



“Go the Distance” August, 2008

Highlights

GTD August “Deep Thought on Fitness” (Linda Shoenberger)

A successful fitness program is balanced by approximately 50% training and 50% recovery. Surprised? Studies have shown that the actual fitness benefit occurs while the body is recovering from a good training session. Recovery can be varied to include active recovery, i.e. taking a long slow swim, and inactive recovery, i.e. taking a nap.

August Highlight # 1: Cool Pictures ... it sure makes you always wonder who you're swimming with!?!

Lynn Kubasek (50-54, 613.34 miles year to date) sent me some pictures that she took from North Laguna beach while she was going for a swim. Looks beautiful from the surface doesn't it!?! Now have a look at who she's swimming with! I wonder what was lurking in the murky waters near Dana Point!?

“These pictures are from North Laguna Beach (August 24, 2008) using a little digital underwater wrist camera that I got for Christmas. The water was finally clear enough to make it worthwhile.

I swam 2 hours (4 miles) today off of Strands Beach near Dana Point and the water was pretty murky but there was a lot of kelp. Actually there was a lot of fog to so we were a little disoriented. I swam with some friends that are training to do the Catalina Channel crossing this month. They are swimming 10 hours today but I only hopped in for the 7am-9am shift! It's a nice energy-conserving pace.

La Jolla Rough Water Swim tomorrow...time to rest!

:-)

Happy Saturday!

Lynn”



Meet GTD Swimmer Linda West (55-59 roun; 97.48 miles to date).

Swimming is my mid-life passion. I have always loved the water and as a youngster I knew all the local pools though I spent most summer days in the ocean waves. I swam with my children as they grew up, but I didn't experience great swimming until middle age. I began a rigorous weight reduction program and I was invited to join a master's team. During the four years that I swam with that group I learned good stroke technique and the value of daily workouts. It was an exciting challenge to complete my WSI and LGT at the age of 46, however, the enjoyment I had in swimming and in teaching kids was well worth the effort. I tried my hand at competition, enjoying distance free and butterfly. A recent highlight for me was swimming a pool 5K a few summers ago.

In real life, I am a retired teacher, married for 35 years to Allen and Mom of two grown children, David and Rebecca. I taught middle school Spanish and science for over ten years. Then, I spent my final six years with the pool as my classroom. A few years ago, my husband's job required extensive travel and since we are good friends we were missing each other. Consequently, I decided to retire so I could travel with him. We have not only traveled for his work in the past four years, but we have gone on some extensive US and international trips; including the southwest "red rock" country, Australia, New Zealand, Israel and a 3 week cruise on the Pacific. No matter where I go I pack my suit and goggles. I have swum in many places on our travels including Jerusalem, London, Aberporth, Wales, Alice Springs, Australia as well as the US especially in Southern Maryland and Arizona.

Since retirement I swim at our neighborhood swim and tennis club, which has a beautiful 25 meter pool and a 20 yard pool (Note two pools: Oh the choices! Swimming in a 20 yard pool makes for some fun conversion to meters for GTD too.)

Allen and I have always enjoyed exercising together and one of our retirement dreams was to learn to golf. We have been playing for two years. The only unfortunate thing about taking up a new sport is that there is less time for the old, beloved one. So I do swim less than when I swam with Masters, but the cross training and the enjoyment of a new sport is a good compromise. I stay motivated by keeping a log of my yardage, so GTD is the perfect event for me. I also participate in as many postal swims as possible so that my workouts alone are moving me toward a goal. My husband tries to make sure that I get my "chlorine fix" no matter where we go. Presently, I have a weekly goal of 6,000 meters, which I usually split into three workouts. I am pushing my distance up because I want to swim the 3000 postal this year. I hope to increase my GTD distance from last year and "negative split" this second half of 2008 as Mary has challenged us. However, I have to hold my goals lightly because I will be traveling during much of August and September.

Retired life is really different than the busy work and family years. Retirement allows time to smell the roses. I love the ones on my garden. Along with golf and traveling I enjoy gardening and church activities. Knitting, weaving, calligraphy and most recently

hand building with clay are new hobbies. My old reading hobby has priority too: I was amused recently when I realized that I was reading three books at once and then started a fourth!

I have often described myself as a candy store person. When you walk in to a candy shop you want to try one of everything. I am like that about life, I want to try many different things and learn about even more. Swimming is the sweet, dark chocolate of life. I love how core strength from swimming has contributed to my overall general health and my golf swing in particular. Swimming alone also provides time for creative and philosophical thinking. I often think that my license plate should read “so many pools, so little time.” I have swum in the Pacific as a child and across that ocean in the pool of a cruise ship. I have swum in small pools in Europe and taught in many home pools in Southern California. I’ve enjoyed cool downs during many sunrises at Master’s workouts. I’ve swum in the snow in Canada and 120-degree heat in Arizona. I remember my first swim lessons, and my first Nationals 200 Fly. A highlight last fall was when I stepped out of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem to a lovely 25 yard pool with a view of the Old City Wall at sunset. I count it a joy everyday that I can swim at my own Swim and Tennis Pool. I never dreamed that swimming would be such an important part of my life. It is a gift in a shimmering blue package, and I thank God for it!



