

Judy Anderson Lallier Hall of Fame Story – Class of 2016

Judy Anderson Lallier began her swimming career as many do, at age 8. Unfortunately, her first club experience was with a coach who was unable to see the champion within. His advice, in effect was, "You don't have the body for this. Go find another sport." Fortunately for the world of swimming, Judy found another club instead. Mentored by Carroll Gustafson at Ascension Swim Club, and then on to Mounds View Swim Club where she was coached one summer by Minnesota Masters Hall of Famer Tom Hodgson, her terrific work ethic brought her prodigious talent front and center. More success followed at the Bloomington Aquatic Club, and by age 13, Judy had made a national cut time in the 200m Breast.

After spending time training in Fort Lauderdale under former Olympic coach Jack Nelson, she returned to Minnesota and worked with Jim Andersen at Twin City, also benefitting from great support from Gopher coaches Jean Freeman and Dennis Dale. State championships and state records came by the bucketload, and Judy clearly became the dominant swimmer of her era in Minnesota. After being named to USA Swimming's national traveling team, she circled the world, even competing in East Berlin and Moscow at the height of the Cold War. Her accolades in this time period included Top Twenty World Rankings in the 200 IM for two consecutive years.

Judy modestly admits to being "a good trainer," but she was known across the Minnesota swimming scene as a great competitor with a tremendous feel for the water, and equal ability in every stroke and at every distance. When asked to name a favorite event, Judy simply replies, "Everything."

"The sport has been such a gift to me," Judy reflects. Yet, for all of her success as a younger swimmer, she is most proud of her Masters career. "Masters swimming was and is the best," she says. "The perspective is different in Masters." To illustrate, Judy speaks of a calm, confident control over her that reflects the maturity brought on by the transition into Masters swimming. Equally important, however, is the social outlet that so naturally accompanies the physical outlet in training for Masters competition.

This different perspective brought a joy to Judy's training that would bring her to amazing levels of success in Masters swimming. Dozens of state records and state and national championships came her way again, winning over 16 Titles in the 100 IM, 200 IM, 100 Back, and 200 Back at both short course and long course Master Nationals. This stretch of success was crowned by one of her greatest accomplishments and fondest Masters Swimming memories: the World Records in the 200 IM and 200m Backstroke in the 35-39 Age Group, swum in one of her favorite pools, the University of Minnesota Aquatic Center.

Her life continues to revolve around swimming, but now also includes family and a coaching career. In recent years, she has spent 10 months of the year in Kenai, Alaska coaching club and high school swimming. At the time of her entry into the Hall of Fame, she was also back in the water. It's for fitness, she says, but the competitive edge still floats close to the surface as she looks ahead at the 60 and over national records. That could be all the motivation this great champion needs to continue marking the record books.