

VFM Chats with Gary Antonick

By Brenda Bartlett

Gary grew up just outside of Detroit, Michigan as the son of a national sailing champion. He learned how to sail at the age of four or five and was sailing throughout the Great Lakes until he turned fifteen. As a high school freshman Gary was intrigued with the idea of trying the sport of swimming since he had already spent much of his life on the water.

After swimming for the remainder of his high school years, Gary then went on to compete for a rising University of Michigan team. He swam primarily 100 and 200 freestyle events. He completed his engineering degree and went on to work for Andersen Consulting. While traveling and consulting he decided to attend to graduate school. It was during this time that Gary returned to competitive swimming while living in the Boston area and finishing up his MBA at Harvard.

Upon graduation he had a notion to swim across the English Channel. So, in 1989, Gary did just that and finished with the fourth fastest US men's time in history, 8hrs. 44mins. That year he also finished second at the Chesapeake Bay Swim. He then relocated to San Francisco and took up with the well-known Olympic Club masters swimming group. For the next six years he would travel and compete in masters national and world championships.

For nearly three years now, Gary has been planning business strategies as a consultant here in Philadelphia. He has competed at Swarthmore, and in

the Zone Championships, and plans to attend nationals back in San Francisco while catching up with a few old friends. His events now include 100 fly (53 seconds), 100 IM (55), 100 back (55) and other "off" strokes. He deems this variety necessary in order to ward off boredom and continue to defy his voracious appetite for a challenge.



Gary also passionately studies languages: Arabic, Chinese, German and French to name a few. He has a profound understanding of education and the world. Some goals of his are to one day master (no pun intended) breaststroke, and retire from long course swimming altogether. He trains primarily at Villanova, aiming to finish at least four swims each week, and knows a couple things about cycling, too.

This is a guy who seems to be sailing through life effortlessly—with the greatest of speed!

Bios of Legendary Swimmers

Collected by
B.W. Dave Burt

Peter John "Johnny"
Weissmuller
(orig. Jonas
Weissmuller)
Date of birth:
June 2, 1904



Swimmer, actor; born in
Windber, Pa

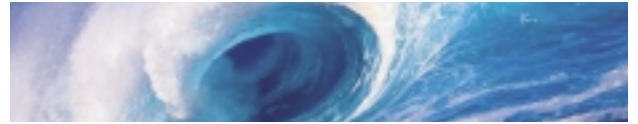
(according to www.biography.com,
Freidorf, Romania - according to www.IMDB.com).

Johnny attended schools in Chicago and the University of Chicago, and during the 1920s was the best all-around amateur swimmer in the U.S.A. After winning three gold medals in the 1924 Olympics and two more at the 1928 Games, he parlayed his celebrity into a career as a movie actor. (Hollywood publicists would later claim he was born in Hungary but had hidden this fact in order to compete for the U.S. Olympic team.) After appearing in some short subjects and swimming extravaganzas, he starred in 12 Tarzan movies in the 1930's and early 1940's including Tarzan, the Ape Man (1932, "Mothered by an ape—He knew only the law of the jungle—to seize what he wanted!") with Maureen O'Sullivan. When he was replaced by a younger actor, he made a series of Jungle Jim movies. He formed a swimming pool company and continued to make occasional appearances in trash films.



Hey, Johnny, didja get that tush from all those monster kick sets.

Big Wave Dave's Incredibly Unscientific Stroke Clinic



Once upon a time, the kids of America who were chosen to be breaststrokers had certain physical characteristics. Most notably they had larger shoulders than their counterparts, their feet pointed out ever so slightly and they had a lack of flexibility that could only be described as wooden. I was one of the chosen ones. Breaststroke back then involved monster pulls and kicking "like a frog" in various combinations that got you to the other end of the pool sooner than the enemy, disguised as another eight year old in the lane next to you. Nowadays, if you get a chance to see the elite breaststrokers on TV or live, you may want to shout out, "Hey, that guy's (gal's) a butterflyer! What's he doing swimming my stroke!" Of course if you do, the person sitting next to you may go find the chair by the door.

