

Who is U.S. Masters Swimming? Why are they helping create an organization for college club swimmers?

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- U.S. Masters Swimming is a national nonprofit organization that provides membership benefits to over 65,000 adult (18 and up) swimmers across the country. What that means is that USMS is dedicated to helping adults use swimming as a form of fitness, comradery, and/or competition.
- USMS was founded in 1970 to unify adult swimmers across the country because there was no organizational structure for them at the time. From then, USMS grew organically and was primarily volunteer run until 2008, when a national office and full-time staff was established.
- Since a staff was hired, the organization has grown by over 20,000 members. USMS has also shifted from being primarily competitive based, to focusing more on swimming for fitness.
- With the direction of the Board, the staff helped create new programs and services to assist in membership connection and growth. Some examples: Coach Certifications, Adult Learn-to-Swim initiatives, e-newsletters, sponsor discounts for members, and new events.
- USMS members can choose if they want to compete in events, when to go to practice, or how they want their club structured. The organizational structure is accommodating on the local level because we know each situation is different.
- Membership demographics: 35% competitive focused, 65% non-competitive focused.
- Our goal is to keep people swimming, whatever their reason, because we know swimming's health benefits and how great of a sport it is.

Why is USMS helping create an organization for college club swimmers?

- There is a large drop-off from the number of swimmers in high school to the number of swimmers in their 30's. USMS recognizes that many people stop swimming during college and either have a long gap or never start swimming again for many reasons.
- Most other sports have a college recreational governing body to help the sport's consistency year after year, with the ever-graduating leadership. However, swimming did not.
- To try and understand the landscape of swimming in college, USMS attended the East Coast Championship meet (the largest college club swimming meet in the country) each year starting in 2011.
- We kept hearing the same input:
 - Our leadership keeps changing and not all the information is passed down from year to year.
 - We are a new club that needs help getting off the ground.
 - We didn't know about other clubs in our area or swim meets near us.

- Our university won't give us more funding because we don't have a national governing body.
- I want to see how our times compares to other college clubs and swimmers around the country.
- I'll join USMS after I'm done with college.
- USMS saw an opportunity to help with most of those issues and many others. We can help create a college club swimming organization because we have already developed most of the infrastructure that college club swimming needs without taking away the control of the individual clubs.
- The organization will unify the clubs, create a support structure that will provide consistency from year to year, provide a communication channel, create a database of times, and give legitimacy to new and pre-existing clubs in the eyes of the university, which would allow clubs to apply for more school funding.
- Not only will this help solve the needs of the college club swimmers, but it will also help high school swimmers continue their swimming careers through college and, hopefully, as part of USMS after college.
- With the number of scholarship programs shutting down or being financially squeezed due to changing football and basketball athlete payment landscape, we want to make sure that college club swimming not only continues, but thrives.
- **We are not looking to make money from college club swimming**, which is why we created a net zero budget to only cover hard costs. Instead, we are looking to support the organization of College Club Swimming and encourage athletes to continue to swim through college and hopefully join USMS after they graduate.

The logo for U.S. Masters Swimming features the word "SWIMMING" in large, pink, outlined letters, with "U.S. MASTERS SWIMMING" in smaller, pink, solid letters below it. The text is set against a light blue background with a stylized wave or ribbon shape.

U.S. MASTERS SWIMMING