



*Fall 2005*

## Stroke Technique: The Catch

*by Jim Montgomery*

One of the most difficult parts of mastering the freestyle stroke is the beginning of the pull, a phase that many coaches refer to as the “catch.” The term was first used to denote the point in a swimmer’s stroke where the hand catches the water and starts to pull. I describe the catch as such: With your arm stretched out in front of you, begin your pull by pressing your fingers tips down and your elbow-up. What’s hard is that 99% of all swimmers try to do this but fail. This is because swimmers lack the strength and flexibility to reach this posture, or because there is not enough body rotation to help the swimmer keep the shoulder and elbow above the pulling hand. The result is the dreaded straight arm or dropped elbow pull pattern which causes the hand and forearm to “slip” through the water. In a good catch, the body rotates past the hand, and the hand moves or slips very little. Therefore the hand may exit the water ahead of where it actually entered. Also realize that the catch isn’t the power phase of the stroke, but when properly done sets up a longer and better power phase of the stroke.

A simple way of achieving a good catch is to get your fingertips pointed downwards as soon as the hand enters the water. Try to keep the armpit open to the bottom of the pool and point the elbow out to the side as long as you can. I am still fond of the concept of “anchoring” the hand and forearm at the point of the catch. I like to visualize my arm reaching over a waterfall and anchoring my hand and forearm against the rock, pulling my body forward. This gets me feeling like my whole body moves forward, not just my hand.

Some other cool drills to try during practice are “fists” freestyle – swimming with your fists clenched pulling the water back with the forearms and upper arm. “Catch-up stroke” or one-arm freestyle are also good drills to emphasize that “high elbow” position. When doing these drills don’t be afraid to use fins. Using hand handles is a good way to apply more pressure to the palm of your hand and reduce slipping, especially if you remove the bottom strap that goes around the wrist.

Suffice it to say, when swimmers perform the catch correctly, they tend to go a lot faster. And for 99% of you that means keeping your stroke long, getting your fingertips to point down and elbow to come up at the start of your pull. Now let’s get into the pool and do it!

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## PRACTICE HIGHLIGHTS

✓ **Evening SMU Outdoor practices** will remain through the fall/winter. Practices will be held every Monday/Wednesday, 6:30-7:30pm through March 10<sup>th</sup>. Check the schedule for Holiday cancellation dates. The indoor locker rooms will be available for changing and showering.

✓ **Sunday Practices 9:00-10:00am will be at SMU Indoor pool on Oct 9 & 23, Nov 6 & 20, Dec 4 & 18, Jan 8 & 22, Feb 5 & 19, Mar 5 & 19, April 9 & 30, and May 7th.** We will move to Outdoor Pool, weather permitting.

✓ **Toyota All Star Clinic with Dara Torres and Rowdy Gaines and DAM Christmas Relays Meet, Saturday December 17<sup>th</sup> at SMU Indoor Pool**

✓ During the **Holiday Break**, December 19–December 31, 2005, there will be **no practices at St. Mark's or Highland Park**. Practices offered at SMU Indoor Pool – tentative schedule of Mon/Wed/Fri 5:30-6:30am.

✓ **For those who practice at St. Mark's and Highland Park pools**, please note when practices are cancelled. Both schools have a policy to close all facilities when school is not in session.

## PRACTICE CHANGES AND EVENTS (Events are in bold)

### NOVEMBER

1 JCC Practices Begin - Tues/Thurs 12:00-1:00pm  
3 Baylor Thurs/Fri evening practices begin 6:30-7:30pm  
5 No SMU 11:00am Practice – SMU Football Game  
JCC Saturday 10:00-11:00am practice to begin

**Backstroke Clinic at Verandah Club, 7:30-9:00am**

6 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU Indoor 9-10am  
12 SMU Saturday Practice changes to 11:00-12:00pm  
Southlake Practice to be held 6:30-7:30am

