

## Million Yard Challenge and Team Work



The Frances Meadows Aquatics Center in Gainesville has certainly seen its share of athletic accomplishments over its 14-year history. Last month, there was another type of accomplishment celebrated in the competition pool when USMS member Bruce Johnson joined Mike Martin as the second US Master's Swimmer to surpass the goal of swimming one million yards in the 2022 calendar year.

Johnson (71) of Clermont joined retired dentist Michael Martin (67) of Oakwood in this fete on December 12 as Martin had completed the challenge on Sunday November 20. One Million Yards is equivalent to 568.18 miles.

Martin and Johnson are two members of the "Olympic Nopefuls" team, a loose confederation of USMS swimmers who use the pool as their primary form of exercise. The Million Yard Challenge goal was suggested by teammate back in the dark days of January, 2022.

Johnson noted, "Neither Mike or I seriously considered this goal at the time, thinking the challenge's originator was crazy, like all the rest of us that dive into a cool pool at 5:00 am Monday through Friday just to swim laps. It wasn't until March that a few elementary mathematical

calculations revealed that the yardage that both Mike and I had been swimming to date, was actually ahead of the pace to achieve a million yards by December 31”.

Both swimmers ramped up the yardage in their workouts starting in April to build margins for later planned and unplanned absences.

Johnson noted, “Mike started some 40 miles behind me due to some minor surgery but started swimming some monster yardages in workouts to pass me in the July timeframe. Mike finished 2022 with 610 miles swum and I completed 595 miles, which was exactly 100 miles longer than my total the previous year.

Johnson added that the Frances Meadows Aquatic Center contains a 10-lane by 25-yard indoor competition pool and another 4-lane warm water pool. The competition pool is open weekdays at 5:00 am and remains available for swimmers until 8:00 pm. “The pool is one of the best designed indoor pools I have ever experienced, with excellent ventilation that eliminates the chlorine odors commonly found in indoor swimming facilities.”

The Olympic Nopefuls have changed training goals for 2023, reducing yardage, adding some intensity and rest, and expect to participate in a few swim meets.