

# THE RIME

Vol. 2 No. 3

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## FROM THE EDITOR

As many of you already know, our former newsletter editor, Natalie Ferrell, and her beloved husband Scott, moved to Dallas, Texas at the end of May. I will miss Natalie, not only because now that she has moved away I have been nominated (or was it coerced by someone named Tom Denes?) to become her successor as newsletter editor, but also because she is a very special person and a great teammate.

When I joined the team in late December last year, I did not know one single person. Natalie was one of the first of my fellow Ancient Mariners to get me involved with the team. She invited me to her annual "Girls Only" Sleepover Party, encouraged me to volunteer at the Albatross Open and solicited my assistance at her many "stapling parties" (which were not all work you know.) By the end of March, I felt like I was a true Ancient Mariner.

It is people like Natalie that inspire in us the true meaning of what it is to be a member of a team. In our busy lives, we often do not take time to help and support each other and, as Natalie says in her article about her experience at Short Course Nationals, to "[cheer] for a 92 year-old man from San Diego (just for the mere fact that he [is] 92 and competing.)"

I hope that you will all find this edition of the newsletter to your liking and I want to encourage everyone (even you Mickey) to write an article (or even a short blurb would do) for

the next newsletter, which is scheduled to hit the presses before the end of November. Please send all of your literary contributions to me (Nadine Clayton) at 125 Talbott Street, Rockville, Maryland 20852, or catch me at the MAC on Tuesday and Thursday nights (and sometimes Sunday mornings.)

## ALBATROSS OPEN

by Tom Denes

Once again, an Albatross Open is behind us. Exactly 200 swimmers attended this year, about 25 less than last year. Several world and national records were crushed at this meet, two by our beloved coach. They were:

JAYNE BRUNER		
60-64	100 Free	1:13.50
60-64	50 Breast	41.74
60-64	100 Breast	1:34.63
60-64	100 I.M.	1:26.42

JOHN CALVERT		
50-54	200 I.M.	2:26.64

CLAY BRITT		
35-39	50 Back	26.84
35-39	100 Back	58.25

In addition, Jeri-Girl repeated as Fastest Woman on the Water with a blazing 28.61 in the 50 meter Freestyle. (Jeri was rewarded with a plaque and promise of a future haircut.) Neil Williams won twice as Fastest Man on the Water by swimming a false start plagued 50 meter Freestyle in 24.37. John Calvert won the Versatility Award by swimming the 200 I.M. in a world-

record 2:26.64.

The meet was followed by a party at Mary Ellen's parents' farm. The party featured a viewing of that comet I can't pronounce.

P.S. We raised \$900 with this meet.

## DID YOU KNOW THAT...

by Jeff Roddin

The Montgomery Ancient Mariners have an official set of team records. These records include categories for short course yards, short course meters, long course meters, one and two mile cable swims and one hour swim totals for all USMS age groups. By being a registered swimmer on our team, you are eligible to compete for any of these records.

The records are printed and distributed once each year during the Fall. If you swim in a meet outside of our area, please make sure you let me know your official times for record comparison. Also, please call me (Jeff Roddin, (301) 649-4861) if you catch any errors or omissions.

## THE LAST ALBATROSS OPEN?

by Tom Denes

Yes, it's really true. I am retiring as meet director of the Albatross Open after four straight years of fun. I am actively recruiting the next director but have thus far been unsuccessful. It would be a shame if we let this very successful meet die. So...who wants to be the new meet director?

## KUDOS

- Brian and Kim Crilly celebrated the birth of their son, Collin Michael on June 6. Kim credits her easy delivery to the fact that she swam up until the day before she delivered.

- Coach Clay Britt "tied the knot" on June 22. Clay and Mary met at a swim meet in 1995. Jodi Ramsbottom also wed her fiance Chris on May 18.

- Congratulations and good luck to Brenda Levy, who qualified for the 1996 Paralympics to be held in Atlanta in August.

- Alan Pollin completed the 7.5 mile Potomac River crossing in June. Alan's time of 4 hours and 24 minutes placed him 6th.

- Congratulations to Marshall Greer who placed 2nd, 3rd and 9th in the 50, 100 and 200 Backstroke events at the Masters World Championships held in Shetfield, England in July.

