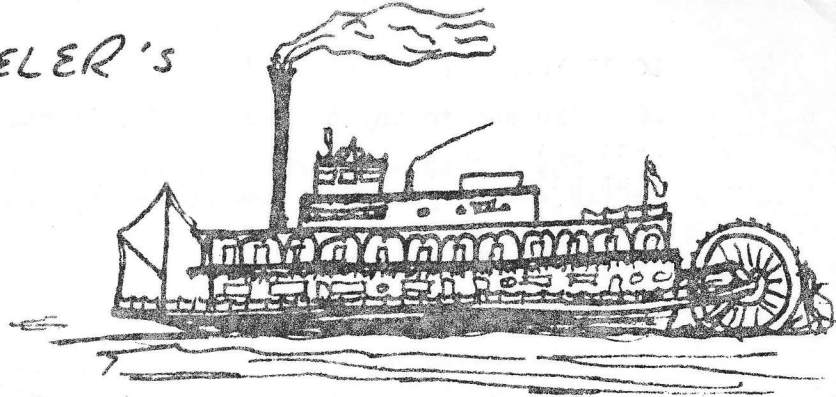


OLD STERNWHEELER'S

MASTERS MONTHLY SEPT. '76



After a few months, (call it a boiler overhaul) the Old Sternwheeler is back. You've missed it, haven't you. Lots has happened in the past months in Masters Swimming, and a busy Fall and Winter are planned. Dave Beardsley tells me that we are planning meets in Roseville, Watertown, St. Paul YWCA, and a summer State Meet to be held in December. Then the Winter Season to start in January. So start getting in shape, there will be plenty of opportunities to improve those times. Set your goals now, they help when it comes time to "curl the toes" over the edge of the pool before each workout.

Last month, the Sugar Creek Sports Club of St. Louis, Missouri, sponsored the National A.A.U. Masters Swimming Championships, and Minnesota was represented by 17 athletes from the Northern Shores Aquatic Club. The NSAC mob was the eighth largest team at the meet, which hosted 514 swimmers from 92 teams in 33 states and 4 foreign countries, including 23 lively "blokes" from Australia. The Northern Shores team finished 7th, scoring 214½ points. A truly great time was had by all, and the chance to meet the Aussis turned into a fine friendship which resulted in an Australian swimmer joining the Northern Shores family of Marianne Schulze, working out with the team, and enjoying an evening replacing those vital body fluids which were lost during the practice. Such events were common in the electric atmosphere of the Nationals. It is an experience which every Master Swimmer should enjoy, for the excitement of swimming with the best, making new friends, and swapping T-Shirts all make for a weekend which defies description. Seek out a Northern Shores swimmer (they're the ones wearing the "Menopause Blue" warm-ups) and ask about the Nationals, then sit down and be prepared to listen for a few hours.

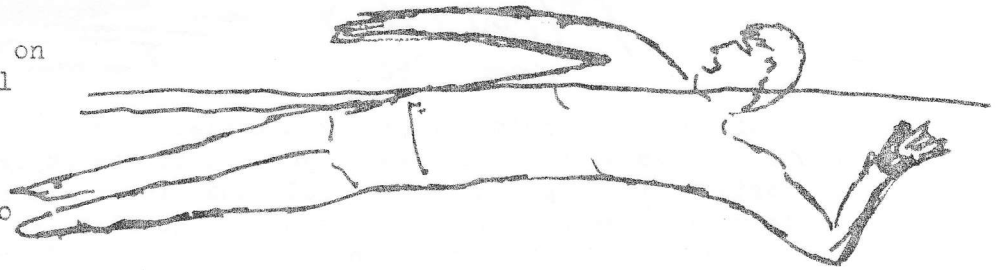
The big winner was Ray Hakomaki, who between Finnish drinking songs swam to 3 firsts and two seconds in five events. Ray set a National Record of 28.568 in the 50m Free. Bill Kansas took seconds in both the 100 and 200m Breast. NSAC relay teams took thirds- the 25 & over 200m Free Relay of Bill Earley, Bob Baker, Robin Kleffman, and Tom Hodgson, and the 35 & over Mixed Relay of Chuck Cohen, Sue Sherin, Carol Harris, and Ray Hakomaki. The same 25 & over Men's group also placed second in the Medley Relay. Every member of the Northern Shores team placed high enough to win a medal (top 6) and score points for the team. Greater than the points and the medals, however, was the tremendous team feeling generated by all being scared together, swimming, cheering, hurting, laughing, sharing. How can you lose when you have 16 other people swimming your races with you?

Is there any interest out there for a Masters Swim Clinic? There could be presentations on strokes, training, how to set up a masters team, and other topics of interest. Let me or Dave know at the Roseville Meet, or drop me a line at: Old Sternwheeler, c/o Tom Hodgson 1015 E. Cty Rd. D #202, St Paul, MN 55110.

DO IT YOURSELF STROKE HINTS -- This month: BACKSTROKE

The key to any stroke is RELAXation, so let's start there. Lie in the water, gently waving your feet and hands, staying totally relaxed. Get used to floating flat and high in the water.

Then bring in some kick, with the ankles loose and knees flexing slightly. Stay relaxed. Focus your eyes on something high on the wall that you're swimming away from, and keep your head still. A good trick to keep your head still is to balance your goggles on your forehead. If your head is still, they won't fall off.



The motion of the arms is continuous and in opposition. For starters, think about windmills. The arms should be straight when recovering, and you can look at them to make sure they are. They should also pass directly overhead, and you can check this too by watching your hand pass through your line of vision to the wall. Shoulders follow the arms, so if you have enough rotation in your shoulders, they will brush by your ears as you place your hand and arm in the water. Stiff shoulders will force your arms to enter the water wider than at 1:00 o'clock and 11:00 o'clock overhead, and probably cause some lateral sway in the hips. The body rolls with the shoulders. Holding your hips flat and rolling the shoulders not only causes sway, but naturally cuts down on that all-important relaxation.

Underwater, the pull is a simple, natural throwing motion. As if you had taken a handful of sand and thrown it at your feet. The throw starts with the hand about 1½ ft. underwater (think of this point as where the recovery ends) and finishes palm down, arm straight. Of course, the elbow bends during the throw and the fingertip traces a down-up-down "S" motion. (a sideways "S", that is...)

Practice the recovery motion in front of a full length mirror, and the pull while lying on the edge of a couch or bed. Much practice, and your family will probably be sufficiently impressed to let you practice your pull on the couch of your favorite analyst. When swimming, write these words in ball-point pen on your hand: RELAX, CONTINUOUS MOTION, HEAD STILL, ANIMATED SHOULDER ROTATION, HIPS UP, RECOVERY MOTION CONTINUES TO 1½ FEET UNDERWATER... then down the other arm, write: KEEP FEET LOOSE, DOWN-UP-DOWN THROWING MOTION, and WIN WITH WILKIE.

Allegheny College is a better place this month with the addition of Bob Baker to its Geology Staff, but we in Minnesota will miss the kid and his wife Ruth. Bob was a big energy helping to drive Masters Swimming in Minnesota, through his recruiting, setting up workout sessions, ripping off the U. of Minn. Geology Dept. for Xeroxing and such. He singlehandedly arranged the Northern Shores trip to the Masters Nationals in St. Louis, where we presented him with plaque of appreciation and thanks, and sent him on his way. The Bakers both love Minnesota, and there remains the possibility of their return some day, so communication lines are well worth keeping open.

The address: Boo & Ruth Baker
 312 McCartney St.
 Easton, Penn. 18042