

YMCA Masters National Championships, May 18-21 2006

From May 18 – 21, 2006, the YMCA Masters National Championships were held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, at the International Swimming Hall of Fame.

Two local swimmers, Hans and Greta van Meeteren of Florence, participated in these championships, at this wonderful facility.

Hans and Greta train at the New Bern YMCA, with the Twin Rivers YMCA Masters, coached by Frank McGrath, and they represented their team.

The participants in this national meet were all YMCA members and US master swimmers from all over the United States. There were a total of 408 swimmers at this event. Competition is held in age groups with five-year increments: 19-24; 25-29; 30-34 and so on. Awards are given for the top 8 swimmers in each age group in each event.

There was excellent competition under very good circumstances: pleasant weather and cool, almost waveless water in a truly terrific pool. The main pool (50 meters long, 25 yards wide) was divided into two competition sections of eight lanes with a wide buffer lane in between and buffer lanes on each end of the pool. There is a separate 50 meter pool, also 25 yards wide, which was divided into 16 lanes for continuous warmup and warmdown for the competitors.

Division of the main pool makes it possible to run two heats concurrently, so that the meet runs quickly and smoothly.

Hans and Greta swam several personal best times at this event, and brought home a total of 10 medals between the two of them, including a gold medal and national YMCA masters championship for Greta in the 200 yd. breaststroke.

Besides their swimming program (4 times a week), they do strength training at home twice a week following a program written specifically for them by Nancy Schwarzer of Body Balance in Oriental. Greta also attends Susan Koepp's yoga classes at Body Balance as often as possible. Strength training and balance are very important components of their training and helps them swim more efficiently.



Hans and Greta at the Fort Lauderdale pool