- Congratulations to Jeff Kostoff for winning The Great Chesapeake Bay Swim in June and also to Jeff Roddin who placed 2nd in his age group and 14th overall. Other Ancient Mariners who participated in the swim included Mike Aaby, Clay Britt (with the aid of a wet suit), Michelle Chestnut, Barbara Clifford, Roger Emch, Barry Gruessner, Ann Kominski, Russell Kominski, Cindy Liu, Beth Lofgren, Jennifer Mitchell, Bill Parlett and Steve Schrier.

## ROAD TRIP

by Tom Denes

Several Ancient Mariners traveled to Raleigh, North Carolina, for the Dixie Zone Championships. The road-trippers included CJ Lockman, Jill Roddin, Jeri Ramsbottom, Nadine Clayton, Natalie Ferrell, Dave

Harmon, Jeff Roddin, Clay Britt and I.

This was an extremely fast pool (really, Nadine) -- deep the whole way. Clay shaved for this meet and set two USMS records in the 50 and 100 yard Backstroke events. He also just missed the record in the 200 Backstroke.

CJ announced that if I beat her in the 200 I.M. she would retire. As you can see, she is still swimming. Jill swam the 50, 100 and 200 yard Butterfly events and the 400 I.M. and decided that she needed a new job. Jeri swam six events her first day, including the 1000 yard Freestyle. She was fast, as always. Nadine swam one-half of a blazing 100 yard Freestyle. Jeff turned into a true Masters swimmer by bringing a folding chair to the meet. But, he also swam his lifetime best in the 200 Backstroke. Natalie swam some great sprints and Dave Harmon swam a lifetime best in the 100 I.M. And I DQ'd our relay.

Several of us went to the social on Saturday night and almost got thrown out by two fascist waitresses.

*(Editor's Note: Trust me, he is not exaggerating about the fascist waitresses, but Natalie did manage to salvage the trip by getting Jeri and CJ a free hotel room for the first night.)*

## ANCIENT MARINER PROVES HE IS NOT SO ANCIENT

by Jeff Roddin

This past winter a local high school swimmer, sixteen year old Jeff Somensatto, made headlines in *The Washington Post* by virtue of his record-breaking performance at the Washington Metro's High School Championship swim meet. Jeff broke

the oldest Metro record on the books: the 100 yard Backstroke record set back in 1979, which was formerly held by our very own coach, Clay Britt.

Two weeks later the Potomac Valley Senior Championships were held in Oakton, Virginia. This meet typically includes the top young talent in the area, mostly from high school through college-aged swimmers, but is open to any registered USS swimmer. Age, therefore, is not a prerequisite to swim in the meet. As long as a swimmer can meet the time qualifying standards for their particular event they may compete.

When everybody saw the program on Saturday, March 9, they thought there must have been a mistake -- Clay Britt was entered in the meet and the age next to his name was 35! Sure, everybody knew who Clay Britt was, but he swam *so* many years ago. Yes, he was the three-time NCAA champion and American record-holder who swam for RMSC in the late 1970's. Thirty-five years old? Yes, it must be the same person; but certainly he must have thought this was a Master's swim meet. And he is seeded second? He must have been confused and entered his time for the 50 Backstroke instead of the 100 Backstroke. Quickly scanning the ages of all the other competitors yielded the fact that he was more than twice their age (except for the 26 year-old guy who, apparently, also refuses to let go of his youth and move on with his life.)

During the morning preliminaries, Clay Britt indeed showed up to the blocks for his heat. Hopefully this former age-group superstar would preserve his legendary status and not embarrass himself. Low and behold, once the starting horn went off Clay shot out ahead and swam a blazing 52.60 to win the heat and qualify second overall!

The tables were set for the evening finals. The top qualifier was Jeff Somensatto -- the young, up-and-coming backstroke sensation, who appeared shaved and tapered. Swimming in Lane 5 right next to Jeff would be Clay Britt -- with about as much body hair as some of the residents at 3001 Connecticut Avenue, NW. (Of course, Clay's friends took much pleasure in reminding him that Jeff was not even born when his original record was set!) The rest of the heat included a few other Junior National qualifiers eager to step up to this most unusual and unprecedented challenge.