Meet husband and wife GTD swimmers Robert Kelly (age group 50-54, miles to date: 39.53) and Darla Kelly (age group 50-54, miles to date: 87.98).

Greta van Meeteren: When we asked Robert if he would participate in our “meet the GTD swimmer”, he responded that he would be happy to, and asked if his wife Darla could also participate in the story. Of course that was an extra bonus!! See for yourself how this very sports-oriented, delightful couple spends their time.

“We both are high school teachers and coaches. I (Robert) teach high school math and am the head swimming coach at Sam Rayburn High School in Pasadena, Texas. Darla (my wife) teaches high school American history and is the head swimming coach at Pasadena High School in Pasadena, Texas. Most of our time is spent working (teaching), coaching (both high school and masters) and traveling to sporting events around the country.

We have a 20-year-old daughter who swam in college but is not swimming anymore due to an injury. Yes, our lives are very busy, and, YES we are doing exactly what we thought we would be doing it this time of our lives. We have been doing it so long that we could not imagine doing anything else.

PS: We also work in the journalism field as a writer (Robert) and a photographer (Darla). We have covered three Olympic Games, numerous national championships in many sports and more local and state competitions than we could ever remember.

Swimming (aquatics) is so much a part of our lives that we are never far from it. I have been swimming since I was 14 (I am 54 now; so that makes 40 years) and Darla has been swimming just as long. We both still compete; in fact we got back into competition about 2 years ago after a LONG layoff. We have been lifelong swimmers and we have always tried to find time to get into the pool to swim wherever we are.

We try to swim two to three times a week, but with high school practice and masters practice, we are usually at the pool for 4-5 hours a day. Sometimes we are so tired from teaching and coaching at the end of the day that it is hard to get in and swim, but we do try to maintain the 2-3 times a week commitment. We usually try to swim during our masters team (South Belt Area "All Stars" Swimming Team) workout sessions, but sometimes we end up helping and coaching our masters swimmers between our sets. I am mainly a breaststroker and Darla is a backstroker. Both our high school and masters swimming teams compete in open water swimming, but we (Darla and I) have yet to take the plunge with them. At this point, we are sticking to pool swimming.

As far as workout, we usually set our workouts up on a time (1 hours 1 1/2 hours) with a variety of mixed sets. Our workouts vary between 500 yard and 2500 yards per workout, depending on the time we have that day.

Everything we do in our lives is goal oriented. I guess that comes from our upbringing in the 50s and 60s. We participate in GTD because it is a fun way to keep track of our swimming and to give our masters swimmers (and us) something to work towards. Our advice to other GTD participants is to work towards a goal and try to attain it. We find it helpful to workout with others so us "oldsters" can support each other. Our goals for 2008 were to swim more yardage than last year, drop our times and find good masters meets in interesting places to travel to.

Something fun to know about me is that I (Robert) played water polo (goalie) for the University of Texas in Austin from 1976-1978 and I used to drive racecars (1/4-mile dirt track and dragsters) when I was MUCH younger.

Darla is a sports photographer and has photographed major sports events around the world (USA, Spain, Canada, Mexico, Canary Islands, England, France, Majorca).

*Three adjectives that describe us would be as follows: Robert: hard-working, loyal, funny
Darla: committed, caring, friendly*

Our friends might tell you that we are extremely committed to any task or project that we take on. We are always there to help anyone who needs help, and love to be involved in anything that is fun.

As far as our favorite swim story, the most recent would have to be at the 2007 USMS Long Course Masters Championships at The Woodlands, Texas. Our masters team was competing in the championships we had eleven swimmers in our group ranging from 18 to 62 years old. Some of our masters swimmers were our former high school swimmers that were now in their mid 30s. They showed up at the meet and naturally had their children (some of whom swim in our summer program) with them. Our former swimmers were calling Darla and I "coach" and THEIR children were calling us "coach." Darla turned to me and noted that we were now coaching our swimmers' swimmers. I felt very old and very young at the same time. Darla commented that we have our "real" family and our "swimming" family. That makes our lives have the best of both worlds. We could not be prouder that many of our swimmers from our past 30 years of coaching still come back to train and compete with us.

The most amusing (recent) swimming story is when we were swimming at the 2008 Short Course Masters National Championships in Austin, Texas this past May. I was swimming the 50-yard breaststroke and after the race, I walked up to the stands. My masters swimmers, some of whom were my former high school swimmers, started coaching me on my stroke, starts and turns. They started commenting (and correcting) on my race as I had done to them after hundreds of their races and meets in their lives. Darla just stood there and laughed, as I did not know what to say. I guess they were giving me back all the "heck" I had given had given after all their races. It was a VERY funny moment."

