

Masters Diving Newsletter

Spring 2005

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US\$12/yr USA & all email, US\$15/others

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This issue dedicated to coach **Dick Smith**, a fixture in the diving community for many years, currently in the sunset stage of life, with Alzheimer's. Stories are shared about his life below.



Introducing our new **Masters Rules Chairman Roy Botsko**: (See photo attached)

I have been computer programmer for the passed 20+ years.

In 1997, I was made an offer I could not refuse, so I moved to Charlotte, NC, where I currently reside. As the Masters Rules Chairman, I want to take over where John Deininger left off. The new masters rules for FINA diving has caused a push for some changes to the U.S. masters program. I plan to try and keep everyone informed of the issues and do what is best for the U.S. Masters diving program.

Growing up in Miami, Florida I played on hotel boards as a kid (front dives, front saltos) In high school, I competed in gymnastics and diving. I was lucky enough to win the 4A state meet in Diving but was only third in the county meet in gymnastics. I dove for two years at Duke University and then finished college at the University of Miami. I competed at the U.S. Nationals mostly on 1 Meter and Platform from 1978 until 1987. After diving, I went back to gymnastics for a few years and then even jumped a little competitive trampoline. A few years ago my shoulders told me it was time to quit gymnastics, so I started diving in the masters diving program. I enjoy diving because you get to hang out with some great people, get a good workout in, and still have fun at the same time. Best of all, you can dive in the masters program indefinitely!

Upcoming Meets:

May 5-8 - Masters Indoors - [University of Buffalo](http://www.unibuffalo.edu) If attending, remember to bring passport or birth certificate, as the banquet will be in Canada at the Skylon Tower overlooking Niagara Falls

May.14-17th Annual Pacific Diving Academy Masters Invitational, Cerritos, CA – Andy/Amy Kwan

Jun 11 - Carlsbad - Marnie Young

Jul 9 - Chow Chilla - Teresa Hall

Jul 22-31 - World Masters, Edmonton, Canada

Aug 18-21 - Masters Summer Championships-Mission Viejo, CA. - Fred Fox

Don't forget winter wear for Buffalo & Niagara!

Also: Dramamine, Motrin, Viagra, Depends, Ear plugs, Orthotics, Splints, Cane, Crutches, Ace Bandage, Cap or Helmet, Cell phone, Address Book, Chamois, Towel, SUITS!!!!

As promised, here are some stories about Dick Smith: (see photo attached)

Here is an interesting little story about DickI think it was the summer of 1974 or 75 ...he told us this fantastic story about being one of two survivors from a plane crash in New Zealand. He survived because of his level-headed, quick thinking and composure in the midst of chaos. The plane was on fire and while all the passengers ran to the front of the plane, he dropped to the floor and crawled back to the wing, put a blanket over his head and escaped out the window. One other man followed him out and they were the only two survivors! He said that his military instincts saved his life! He said, "I guess I have more coaching to do!" Miracle material!!

