



What a GREAT year - so far...

I apologize for not updating the membership sooner – it has been an incredibly busy summer and fall. I left the USA for Budapest in late July for the FINA World Championships in Budapest – and have not stopped. After 17 days in Budapest – I travelled to Riverside, California for our Summer Nationals. A few weeks later I flew to Dallas for the United States Aquatic Conference for the USA Diving annual meeting. It was a whirlwind – and I loved every minute of my time with my Diving family. I'd be lying if I did not admit I am happy to be home – and NOT travelling for at least a little while.

Budapest is a simply beautiful city. Though part of the European Union – it has not yet converted to the EURO. This led to a fantastic conversion rate for our Dollar – and allowed all of us to splurge while there without breaking the budget. Good food, cheap beer and great company from all over the world made this one of my favorite meets ever. We performed extraordinarily well as a team. I was proud of each and every diver that participated.

The new DUNA arena was built on the bank of the Danube River. It is simply beautiful. I cannot imagine competing in a nicer facility. There was an athlete village adjacent to the pool

that had a Beer Garden and picnic area for the athletes. We spent many afternoons and evenings with friends from all over the world celebrating our successes and friendships. It was an incredible experience.

If you have not yet had the chance to experience a World Championship – please put it on your to-do list. It is very difficult to explain to my peers what it is like. I will say – the diving aspect of the trip is not necessarily the most satisfying. For me – it was the fellowship with those divers from all over the world that just LOVE what they do. It can be life changing. I will say again – JUST DO IT...

I am so proud to be part of the USA team that competed in Budapest. There were some incredible performances by our athletes and our medal count was off the charts. We brought 48 athletes and left the competition with a total of 91 medals. Congratulations to all of you. You represented your country with honor and class. The following chart shows our results.

Team	Gold	Silver	Bronze	4th	5th	6th	Total
USA	25	19	10	15	11	11	91
GER	14	5	10	10	8	7	54
GBR	5	11	7	11	3	3	40
HUN	8	7	4	9	6	4	38
SWE	1	7	7	7	8	8	38
ITA	4	3	6	4	5	10	32
RUS	7	5	7	1	2		22
CAN	6	3	5	1	3	3	21
AUT	6	2	2	2	3	6	21
CZE	1	3	4		2	5	15
LTU	1	5	2	2	2		12
AUS		2	4	1	2	2	11
NED		1	2	1		5	9
BEL	1		1	2	3	1	8
FIN		4		2	2		8
FRA	1	1	1	1	2		6
NOR			1	2	2	1	6
JPN	2		1			1	4
ECU	3						3
CRO					2	1	3
ESP	1	1					2
DEN					1		1

SUMMER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS - Riverside, California

Riverside California hosted our Summer Championship at the end of August. It seems the heat followed us from Budapest. It was over 110 degrees for one of our competition days. We had 77 divers brave the elements and did not let the heat affect our fun. It was so nice to see so many new faces at this event. I hope we made an impression – and see some of them back in the Spring. It was also nice to see some divers that have been off the board for a while come back and win medals. (OK Jimmy Whalen – no excuses – we want you back in the spring).

I learned some lessons too. We are going to make a better effort to have seating, shade and hospitality for future events. Kevin Lynch brought an espresso maker from home – and was an extraordinary barista for the three days we dived. I'll forgive him for kicking my butt on three meter – his kindness and caffeine made up for it..... Thank you to Lenny Larson for the water and large cooler – and all of those that went the extra mile to bring fresh fruit and goodies for the athletes.

I'd like to send a special thank-you to Terry Powers from USA Diving. He made the trek from Indianapolis to spend time with us on deck in the oppressive heat. Thank you for making the time to see what we do. I hope you enjoyed our banquet!

United States Aquatic Conference (USAC) - Dallas, Texas

A few weeks after Riverside – Ron and I attended the US Aquatic Conference in Dallas. We gave our report to the membership and they were amazed by our success in Budapest. I had many kind comments – and congratulations from coaches from all over the country. We certainly had their attention – which bodes well for all of us. Having the coaching community supportive of masters diving is important. It will allow us access to pools and ultimately allow us to grow our membership.

Ron and I attended the International Swimming Hall of Fame induction on Friday night. Grete Kugler from Austria was the deserving Masters Diving candidate – and was very pleased to see us there. She was invited to join us at the USAC banquet on Saturday night – and we had a great time. Congratulations to Grete. Once again – we are blessed to have the opportunity to meet quality people from all over the world. We are truly one family.

After the Hall of Fame induction – Ron and I drove to Fort Worth to visit Marnie Young. Marnie participated in the Red Bull Big Dive at Possum Kingdom the previous week. She had an awkward landing and broke her pelvis. If you have not had a chance to wish her well – please do. She is one of the toughest and sweetest people you will ever meet. I am so happy that she is on the road to recovery after some dicey moments. Get well soon Marnie... We want you back!

We also got to spend time with Lee Johnson – the new CEO of USA Diving. He and Terry Powers are incredibly supportive of US Masters Diving – and I am looking forward to an ongoing relationship with all of the management and staff in Indianapolis.

Ron and I were also able to visit the SMU campus while in Dallas. The pool is near completion – and is beautiful! We met with the facilities director (after a few unsuccessful attempts) and he seemed supportive of our interest in holding our Spring Championships at the new facility. We are waiting for the Athletic Director to set rates for pool rental so we can get on the schedule and sign a contract. We will continue to reach out for status.

We researched and inspected a few hotels near SMU. The old Holiday Inn that was a bit run down has been taken over and renovated. It is adjacent to the new SMU facility – and will be a great host hotel. It is both convenient – and perfect for our needs. They would love to have us – and have been diligent in keeping in touch. Fingers crossed we can get a confirmation and contract from SMU in the very near future.

On the immediate horizon is an event near and dear to my heart. My first master meet ever – was with East Coast Masters Diving. Their annual Masters meet has since been renamed the ***Mary Bennett Masters Diving Invitational*** which will be held the weekend of November 11th. This is an incredible meet – hosted by an incredible group of Masters Divers. There will be a fun event on Saturday afternoon – with the main competition on Sunday. The meet is up on DiveMeets – and the \$65 fee includes all of your events and a team dinner on Saturday night. This is always one of the highlights of my Masters Diving season – and if you can – you should consider attending. The **TRENTON-MERCER (TTN)** airport has some incredibly inexpensive flights – so it may be worthwhile to investigate airfares for Frontier and Allegiant... There is also a block of hotel rooms reserved nearby. What a great time of the year for a weekend roadtrip! I am looking forward to the event and hope to see you there!



Marnie - before the big dive in Texas...



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