**18 DAM Fall Short Course Meters Swim Meet at Baylor, start time 6:00pm**

**19 DAM Fall Short Course Meters Swim Meet at Baylor, start time 8:30am**

No SMU Outdoor 11:00am Practice

No Southlake Practice

21-26 No St. Mark's Practices due to school closing

No SMU Mon/Wed Evening practices

20 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU Indoor 9-10am

23 No HP AM Practice

24 No Practices – HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

25 No HP AM practice

26 No SMU 11:00am Practice – SMU Football Game

### DECEMBER

1 No St. Mark's Evening Practice – High School Meet

4 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU Indoor 9-10am

**17 Toyota All Star Clinic, 8:00am and DAM Christmas Relays Meet, SMU Indoor Pool, 10:30am**

**All Morning Practices cancelled**

**DAM Christmas Party 3:00-6:00pm**

18 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU Indoor 9-10am

19-31 No St. Mark's Practices – school closed

SMU Indoor tentative time of MWF 5:30-6:30am

No SMU Mon/Wed Evening practices

No HP AM Practices

24 No SMU 11:00am practice

No JCC 10:00am practice

No Southlake Practice

### JANUARY

**1 DAM POLAR BEAR SWIM 12:00-1:00pm at SMU Outdoor Pool**

2 Baylor MWF 5:00-6:00am begins

No HP AM Practice

No St. Mark's Practices – school closed

3 St. Mark's Practices resume

4 HP AM Practices resume

8 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU Indoor 9-10am

10 No St. Mark's Evening Practice – High School Meet

12 No St. Mark's Evening Practice – High School Meet

**13-14 SMU Men's Swim Classic 7:30pm**

**14 Butterfly Clinic at Verandah Club 7:30-9:00am**

18 No St. Mark's Evening Practice – High School Meet

22 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU Indoor 9-10am

**30 Starts Clinic at St. Mark's 6:30-7:30pm**

### FEBRUARY

**1-28 Fraternity of Flyers Month**

5 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU Indoor 9-10am

**8 Turns Clinic at St. Mark's 6:30-7:30pm**

19 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU Indoor 9-10am

**24 DAM Spring Meet at SMU, start time 6:15pm**

**25 DAM Spring Meet at SMU, start time 8:30am**

### MARCH

5 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU Indoor 9-10am

7 Last day of Tues Evening Baylor Practice

9 Last Baylor Thursday evening Practice

10 Last St. Mark's evening practice

Last Baylor Friday evening practice

**11 Breaststroke Clinic at Verandah Club 7:30-9:00am**

11-18 No St. Mark's morning practices – school closed

19 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU Indoor 9-10am

13 SMU Tues/Thurs/Fri Evening Practices Begin 6:30-7:30pm

13-17 No HP AM Practices – school closed

25 Last JCC Saturday 10:00am practice

**31 South Central Zone SCY Meet at CISD Aquatics Center in Southlake, TX**

### APRIL

**1-2 South Central Zone SCY Meet at CISD Aquatics Center in Southlake, TX**

1 SMU Saturday 11:00am practice changes to 10:30am

9 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU Indoor 9-10am

14 No HP AM Practices – school closed

30 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU Indoor 9-10am

### MAY

5 Last HP Morning and Last Baylor 5:00am practice

6 Last St. Mark's Morning Practice

7 Super Sunday Swim Practice – SMU 9-10am

8 SMU Tues/Thurs/Fri Morning Practices Begin

**11-14 2006 USMS Short Course Yards Nationals, Coral Springs, Florida**

# DAM Member Anne Schuster Swims *The Channel*

by Anne Block

London's ladies' ponds helped prepare Anne Schuster for *The Channel*, a chilling 23-mile team swim across the English Channel in the Strait of Dover. The ladies ponds – yes, there's separate ponds for men too – are where women of all ages go daily for cold water swimming and warm conversation. The ponds are hard to describe says Anne; you can't do lane swimming and you can't see or touch the bottom. A lifeguard and friend inspired Anne to join their Channel swim team. So when she moved to Dallas in December 2004, her first objective was to begin training with DAM.

