

2022 PNA COACH OF THE YEAR AWARD

Wade Praeger

Lake Washington Masters

(Article published in May-June issue of *The WetSet*)

A long-time coach for all triathlon sports, Wade began coaching for LWM in 2017. To accommodate lane occupancy limitations during the early months of COVID-19, he coached 17 workouts a week – three 75-minute workouts per day M-F, and two 60-minute workouts on Saturdays. Also, during the pandemic, Wade posted videos with strength training and cardio work for LWM swimmers to do. This unexpected effort really helped his swimmers stay fit. With restrictions now lifted, he currently runs 11 workouts per week for all levels of Masters swimmers.

Wade has taught and encouraged novice swimmers who have excelled and moved to faster lanes as they gained skills and speed. He encourages beginners to give swimming and/or triathlons a try, and he focuses on improving technique for all – even the already very fast swimmers! He finds the right drills for different strokes and makes them a daily emphasis. He's able to balance distance, sprint, and stroke while managing different swimmers and their goals. The entire atmosphere is that everyone is welcome, everyone is supported, everyone can improve, and everyone can have fun. Wade has provided the structure and culture for LWM swimmers to maintain and grow in both fitness and friendships.

Watching LWM swimmers at practice is the best evidence of the quality coaching they receive. Wade emphasizes all phases of racing – starts (even using the backstroke wedge), turns, finishes, bursts, pacing, builds, and negative splits. Skills are practiced during workout that transfer to racing. If you ask a question during practice on training or technique, you get an accurate and relevant answer. Wade is known to be even-tempered and always prepared at practice. He strikes a good balance between pushing, supporting, and letting go (when we are tired).

In addition to being the head coach of Lake Washington Masters, Wade also serves as PNA's Fitness Coordinator. He has shared his expertise with PNA swimmers who do not swim with his team by frequently contributing articles to *The WetSet*. Read Wade's excellent and entertaining article titled "The Truth About Swim Toys" in the March-April 2022 issue!

Photos submitted:

- Sally Dillon, Wade Praeger, and Linda Chapman
- Wade celebrating with LWM swimmers attending the recent "Champs-ish" meet