

## The Sunbelt Championship Meet, January 28 and 29, 2012

By Greta van Meeteren

What comes to mind first after returning from this wonderful swim meet is: "that was a great weekend." And for so many reasons. Our wonderful meet director Jerry Clark did an exceptional job as always in so many ways: he kept swimmers informed ahead of time of anything they needed to know - from the color of the T-shirts to the changes in hotel policy, to the psyche sheets and the rules of the meet. (We have not had a meet this size in NC with 300 swimmers registered since 1992)

Jerry never hesitated to answer the many questions that people were asking of him during the meet, and as always he was the perfect gentleman. It was great to see him swimming again after a shoulder replacement last year.

The water was the perfect temperature, the aquatic center boasts new displays and electronic pace clocks, and the referee, the starter, the people manning the timing system and the volunteers did a great job keeping the meet running very close to its timeline.

During the break between the long-distance events and the afternoon session, awards were given to the outstanding female and male swimmers and a moment of silence was observed to commemorate the death of long-time masters swimmer Dick Webber.

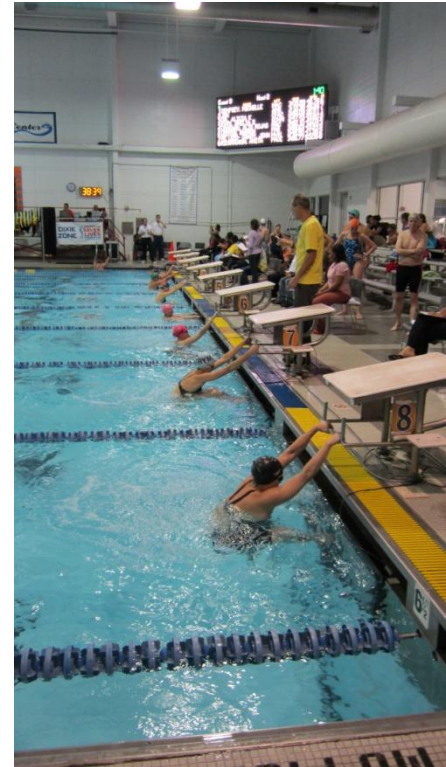
With her express permission, I'd like to share with you what **Sandra Kremer** wrote after the meet:

*"We come to these meets to challenge ourselves. It's not so much about winning as it is about that challenge to ourselves to choose a goal and work to achieve it. It's still about winning of course, but we all win in the end. Whether we go back to our pools challenged to work harder, get better or with the glow of having won the day, it's all good.*

*While at the meets we absorb the inspiration all around us: folks with pacemakers, prosthetics for legs, folks with no legs, old folks, young folks. We swim with swimmers who are battling cancer, heart disease, diabetes, rehabbing from strokes or broken body parts. Also we swim with lanes mates overcoming invisible challenges such as confidence, self esteem, and returning to a once loved sport to see if it still calls our name.*

*All in all, swimming is a lifetime sport that challenges us to discover who we are and become more fully who we can be."*

To me, this says it all, thank you so very much, Sandra!





Here is a contribution from another one of our wonderful masters swimming friends, Beverly Amick:

*"It was such an awesome experience watching Ole Larson receive an award for outstanding swimmer. He was my coach at ASU my freshman year in 1972. He was a great coach but it is sad that I did not realize what a great experience I had at ASU until much later in life. It was such an awesome experience reconnecting with him 40 years later at the Sunbelt meet. The swimming community is a small but close knit group. I am so appreciative*

*for all my experiences and memories here."*

And then there is the story of Roderick Sewell. This very nice young man who is a double amputee. Roderick has a beautiful attitude, and it was an unbelievable experience to watch him swim 200 I.M. It was even nicer to meet him in person and talk with him. He is an example of a very strong human spirit. Thank you for being there, Roderick!

Of course there was also the VERY exciting 50 freestyle race between Josh Schneider (19.64) and Nick Brunelli (19.65). A collective OOOOOOH was heard throughout the pool when they touched the wall 0.01 second apart. It is great to see these top swimmers participate in masters meets.



My team from New Bern (TRYM) came to the meet with 11 swimmers and our coach, biggest group we've brought so far, and we had a terrific time.

We had two novice masters swimmers in our midst, and they each had a very good meet. This meet is one of our favorites of the year, and even the long drive does not seem to stop anyone from going. We share rides and meals and have FUN.

As Sandra said: it's all good!