## **Training**

Anne had not been in a real pool in eight years. "There's only one 50-meter pool in all of London," she says. So she began with the DAM Polar Bear Swim on January 1, 2005, and later discovered the many pools and training opportunities to build strength and endurance.

Age 38, Anne combined general fitness – yoga and running – with lots of practices and worked up to 5,500 to 6,000 meters per swim. DAM distance month was perfect timing. In July, she did workouts back-to-back and logged a total of 67,000 meters.

Disciplined training is not new to Anne. She swam as a kid so much that her hair took on a greenish hue and nearly fell out. So she took a break from swimming – teens through college – and instead played tennis, squash and cross-country skied in Minnesota. When she met athletic friends through work, she focused on triathlons, and was ranked 25th in the country in 1996, nearly making the national team.

What drives Anne? Her goal-oriented mother who "gets her teeth in 100 percent" and her brother, who reminds her, "winners never quit and quitters never win." Anne's own motto, "if you work hard and spend the time you can have great results," drives not only her sports training, but also her success as a business owner of ASK Research Inc.



***In memory of Merv Cave:*** The mission behind the August 2005 Channel Swim for Anne Schuster and her team was to help raise money and awareness of Parkinson's. Team Merv swam in honor of Merv Cave, father of Anne's friend Jules, who suffered with Parkinson's and ultimately died from the disease. They raised over \$20,000 which will help pay for nursing care as well as wheelchairs for people with Parkinson's unable to afford care and support. Go to [www.teammerv.com](http://www.teammerv.com) for more!



## DAM Swimmer Anne Schuster Swims Across English Channel (continued)

### **The Swim**

With training complete, the team was on call for 10 days. Their boat captain alerted Team Merv when to begin based on the tides, currents, winds and according to Channel Swimming Association (CSA) rules. CSA has organized cross-channel swims since 1927.

Team Merv began at 8:00 a.m. with their team of five: four women and one man. They swam in one-hour rotations. On board between swims, the team had access to hot tea and pasta. "The swim is more mental than physical," Anne says, adding, "The hardest thing is swimming in the dark. It's spooky to swim in pitch black and not be able to see a thing." Anne did not anticipate the rocky boat, but thankfully, she took Dramamine as advised by her husband, a physician. She may not have felt 100 percent, but she escaped the channel bucket club.

Anne was somewhat prepared, but the water was "shocking cold and took your breath away." The water temperature averaged 60 degrees. In order to maintain the integrity of the swim, CSA allowed each swimmer one regular suit, one cap, one pair of goggles, and the use of lanolin (whale blubber), which Team Merv passed on.

It took Team Merv 14 hours and 6 minutes to complete the swim. Most teams actually swim about 30 miles, considering water conditions. At the finish, Anne met the huge white cliffs of Dover, not the sandy beach and coffee bar she had envisioned. What's next for Anne? We will all have to wait on that.

### **DAM Message**

What does it take? Anne says that any DAM swimmer could accomplish *The Channel*. "DAM is second to none in the country," she says. "The facilities and variety of workouts are incredible, and the great coaches are superior to other masters' groups. It's a gift to have access to such a well-run swim program."



**DAM Guests Receive A Free Week of Workouts!**

Hey DAM member, bring a friend or spouse as a guest to any of our workouts! DAM offers a free week of workouts to anyone who is interested in joining our program. The guest just needs to go to our website at [www.damswim.com](http://www.damswim.com) to sign up for our trial membership. The trial membership works at all our locations and practice times. All skill levels welcome: beginners who can make one length of the pool, fitness swimmers, triathletes and competitive swimmers. They'll simply have a week to swim with us, meet our coaches and team members and decide for themselves. For more information, contact the DAM office at 214-219-2300 or email us at [swim@damswim.com](mailto:swim@damswim.com).

