

NOVA Masters News – Summer 2022

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Those interested in watching the USMS Long Course Nationals here in Richmond, VA at SWIMRVA August 3-7, it is free to attend or can be viewed, via live stream, on the usms.org event page. Good luck to Kevin, James, Brad, Dirk, Luke, Dave H. and Val!

SWIMMING COMPETITIONS – POOL –

Val Van Horn Pate crushes Four LMSC records

2022 TIDE Big Kahuna Classic (LCM), June 18, 2022, at Princess Anne YMCA in Virginia Beach



Val in the 100 M Fly

Four NOVA Masters swimmers made their way down to the long course outdoor meet in Virginia Beach.

Val Van Horn Pate led the way to win four events in the Women's 60-64 age category, while setting LMSC records in all four – 50 Fly – 34.73, 100 fly – 1:21.59, 50 Back 38.02 and 100 Back – 1:23.27. Val crushed the 100 Fly record by 7 seconds which had been on the books since 2010 set by a former NOVA Masters swimmer, Terry Sue Gault. Val

took a combined total of 13 seconds off those four event records. **Patrick Lowry** placed first in three of his four events in the Men's 40-44 age group -- 50 Fly - 30.55, 50 Back - 34.04, 100 Back - 1:14.37 and second by four tenths of second in the 50 Free – 27.96.

Luke Garcia also brought home three golds in the Men's 18-24 age group with fast swims in the 100 Back 1:13.15, 200 Back – 2:38.00 and everyone's favorite the 200 Fly (remember this is long course – 50 m pool) in 2:42.82 while finishing second in the 100 Free – 1:04.62. Way to grind it out Luke!

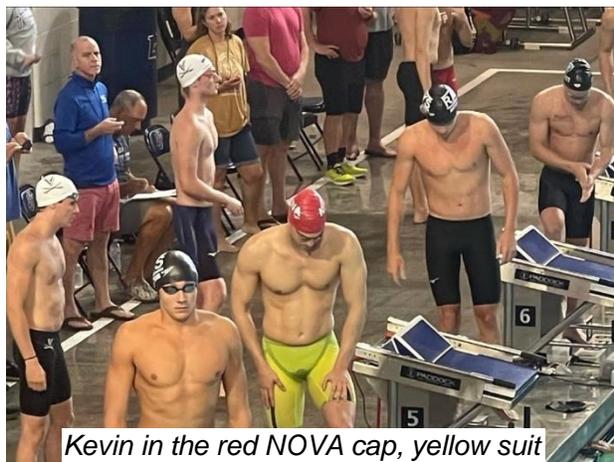
Kevin Mastracci arrived in time for a few sprints in the Men's 25-29 age group edging out a TIDE competitor by mere tenths of a second to go a 24.50 in the 50 Free while posting a 54.88 to win the 100 again by mere tenths. Kevin also won the 50 Fly in 26.09. Mark's training will get you ready! Well done NOVA Masters!



Luke, Kevin and Val

Kevin Mastracci, Fastest NOVA Swimmer (Age Group or Masters)
at Long Course Senior Champs!!

**Senior Championships (Long Course), July 14-17, 2022 Liberty University,
Lynchburg, VA**



Kevin in the red NOVA cap, yellow suit

He's not the youngest one on the blocks, nor the smallest one, nor the most heavily trained swimmer but **Kevin Mastracci** makes the most of his 90 minutes each weekday morning with Coach **Mark Kutz**. Quality over quantity. Mark's mantra is "To go fast, you have to swim fast." So that is what Mark trains his swimmers at NOVA Masters to do, specifically on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Kevin took his training to heart and showed the youngsters how it is done by clocking a 23.60 in the 50 M Free finishing 3rd behind two UVA hotshots. In the 100

M Free he went a 52.97 good enough for 10th place while taking 30th place in the 100 M Fly in a time of 59.02. Kevin also swam on 4 relays with some notable splits -- 22.95 in 50 M free, 52.07 for 100 M free, and 24.90 in the 50 M Fly

Kevin had this to say about the meet, "This Senior Champs was my first long course championship meet ever, and it was a great experience. Aside from swimming and placing well, it was super cool to be surrounded by a few big-name swimmers and I even got to race a couple of current American record holders. Always fun to race some of the best of the best!"