But I digress. What can we, the natural breaststrokers as well as the aging master, do to combat the encroachment of those rubber-legged neophytes? I propose a two pronged attack. First, we must enhance what we have learned from childhood, and, second, we must (painfully) join with them in their odd technique. What did they teach us in our

formative years that we retain to this day? Well, the pull was king. Elbows up, fingers to the bottom and a nice sweeping pull with a recovery that looked like an upside down heart shape. With minor modifications over the years, it still remains the same.



Bill Specht of St. Pete Masters demonstrating the "dresser push up" on the side of a pool (photo stolen from SWIM magazine)

Then came that period when a good swoosh of water coming up under your chin was the mark of the "new stroke" (see below). Not only was it supposed to make you go faster, it looked pretty goldarn cool! I don't know how many hours I spent trying to get that swoosh to the detriment of everything else I was doing. I don't think my times improved during that period, either. What came out of that experience,

though, is that the extra elbow shove and recovery are paramount to produce the required force. I like to visualize myself pushing up on a dresser. After all is said and done, the downward push of the arms is the essential action that produces the equal and opposite reaction—lifting the body up onto the dresser, or in the case of being in the water, pushing the body forward.

Part two of my master plan is to give in to the Dark Side and try butterfly kicking off the wall and incorporating some of that action into your stroke. This goes against every ingrained impulse for one reason ... we used to get disqualified for doing just this! It's like being told not to stick your hand on the stove for half your life, then being told one day it's OK. But if you dig deep, you may find that secret part of you that actually liked to get away with a little butterfly kick off the turn. Legitimize that subconscious truant and the kick will come much easier.

By combining the old and the new, you get the best of both worlds and may even feel better doing it.

Next Issue:
Butterfly, the stroke you love to hate.



Valley Forge Masters 1999 Workout Schedule

UMLY Workouts 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Radnor High School Workouts 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Villanova University Workouts 10:00 AM to 12:00 pm &
9:30 AM to 11:30 AM

Workout Fees: \$ 3.00 for VFM Members
\$ 5.00 for Non-VFM Members

For more information contact Dan Castellano



May

- 23 Definite start of UMLY Outdoor Workouts
UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Melanie and Ron
If weather is inclement during the outdoor season we will swim indoors. No workout will be cancelled due to weather.
- 30 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Vibeke Swanson
Food and Beverages will be served after practice.



June

- 6 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Barney Hungerford
- 13 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Tom Krug
- 20 No workout due to Masters LC Meet
- 27 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Brenda Bartlett

July

- 4 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Dan Whitehead
- 11 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Deb Kurucz
- 18 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Judy Michel
- 25 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Charlie Johnson

August

- 1 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Andy Ellis
- 8 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Gary Antonick
- 15 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Mike Casciato
- 22 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Jamie Krull
- 29 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Stephanie Walsh Beilman

September

- 5 No workout due to Atlantic City Pageant Swim
- 12 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Jim Mack
- 19 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Chris/Margaret Craft
- 26 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: Susie Lucas

October

- 3 UMLY 10:30 - 12:00 Coach: John McShane

Directions:

Upper Main Line Y 1416 Berwyn Paoli Rd, Berwyn, PA 19312
Villanova University Lancaster & Ithan Avenues, Villanova, PA 19085

Notes to Coaches:

You can swim from 8-10:30 indoors before practice on the day you coach; Dan C. will provide passes

Please try to swap dates with another coach in the event you can't coach on the day you're assigned. In addition to the other coaches, I've identified 2 substitute coaches:

Dan Castellano (610) 497-1157;
dcastell@bee.net
Richa Kleiman (610) 995-9643;
rkleiman@vm.temple.edu

Call them if you can't swap with another scheduled coach. As a last resort, call Melanie at 525-5158 or email me at mjames@kpmg.com.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!!!!

Set Corner

That monthly feature to enlighten you denizens of the pool when the person next to you asks, "Oh, Glorious Lane Leader, what now?"