Soon after the starting horn went off, it became apparent that the race would be between the swimmers in Lanes 4 and 5, since those two swimmers emerged out in front immediately. Jeff quickly took the lead going into the first turn, with Clay slightly behind. The second length remained about the same. Jeff initiated his turn at the 50 just ahead of Clay, but Clay got around faster and took the lead split for the push-off. During this third length, Clay jumped out in front by a half body-length. Approaching the wall at the 75, Jeff began closing the gap. But once again during the turn, Clay got around much faster and increased his lead. The last length was more or less a dog-fight, with neither swimmer noticeably gaining or losing any ground. With the final lunge at the finish, Clay touched in 51.70 to soundly beat Jeff's 52.20 second place time. Earning this title, Clay became Potomac Valley Senior Champion in the 100 yard Backstroke for 1977, 1978, 1979 and 1996. Truly a Herculean feat of immortal proportions!

(It should also be noted that some other "senior" swimmers made an impression at the Senior Championships. Clay and other Montgomery Ancient Mariner

swimmers, Jeff Roddin and Jason Crist, teamed with Wally Dicks, from Fairfax Masters, and swam a 400 Medley Relay. To nobody's surprise, Clay led off the backstroke leg with a lead. This lead was never relinquished or even threatened throughout the race. The winning time of 3:34.50 was two seconds faster than the second place time. The winning time actually was a full second under the USMS National Record, but since the four swimmers are not registered on the same Masters team, they are not eligible for the record.)

## **THE REVENGE OF THE ANCIENT MARINERS**

by Tom Denes

Before you know it, it will be Fall and time for our next Phun Meet. Because we were soundly defeated by the Fairfax County Masters for the first time last year, I am expecting everyone (even you, Jennifer Mitchell and Brian Davis) to turn out and swim. Stand by for details.

## **ANCIENT MARINERS WIN RESTON LAKE SWIM**

by Tom Denes

The Ancient Mariners won the small team category of the Reston Lake 2-Mile Swim, beating 17 other clubs. Those who participated in that glorious event included:

ANGELA KRUEGER (10th)	1:03:00
CAROLINE SCACE (8th)	57:58
MICHELLE CHESTNUT	1:06:13
JEFF RODDIN (2nd)	44:43
ROGER EMCH	54:51
BARRY GRUENESSNER(6th)	52:35
TOM DENES (4th)	46:18
EVAN PARKER (4th)	49:16
MIKE AABY (6th)	54:18

## **SHORT COURSE NATIONALS**

by Natalie Ferrell

My first USMS Nationals at De Anza College Aquatic Center in Cupertino, California (May 9-12) proved to be an exciting experience. It was marked by the opportunity to meet past and future Olympians, to spend time with family, to cheer for a swimmer who was four times my age, and to relish in our team's true spirit and friendship.

It was great to return to my home state for Nationals. My parents and I were able to stay with my Aunt Annette who lives in Santa Clara located about 10 minutes from the pool. My father was a bit nervous since Nationals would be his first ever swim meet. (His Christmas present from me was a Masters Membership and instructions to start training for Nationals.) We went to the pool on Thursday and were extremely impressed. There were about 20 lanes in the competition pool and about five in the warm-up pool. During the meet, they ran two courses at once.

The best part of the meet was the opportunity to share in the Ancient Mariner's team spirit. Jill Roddin's Aunt Laura commented that our team was certainly not the largest at the meet, but that we were definitely the loudest. It was very reassuring to stand on the blocks and look across the pool and see your teammates smiling and cheering you on. We often had to keep running back and forth between the two courses to make sure we did not miss each other's races and to make sure we wrote down each other's splits. My Aunt Annette, who had never been to a swim meet before, was awestruck to see all of these swimmer's, young and old, in one place. (She also later confided that she had never seen so many bodies in one place either.) She

was so inspired that she joined Santa Clara Masters the week after Nationals, even though she could not even make one lap across the long course pool during her first practice.

The Ancient Mariners fared very well at the meet. Our crew included Kelly Appler, Clay Britt, Tom Denes, Mickey Hall, CJ Lockman, Jerry Ramsbottom, Jeff Roddin, Jill Roddin and myself. Some of us were a bit nervous because we had seeded ourselves a bit faster than we had swam in a while. Luckily, none of us embarrassed ourselves, at least not while swimming. Our speedy coach Clay led the team with a first place in every event he swam, including the 50 Free, 50 Back, 100 Back, 200 Back and 100 I.M. He also set two national records in the 50 and 200 Back events (he had already set the 100 Back record at the Raleigh meet.)