Kevin in the 100 M Fly

OPEN WATER-

James Crabbe WINS it all!!

VA Beach One Mile Open Water Swim

Sunday, June 19, 2022

Three NOVA Masters took on the rough waters of the ocean Sunday morning – **Sallie Godwin, James Crabbe,** and **Val Van Horn Pate.**

After the lifeguards determined the water current and wind to be moving uncharacteristically from north to south the meet director asked the record number of registered swimmers (282) to walk the boardwalk from 24th to 40th street for a reversal of the swim course direction. Two separate

waves were created to accommodate the masses with Sallie and James starting in the first, and Val in the second wave five minutes later. James navigated the rough seas far better than anyone (!) as he posted the **fastest** overall time at the race - 22:58.92!! Val finished first in the Women's 55-59 age group, 8th overall female, 30th overall in a time of 27:06.11, while Sallie was just edged out of third finishing fourth in the Women's 30-34 age group, 36th female, 85th overall in 32:23.04.

Congratulations James for a fantastic performance!!



James on far right, 1st overall winner with the runner ups



Val, James, Sallie

Bradley Beach Ocean Mile Swim, Saturday, July 2, 2022, Bradley Beach, NJ



Val at Bradley Beach, NJ

Avon By-The-Sea Ocean Mile Swim, Sunday, July 3, 2022, Avon, NJ

Braving the 58-degree waters of the Atlantic Ocean over the Fourth of July holiday weekend, **Val Van Horn Pate**, held her own as she won her age group (Women 53-59) in both races. Bradley Beach she finished seventh overall, fourth overall female out of 80 swimmers in the point-to-point race in a time of 22:48. Avon attracted twice the number of participants, despite the drizzle and cold-water temperatures, Val finished 4th overall female, 19th overall in a time of 27:30.

Bringing Home the Hardware!



Sallie proudly displaying her 2nd place medal

**Virginia Beach Ocean Swim Series, #2
3000-meter Swim, July 17, 2022,
as reported by Dave Holland**

I (**Dave Holland**) can't remember the last time I was asked to do a race report. Then again, I can't remember the last time I actually signed up for an open water race!! It's been a few years, so I signed up with the attitude of "nothing ventured, nothing gained". What's the worst thing that can happen? Well, on the drive down that Sunday morning, I did consider the worst-case scenarios, i.e., a shark bite, swimming the wrong direction, swimming out to sea, swallowing a jellyfish, and on and on. Once I got to the beach and looked at the placid water, all anxieties floated away, and I said to myself, "Wow what a fine fine day. Finer than the fuzz on a bee's upper lip", as Mark would say. Let's go swimming! We

started at 17th street, with a beach start, and after rounding the initial buoy, I decided to get away from the congestion, so I went out to sea a little, then remembered, "wait, don't swim out to sea, Dave! Swim parallel." I settled into a rhythm and spotted a very large hotel in the distance that seemed to work for navigation, aimed for it thinking it was near the finish line, and enjoyed the nice conditions. I had calculated that it would take close to an hour to swim 3000 meters in the ocean, so I was surprised when, after about a half hour of being in LaLa land, I noticed a lifeguard beside me on a boogie board. Oh, that's nice, I feel safe, I was thinking, she's escorting me. Then I noticed she was waving to get my attention. "Oh, crap, what have I done?" So, I stopped, and looked up, "is there a problem?" She said, "no problem, but you are at the finish, so you may want to head toward the shore." Oh my! I looked around and realized, "holy crap, you really were swimming out to sea, you dumbass!" The finish buoy was a good 100 yards toward shore, so I changed directions and headed straight for the beach,

swimming until I hit sand with my hand, and then charging up the shore to the finish line, crossing to thunderous applause (ok, maybe one person clapped). Catching my breath just past the finish, a lifeguard removed the chip from my ankle, a chip that somehow magically knew that I finished in 37:34.00, much faster than I should have been for that distance. Did I mention that conditions were perfect? The wind was from the south at 10mph, so obviously we all enjoyed a little push. Apparently, I finished 8th overall, and first in my age group (50-54). And guess what, I didn't swallow any jellyfish, and didn't swim out to sea (thanks to the lifeguard).