100 Free	on 1:30 base (faster or slower depending...)
200 IM	on 3:15 or 3:45
300 Free	on 1:30 base (4:30)
200 IM	on 3:15 or 3:45
500 Free	on 1:30 base (7:30)
200 IM	on 3:15 or 3:45
300 Free	on 1:30 base (4:30)
200 IM	on 3:15 or 3:45
100 Free	on 1:30 base

Total - 2100 yards

The key to this set is that you want to descend the IM's, and, if you are masochistic enough, you can try to get the second 300 and 100 faster than the first ones, too. I call this the Mother of All Sets because at the end I say, "Oh, Mother."

Editorial Staff:

"Big Wave" Dave Burt - Editor in Chief, Art Director, Breaststroker
Dan Castellano - Contributing Editor, On-Line Editor, Wearer of Many Hats
Brenda Bartlett - Contributor
Melanie James-Cosgrove - Contributor

Once in a Lifetime

Music & Lyrics by David Byrne

Letting the days go by let the water hold me down

Letting the days go by water flowing underground

Into the blue again in the silent water

Under the rocks and stones there is water underground.

Letting the days go by let the water hold me down

Letting the days go by water flowing underground

Into the blue again after the money's gone

Once in a lifetime water flowing underground.

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Don't be a hippo.



Artifact Corner: Playing Cards

Found by the editor, yours truly, in my wife's backpack that had lain dormant for six years. She was getting ready to go on a hiking trip with her dad when she stumbled on this deck of cards. They are vintage 1979, given away in courtesy packs at Y Nationals in Ft. Lauderdale so the legions of high school swimmers could solitaire away the hours with a proper sponsor. The thing is, I thought hippos were pretty good swimmers. Maybe they should have said, "Don't be a Lemming."

Estimated "Antique Roadshow"
Value: Worthless.

What didn't make it very far out of the same courtesy packs were mesh bathing suits by Dolphin. Yes, in the pursuit of faster suits, Dolphin came out with a large mesh, and, yes they were see-through. They lasted about a day, till the youth of America figured it out.

Do you have an heirloom that has a story and want to share it with the VFM faithful? Send a photo and corresponding story in to me, Dave Burt (dave@hbmadv.com), and it will get its proper embellishment.

A reprint of the Commemoration in the Swarthmore Heat Sheet 1999:

Bill Crawford Memorial Winter Classic

Presented by the Valley Forge Masters Swim Team

The Valley Forge Masters Swim Team is proud to present the 1999 edition of the Winter Classic. It is also our privilege to honor the memory of our coach, Bill Crawford. Bill's coaching career spanned many decades and touched both beginner and Olympian alike. His goal was to help swimmers at all levels grow in their enjoyment and performance in the sport. We are particularly proud of the interest Bill took in our swimming careers in his later years. Whether he was helping us learn the latest techniques, taking our splits at nationals, working as starter at this meet or enjoying pizza and beer after workout, Bill was a great friend and supporter of our team. While Bill has been gone from us for a couple of years, his memory lives on in our swimming and, proudly, in this meet.

Best of luck to all participants, enjoy the competition and we look forward to seeing you next year.

The Valley Forge Masters Swim Team

NOTE:

If you enjoyed this newsletter and would like to continue receiving it, renew your membership to VFM and we would be ecstatic to keep on sending it to you. Applications are on file on UMLY's bulletin board and can be found on Dan's website. It's cheap and a great way to meet exciting people!

Article Watch - Outside Magazine, May 1999 Eat My Backwash, Señor!

Sixteen hours in the foul Argentine drink, at a pair of the world's longest (and strangest) swim races. By Ken Kalfus

As a sprinter, it's kind of tough to relate to the exploits of the open water crowd, and, after reading this article, I firmly believe that they are all nuts. Nevertheless, an intriguing article about the ultimate open water events and the party atmosphere that surrounds it.

An excerpt: "As a sport, open-water swimming has been in decline ever since Leander drowned crossing the Hellespont. Nowadays it's ignored by multinational sponsors and satellite television alike. The grueling races are often swum in conditions that at best can be called adverse: miserable cold, the gloom of night, the fecal and industrial filth of the Nile. In the Atlantic City marathon a few years ago, a baby jellyfish swam into the mouth of one of the swimmers. Here on the Paraná, a chicken factory lies upriver, and in years past swimmers have shared the current with chicken heads and other parts."