# Call to Action!

*by Bobby Patten*

I rarely use the DAM newsletter or web site for a call to political action. However, this is a problem related to fitness, health and the well being of your loved ones. Recently an issue was brought to my attention. I feel I must pass the information along to DAM members and ask for your help. United, we can make a difference.

A close friend recently informed me of a chemical, used in fire fighting, that now has been used so widely in such varying industries from the processing of nuclear waste, to the manufacture of baby food. Yes, you read that correctly, manufacturers of baby food are using the same dangerous chemical to make baby carrots that Three Mile Island used to deal with nuclear waste. That alone should scare you.

The FDA has basically turned a blind eye to the use of this chemical. The chemical, dihydrogen-monoxide, is according to the FDA "generally regarded as safe when used as intended." Gimme a break! These are the same guys who said asbestos and lead-based paint were safe. Now we have a bunch of three headed trout and kids with the IQ of a shoe.

Consider the undeniable facts: unprotected exposure to this chemical has been known to cause death. Other problems associated with consumption include excessive sweating, frequent urination and bloating. Over 100,000 people have lost their lives when they have been unprepared and come in contact with DHMO. This chemical can be found in deadly amounts in every lake, swimming pool, ocean, and even the organic fruits purchased from Whole Foods are not free from it.

As of now science has no way of removing this chemical from our environment. Many speculate that until the FDA determines a safe clean up process, they will never admit its potential harm to humanity. To admit a problem exists would mean admitting a mistake for even allowing such a dangerous chemical to be used with such a cavalier attitude.

So to protect those with conflicts of interest, the FDA has chosen to bury their collective head in the

sand, hoping we will all go away, they are doing almost nothing.

One really has to wonder, who is getting rich on this one?

From a biological perspective, DHMO can be found in every cell of a human being. Even new born babies are no longer free from the effects, having received massive amounts from their mother. In fact, massive quantities of dihydrogen monoxide can be found in every living animal.

There is, however, a glimmer of hope. Recent research determined that water mammals have over time adapted to the high concentrations found in the oceans. In fact several species of water mammals and fish seem to have developed a "purification system" that completely eliminates the negative affects of the chemical. In fact certain species of fish actually are able to continue to breathe unhampered in it's presence. Clearly more research is needed, but our friends from the sea may hold the answer. Unfortunately PETA and their militant arm SHAC have discovered the testing involves animals and several DHMO research facilities have been bombed and attacked, causing many scientists and researchers to fear for their lives.

The research is in the early stages but with your support and the combined efforts of your friends and family we can make a difference.

Here's what you can do to help. Write your congressman and demand that he or she support House bill HRMM18. Also contact your senator and demand support of bill FM18. Both of these bills will fund needed research on dihydrogen-monoxide, which hopefully will lead to a solution.

In the meantime please be sure to study and ask questions before you completely panic over something in which you don't have all the facts!

More information about DHMO can be found at:

<http://www.lhup.edu/~dsimanek/dhmo.htm>  
<http://www.dhmo.org/>

# 2005 Maui Channel Swim

Head coaches Bobby Patten and Jim (a.k.a. "Kimo the Powerhook") Montgomery led over 30 DAM swimmers to Hawaii over the Labor Day weekend to compete in the 36<sup>th</sup> Maui Channel relay swim and the 1<sup>st</sup> ever Maui 'Aumākua 2.4 mile/1 mile sprint race. In the Channel Swim, DAM fielded five teams and one import team from the Rockies for the assault on the ten miles of deep blue water between Lanai and Maui. Most of the troops convened in Kaanapali Beach resort area just outside of Lahaina on Thursday to begin preparing for the Saturday morning channel swim. The squad fine-tuned their competitive fires by doing group training swims twice a day in the mornings and afternoons. Other members of the team continued their training by hitting the links (i.e. playing golf) or opted for more cerebral measures by lying out on the Beach or around the Sheraton Maui hotel pool trying to reach altered states of consciousness with Mai Tais and piña colodas. Thursday evening the team gathered for a special catered dinner where each six-person team strategized on how best to accomplish their goal. For some of them, it was nothing more than survival mode, praying to the channel gods for fair weather and a smooth crossing. For others it was grasping for any information on tides, currents and what line of attack should be taken. When Saturday morning had come and gone and the race was finished, we realized that we fared somewhat better than in previous years, with all teams getting across much quicker than expected.