Sallie Penn Godwin also represented NOVA masters very well that day, and unlike Dave, she had more recent experience with open water swims. Sallie had done the first race in the series a few weeks earlier (the one-mile swim on June 19), and apparently the conditions were much more difficult in that first swim, with red flags out on the beach, and people getting tossed around so much in the waves, that a few people tossed their cookies. Sunday, July 17, however, was a different story. Sallie reports that "it was basically the perfect day. The weather was amazing compared to the first swim, and instead of thinking about not dying, I was able to find a nice groove and really have fun. I'm not gonna say that I actually swam fast, but I did enjoy it." Well, the results prove that she DID swim fast, as she finished in 41:59, or 22:32 per mile average pace. Sallie swam it smarter than Dave, staying close to the shore, rounding the last buoy, and sprinting up the beach to claim second in her age group (30-34), 16th overall female, 36th overall. Afterward, everyone stuck around for a nice awards ceremony, with Sallie and Dave both claiming some hardware to bring home to show Mark. It's always nice to hang a medal around your neck and bask in the glow for a few minutes... or maybe the entire day, including the 2-hour car ride home. Ah, the joys of masters swimming!



Dave and Sallie with their hardware

Val's team places **SECOND** in division in Trans Tahoe Relay!



George, Jeff and Val at Sand Harbor, Lake Tahoe, NV for a pre-race training swim

Trans-Tahoe Relay, Saturday, July 16, 2022, Lake Tahoe, NV/CA

Val Van Horn Pate

organized a 6-member team to compete in this year's 11.4-mile crossing from Sand Harbor Bay, NV to Skylandia Park, CA in the frigid waters (typically mid-50's) of Lake Tahoe. No wetsuits permitted. Two members of the team were former NOVA Masters swimmers, George Sushoff and Jeff Miladin. With Jeff having relocated to the

Nevada area, about a year

ago, he recruited three other team members from his Nevada Masters group. With over 170 teams competing, that's roughly 1050 swimmers, the race organizers held strict to their rules of one escort boat per team, four waves of swimmers at the start departing 10 minutes apart, each swimmer swimming a 30-minute segment in rotational order, followed by 10-minute segments until the team finished, all swimmers had to stay in their rotating order except for the last quarter mile, each changeover (i.e. Like passing the baton) the finishing swimmer had to tag his/her teammate prior to the new swimmer starting. There were a variety of divisions, but Val's team was in the Mixed (3 men/3 women) 300-360 age group (combination of team member's ages).



Here's Val's view of the day. "With high winds and colder than average water temps this spring, the team expected rough and cold water, but they were pleasantly surprised on race day with mid-60 water temps, light wind, and glorious sunshine. I was dropped from the boat at Sand Harbor at 7:30 AM, as the horn was signaling the start of Wave 1 (swimmers in blue hats) rang out. The sun had not yet creped over the mountains which left the remaining swimmers shivering on the cold sandy beach awaiting their wave start and the horn. Red hat swimmers took off, as did the green hats, until finally the yellow hat swimmers were all that remained. They moved us across the timing device reading our ankle chips as we inched forward into the ankle-deep water, which was surprisingly warm compared to the sand. The clock ticked down to zero.

