

Barb Scouler Hall of Fame Story – 2015

As a young woman, Barb worked hard for Southern Illinois University, a NCAA Division I school. Barb balanced this hard work with a healthy dose of finding her wild side! Later being inducted into her University Athletic Hall of Fame. After college, she did what a lot of us have done after years of hard, competitive swimming; she took some time off. During her break away from the pool, Barb took advantage of her young, strong body to focus on starting a family. After 15 years of that and almost 40 years old, Barb found herself out of shape and trying to keep up with two energetic boys.

In 2002, searching for a solution, Barb found Gary Taylor of TCMasters. Barb enjoyed the connection he made with his swimmers and his ability to help swimmers connect with their drive and old spirit. Barb became reconnected with her love of the training and the swimming community. In the next 13 years Barb accomplished:

- National Top Ten: 64 times individual, 5 times relay
- National #1 Placement on Top Ten: 1 time
- USMS National Record: 50 Fly
- FINA World Top Ten: 1 individual and 1 relay
- Current MN LMSC Records: 32 individual events, multiple age groups

But Barb is the first to say; it is not about the accomplishments; or the competition, saying, “I only compete because it is there”. For Barb it is about the community of people. Barb has made her mark in Minnesota Masters Swimming. As head coach of the Minnetonka Master's swim group, Barb is creating for these swimmers what Gary Taylor created for her when she needed it. Barb has a nice balance of strength, knowledge and genuine caring that she brings to her coaching. Creating a welcome place to be respected no matter what skill level.

What her swimmers say about her, is Barb's legacy:

- “The first time I met her, I liked her. I think that's what everyone feels about her.”
- “She is deeply interested in everyone she knows.”
- “An affable, dependable and caring personality that makes it so easy for her swimmers.”
- “She combines friendliness with authority and expertise.”
- “People both like and respect her, as a person and a coach.”
- “She doesn't force her own goals on us, but encourages people to reach farther beyond the goals they're set for themselves.”
- “She knows that the true rewards of swimming don't lie in the records or first places, but in improving physical and mental health and forming connections to others.”

Barb's depth of commitment is acknowledged by a swimmer she closely worked with to over-come his fear of open water swimming. Battling with anxiety after a near drowning experience, he says, “Such a big thing for me, that I used to think I would never be able to get over this fear.” As the culminating experience for this swimmer, he swam successfully across a local lake; every few strokes looking to draw on Barb's calm reassuring presents.

Although there is no doubt that setting a national record is something Barb will never forget, her favorite moments stem mostly around coaching and community. When asked about her favorite event, she doesn't say her 50 Fly; she immediately thinks beyond herself. She says her favorite event is Minnetonka's Thanksgiving Day Workout; which serves Minnesota Masters and the greater good. Barb is the creative vision behind this fundraising event, which raises money for struggling families. Barb has the hopes that this Thanksgiving Day event can grow beyond Minnetonka. We are lucky to have Barb as part of our swimming community.