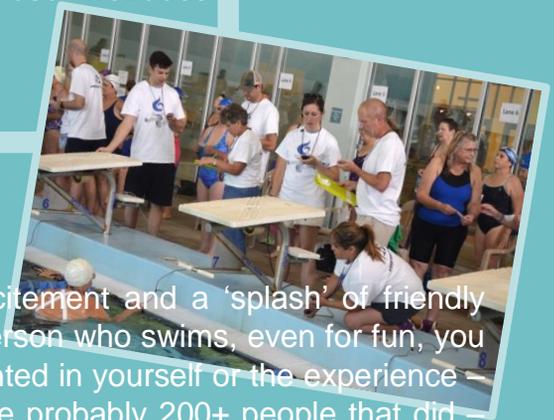


As a first time volunteer at the Swim Meet Wednesday night I experienced many firsts: using a stop-watch, attending a swim meet, working as an event 'official' and being involved, at any level, with KCCC! The event was well organized, parking was great and the event was even held indoors – in the AC! Everyone was very friendly and I was greeted with smiling faces ready to point me in the right direction. Once I signed in on the correct company sign in sheet and received my volunteer t-shirt – I was in business to figure this thing out! The good news was it didn't take much to get us 'new-timers' trained up, "Start. Stop. Reset." That was the mantra for the night and once we got used to the process after the first few heats it was like being on auto-pilot!

Jesse Miguel provided us with a great dinner from Panera so we took quick breaks between heats when we didn't have swimmers in our lanes to grab a bite to eat. The event was full of excitement and we met a lot of great people from all over Metro KC. I learned that you don't have to be an Olympic athlete to participate in these events. There were many varying levels of experience and the ages ranged from 18 to 65 years old – men, women all shapes and sizes with a few Adonis types mixed in – who let those weirdoes compete?!



All in all, it was a fun and full night with lots of excitement and a 'splash' of friendly competition thrown in for good measure. If you're a person who swims, even for fun, you can do this event – I promise you will not be disappointed in yourself or the experience – I only witnessed one person not finish and there were probably 200+ people that did – they all just took their time and did their thing the best they could. I heard one guy that placed 3rd in his heat say, when questioned by place winner #1 and #2 about where he practiced swimming, "My pool in my backyard." He never competed in any sort of swim event but he gave those other fellas a run for their soggy money!

Another unexpected thing happened too. The appreciation expressed by the competitors themselves for our volunteerism was also very nice and appreciated! Many friendly folks out there having a good time and really enjoying their sport.

If you're thinking about getting involved with HNTB's KCCC team even if just as a volunteer please do so with pride and confidence – you are needed!

~Elizabeth Miller, HNTB