

2-MILE POSTAL RELAY

By Erin Cavender

Meet Director Jim Teisher visited Masters of Southern Texas (MOST) to talk with Susan Ingraham about her experience coaching the relay. MOST had 23 teams enter the event in 2017, the most of any club.

JT: What caught your interest about the 2-Mile Relay?

SI: I saw this as a new, fun team challenge and I thought it would be great. I really promoted it to the team that we were going to this as a team event.

JT: How did your team respond? Were they excited? Apprehensive?

SI: I think a little apprehensive is true because it was something they hadn't ever done before. If you had four in a team that's nine 100s. That seemed reasonable. But if not, you were in 12, and if not you were doing 18 of them.

Once the first group had done it and kind of explained how they approached the event, I think people were more excited that it was going to be their turn.



Paul Slotemaker (left) and Michael Baele (right) participated in the winning relay for the Men's 25-34 age group.

New event on the blocks

Last year a unique event joined the ranks of USMS-sanctioned swims. The Tualatin Hills Barracudas hosted the first USMS-sanctioned 2-Mile Postal Relay. As one of the only sprint postal events of the year, the 2-Mile Relay resonated with Masters swimmers and coaches alike.

As with many Postal events, swimmers were able to complete the 2-Mile Relay in any regulation-length 25-yard or 25-meter pool. While most Postal swims are completed individually, the 2-Mile Relay was completed in teams of two, three, or four swimmers. Each participant swam 100 yards in rotation until the team reached a total of 3,600 yards, or about 2 miles. Depending on the number of swimmers per team, each participant swam:

2 Swimmers: 18 x 100 each

3 Swimmers: 12 x 100 each

4 Swimmers: 9 x 100 each

cont.

JT: Did any results surprise you?

SI: I actually was surprised how even the splits were. I think everyone had the right attitude going into it and that everyone had very good effort. They didn't just swim through the event. They really tried hard and in trying that hard they also had very even splits.

I was really proud of the group as a whole—how much effort they put towards the event to perform well for themselves and their team.

JT: How did you feel about the relay after it was done?

SI: I think it was a great team bonding thing and definitely we will do it again.

JT: What advice would you give to coaches who want their teams to participate?

SI: It was a lot more fun than perhaps it sounds when you first read about the event. We liked it for the team-building aspect. If nothing else, look at it as a unique workout challenge.

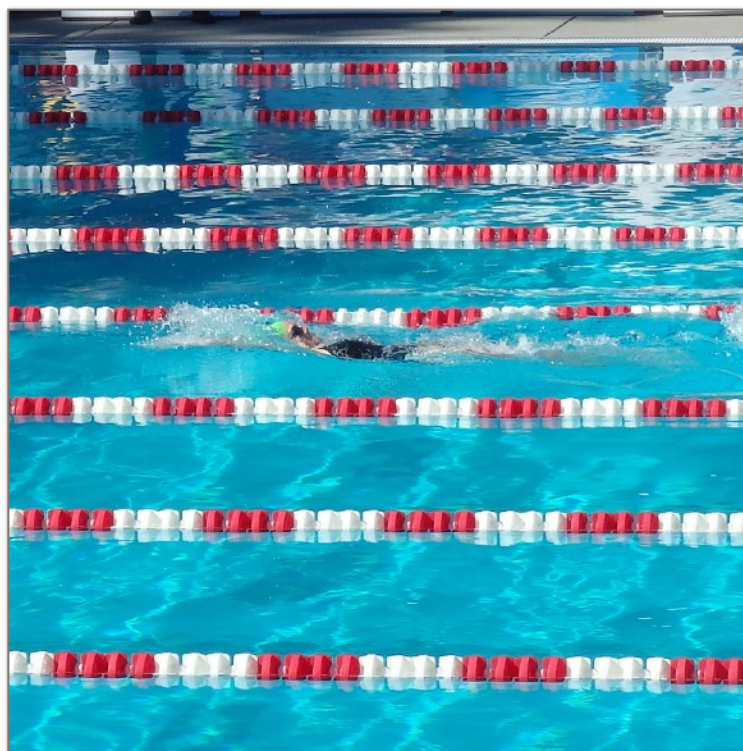
I also might add that this isn't just geared towards top swimmers. Even my middle and lower-tier swimmers enjoyed it. Having a team and doing something for their team that was safe and fun was the key!

Sixty-eight teams from across the nation participated in the 2017 2-Mile Postal Relay. Twenty-three of these came from Masters of Southern Texas (MOST), including the 2-woman team who won the Women's category with a time of 39:06.28.

"I have two ladies who just shred up the water every morning at practice. I didn't even ask them. I just let them know that next Thursday this was going to be their work out," said MOST Coach Susan Ingraham. "They're fast enough they were holding 1:04s on one minutes rest. They were going all out and they were excited to do it. I'm really proud of how hard they worked at it."

Though the 2-Mile Postal Relay is entering its second year as a USMS-sanctioned event, the swim has a ten-year history tracing back to the Nike pool in Beaverton, OR. The pool manager at the time ran a similar relay event. That's where Meet Director Jim Teisher first fell in love with the idea of a sprint Postal swim.

"I competed in it, thought it was a great event, and thought someone ought to do this as a USMS Postal," said Jim. "After ten years I got tired of waiting for someone to step forward and decided to do it myself."



Sara Shepherd swam in the second-fastest Women's relay.

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What to expect in 2018

Teisher will be running this year's 2-Mile Relay as well. Swimmers can complete the swim anytime from October 1 through November 30. They will then have until December 10 to register their teams online and pay the \$20 team participation fee (\$25 for foreign teams).

Coach Ingram confirmed that Masters of Southern Texas intends to participate this year as well.

"I think it was a great team bonding thing," she said. "Definitely we will do it again."

Ready to swim the Relay? Here's how.

1. **Assemble a team** of two, three, or four swimmers. Teams can be Men, Women, or Mixed (one man and one woman or two of each).
2. **Swim the relay** in a regulation-length 25-yard or 25-meter pool anytime from Oct. 1 through Nov. 30. Each swimmer will swim 100 yards in rotation until the team reaches a total of 3,600 yards/meters. Times will be adjusted for meter pools.
3. **Record your splits** using the official event split sheet available on Club Assistant at the link below.
4. **Register** and pay the \$20 team participation fee by Dec. 10.

For full event details and registration, visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/2MileRelay>

2017 2-Mile Postal Relay Winning Times

WOMEN

Time: 39:06.28

Club: MOST

Age Group: 25-34

Swimmers: Erica Kao, Anne Muir

MEN

Time: 35:14.03

Club: WLOO

Age Group: 45-54

Swimmers: David McClellan, Brian Buras, Ron Orris, Mike Varozza

MIXED

Time: 39:10.50

Club: MINN

Age Group: 35-44

Swimmers: Peggy Kratz, Wendy Peterson, Eric Vogen, Sean Bateman

Full results are posted at:

barracudas.org/postal-twomile-relay/