

## Walnut Creek Masters Team Survey Results and Responses

**Introduction.** Walnut Creek Masters (WCM) conducted a voluntary team survey during the February 2010 to assess the level of member satisfaction with various elements of the program. A ten point Likert scale was used to measure: practice times, stroke work, dry land training, social events, website and communications, fitness events, and open water events. A score of 1 meant “less” was desired; ten meant “more” was desirable. A score of 5 or 6 indicated “about right” level of satisfaction. Each of the above survey topics was followed by a space for participants to write comments. Following the Likert scale, two open-ended questions asked for participant input for “other changes” they would like to see with (1) the WCM program and (2) the Coaches and Board.

**Demographics.** One-fifth of the members (80 of 397) participated in the survey. Fifty percent of the participants were female and 50% were male. A majority of the respondents (65%) identified themselves as “competitive,” whereas 16% identified themselves as “fitness” only. Also, 35% of the respondents were 60 or older, and only 10% of respondents were in the 30-39 age bracket. The remainder mostly fell in the 40-50 age group. Thus the survey may be interpreted as over representing older team members and under representing younger team members. Participants in the survey are frequent users of the swim program. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents are swimmers who attended practice 3 or more times a week. In this regard, survey information represents members who regularly participate in team practices and events

**Analysis and Discussion.** The following discussion will present a summary and analysis of raw data with a [draft] response from the Board for each of the items in the survey.

1. Practice times.
  - a. Results. The mean, median and mode for this category were 5.75, 5.5 and 5, with a range of scores between 4-10. Responses indicate that members feel “number and time” for workouts are “about right.” Many responses expressed appreciation for the number of available practice times. A few comments asked for new practice times in the morning and at the end of the day, including Friday evening. A few comments requested more Saturday workout times and regularly scheduled Saturday workouts.
  - b. Response. At this time, the Board does not foresee changing or adding practice times. The Team’s use of the pool is limited by time, space and financial resources. Since the pool is shared with other teams and the public, we cannot start practices earlier in the evening. Adding another morning practice would require paying for more coach and pool time, which currently is not financially feasible.

Regarding Saturday practices, WCM currently has use of the pool at 9AM, before it opens to the public. We do not expect rolling time slots for Saturday practices. So in this regard, Saturday practice time will remain constant. We will progress toward advance scheduling of Saturday practices on a month-to-month basis. Some months have competitions or other events, which makes it difficult to commit scheduling practices to every Saturday or every other Saturday. We plan to post a Saturday or weekend

workout on the website. Members are encouraged to swim on their own or with others on weekends. As most of us know, WCM does not have lap lanes reserved on weekends during swim time open to the public.

2. Stroke Work.

- a. Results. The mean, median and mode for this category was 6.43, 6, 7 with range from 2 – 10. Again, 6 reflects the “about right” response. So, participants were very largely satisfied with stroke coaching, but the scores reflect a desire for slightly more support in this category.
- b. Responses. Stroke coaching suggestions in this field have been forwarded to the coaching staff. Changes will be made at the discretion of the coaching depending on season and general the needs of the team.

3. Dry land Training.

- a. Results. The mean, median and mode for this inquiry were 7.02, 7 and 8, with a range from 1-10. This response suggests that members would like moderately more dry land training with their conditioning. At this time, WCM does not offer dry land training, so this question was an assessment of the team’s level of interest. Several comments reflected the desire that this type of conditioning be overseen by a coach/instructor.
- b. Response. The Board supports augmenting swimming conditioning with dry land training. Some team members are actively engaged in dry land training in small informal groups. Kerry’s bands workout are currently posted on the WCM Facebook page, courtesy of Ashley Martens and Alex Su. Our use of the weight room is limited in that we do not have exclusive use of the weight room at any given time. Team members share it with public visitors. Because of this, we can only allow small training groups of no more than 5 to use the room at a time, which prevents infringing on the rights of others who may desire to use the room as well.

Bosco will be spearheading a committee to work with Kerry in developing a semi-structured dry land program for small groups. An introductory dry land instruction session opened to all members interested is being discussed which we hope to offer in May. Other actions we are considering include posting a recommended dry land training regimen; supporting the formation of more small dry land training groups; and exploring with the City of Walnut Creek a new fee program of instruction in the Clarke Pool weight room. We invite any member who is interested in participating with the committee to contact Bosco.

4. Social Events.

- a. Results. The mean, median and mode for this category were 6.12, 6, 5, with a range from 3-10. Again, these numbers suggest that members are largely satisfied with the social opportunities for members to congregate outside the pool. The comments reflected ideas for other types of activities and changing the time/date for some existing

activities. Several comments reflected a concern for the burden they feel the social activities place on the few who end up coordinating them, and suggest expanding leadership to coordinate our social events to alleviate that burden.

