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**RAC NEWS VOLUME 20 - SEASON
2018-2019**

Current & Upcoming Events

[8&Under Quadrathon - January 27th](#)

[HHAC Invitational \(9-12 DEVELOPMENT ONLY\) - January 26th-27th](#)

[Winter Tryouts - January 31st](#)

[CPAC AGE GROUP QUALIFIER - February 2nd and 3rd](#)

[SWIM-A-THON - February 8th](#)

[Bulldog Swimming Invite - February 9th and 10th](#)

[LINK](#)

Schedule Changes

(See Below)

Meet Results

[LINK](#)

What's New

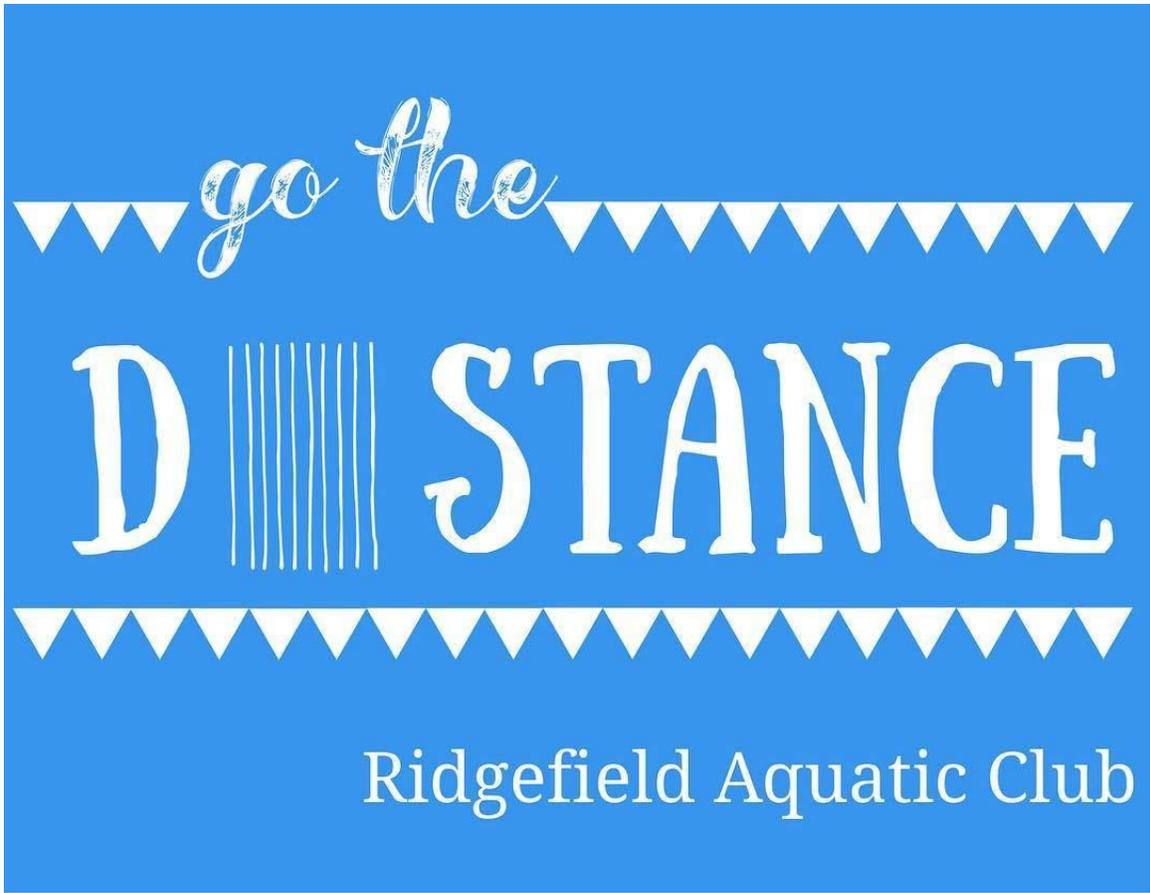
HMST 8&Under Quadrathon has been rescheduled

Olympic Way Mini Meet and Winter Tryouts

Confidence By [Olivier Leroy](#)

Are you having fun with swimming?

If it's greatness what you want, stop asking for permission.



