

## The New Coach at SwimMAC Carolina

*By Bill Davis*

What is it like taking over a program from a beloved coach with over 30 years of coaching experience? What is it like having your boss be a 2012 Olympic Assistant Head Coach and multiple NCAA champion? What is it like working at the nation's #1 age group club that just brought home five Olympic medals and the Junior National Team Championship? But, most importantly, what is it like to coach over 100 dedicated and awesome Masters swimmers? There is only one answer and that is "**awesome.**"



When Coach Patty Waldron retired in April, 2012, I was also at a crossroads in my life. Patty, along with Jerry Clark, were my inspirations and mentors for getting into Masters swimming well over a decade ago. Patty's departure opened an opportunity for me to assist the club as a deck volunteer. Little did I know how much I would enjoy learning from the swimmers and helping them towards their Spring and Summer swimming goals. It also quickly became obvious to me that I wanted to take on a more formal role with the Masters program and I began interviewing and accepted the job of head coach at the Latin facility.

Coaching at SwimMAC Carolina is about one thing - the swimmers. The goal is to provide our athletes with quality workouts in a fun and safe atmosphere. Workouts can be raucous, loud, grizzly, but always filled with the enjoyment of sharing a sport with teammates.

I write workouts that are challenging and often encourage swimmers well outside of their comfort zones. I figure if you are going to swim you might as well make it worthwhile, or even a little bit/whole lot painful. The assistant coaches on staff are all experienced swimmers and triathletes who also share a passion for the sport. For all swimmers we emphasize proper technique, no matter the level of proficiency. Oh, and I don't like fins, but that is a personal issue.

More than anything else, SwimMAC Carolina Masters are a big family. We have breakfast once a week and post-workout coffee once a month. As with any group of adults, life often presents us with challenges and I have seen the team come together for members often. Many teammates also get together outside of workouts for social endeavors, which might include a beverage or two. I would invite any traveling Masters swimmer to drop by SwimMAC Carolina for a workout if ever in Charlotte. We would welcome the company!