Then just two days later it was every man and woman for himself or herself in the 2.4 mile/1 mile Maui 'Aumākua swim. This year's race was in lieu of the Waikiki Roughwater swim in Honolulu, which was moved from Monday to Sunday morning. Those of us who swam the race two years ago, when strong currents and tides caused over 600 swimmers to be plucked from the ocean, were more than happy with the calm conditions the morning brought. To our collective surprise there were many good swims turned in by the DAM aquanauts. Our fearless leader Bobby Patten was the first out of the water. But due to a bogus handicap that allowed anyone to dive through an underwater archway ½ mile from the finish for a 2 minutes reduction in time, he finished 4<sup>th</sup> in his age group. **Other results were ....**

Bobby Patten	Nicole Vanderpool
Jackie Bower	Judy Laney
Katherine Bower	Mark Johnston
Karen Schmidt	Susan Nolte
Andy Schmidt	Chris Nolte
David Fuller	Kathy Garnier
2 <sup>nd</sup> in 150+ Mixed	8 <sup>th</sup> in 240+ Open
3:28.53	3:48.51
Jim Montgomery	Liana McStravick
Jill Gellatly	Norbert Hoehne
Angus Cameron	Amanda Sanguinet
Kim Crouch	David Harrison
Tim Glenn	Steve DeWolf
Laura Winslow	Elizabeth Johnson
3 <sup>rd</sup> in 240+ Mixed	8 <sup>th</sup> in 240+ Mixed
3:28.40	4:40.02
Katie McClelland	Malinda Arvesen
Lia Oberstar	Dave Arvesen
Terry Latham	Lisa Brecht
Patty Buffett	Marcia Anziano
Christine Litz	Paula Kelley
Chris Gray	Jerry Smith
2 <sup>nd</sup> in Women's Open	6 <sup>th</sup> in 300+ Open
3:31.42	4:57.25

## Sprint Mile:

Malinda Arvesen 3<sup>rd</sup> in Age Group 27:43

## 'Aumākua 2.4 mile:

Bobby Patten	4 <sup>th</sup> in Age Group	48:52
Jill Gellatly	1 <sup>st</sup> in Age Group	49:47
Katie McClelland	2 <sup>nd</sup> in Age Group	53:20
Jim Montgomery	4 <sup>th</sup> in Age Group	51:25
Tim Glenn	8 <sup>th</sup> in Age Group	57:20
Lia Oberstar	4 <sup>th</sup> in Age Group	57:32
Katherine Bower	6 <sup>th</sup> in Age Group	58:49
Chris Gray	6 <sup>th</sup> in Age Group	60:08
Patty Buffett	5 <sup>th</sup> in Age Group	62:44
Liana McStravick	9 <sup>th</sup> in Age Group	63:05
David Harrison	1 <sup>st</sup> in Age Group	63:07
Jacky Bower	9 <sup>th</sup> in Age Group	66:56
Marcia Anziano	1 <sup>st</sup> in Age Group	75:00
Amanda Sanguinet	10 <sup>th</sup> in Age Group	78:12
Paula Kelley	6 <sup>th</sup> in Age Group	79:30
Lisa Brecht	12 <sup>th</sup> in Age Group	81:25
Steve DeWolf		85:15
Elizabeth Johnston	1 <sup>st</sup> in Age Group	86:16



# XI FINA World Masters Championships

Stanford  
California, USA  
August, 2006

Next August (2006) the XI FINA World Masters Championships will be coming to Northern California. This event brings the best masters swimmers from all over the world together, and it is the first time since 1996 it has been hosted in the Americas. Even though the Championships are next summer, now is the time to start thinking about it in the pool during practice everyday and to decide whether to compete, since hotel rooms will book quickly. It would be a great opportunity to represent DAM!