- b. Response. The Board supports activities that bring its members together in social contexts outside the pool. We will continue our traditional whole team events such as the annual summer picnic and holiday party, and will continue to plan such ad hoc special interest events as baseball game outings, night out at the theatre, and Friday happy hours. We will work on further enhancing our social connections. We encourage any Team members who have ideas for new Team social activities and who are willing to help plan events to contact a Board member.

#### 5. Website & Communication.

- a. Results. The mean, median and mode for this aspect measured were 6.05, 6 and 5 with a range from 1-10. Members are largely satisfied with team communication. Receiving notification from the website by e-mail is especially considered valuable based on comments that were submitted. Several respondents would like to have more interactive e-communication and see posted: services from members; social announcements (i.e., weddings, births); calendar of team events (i.e., meetings).
- b. Response. At the present, the team website is set-up as a read only space, which is administered by only a few members of the board. The Team pays an annual fee for its use the software to its producer. We acknowledge that we are not using all of its capabilities. Board Member and Women's Team Captain Mary Williams will be our new Webmaster and will work on consistently improving the content of the Team website. She will use discretion and explore objectives of the website, keeping in mind the cost of time required to keep the website updated and meaningful. We direct and encourage members to join our Facebook page to network with other members. All Board members and coaches welcome and respond to personal e-mails. E-mails can be found on the membership roster of the website.

#### 6. Fitness.

- a. Results. This inquiry was constructed to assess satisfaction with swimming programs that were not sanctioned swim meets or open water events (i.e., Postal Swim, March Madness, etc) The mean, median and mode for this inquiry were 6.14, 6, and 5 with a range from 1-10. These scores suggest that members feel the fitness events are about right. However, many of the comments revealed that participants were unsure as to what the "fitness events" were.
- b. Response. The Board will offer better promotion of events that are considered "fitness events." Board Member Amy Besheim will be in charge of promoting our Team fitness events. We look for support from all team members to facilitate events as they come up. Please contact Amy to let her know you can help.

## 7. Open Water.

- a. Results. The mean, median and mode for this were 6.04, 6 and 5.75, with a range between 1-10. Again, participants are satisfied with the Team's efforts in promoting and encouraging participation in open water swimming events. Several comments suggested that they have recently become more aware of open water events and activities organized by the team. Some suggestions included adding more open water training (for a fee) and open water fun (not necessarily competitive races). Still other felt open water activities were not well attended.
- b. Response. The Board plans to continue supporting team sponsored open water swimming events. We plan to have our Team banner at Northern California events for our swimmers. To kick-off the season, we will have the Team picnic at the Del Valle Reservoir race in June, as we did last year. Board Members Mike Piazza and B.J. Henry will lead our Team Open Water activities this year. We will explore conducting team open water practices at the Shadow Cliffs East Bay Regional Park, and will encourage swimmers to participate in the Pacific Masters Open Water clinics being offered this year. We will continue our communication of open water events with the Team Website and Open Water email group.

### **Responses to Open Ended Survey Questions**

Question 8: What change to the WCM program would you like to see?

Question 9: What other suggestion/comments would you like to offer our coaches and board of director?

, Several comments specifically regarded workout structure and content. These comments have been forwarded to the coaches, and changes will be made at the discretion of the coaching staff depending on the season and general the needs of the team. We also forwarded the many accolades of praise to them as well. Points that were raised primarily regarding the condition of the pool have been submitted to the City of Walnut Creek's Parks, Recreation and Open Space committee. All ideas submitted on the surveys were creative, and comments were constructive. They will be fully considered in future Board decisions and planning.

### **Conclusion**

This is the second time WCM has conducted a team-wide survey. This year we received 20 percent return in responses, which mainly represented high frequency swimmers and competitive swimmers on the Team. The Survey found that in all areas of measure (practice time, stroke coaching, dry land training, social events, website & communication, fitness events and open water events) participants were overall satisfied with how the program is meeting their needs. Open-ended comments offered suggestions to enhance aspects of these topics. Other comments recommended delegating the work of

organizational events to other members, so the burden of this work would not fall on the shoulders of only a few. (Last year we expanded the number of Board Members, and we will actively solicit Team Members to assist the Board.) Finally, the open-ended comments were appreciative of having access to such a program that in their esteem was among the best ever, and extended gratitude to the coaches for their dedication.

This study is limited in that it only measured *satisfaction* with various elements of the team programs. It did not ask members to weigh various elements in comparison to each other, such as which do you rate as more important for the team, x or y. Future surveys might consider finding ways to recruit more participation and obtaining a better representation of the team. Free online services are available to conduct surveys, which may or may not improve participation.

The Board gratefully acknowledges the members who took the time to complete the survey. Thank you for your support.