The horn rang off as we all ran for the water, some dolphining up and down while others

freestyled it all attempting to power to the front and round the first couple of buoys before making it out to the open water of Lake Tahoe! I found myself between two swimmers both about my speed and neither one about to give an inch. We clubbed each other repeatedly. Funny how situations like this take your mind off things like the water temperature, one's breathing or lack thereof and the beauty and clarity of the water in which one can see 80 feet down. As we rounded the second buoy the swimmers began to thin out and I sighted my boat, waving to them as they had not yet spotted me, and I swam on. This boat was to accompany me (and my teammates) across the lake. At 29:50 George hopped in the water ahead of me for the tag, and he took off as I got myself to and into the boat. Another 30 minutes went by, and Jeff is now in the water for the tag. Then came Kathy, Tim, and Karen. One rotation completed. I jumped in for the tag with Karen for a 10-minute sprint, then George etc for another 94 minutes before we arrived at the quarter mile yellow buoy denoting the finish whereby, we sent George in. Our team finished in 4 hours; 43 minutes, good enough for second place in our division. This event was a dream come true!

Val ready for the drop at Sand Harbor Beach, Trans Tahoe relay, NV

A few takeaways from this experience – swimming brings people together as I made three new friends as my teammates. I have swum in no bluer, clearer, purer, more pristine water than Lake Tahoe. Cold is as much mental as it is physical. One swims harder for a team, than for one's self.

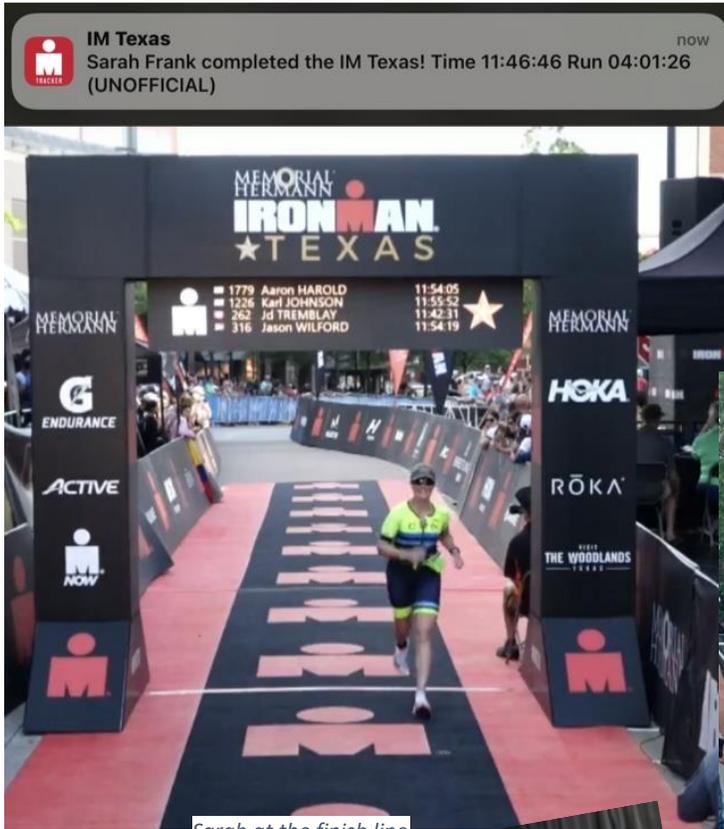


Trans Tahoe Relay - Tim, Val, George, Karen, Jeff & Kathy at the finish

OTHER ATHLETIC ENDEAVORS –

Sarah Frank is Triumphant!