[\(click for more info\)](#)

Schedule Changes

Wednesday, January 30th (boys home meet)
Thursday, January 31st (Olympic Way Mini Meet)

[MORE](#)

What's New

HMST 8&Under Quadrathon has been rescheduled to January 27th

[More info](#)

Olympic Way Mini Meet

Good luck to all the Olympic Way swimmers competing in the [Session 2 Mini Meet!](#) The meet will take place on January 31st at Barlow Mountain Pool. All Olympic Way Swimmers should check in at 4:30 pm, warm-ups will begin at 4:45 pm and the meet will start at 5:00 pm. After the meet concludes, there will be a pizza party afterward in the pool lobby!

As always, we are looking for athlete volunteers from the competitive squads to come help time, organize and most importantly...CHEER! If you are able to come help, please contact [Coach Thammara](#).

WINTER TRYOUTS 2018



Where? Barlow Mountain Pool

When? January 31st - 6:00-8:00pm

Contact info:

[Thammara Clemente](#)

203-438-3951

Confidence

By [Olivier Leroy](#)

The confidence of a swimmer is one of the biggest contributors to success in the pool.

When a swimmer is confident, they trust their abilities, tend to focus on the right things, have positive body language, and are more willing to face challenges and adversity.

When confidence dips, well, you likely already know what happens. Your attitude dives, you feel less sure about your skills and abilities, doubt yourself, and even start to overthink things.

Because of the power of self-confidence, it's something we look for when we hop or dive into the water. Something we rely on to perform at our best and enjoy the process of working hard.

But for a lot of swimmers, they hope and wait to feel confident.

Confidence is something that can be developed. It is a skill. And like any skill it requires

attention and constant development, otherwise, it withers and degrades.

Confidence is something you will always struggle with.

Even elite athletes have a hard time regaining confidence when dealing with a setback in competition. The chlorinated greets aren't immune to a crisis of confidence when things don't go their way.

Much to your eventual disappointment, being confident doesn't get any easier as you get faster—you just get issued faster intervals in practice and find yourself in a faster heat in competition.

There is a big silver lining here: you don't need to wait for the big goal to be a confident swimmer—there are things you can do today and tomorrow to be that confident swimmer as you chase the next level in the sport.

Confidence is a skill that needs attention and maintenance.

Think back to the last time you were out of the water for longer than a few days. When you got back into the pool your feel for the water was off; it took a few thousand meters to get back into the rhythm of your stroke.

Your self-confidence is the same. Left alone, it will fade over time. Just like your technique, feel for the water or any other skill, confidence is something that needs continual attention and work. It's a perpetual work in progress.

Confidence doesn't just come from the big breakthroughs.

Swimmers live and die for the big breakthroughs in the water. Cracking a minute for the first time. Smashing a personal best time.

But epic levels of confidence shouldn't come exclusively from these big, awesome, and ultimately hard to predict breakthroughs.

Sustained confidence—and the high-powered motivation that follows—is found in your routines, doing the small things right, and focusing on the controllable.

Now that we've covered the basics of how self-confidence works, why you should work on it, here comes the how.

1. What does being self-confident look like to you?

What is confidence? Why does it matter? Where does your confidence come from? What does confidence look like to you?

Becoming more confident starts with learning and understanding what confidence is for you. This should include a realization that confidence is something you can affect, and not something you are simply a victim to or must suffer the whims of.

There should be multiple sources of confidence to give yourself a broader foundation for your confidence so that it isn't purely reliant on one or two aspects of your swimming.

Simply, the more things you have to be confident about the less likely you are to have your confidence collapse when something goes wrong.

Think back to the times where you were most confident in training and competition. Why were you feeling confident? What was your attitude like? Your mindset? The environment you were in?

Being confident more often starts with understanding what being confident looks like.

2. Evaluate and tracking your training.

For swimmers who log their workouts in a training journal they likely already know the benefits.

You can reflect on your training, giving you a big picture view of your swimming, provides daily feedback, gives you a tool to keep an inventory of your stats and best times (in practice and competition), seeing change and improvement, and celebrating triumphs and marking progressions.

A training journal shouldn't just be for writing out the sets and the volume of your training—it's a place to focus on what you are doing right and highlighting the opportunities you have for improvement.

3. Train under conditions that inspire confidence.

Usually when a swimmer lacks confidence in competition it's for two reasons:

The training they did doesn't give them the sense that they can be successful.

The practices and sets they have been doing, don't reflect what they want to accomplish in competition.

For example, they hope to go: 55 for their 100m freestyle, but the fastest pace they've reached in training has been a: 29.

It's hard to feel confident when your training doesn't provide the evidence.

The pressure they face on race day is so much higher than the pressure they

experienced in training that it leaves them feeling blindsided.

