD Swimmer” and Lindsey sent me a great story about herself and her swimming (and running) lifestyle. I’m sure you’ll be just as delighted to “meet” her as I was. This is what Lindsey says:

I graduated in May from the University of Kansas (I also swam for them from 2002-2006). I got my Doctorate of Pharmacy and moved out to Tempe, AZ. Why AZ you ask? Well I wanted to swim outside to be honest, so I picked somewhere with “few natural disasters”.

I currently work for The Apothecary Shops, which is a specialty pharmacy, as a clinical pharmacist. We do all kinds of interesting things: oncology, infectious disease (HIV), pain, ophthalmology, women’s health and fertility, sports (all professional sports teams in California, AZ, some in TX and colleges too), as well as veterinary. I really like it and being the new kid is a learning experience every day. I would love to stay here for my career, however my boyfriend is trying out for the AFL (arena football) and NFL...so I may be moving or he may be coming out here to go to Med School. Life is quite the adventure for me!

Swimming is one of the few things in life that gives me the most consistency and never lets me down! It has given me more than I can write down - work ethic, determination, FRIENDS, a degree from school, and adrenaline on a daily basis! I've been swimming since I was 3 and competitively since I was 7. My parents tossed me into swim lessons so I wouldn't drown and I took off like a fish. You know when the swim teacher constantly asks you if you're sure you're supposed to be in that higher level? Ya that was me. I've always loved to swim. In my first year of competitive swimming I was State Champ Overall and proceeded to grow through Zones, and Jr. Nats and Nats to college. That freshmen year of college will definitely test your love for and desire to swim. The entire coaching staff changed my 2nd day of practice at KU. I asked to come home everyday after that until the spring when my coach and I revamped my training to more sprint and I began to swim faster again. I was top 8 in the big 12 in the 100 fly, top 16 in the 50 and 100 free, 100 and 200 backstroke throughout the years and on record setting relays for KU. I swam all lifetime bests and learned a lot of college lessons!

I continued to swim immediately after college on the Lawrence Sharks Masters team in KS. I swam 4-5 times a week and recently have increased to 6-7 times (3000-4000 yards or meters) since coming to AZ. I was Masters Nats Champ in the 50 fly in 2007, but haven’t been able to race due to pharm school and moving. I now train with the Arizona Sun Devils Masters team and still love racing. 100 fly is my favorite but I like training I.M. (minus the breaststroke). Pool swimming only. I am not a fan of lake swims.

GTD allows me to see how much work I actually do and when I think about how much less it is compared to college, I realize how extremely crazy I was back then! HAHHAHA.

My friends would probably tell you I'm crazy for all the training I do. I picked up running and I've done 2 half marathons this year. I'm by no means good at them but I do enjoy them. I try and run 4 times a week at least for an hour. So between swimming, work and running, I find time to play at pools or clubs and game nights!

I would say one of my favorite things to do is anchoring relays. I picked up the name "Showstopper" my freshmen year when I was doing a challenge race set of 175s backstroke and beat some freestylers. So whenever I was announced in college (at home-our assist coach Charlie had an ESPN voice) I was "from Sheridan, WY...Lindsey... The Showstopper.... Urbatchka!!!"

Carrying that nickname carries some pressure and on the final leg of the relays we remained undefeated at home. It also helped to pump me up for individual races! I love to be the swimmer to upset the faster swimmer, I hate to lose and I know that it is up to me to swim the best time of my life and/or to swim the greatest time of my life, but as long as I give it my all the water won't ever let me down, and I'll always have an addiction to chlorine.

Lindsey

“Meet GTD Swimmer”: Paul Bousel

(55-59 age group, 277.33 miles to date)

Greta van Meeteren: When we asked Paul to share his story with us, his reply was: “I’d be happy to participate, although I can’t say I’m all that interesting”. Personally, I do not believe that there is an un-interesting Masters swimmer; everyone has fascinating things to say. As for Paul, here is his story:

Real Life

I am the Assistant Director of the Academic Advising Center at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA where I have worked since 1984. I like projects that entail gathering and analyzing information relating to the students with whom I work—mostly college freshmen and sophomores who have not yet declared a major.

I am married and have two grown children—a son who is 29 and a daughter who is 25. Life is neither busy nor slow, which works very well for me.

I wanted to work in a college/university setting after completing graduate school, so I suppose I am where I thought I would be even if I am not doing exactly what I originally wanted.

Real Life and Swimming

Swimming is most definitely a hobby. I have been swimming since childhood, but I began swimming regularly about 20 years ago, and I started swimming masters in 2001.

I always swam in the summer. I started to swim year round when I realized I did not want to stop at the end of the summer.

I do not do competitive swimming, but I do run about 25 road races every year. Swimming is a big part of my life. I definitely miss it when I am unable to swim for any reason.

Swimming Habits!

I usually attend a 90-minute masters practice four mornings a week. In our lane, we usually swim 4,000-4,400 yards in a typical practice. I like swimming free style, and I really enjoy practices where we do a variety of distances. I prefer pool swimming and have done very little open water swimming.

Why do you participate in GTD?

I like to mark my progress and see how much I swim month to month.

I’d advise other GTD swimmers to be flexible and if they do not achieve a particular goal not to get discouraged. I find that there is often some issue that causes me to miss a practice or two and thus not achieve my goal.

I was hoping to reach 500 miles for this year, but I probably will not unless I start doing five practices a week.

Tell us about your personality

Hobbies: running, reading, songwriting, crossword puzzles, Sudoku.

Three adjectives: funny, helpful, and thoughtful.

I think my friends would say that I have a good sense of humor and am usually considerate of others. They may say I am a creature of habit bordering on compulsive and/or predictable.

Favorite swim story:

The first time I went to a masters practice I did not know what to expect, and I was concerned about the length of the practice (90 minutes), when I was used to swimming no more than 30 minutes. I had a great time and felt energized at the end of the practice. This was in July 2001, and by the end of the summer, I was hooked; I have been swimming masters ever since.