Barbara Mayer

Some folks have asked about Dick's childhood diving accident. Several years ago Dick related the incident to Verne Boatner. These are his words...Riverside Park Pool in Phoenix, Arizona was made using concrete boulders. We kids used to climb to a platform stuck up there about 40 feet high and dive off into nine feet of water. In the summer of 1933 some big fella said "Kid, you're doing it all wrong. When you hit the water you're supposed to double up and roll and that will keep you from hitting the bottom." Well I did it, hit the bottom hard, got a severe concussion and fractured my seventh vertebrae. All I remember is being lifted out of the pool. An ambulance took me home and the Doctor put me in bed. I remained there for about six months. I was paralyzed from the hips down. I had to learn to walk all over again. Little by little I got better and stronger. If it hadn't been for the kids I hung around with, like J.D. Rogers and others I probably wouldn't have gotten along so well. They kept challenging me. When I got so I could move pretty good they'd put some obstacle in the way and I'd have to hurdle it. When the school bell would ring they'd plop me on my back and I'd have a devil of a time getting up. So I was always late. Later on when I was getting around better they'd take my books and a knit hat that I wore and put them up in a tree. I'd have to climb up that tree to get my books down. And my hat. The following summer came along and I was still a mess. I had to teach myself to swim. I was really scared. I didn't know whether my legs would work right or not. At old University pool I was in the corner, holding on to the ledge just daring myself to swim across. I finally did it. Later I got a job as a towel boy at that pool. There were two divers there, Billy Brinks and Rex Ladell. They were junior state champions. I loved to watch them dive. They were my age and I thought that someday I'd get strong enough to learn some of those tricks they were doing. But because of the accident my family had forbidden me to dive. Nevertheless, I got really interested in diving and by the end of that summer I secretly learned a few things. The following summer I dedicated myself to becoming a diver...in secret. In the summer of 1935 the State Championships were held at Tempe Beach. I entered and out pointed Dave Murdoch and Horace Collier, both of ASU, to win the Junior Low board and Senior High board titles. So far I had managed to keep a low profile. Now the newspaper photographers were going to run my picture in the paper and I wouldn't be able to keep it from my mother any longer. So I raced away on my bike and hid under the Tempe Bridge. Finally my brother George found me down there and said come on home, Mom knows and she says it's OK.

From Olympic Champion Sammy Lee...

Jim Ryan and I wouldn't see Dick Smith for about 2 wks. When mid-term ended & Dick told Ryan he had a lot of work to do at the sorority house. But Ryan checked his left arm and it was sunburned from his shoulder to his hand. Ryan would then get out the stick and swat him. Later Dick told me he had to get \$\$\$ to pay his tuition for the rest of the semester so he would go back to Arizona and steal a horse off the Indian Reservation bring it into town and sell it. I was always amazed he was never jailed for stealing from our American Indian Reservation. Isn't that a federal offense? Dick's ability to horse trade was evident when he was stationed in Germany right after the cease-fire his recreation center had every conceivable sports equipment & local horses, etc. that he bartered for and when news came around that the Inspector General was coming to the area to see what our Dick Smith the athletic director had wheeled and dealt for....Dick's commanding officer said I am transferring you back to the States as soon as possible 'cause you will be in prison for life with all the stuff you got here from the locals so that is how Dick Smith got back to Lodi, Calif. before he started the Dick Smith Swim Gym when he returned to Phoenix. Jim Ryan said he would kick the s--- out of us if we ever went into coaching diving! Thank God he never listened to Ryan about coaching but did adopt his no nonsense no excuse why you could not win. When we pointed out that the great Al Patnik used to save his back and rev. dives, Ryan said he would kick us into the next world if we did that because that was cheating! Also Ryan had no idea how to teach us how to do twisting dives...he thought they were too dangerous but I think he did not want to admit he did not know about twisting dives!

The Dick Smith Swim Gym. Tom Gompf and I were without a coach in 1964. We were also old (Tom-25, Me- 26) and married... with kids...not terribly hot prospects for a place on the Olympic Team. But Dick Smith's instincts inspired him to allow us to join his team. People often said about Dick..."He didn't teach you to dive... he taught you how to become a champion." It certainly rang true for the group he trained that summer:

Bernie Wrightson, Keith Russell, Wynn Young, Jeanne Collier, Patsy Willard, Barb McAlister, Tom Gompf, Frank Gorman – All Olympians!

Attached photos: #1. Award stand, 2003 Masters Summer Nationals, Men's 3m 45-49

L-R: Kirk Seitz, David Cotton, Roy Botsko, Tony Perriello; presenter- Keala O'Sullivan Watson, '68 Olympic Bronze Medalist

#2. USN Lieutenant Bernie Wrightson, Olympic Diving Champion, 3m-1968 with his coach USAF Colonel Dick Smith, Olympic Diving Coach-1964