The championships will be held at the Avery Aquatic Center, Stanford University, California. It is just a short 40 minute ride from beautiful San Francisco. California is one of the world's great tourist destinations with San Francisco and its magnificent Golden Gate, and Bay. Nearby are the Sonoma and Napa Valleys, where some of the world's best grapes are grown for fine wines. Yosemite National Park is 200 KM to the east. Monterey and the great aquarium make a great day trip as well.

The Avery Aquatic Center on the Stanford Campus has great swimming facilities. It is the largest swimming facility in the nation, and one of the fastest and finest facilities in the world. It is the home of Stanford's men's and women's swimming teams. There are two fast 50 meter pools, the Maas Diving Tank and the Avery Competition pool where water polo finals and Synchronized swimming will take place.

You'll find the schedule of events and meet information (including online meet entry forms) at <http://www.2006finamasters.org/index.php?topic=meetinfo>.

For more general information (including hotel reservation information) please visit <http://www.2006finamasters.org/index.php?topic=welcome> or contact Michael Moore at [michael@2006FINAMasters.org](mailto:michael@2006FINAMasters.org).

Don't wait to book a hotel room. Most coaches and swimmers have booked rooms at the Westin Hotel which is within walking distance to the aquatic center. If you are looking to share a hotel room, contact Laurie at the DAM office.



# DAM-LUKE'S TRIATHLON

## SPRING 2006 TRAINING PROGRAM

Are looking to add the word "triathlete" to your résumé? Would you like to train in a social and supportive atmosphere? Do you have a quest for speed with the desire to win your age group at your next race? If you said yes to any of the above – the new DAM Luke's Triathlon Training Program is for you!

Starting **January 9<sup>th</sup>** Luke's Locker and Dallas Aquatic Masters are teaming up to add the flavor you've been looking for in your training program. Expert, certified triathlon, swimming, cycling and running coaches will provide detailed training schedules for all levels to compete in a Sprint or Olympic race.

### **TRAINING DETAILS:**

Daily coached and group workouts to include outdoor cycling, triathlon swimming, combo workouts (run/swim), group runs and rides.

The shared team experience during weekly workouts makes for great training partners and enduring friendships whether this is your first triathlon or your 10<sup>th</sup> year in the sport.

Certified coaches, all seasoned elite triathletes and Ironman finishers will share experiences, knowledge and expertise in all three disciplines.

Detailed 18-week program specific for Beginner, Experienced and Elite level athletes will utilize periodization methods to ensure logical build up and taper for an early season race. Each athlete will be assigned a coach for general questions.

Program will target Sprint, Olympic and Half Ironman distance races. The Half Ironman distance is new for the spring program and will target the Gulf Coast Half Ironman in Panama City, FL on May 13<sup>th</sup>.

Informational speakers and hands on clinics will cover all aspects of triathlon to include nutrition, goal setting, race planning/preparation and transition work.

Seasonal open water swim sessions will be held at Lake Grapevine.

Indoor wind trainer sessions at Luke's Locker on Oak Lawn Avenue (trainers provided). Outdoor group rides will also take place on Sundays.

QuickBeat (previously Beat Goes On) – The magical element of DAM Luke's is the ability of both groups to capitalize on their strengths – both swimming and running. Our Saturday workout will merge with the city's premier 5K/10K walking/running program with top level expert Luke's Locker running coaches.

### **Program Costs:**

- Sprint and Olympic programs: One-time fee of **\$399 or \$104 per month**
- Half Ironman program: One-time fee of **\$449 or \$117 per month**

3-month minimum sign up required

30-day cancellation notice required

There is a one-time enrollment of \$15 for all new DAM Luke's members.

