

Results of the 2016 Davis Aquatic Masters membership survey

Almost 50% of our current members completed the 2016 survey. This is a fairly high level of participation for an organized group. The DAM board of directors and coaches will use the results of the survey to inform decisions about coaching priorities and contracts, charitable donations, and operations. The survey also will help DAM to track the characteristics and values of its members over time.

1. For how many years have you been a member of DAM?

	proportion of repondents
Less than one	0.10
1-3	0.19
4-10	0.28
11 or more	0.44

2. For how many years have you been a masters swimmer (member of any club)?

Less than one	0.06
1-3	0.17
4-10	0.25
11 or more	0.49

3. What is your age?

18-25 years	0.04
26-35 years	0.13
36-45 years	0.15
46-55 years	0.23
56-65 years	0.29
66-75 years	0.12
76 years or older	0.05

4. On average, how many workouts do you attend per week?

1-2	0.22
3-4	0.58
5 or more	0.21

5. How would you characterize yourself as a swimmer?

Fitness swimmer	0.72
Competitive pool swimmer	0.17
Open-water swimmer	0.08
Competitive triathlete	0.03

6. I primarily swim with DAM for¹

The physical benefits	0.99
The mental benefits	0.81
The camaraderie	0.66
The sense of community	0.55

7. On average, how frequently do you visit DAM's website

One or more times per week	0.25
One or more times per month	0.32
Less than once per month	0.28
Rarely if ever	0.16

8. If you visit DAM's website, how useful do you find the following features?

	Quite useful	Somewhat useful	Not useful	Haven't explored
Announcements	0.57	0.27	0.02	0.14
Articles and video	0.36	0.35	0.07	0.22
Daily workout schedule monthly calendar	0.70	0.16	0.04	0.10
Membership information	0.35	0.25	0.11	0.28
Quick links	0.30	0.26	0.08	0.36
Results	0.30	0.23	0.10	0.37

9. Do you follow either of these?

	proportion "yes"
DAM's Twitter account	0.06
DAM's Facebook page	0.27

10. How useful do you find the following Pacific Masters Swimming (PMS) or US Masters Swimming (USMS) benefits?

	Quite useful	Moderately useful	Not useful	Don't use
PMS emails	0.07	0.32	0.22	0.38
PMS website	0.11	0.24	0.18	0.48
Streamlines	0.09	0.31	0.21	0.39
Swimmer magazine	0.36	0.42	0.12	0.11
USMS website	0.15	0.22	0.16	0.47

¹ Because respondents could select one or more answers, proportions do not sum to 1

11. How convenient to your schedule are the workout times offered by DAM?

Quite convenient	0.83
Somewhat convenient	0.16
Not particularly convenient	0.01

12. On a typical weekday, what is your preferred time to attend a workout?

6:00 A.M.	0.26
7:00 A.M.	0.17
10:00 A.M.	0.10
11:00 A.M.	0.10
noon	0.09
1:00 P.M.	0.07
6:15 P.M.	0.15
7:15 P.M.	0.04
No preferred workout time	0.04

13. If you are unable to attend a weekday workout at your preferred time, at what alternative time are you most likely to attend a workout?

6:00 A.M.	0.11
7:00 A.M.	0.07
10:00 A.M.	0.07
11:00 A.M.	0.15
noon	0.10
1:00 P.M.	0.07
6:15 P.M.	0.09
7:15 P.M.	0.12
No preferred workout time	0.05
Not applicable	0.17

14. On average, how frequently do you attend the weekend lap swim (10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. on Saturday and Sunday)?

Almost every week	0.14
1-2 times per month	0.13
A few times per year	0.27
Rarely if ever	0.47

15. Do you participate in DAM social events (e.g., annual meeting and party, barbeque, softball game)?

Almost always	0.09
1-2 per year	0.36
Rarely if ever	0.55

16. What role does swimming play in your exercise routine?

My primary type of exercise	0.54
One of two or more types of regular exercise	0.46

17. Relative to when you joined DAM, and not taking into account age-related health problems, aerobic capacity, etc., how would you characterize your current health and fitness?

About the same	0.18
Improved, and I think swimming contributed to the improvement	0.73
Improved, but I don't think swimming contributed to the improvement	0.01
Decreased, and I think swimming contributed to the decrease (e.g., overuse injury)	0.04
Decreased, but I don't think swimming contributed to the decrease	0.08

18. In a typical week, what proportion of the workouts you attend are coached by Stu (head coach)?

0-25%	0.14
26-50%	0.39
51-75%	0.35
75-100%	0.14

19. Unless you do not attend any workouts coached by Stu, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about DAM's head coach

	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Neutral	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly
Willing to help DAM members	0.94	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.00
Knows my name	0.98	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Provides general information about swimming technique	0.91	0.08	0.01	0.00	0.00
Responds to my personal requests for technical feedback	0.90	0.07	0.02	0.00	0.01
Has members' best interests at heart	0.93	0.05	0.01	0.01	0.00
Skilled and knowledgeable coach	0.98	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Polite	0.89	0.08	0.01	0.00	0.01
Respects the members	0.93	0.05	0.01	0.02	0.00