“Meet GTD Swimmer”: Laura Tiedge (45-49 age group; 63.89 miles to date).

Greta van Meeteren: I'm sure you will be happy to meet Laura. I asked her some questions, and got a very interesting story. I am convinced every swimmer has a good story to tell!

Real Life

I consider myself an overall aquatics professional, and earned the nickname “Aqua Diva” when I was the Aquatics Director at the New Rochelle YMCA. Aqua Diva is the vanity plate on my Lexus convertible. I am now the Aquatics Director at the Rye YMCA in Westchester County, NY and I'm a Senior Coach with Total Immersion Swimming. I am a swim coach with a passion for stroke mechanics — I am head coach for a winter age group team, as well as a summer league team and a summer Masters Team.

I am married with 2 kids — Sarah (soon to be 23) and Erik (soon to be 18). Sarah is a Trading Assistant with a commodities brokerage firm in NY, and Erik is a HS Senior at the New York Military Academy. Everyone always asks if my kids swim — Sarah can swim to save her life but her athletic calling was rowing. Erik is one of those natural athletes but cross-country running is his passion. He learned to swim at a YMCA camp in Western PA and this past winter swam for his HS for the first time — pretty good newbie breaststroker. This summer he is working at my Y as a camp unit leader. It's cool that we get to commute together. My husband Ed is a newer swimmer — I taught him to swim 3 years ago and now he competes in triathlons and loves open water swimming.

The return to the pool - beyond that of a swimmer - was never anticipated! By now I was hoping to be a US Senator from PA. Our family moved back to the NY-Metro area (from a 13 year stint in Pittsburgh, PA) a couple of weeks before 9/11. Everything changed after that, and I found calling back in the pool and eventually employment in aquatics. Full circle!

Real Life and Swimming

Swimming is EVERYTHING to me!! It is my profession and my passion. Life without swimming would be empty. My mom reports that it all began a Crestwood Lake (NJ) when I was 6 months old. She never could get me away from water. When I started swim lessons at the YWCA in Jersey City NJ, mom sat in the balcony to watch and when the instructor started to say that we were going to jump in and (blah, blah, blah) I was the first one in (rather prematurely) -- almost gave mom heart failure!!! There was no going back after that. She was my advocate and hooked me up with a team, drove me to meets/practice, was a timer — you name it.

I swam competitively through HS. At my last meet as a senior I won all my events — I haven't swam in a meet since then, but I have swam all my life. I am now a member of a local Masters team and will eventually get up the nerve to get back on the blocks!

Swimming Habit

Till about 6 weeks ago I was swimming with a Masters Team 4 days a week about 3,000 yards a practice. Unfortunately some shoulder problems have me back on dry land for exercise until surgery next month :(I am a freestyler (former flyer) who loves long distance open water swimming.

Go the Distance

GTD gives me a way to meaningfully track my progress — remember I am a project manager I love the spreadsheet and seeing that bar graph grow makes me proud and motivated to do more. Now I just need to get this shoulder fixed and healed so I can do the Bonaire Ecco Swim this December.

Swim Stories

3 come to mind (other than those 4 gold medals as a senior in HS). 2 took place at the Coral Spring Aquatics Center. The first was when I was attending my Total Immersion coaches training in Coral Springs and got to work with my childhood hero Shane Gould. She was also attending the training and I was shocked to be sitting around a table with THE Shane Gould!! I had a bad crossover on my backstroke and she took the reaching pole, stood on a block and put it behind my head. Every time I crossed over I whacked the pole — I don't crossover anymore!! BTW, turns out we are birthday twins — both born on 11/23, just in different years!

The second memorable experience was swimming in a lane next to Dara Torres when she was 8.5 months pregnant — yet another hero of mine and she was awesome in the pool with little Tessa soon to be born. Reminded me of when I was pregnant with my daughter — I swam 3-4 days a week till the day I delivered. In fact I was on my way to the YMCA in Lawton, OK when my water broke and I went into labor. The swimming helped avoid an almost certain a C-section and helped me come home at my pre-pregnancy weight.

Finally in December 2006 I did a Total Immersion open water swim clinic in Eleuthera —my first ocean swimming (other than playing in the surf on the Jersey Shore as a kid). I remember on the 2nd or 3rd day it was announced we'd be boated out to a sand spit and would swim back. Turned out the newer swimmers were boated out and the stronger wave would start to swim toward the sand spit and eventually the boat would come back to get us and then drop us off a sand spit. We swam probably a mile before the boat got us and then we got to the sand spit jumped out and swam 2 miles back. I had never swum that far in my life — what an accomplishment and it was so beautiful and effortless!