Other Ancient Mariner top ten finishers included the following:

<b>JEFF RODDIN (25-29)</b>	
100 Back (5th)	54.01
200 Back (6th)	1:58.38
100 Breast (6th)	1:01.37
100 Fly (4th)	51.80
200 I.M. (4th)	1:58.02
400 I.M. (5th)	4:17.84
<b>MICKEY HALL (25-29)</b>	
400 I.M. (10th)	4:30.40
<b>JERI RAMSBOTTOM (19-24)</b>	
50 Free (7th)	25.78
100 Free (6th)	54.87
50 Back (2nd)	28.73
100 Back (1st)	1:01.84
50 Fly (2nd)	28.37
100 I.M. (4th)	1:02.71
<b>NATALIE FERRELL (19-24)</b>	
50 Free (10th)	26.33
50 Back (9th)	31.88
100 Back (9th)	1:09.90
50 Fly (4th)	28.94
100 Fly (8th)	1:05.01
<b>JILL RODDIN (25-29)</b>	
200 Fly (8th)	2:21.50
400 I.M. (10th)	5:13.17
<b>CJ LOCKMAN (30-34)</b>	
50 Fly (8th)	28.52
100 I.M. (5th)	1:05.16

Our 200 Mixed Medley Relay of Clay

Britt, Jeff Roddin, Jill Roddin and Natalie Ferrell also placed 6th.

The refereeing was fierce at Nationals. My father was the first of our group to succumb to their watchful eyes. After diving off the blocks, his goggles came off and ended up around his neck. Needless to say, in all of the confusion, he forgot to do his much practiced breaststroke pull down. At this point I was relieved that he had made it into the water without false starting and without losing his suit! Unfortunately, his goggles ended up slipping completely off and instead of leaving them floating behind him, he made the wrong split second decision and turned and grabbed them -- thus breaking his stroke and ending up with a DQ. As you might have guessed, my dad did not wear goggles in his other two races.

The next victim was Mickey Hall. Now I must say that Mickey is a sly one. Before the meet he boasted that he uses a one hand touch in butterfly. His theory was that with so many swimmers in the water and with all of the splashing at the wall, the refs cannot actually tell if you touched with one or two hands. He also hypothesized that the refs stand back a bit so that they will not get wet. Well, unfortunately for our friend Mickey there was one ref for every 2-3 lanes on both ends of the pool and his one hand touch didn't fly (so to speak). CJ Lockman was also DQ'd during butterfly. The refs claim she dropped her shoulder too soon at the wall before her turn. Personally, I think she got DQ'd by association (due to her engagement to Mickey).

Although the refs were a bit tougher than we had anticipated, they did find some moments of leniency. As I cheered for a 92 year-old man from San Diego (just for the mere fact that he was 92 and competing), I chatted with a ref about the questionable

breastroke technique of some of the 80 and 90 year-olds in the water. The ref had a good point. He was not about to DQ someone who was the only person in their age group. So Mickey - you are going to have to use a two hand touch in fly until you are at least 90.

One of my goals at Nationals was to meet some swimmers from Texas (my new home). My mother is very resourceful and on the first day of the meet she called me into the women's locker room saying she had met a woman who lives in Dallas. It goes without saying that once I saw the woman I needed no introduction. Mom had unknowingly met former Olympian Sandy Neilson-Bell. Our other brush with celebrity at the meet came in the form of Gary Hall, Jr., who is set to compete in Atlanta this summer. Jeri Ramsbottom and myself, after ogling him from afar (sorry Honey), talked Tom Denes into asking Gary if we could get a picture with him. His smooth response was, "Only if I can have a copy." My mom and aunt were not to be outdone and proceeded to get at least three pictures with him over the next few days.

As you can see Nationals was a fantastic experience. I have not even touched on our fun nights out or the trips to Carmel and Monterey after the meet; so, we will leave those experiences to your imagination. After this summer of gluttony, it will be time to start training again for next year's nationals. Don't forget to mark your calendar for May 15th - 18th. I hope to see all of you in Seattle in 1997 for more team bondage -- I mean team bonding!!

*Natalie Ferrell and her husband Scott relocated to Dallas at the end of May. Although she may join another team, she will always be an Ancient Mariner at heart. You can reach the Ferrell's at 18408 Rain Dance Trail, Dallas, TX 75252, (214) 931-4055; or E-Mail: 104727.16@compuserve.com.*

## LIVING YOUR NIGHTMARES or SILLY WABBIT, USS MEETS ARE FOR KIDS

by Tom Denes

Jeff Roddin's article notwithstanding, not all of the Ancient Mariners have had pleasant experiences with USS swim meets. Following USMS Nationals in May, I was delighted to learn that I had qualified for the 200 meter Butterfly in a local USS meet to be held in June. Oh boy, a chance to compete with the elite swimmers in the area!

