

Memories of the 2012 USMS Spring National Championship

By Bob Husson

Having swum the last event of the meet, 200 IM, I took a leisurely shower while I waited for the results to be posted. As I entered the almost empty pool deck for a last look around, I was reminded of Shakespeare's famous speech by King Henry V, which I have redirected from the bloody battle of Agincourt to the four days of friendly battle in Greensboro:

**And those in Carolina now a-bed
Shall think themselves accursed
they were not here**



Warm-up crowds

The only casualties at the GAC were a lot of national records and personal bests. But the rewards, beyond the medals and the great swims, just kept coming. The meet organization, ably led by Don Gilchrist and Hill Carrow, was amazing. To have a big meet run as much on time as this one did was a real accomplishment. I was happy to take a short stint as one of an army of red-shirted volunteers who were friendly and competent.

I was always encouraged and cheered on by the timers, and one young lad in particular almost jumped in the pool when I beat my seed time by four seconds. It was exciting to see former and hopeful Olympians display their great form and conditioning.



Left to right: Craig, Jennifer and Herb Siegel

North Carolina's Erika Braun (who has since qualified

for the Olympic Trials in the 50M Free) thrilled the crowd with a number of breathtaking performances.

The North Carolina team overwhelmed the others with sheer numbers and tremendous talent. But the best stories were not the well-publicized or honored ones. There were three generations of Siegels and other families enjoying the experience together.

Joe Gosha instructing timers



World-class swimmers got as much pleasure from seeing a teammate finish 25th, but with a personal best, as from their own record-breaking achievements. Teams supported all swimmers, fast or slow with the same enthusiasm.

Pockets of swimmers would join in cheers for their deck neighbors from other teams. None were more supportive than our little band of brothers and sisters from New Bern and our coach Frank. We made a lot of noise and everyone came home with at least one medal.



Relay excitement

I had both old and new experiences. My first race was right next to my old rival, Jim Green, who had not raced me since 1962. And after having a paper rivalry with John Zeigler for almost 40 years, I found that we had entered the same six events! We had a number of interesting chats about swimming and life.

I must give thanks to the old and new friends who swam such good relay legs: Lou Gadol, Bill Brown, Bernie White, Tim Kute, Camille Klotz, SAM Brooks, Jerry Clark, Jane Rice, and Mary Anna Hovey.

Those who were there know what I mean about the great atmosphere and good feelings from this experience. To those who missed it, we missed you, and hope you will join us if you ever get the chance again. You'll make memories that last forever.



Scene from the outstanding social event on Saturday evening