20. In a typical week, what percentage of the workouts you attend are coached by Mary (assistant head coach)?

0-25%	0.30
26-50%	0.48
51-75%	0.17
76-100%	0.05

21. Unless you do not attend any workouts coached by Mary, please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about DAM's assistant head coach

	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Neutral	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly
Willing to help DAM members	0.95	0.03	0.02	0.00	0.00
Knows my name	0.97	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
Provides general information about swimming technique	0.92	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.00
Responds to my personal requests for technical feedback	0.90	0.06	0.04	0.00	0.00
Has members' best interests at heart	0.95	0.04	0.02	0.00	0.00
Skilled and knowledgeable coach	0.94	0.05	0.01	0.00	0.00
Polite	0.96	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.00
Respects the members	0.96	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00

22. Focusing only on the swimming that DAM provides (not locker rooms or other facilities), I feel that my monthly membership dues (\$7 for most members) and pool fees (\$40 for most members) are

A great value	0.74
A decent value	0.26
A poor value	0.04

23. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, DAM donates a portion of its revenue to support our teammates, the community, or other public-benefit organizations or activities. How would you prioritize DAM contributions to the following?

	High priority	Medium priority	Low priority
Youth swimming programs	0.40	0.41	0.19
Senior swimming programs	0.47	0.43	0.10
Lessons for individuals who cannot swim	0.45	0.40	0.15
Teammates' participation in swim competitions	0.29	0.42	0.29
Community services (not necessarily related to athletics)	0.21	0.44	0.35
Other	0.24	0.21	0.55

Representative comments about DAM's website

I usually check it for workout type, to prepare for it

I enjoyed it when the workout details were posted in advance on the website

I rely on the emails for updates

Have not made use of videos/article but believe it will be one of the most useful aspects of the site

I direct potential new members to the website because it's such a useful tool

I recently joined DAM and found new member info easy to follow.

I did not know that a lot of these features existed. Now that I know, I am likely to use them every now and then.

Representative comments about the level of convenience of the workout schedule

Would love to see longer practices (1:15 or 1:30) offered again. The hour-long workout is not enough yardage to really help prepare for longer open-water swims.

I LOVE the new three Saturday morning options

I would love an 8 or 9 am workout on weekdays

Can we change the 6 am time to a 5:45-6:45?

I would like to see more workouts available at Arroyo.

Could you offer a Sunday practice?

Representative comments about the head coach

Suggestions for improvement (less than 5% of comments were suggestions for improvement)

Head coach is nearly always respectful and polite to members, but I have observed rare occasions when he said things to a particular swimmer out of frustration, annoyance, or anger. The swimmer may or may not have deserved it, and Stu is, after all, only human. I believe as in any position, some of the dynamic coaching one-to-one or even, single lane coaching that happened in the early years with coach Stu are rarer these days. There are swimmers who do not want to be coached . . . I am definitely NOT one. I love learning and I believe I can learn every day and every moment that we are coached.

Positive (about 95% of comments were positive)

Listen, Stu is at the top of the business. His greatest attribute is his interest in reaching out to every swimmer at every practice. The typical trap for coaches is to gravitate to the hardest workers or the fastest swimmers. This is age old truth. Stu knows how important it is to give attention to each swimmer because the beauty of swimming is that you are competing against yourself and the fitness level you can achieve individually is like no other activity. Swimming actively can add years to your life and dramatically improve your quality of life. To have a coach focused on that for each of us is priceless. What else should we be doing here on planet earth other than making this a better place to live.

I met Coach Stu on my very first day of practice. He made me feel welcome and was a very valuable resource in getting me up to speed quickly. He gave me immediate feedback which helped me with my technique and overcome my rustiness. Although I swim mainly at Arroyo, and typically see him twice/week, he remembers my name. In terms of workouts, I feel like he makes appropriate modifications based on skill level. Every time I walk out of one of his practices, I feel as though I accomplished something.

Mary tends to be the primary coach at the workouts I attend, but workouts with Stu are always particularly clear about not just what we are doing, but why. He is friendly and approachable, and I have appreciated his stroke instruction when it is offered. In general, and speaking as a DAM newbie who has swum at other teams, I have felt like this coaching staff is more focused about what they are doing and why, and I would credit that to a strong and knowledgeable head coach.

Representative comments about the assistant head coach

Suggestions for improvement (less than 5% of comments were suggestions for improvement)

Sometimes too much time is spent chatting on the pool deck.

Positive (about 95% of comments were positive)

A few years ago I had rotator cuff surgery, which was very frustrating (and painful!) and Mary was such a huge inspiration. I remember her telling me she had a significant injury once and had to kick only for over a year. Her comment was – “I was so happy that I had my legs to kick; I think I was in my best shape at that time.” To me that was amazing, it really put my injury in perspective!

