

FACT NEWS FOR SEPTEMBER, OCT AND NOVEMBER

Life has gotten in the way of my duties recently; my husband is doing well now and I hope to be able to participate as relay coordinator and news broadcaster more actively. We had good participation at the SCM meet in Orlando – sounded like a fun time and a lot of good swims. It was great to see so many from our Villages Chapter so early in the season and some of our Jacksonville group we haven't seen in ages! Good to see Cathy Shonkwiler back in competition!

The Bridge to Bay meets I was unable to attend but saw there were some good potential relays. Let's not forget the postal swims – results should be sent to Coach Joe so that he can enter relays. Remember that our dues (now $5) pay for all our FACT relays, so if you enter a relay at any meet, be sure to notify Marianne Bradley in order to be reimbursed.

Sarasota's meet in January we can test some relays; the SUN Masters Valentine Meet February 13 – 14 (President's Day weekend) is a Chapter meet – always a fun time and Clearwater's Long Center is very comfortable nowadays with their upgraded ventilation system. St Pete is the weekend of March 21st – we always have a great group for relays there and hang on to your FACT hats for a big splash at SCY Nationals at Georgia Tech May 20 – 23rd! We'll have a fun hospitality suite and let's at least repeat our Savannah 2003 success – we placed 3rd nationally! If you are doing any change of affiliation to our Combined team, remember you cannot compete for another USMS registered team (chapter is not a problem) within 60 days of competing at Atlanta Nationals. Keep this rule in mind if you want to join us for an awesome regional group!

I am continuing the inclusion of the advantages we determined when we formed the Florida Aquatic Combined Team in October of 2003 to keep our members informed and answer any questions you may have.

The Florida Aquatic Combined Team (FACT) is ideally composed of those members of the Florida LMSC who regularly compete and desire to join others to form a team that is competitive on a Zone, National and International level. We hoped to create camaraderie in line with USMS goals and give us all a chance to really know members of the other teams that comprise the Florida Combined Team. Although there are large clubs in this LMSC, it is a normal occurrence that approximately 10% of a team competes regularly (a local and national phenomena), and even less

outside our LMSC – sometimes only 3 or 4 swimmers at Nationals and World's!! This makes for very weak representation on a national scale for one of the strongest swimming areas in the country!

- **We will refer to Clubs and Chapters within this information sheet as:**
  CLUB: The USMS Registered Club (FACT, HLJ, CATM, SUN, SPM, FMM)
  CHAPTERS: Workout Groups or those affiliated with FACT (UNAF, SUNF, SARF, VASF, SPCF, TBAF)
- **Meets within our LMSC can be Club or Chapter competitions.**
- **If the Meet Director is agreeable, team scores can be totaled by using their chapter designation, including relays made up of all SARF or VASF members, for example**
- **At all times consider that USMS only recognizes our REGISTERED team and results for Top Ten, Records, etc. will indicate FACT.**
- **All Clubs or Chapters remain autonomous financially and otherwise.**
- **There are no additional fees for membership in FACT other than a once-a-year $5.00 registration fee that covers FACT relays at all meets.**

We recommend that members of a Chapter who plan on any competitive swimming events be registered as FACT. Also, it is advantageous to maintain your club entity registration for communications purposes and for those totally non-competitive members.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in FACT is voluntary at both the individual and chapter levels. Membership can include Unattached swimmers as well as swimmers who are members of Chapters.

FACT is an independent club in the Florida LMSC. It is not the LMSC club, it does not have special LMSC support, other than what is given to other independent clubs, and the LMSC does not exercise any control or responsibility other than what it does for any other registered clubs.

Can some members of a club join FACT while others choose not to?

Yes. It won't make any difference anywhere except at competitions, but be sure everyone understands the implications for competition.

How would that affect each person's USMS Registration?

As far as USMS is concerned, the Florida Aquatic Combined Team (FACT) and the local Club are two entirely different entities. To make things easier to understand,

TBAY would be an example of a Club; TBAF would be a Chapter of the USMS registered Club of FACT, even though they may swim and workout together.

USMS Rules about membership and transferring membership:

USMS rules pertaining to registration:

- **There shall be only one USMS registration per individual permitted at any time. This means that swimmers may not register for the combined team and their local club. They will be considered a local chapter of FACT.**
- **In order for a swimmer to compete as a representative of a club, that club must be a member in good standing of an LMSC and USMS for the year a swimmer is registering. FACT is a registered Club of LMSC and USMS.**
- **A swimmer shall not REPRESENT any club in competition for 60 consecutive days before transferring affiliation to another club, unless this transfer takes place at the time of annual registration.**

FEES

What about registration fees?

All local club registration fees would still go to the local club/chapter, which would set its own fees. Members of the FACT Chapter have an additional $3.00 fee to cover office and relay expenses of the FACT Treasurer. UNATTACHED FACT swimmers, who would not be paying local club fees along with their $5 FACT fee, must be sure to send their $5.00 fee to the FACT treasurer, currently: Marianne Bradley, 869 Manning Road, Palm Harbor, FL 34683. Questions: bradleym@tampabay.rr.com. Failure to pay this small fee will mean you will not appear on the roster as FACT when we are forming relays, so PLEASE make our life easier and follow these simple instructions.

What about local club dues and other fees?

Local groups are and always continued to be independent groups that set their own pool fees, coaching fees, dues, and whatever else they already do. Nothing changes at the local level! FACT chapter and Local Club can still speak to each other (aquaquack), practice in the same lanes, attend the same social functions, volunteer to help at chapter and club events, and everything else they've always done.

COMPETITION

Competition rules are covered on the Florida LMSC website, floridalmsc.org under Form & Registration: Explanation of FACT competition in Local and National Meets.

RECORDS & TOP TEN

All new individual and relay records set by members of the combined team will be listed with the combined team designation and must be reported to the LMSC Top Ten and Records Chair as such, not with the individual chapter designations. Because the combined team is the only official USMS-registered club, club affiliation with record performances need to be consistent at the LMSC, ZONE, USMS and FINA levels.

ADVANTAGES FOR SMALL CLUBS

- **At meets within and outside the LMSC, individuals can participate in relay events.**
- **Relays can be created in a variety of age groups**
- **Socially, it provides an opportunity for increased involvement in Masters swimming, makes Masters swimming more enjoyable, and encourages people to become involved in Masters swimming.**
- **Relays tend to be "bonding" types of events, so individuals get to know swimmers from other small clubs and are more likely to attend meets if they know they are swimming on a relay.**
- **If one of the chapters has a coach who attends meets, the coach offers suggestions and tips to other swimmers on the combined team.**

ADVANTAGES FOR LARGE CLUBS

- **The likelihood of putting together national championship and All-American relays is much greater.**
- **The likelihood of winning National team championships is greater.**
- **At National and International competitions where attendance is usually small, combined team members have a greater opportunity to create competitive, winning relays and contend National titles.**
- **The elite swimmers already know each other and have no problem putting together relays; however, they are often in need of a certain age, stroke and gender and members of the combined team have a great chance of participating and contributing to a team effort.**

RELATED ITEMS:

- **Swimwear with the current logo is available through Agon Swim Wear on the Internet.** http://www.agonswim.com/cgi-

bin/sales1/agreement.cfm?ClientID=17991&AgreementID=1. Or contact Nick@agonswim.com.

- **We currently have a few t-shirts (white and navy) and swim caps available if anyone is interested. Please contact: Joan Campbell for prices and size availability. (jcampb10@tampabay.rr.com)**