The full article can be found on the web:

<http://www.outsidemag.com:80/magazine/0599/9905maraswim.html>



The Morning Bunch

If you love the smell of chlorine in the morning, and like the idea of not knowing which pool you will be jumping into from day to day, then maybe **The Morning Bunch** is for you. Starting at about 5:30 we do the old up and back at the Upper Main Line Y, and we end anywhere from 6:20 to 7 am. Of course you must be a member or a program member, which isn't very hard. Numerous VFM dignitaries have been spotted in the mornings over the last few months as the lineup changes. Most recent variations have had us in the A Pool with the B Pool out of commission due to a boiler problem. Next it's out to the 50 meter for the summer months. Hope to see you there!

- B.W. Dave



Ode to a Wall

Oh, majestic wall
So strong and true,
Please don't turn my foot
To black and blue.

But let me perform
My graceful flip,
With crunch of abs
And swivel of hip.

Yet in chlorine deep
Lurk your slippery tile,
Waiting to create DQ's
So loathsome and vile.

But tho thou art tough
On all our dear readers,
You're still much better than
Swimming fifty meters.

- Big Wave Dave

Villanova Sunday Workouts

On Sunday, May 16th, the Sunday workouts at Villanova University came to an end for the season. Though there were some problems and conflicts in the scheduling, on the whole, the winter season ran fairly smoothly for the first year. Next year we should be able to avoid scheduling problems such as the problem with the graduation ceremonies held on May 16th.

The workouts were well attended with an average of 32 swimmers per

workout as opposed to 26 swimmers for the previous winter season.

The Villanova workouts increased the exposure of our team throughout the Greater Philadelphia area, and several people joined as members due to this fact. As this Sunday workout becomes better known and more established, the attendance should grow and along with that the membership of the Valley Forge Masters Team.

Sunday Workouts at UMLY

As you know when the team workouts at UMLY, the workouts are coached by members of the VFM Team. If you would like to coach or would like to volunteer as an emergency backup in the event one of the scheduled coaches can't coach on their designated Sunday, please contact Melanie James-Cosgrove. Melanie will be in charge of scheduling coaches for the summer season.

If you are already scheduled to coach, and for any reasons can't coach on your designated Sunday please contact one of the other coaches on the coaching list to see if you can switch dates. If you are unsuccessful in finding a substitute please contact Melanie. Dave Craven has generously given the VFM Team passes for any non-UMLY member who is coaching, which will allow them to enter UMLY early on their coaching Sunday and swim in the indoor B pool, before the Sunday workout, so that they won't miss a workout that day.

If you want a pass please contact Dan Castellano by e-mail (dcastell@bee.net) or phone.

The Undertow Conspiracy

(continued from front cover)

Second, there are family commitments: the kids who need to get to soccer, the parents who need you to pick up their plants, the boyfriend who really wants to go to his folks in Akron on the weekend of Swarthmore.

Third, there is that nagging primordial urge to remain where you are when the alarm goes off at 5:15—the primordial urge that says, "Stay under your skins, fool! Stay in your cave and wait till it is light—no sense in going out and hunting the Sabertooth in the dark." We've all experienced the temptation, and I for one have listened to that voice and heeded its call.

So, for every one of you who can find the time, create that niche, and get to the pool, I salute you! Because no matter how subversive the conspiracy seems to be, you are a swimmer and the spirit of swimming in you is strong. Don't ever let the spirit die!



Submissions needed:

- Ideas for a newsletter name.
- Events
- Photos! Photos! PHOTOS! We have scanners, we can put your head on Matt Biondi's body.

Next issue:
August 30, 1999

Remember:
If there's no news, it's just a letter.

On the Net

www.bee.net/dcastell/ValleyForgeMasters.htm

Dan Castellano's homage to VFM.

www.bee.net/dcastell/DelawareValleyLocalMastersSwimCommittee.htm

The DelVal page with listings of places, meets, directions. A cornucopia.

www.swimnews.com

More than you could ever possibly want to know about swimming.

www.swiminfo.com

When you're not in the water, why not chat about it!

www.usms.org

Are you a card carrying member? Then this is your place.