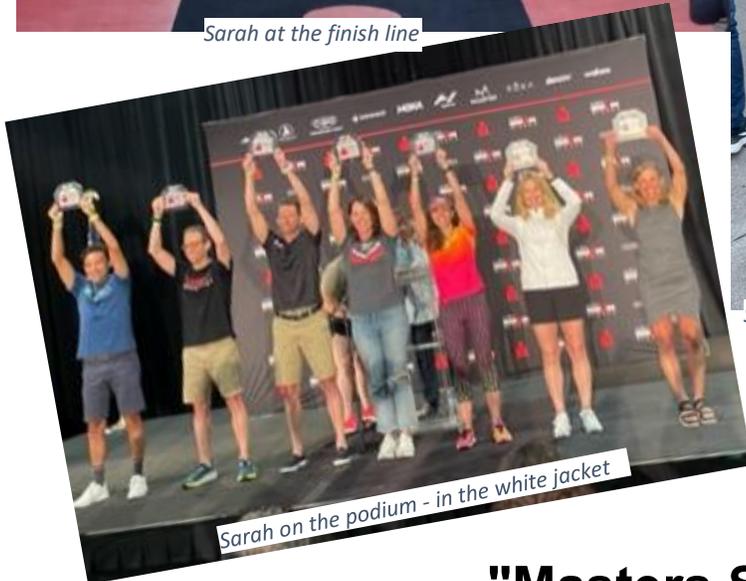
Sarah Frank participated in **Ironman Texas** in April (2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike and 26.2 marathon). She completed it in 11:46 and grabbed a 3rd place finish in her age group. She was 291st overall in a field of 1840 finishers (the finishing number dwindled due to a 21% DNF rate. It was a hot and very windy day!) Many thanks to Mark and his coaching to get the swim done!!



Sarah at the finish line



Sarah with her husband, Jonathan and daughter, Hannah



Sarah on the podium - in the white jacket

"Masters Spotlight" is on ... **Jim**

O'Hanlon

When did you join NOVA Masters and how often do you swim?

I initially joined NOVA Masters in 2006. I swim with the late masters three days a week.

Background as a swimmer and an athlete.

I played sports all my life. I played football and track (running mostly 100 to 800 yards) in high school. At the United States Naval Academy, each year was segmented into trimesters and every midshipman was required to participate on a varsity or intramural sport each trimester. I participated in several sports: wrestling, cross country running, boxing, rugby, track, and lettered in Sprint Football. Sprint football is a varsity intercollegiate sport with a weight limit on how heavy a player is allowed to be. When I played, the limit was 155 pounds and we had to weigh in two days before each game. Physical fitness was a requirement at the Academy. We had to pass several physical tests each year. If a midshipman failed to pass a test, he would be placed on a "subsquad" and required to work on that physical activity until he could pass the test. I did well on all the tests except one – swimming! I barely passed the swimming tests. I grew up in Maine where all the swimming we did was in lakes. When I was about 10 years old, I was in a rowboat with my older brother, and I asked him if he would teach me how to swim. He said sure and then picked me up and threw me out of the boat and rowed off. When I finally made it to shore, he said I now knew how to swim. Really, all I learned was how not to drown! I swam mostly in a vertical position, keeping my head out of the water so I could breathe. So, when we had swimming tests at the Academy, I did my best but barely passed. When I saw how well most other midshipmen could swim, it set a goal in my mind that someday I want to swim well.

What motivates you to get up and swim at 6:00 or 7:30 AM?

Part of the reason is my desire to learn how to swim. Part of it is swimming is a terrific physical activity to stay in shape and causes less stress on the joints than running. I stopped running several years ago and ended up having my right hip replaced in 2019 (four days after Mark had his replaced). Swimming can be a lonely activity and just swimming laps back and forth alone was very boring to me. So, what motivates me the most are the people with whom I swim. And, of course, our great coach, Mark!

What occupies your time outside of the pool?

I enjoy spending time with my wife, Claudia, and our family. I have a woodshop where I carve, mostly birds and caricatures. I also turn bowls and other articles on my lathe. I play golf each week with some friends.

Some people might be surprised to know that...

The first time I crossed the Atlantic Ocean was under sail on the USCG barque, Eagle, when I was on an exchange cruise with Coast Guard. The Eagle is 300 feet long, has three tall masts and 23 sails. The main mast is 150 feet tall. The last time I crossed the Atlantic, I was under water the whole time on the USS Thomas Jefferson (SSBN 618).

Favorite song that Mark sings and dances to?

Only The Lonely by Roy Orbison. But I must say that many of the songs of the 50s and early 60s are excellent and I love it when Mark plays these songs. He knows them all! And he sings very well!

Favorite Kutzism...We shall see....



Jim with his three youngest grandsons in his woodworking shop, Cooper (10), Isaac (8) and Caleb (12). All three boys are swimmers with Caleb heading to Nationals in FL in August.