As a female swimmer it is very important to me to have the perspective of a female coach. Mary is excellent!

Mary is absolutely the best of the best when it comes to learning. She is friendly and supportive, yet makes the workouts meaningful for those who want to get great exercise and improve themselves. I always feel welcomed, and I am always glad I have gone to my swimming practice.

Representative comments about charitable-giving priorities

DAM swimmers

Assistance to support DAM swimmers who cannot afford to swim

Anyone with financial needs should get help. If we have an uber <consistent striver> swimmer (AKA poor student) who need \$ to compete in another region, DAM might consider helping.

Teammates participation in swim competitions is a hard one – I'd be open to a need-based fund for swimmers in general (including monthly fees) so that people could enjoy swimming regardless of financial ability, but I do feel like competition fees are a tough hurdle to cross for need-based aid.

Swimming lessons

I am amazed when I learn about kids or youth that cannot swim, and this is related to deaths or severe accidents. I'd like to see us support swimming lessons for under privileged kids & youth.

I think lessons for individuals who don't know how to swim is the highest and best use of charitable donations

Providing swim instruction and access to swimming facilities for youth and adults that are underrepresented or unable to pay due to financial limitations. Helping underserved communities access the local swimming resources to help benefit health and quality of life.

Supporting veterans

I'd like to see DAM expand its contributions to subsidize veterans (similar to how seniors are subsidized), and contribute again to support foster family swim classes or other underserved populations.

Programs that get veterans in the pool or doing athletics

Swimming opportunity for disabled veterans.

Representative general comments

Financial

I am aware that there is some concern with the cost/usage ratio for the weekend lap swim; however, I would say that this feature is pretty essential to my routine and may be critical to others either because of work schedules or the flexibility of determining one's own form of workout; certainly cancellation of this feature would cause me to look for other options.

Please consider adding a student-rate option to make dues more affordable

I think you should consider a tiered monthly membership fee, so that members who would like to support the club at a higher level would have that opportunity. I pay a lot for other kinds of exercise classes (Pilates, yoga). Swimming is my favorite and yet the monthly fee is extremely low.

Facilities

Women's locker room at civic is in need of renovations, or at the very least a deep cleaning.

My complaint is the locker rooms, especially the women's (I have no experience in men's showers) Civic Center showers – in the day it was such a pleasure to swim at Civic and get out of pool to enjoy a good shower, and get ready for whatever after workout thing was going on. But this lady year the showers barely work and are cold which is SO UNPLEASANT especially in the winter, to get out of workout and not have a warm shower available. After over 30 years of swimming with DAM this has been a big disappointment and hard to adjust to

We need a 50m pool - aquatic facility. I think there are many DAM members who are ready to donate significant amounts of money to make this a reality. Let's get this ball rolling.

The single greatest additional, transformative thing that could be added to the great things DAM already does is a new, 50-m pool. This should be a fundraising and planning focus, without diminishing what is already a great program.

Coaches and coaching

We are very lucky that Stu married Mary and that they both seem so enthusiastic about our swimming program.

Great program overall! while Stu and Mary are great, there is a significant drop off with substitute coaches. Encourage these to be more hands on, more outgoing and to share knowledge if they indeed have a swim coaching background. Overall: I love DAM!

I'm glad for the chance to prove my stroke, work on pacing, and for a workout where someone else instructs.

DAM is a great club, and Stu and Mary are great too, but I do have a quibble about the workouts.

It would be great if the coaches would challenge the swimmers more with tougher sets. I know even beginning swimmers who chafe at the amounts of 25s and 50s we do. Some of that is necessary, and I don't mind it every once in a while, but some encouragement (via tougher and longer sets) to stretch the bounds of what is capable would be appreciated. Stu's workouts are sometimes capable of this – the potential is there.

Further, some creativity of the sets would be great. Long time swimmers joke about the

use of the same workouts, and long course has followed the “two weeks of this,” “two weeks of that” set up for years. The coaches should redouble their efforts to capture the interest the swimmers. It’s not lost on me that having a husband and wife team as coaches does not necessarily allow for “fresh voices” in terms of workouts. And finally, it would be great if the long course workouts were utilized to pound out meters – many love the feeling you get after a good (long) long-course workout. We only get the pool for eight weeks so let’s use it to really open up on distance swimming and use the other 10 months at Civic to focus on sprinting, IM, kicking/pulling, and drills. Again, DAM is a great, great club, and Stu is a fantastic steward of the operation. But, you asked for feedback, so I am using to offer what I hope is constructive thoughts.

Over the years, swimmers have continually moved up to faster lanes. This has reduced the faster swimmers ability to get a work out as they have to raise intervals and swim slow to accommodate. The slow side of the pool is often spacious if not empty while the fast lane is crowded. Swimmers should be encouraged to swim in the correct lanes, and coaches should maximize space on both sides of the pool.

Occasionally there is a mismatching problem within a lane that needs to be ‘managed’ by the coach and I appreciate it when either one of the coaches attends to such issues.