Too often you see the swimmer who is super confident in practice fall apart on race day because they've never had that practice confidence threatened.

Swimmers should be regularly pressured in practice so that they can also perform at their best in competition when the stress, pressure, and anxiety are ramped up.

4. Use mental training skills (visualization, goal setting, self-talk, process-based)

Mental training skills are likely not new to you, even though you may not have done any formal training with them.

Here are the big ones:

Goal setting: Putting together end of season goals, along with the short and medium-term goals and targets. They should be specific, within the scope of your abilities, and unique to you. Elite goal setting means continually evolving and tweaking them.

Visualization: There are plenty of ways to use this tool, from boosting performance in practice to visualizing the race of your dreams over and over so that when you step up on the block the subsequent performance feels like “just another rep.”

Self-talk: Getting a grip on your self-talk by reframing bad self-talk (“I suck at this!” -> “I didn’t get it right this time, but I will try again”). Working your self-talk improves your resilience, helps you deal with adversity and can keep you pushing through those hard sets and races.

Process: Being process-based is a big focus of this site (and of my mental training book for swimmers, *Conquer the Pool*). Learning to trust and love the process is part enjoying the journey and part mastering the details of your performance. A process-oriented focus keeps you locked in on the things that ultimately drive your performance.

5. Race day plans Your pre-race routine.

Racing is stressful. How stressful? The physical symptoms of stress we experience behind the blocks—increased cortisol, for example—are the equivalent to jumping out of a plane for the first time. That’s not a typo.

When a group of ballroom dancers had their saliva tested before a local competition, the stress response was on par with the physical response of people hurling themselves from a plane. Most interestingly, no matter how experienced the dancer, no matter how many competitions they had attended in the past, the stress was universal.

There should be some measure of comfort in this: Every swimmer on race day is feeling the nerves and anxiety—the difference is the way we view those butterflies.

Are we scared? Are we excited? Are we calm(ish)?

A powerful way to keep our emotions from getting away from us is to have a pre-race routine. Things we can focus on so that we aren't obsessing over how the competition did, how our warm-up didn't feel perfect, how the whole season comes down to this one race, and so on.

Michael Phelps leaned on one. Katie Ledecky has some simple things she does behind the blocks each time. Sierra Schmidt's dancing routine behind the block got a lot of attention.

A proper pre-race routine is simple, totally under your control, and unique to you.

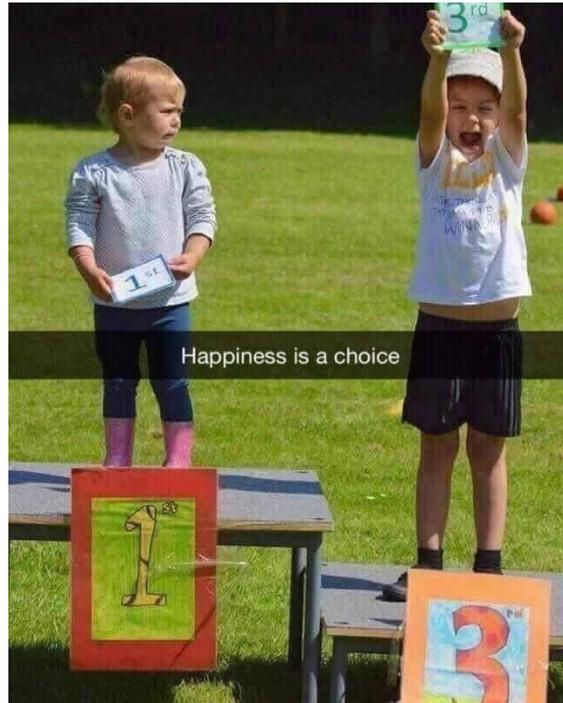
Start out with these four things and work on building your own confidence blueprint for your swimming.

If you want more help on sharpening your confidence, give [Conquer the Pool: The Swimmer's Ultimate Guide for a High-Performance Mindset](#) a look.

See ya in the water,

Olivier

Are you having fun with swimming?



[LINK](#)

“ While achieving external and material success is important – and while you certainly should be committed, dedicated, and devoted to taking the sport seriously – it’s absolutely essential that you are able to hold onto your ability to have fun and enjoy the sport you love. If you lose sight of that, then you’re never going to be able to be the best version of yourself or sustain success over a consistent period of time.”

What’s New from USA Swimming



[For swimmers](#)

[For parents](#)

[For volunteers/ Team Leaders](#)

[LINK to past newsletters](#)

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