Several days before the meet, Jeff showed me the heat sheet. I was seeded in the slowest heat with a bunch of 15 year-olds. Being 38 years old, this was not the glory I had anticipated. But, I was determined to make a good showing.

The night before the meet, I woke up at 2 a.m. in a cold fear of the potential humiliation I was risking. I did not sleep the rest of the night.

I arrived at the pool at 7 a.m. to find a churning soup of young swimmers. My fellow Ancient Mariners were nowhere to be seen. I quickly took off my warm-ups and slipped into the pool. Fortunately, I was still somewhat shaved down and there were no mothers screaming at me to stay away from their kids. I stayed very low in the water, hoping nobody would notice me. But, there was no way to hide. At each end of the pool, a line of 20 kids hung on the lane lines waiting to reach the wall to turn. I hung out with them awaiting my turn. After several laps of this, I gave up and towed off.

Then I spied Jeff Roddin. A fellow old person! I was very happy to see him. Jeff talked to me about the various events and swimmers and I immediately relaxed. It turns out

Clay was seeded next to the current American record holder in the 100 meter Backstroke. That would be something to watch.

My heat of the 200 Butterfly was one of the first of the morning. Newly energized by Jeff's enthusiasm, I hopped on the block. I would show those 15 year-olds!

The gun went off. I took off smartly and sliced into the water. I set off at a steady pace and before I knew it, I was at the wall. A quick turn and I was underway again. My competitors were nowhere to be seen. I guessed that they had given up and left the pool. I stroked through the beginning of my second lap and was heading for the 100 meter mark when I noticed that my arms were starting to feel a little tight. Hmmm...this usually does not happen until near the end of the race and I still had over half of the race to go!

As I came up to the wall, I kicked in, hoping that my arms would be re-energized by the brief pause. It also occurred to me to touch the wall, jump out and say, "You mean this is a 200 fly?" But, like a fool I took off for the last 100. To say that I experienced the tortures of hell during the last 100 meters would be an understatement. My arms felt like 100 pound paint buckets were attached to them. I broke stroke and kicked for awhile. I noticed that the 15 year-olds were passing me. I also noticed that I did not care.

What I did care about were the spectators on the deck as word passed quickly among them that someone was "going vertical" in the water. This was a spectacle to be relished. It is almost the same fixation as watching a terrible accident -- it is horrible to watch, but you cannot tear your eyes away.

Anyway, I painfully lurched my

way to the 150 meter mark and gamely turned for the last lap. My arms were barely clearing the surface of the water when I did bother to take a stroke. I am not sure how I finished. I do know that the referee was watching me very closely. This was probably because there was no one else in the pool. The rest of my heat had finished and the next heat was impatiently waiting. I finally hit (uh, I mean touched) the wall. I climbed out of the pool, muttering something about "a long way."

The only nice thing that happened is that no one clapped. For you sadists out there, my splits were: 34.1, 39.3, 44.1, and 52.7. You add it up.

And just for a touch of irony, I also had qualified for the 50 Freestyle, but I had scratched that race to concentrate on the 200 Butterfly!

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 28	DCRP Meet
Aug. 3-4	Camping trip to Bavarian Beer Hall. Call Jeff Roddin for details.
Aug. 6	Team Picture @ 8:20 p.m. sharp at the Bethesda Pool (rain date: Thurs. Aug. 8)
Aug. 11	D.C. Masters Meet
Sept. 9	Tom's "End of Summer" Party
Oct. 5 or 6	DCAC Meet
Oct. or Nov.	The Revenge of the Ancient Mariners Meet (formerly known as The Fun Meet)

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### Montgomery Ancient Mariners

Tom Denes, President  
Jeff Roddin, Co-Vice President  
Jill Roddin, Co-Vice President  
CJ Lockman, Treasurer  
Lisa Berger, Secretary  
Nadine Clayton, Editor  
Jeff Roddin, Recordkeeper  
Coaches:  
Clay Britt  
Jeff Kostoff  
Stan Tinkham

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Pictured above - Road Trip: The girls at the social for the Dixie Zone Championships in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Pictured below - Ancient Mariners attending the going away dinner for Natalie + Scott Ferrell at T.G.I. Fridays in Rockville.

