

Editor's Note

Gold, Delivered



Each time Spring or Summer Nationals rolls around, I get excited about the people I'm going to meet. Just walking around on deck at a USMS national meet is a treat—seeing old friends and making new ones—and experiencing a great facility, friendly volunteers, and fast swimming. The media staff stays busy interviewing swimmers for the daily recap videos and, although we're working hard, we're having a great time.

This year in Indy was no exception. Olympic silver medalist Emily Silver joined us for commentary and, in a special project made possible by USMS partner SwimOutlet.com, Silver and the legendary gold medalist and relay anchor extraordinaire, Jason Lezak (yes, *that* Jason Lezak!), dropped in on the social for a SwimOutlet.com Gold Medal Delivery.

Silver and Lezak delivered some great SwimOutlet.com swag and made time for autograph signing and photos with Masters swimmers, who lined up for a chance to meet them. As part of the video project, an exhibition 200-yard mixed freestyle relay was planned. We needed two Masters swimmers to pair with the Olympians, and I remembered a story I'd read on SwimmingWorld.com about a young swimmer who was battling Hodgkin's lymphoma but who planned to swim in Indy.

Esmerelda Perez, just 18, was a graduating high school senior facing an operation to remove tumors in her chest cavity. She'd been through months of chemo and radiation, and doctors had implanted a port in her chest to deliver treatments. Through it all, she wanted to keep swimming. Swimming is what makes her happy. She'll be swimming at Carthage College in the fall, but her immediate goal was USMS Spring Nationals.

Perez's quiet maturity and deep love of the sport was inspiring to us all (her 25-something split on the relay was pretty amazing as well). She was thrilled at the opportunity to participate with these swimming heroes, but it was pretty clear that the Olympians were honored to swim on *her* relay.

The relay lasted only a few moments, but created a lasting impression. Silver led off, followed by Jon Shope, a local meet volunteer and lifelong swimmer. Perez swam third and, of course, Lezak was the anchor. Don't miss the video at swimoutlet.com/goldmedaldelivery.

The project turned out to be more meaningful than we ever could have imagined and it brought together the best elements of a USMS national meet: sponsor support, great swimming, amazing venues and volunteers, and inspirational stories. Gold really was delivered in Indy, by all who participated.



Laura Hamel, SWIMMER editor

THE SOCIAL SWIMMER



SwimOutlet.com is holding a Jason Lezak catchphrase and Internet meme contest. Jason will be selecting his favorite catchphrase and the winner will receive a two-year complimentary USMS membership, an embroidered USMS bag, and a \$100 gift card for SwimOutlet.com. Watch the video and enter by scanning the QR code or going to swimoutlet.com/goldmedaldelivery

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» Other than your USMS gig (obviously!), what is your aquatic dream job?

Dolphin trainer at Sea World

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ON THE COVER

Abigail Anderson, 23, of Middle Tennessee Masters, reacts to her 55.82 (a first-place finish) in the 100-yard backstroke on Sunday, May 12, 2013, at USMS Spring Nationals in Indianapolis. Photo by Peter H. Bick.

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