*Members must be current members of United States Triathlon (USAT) – [www.usatriathlon.org](http://www.usatriathlon.org)  
\$3 discount as part of DAM Multisport membership*

**For more information contact**  
**Stacy Mullikin – [stacymullikin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stacymullikin@sbcglobal.net)**  
**or Terry Hunter – [tewahu@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tewahu@sbcglobal.net)**  
**Registration available online –**  
**[www.damswim.com/tri](http://www.damswim.com/tri)**



# Swim Basics

# Coach Todd Dawkins

by Anne Block

DAM's Swim Basics program is going strong into its second year. Our fall and winter sessions will be at Hockaday School, with plans to expand the program to the Verandah Club in the coming months. For more details click on the "Swim Basics" link at [www.damswim.com](http://www.damswim.com).

Here's what **David Price**, a recent graduate of our Swim Basics and Intermediate Group had to say about the program.

## 1. Why did you sign up for Swim Basics?

I had access to a lap pool, but I felt intimidated since I did not know how to swim freestyle. The extent of my previous swimming knowledge was splashing around in a backyard pool. I never swam laps before, and it was something that I had wanted to learn for a long time.

## 2. Did you feel the course met your needs?

Yes, the course allowed me to reach my goal of learning how to swim properly. On the first day of the class, I was barely able to make it across one length of a 25 yard pool. I had my doubts that I could learn to swim freestyle, but the coaches knew how to work with absolute beginners. By the end of the first month, I was able to swim freestyle. I chose to take the Swim Basics beginners class for a second month to further refine my stroke mechanics, and then I moved on to the Swim Basics intermediate class. I far exceeded my original goal.

## 3. Did you feel that the course prepared you for more fitness swimming?

Absolutely. I can now swim about 3000 yards each time I practice, and I apply many of the skills that I learned in the Swim Basics classes. Intense lap swimming is a great workout, and my fitness level now is probably the highest that it has ever been. Without Swim Basics, I probably would not have started swimming regularly.

## 4. Would you recommend Swim Basics to others?

I highly recommend Swim Basics to any adult who wants to pursue swimming as a competitive sport or fitness activity. The skills taught in the class provide a solid foundation to get the most out of swimming. Knowing how to swim correctly also helps to prevent injuries that could be caused by incorrect swimming techniques. I have recommended to class to several people.

Todd Dawkins likes to plunge in, whether it's swimming, running, studying or diving into a mound of ice cream. He's been coaching DAM swimmers since he moved to Dallas from Indianapolis a year ago.

Todd grew up in Jasper, Indiana. He entered the water at age six, swam continuously with his age group and high school teams, then took a break for six years. After college, Todd was inspired by his brother, a nationally ranked swimmer. Todd resumed swimming, which has always been his favorite sport.

In Indianapolis, Todd swam for and coached the IndySwimFit Masters for five years while coaching a high school team for three years. Todd came to Dallas to attend Dallas Theological Seminary and aims to complete the program sooner than the typical four years. He aspires to become a pastor or do mission work. His wife Stacy, a physician assistant, currently works for the Dallas Veterans Administration Hospital.

In addition to studying, coaching and swimming at SMU and Baylor, Todd participates in at least two swim meets a year. At age 32, he says he can still make his best times. Also a runner, Todd is training for *The Rock* this December, which will be his sixth marathon.

What motivates Todd? "That extra bowl of ice cream with lots of chocolate sauce," he admits.

As a coach for DAM, Todd learns from the faster swimmers and helps novice swimmers through a lot of encouragement and a little technique. Whether he's coaching a practice or teaching Swim Basics, Todd tries to personally relate to each swimmer and help set realistic goals.

"I get down close to the water and encourage what someone is doing well," he says. "There's more to coaching than the nuts and bolts of mechanics. And I want people to swim for years, not get frustrated or hang up their goggles."

About DAM, Todd says, "The coaches are personable, hold amazing world records, and they're down to earth," he says. "It's all about the relationships we make and the camaraderie that develops among swimmers, especially lane mates. Swimming gives us a great platform to learn about one another and share our lives. And those are some incredible privileges."