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Dear Coaches,

Quote of the week:

"Absorb what is useful, discard what is not, add what is uniquely your own."
~Bruce Lee

The Chuck Wielgus Blog: #CoachesAre Teachers

USA Swimming has designated April as "CoachesAre Month" and we're taking the month to share stories that highlight the important role that coaches play in the lives of young athletes.

At their core, coaches are teachers. Whether their classroom is a pool, gym, or playing field, it is within these arenas that the coach as teacher provides important life lessons. It has been said that beyond parents, there is nobody who can have a greater influence in an a young person's life than a coach.

In the early 1980s the high school basketball team I was coaching had a solid group of good players. We were winning our share of games, but I just felt we could do better. I dubbed this team with the nickname of "The Choir Boys" because of their overly nice temperament, and midway through the season I began to push them a lot harder than I normally would. We didn't win the state championships that year, but we exceeded expectations. I had been hard on them, but I wondered if I had been too hard.

Many years later and just a few years ago, I began hearing from some of the boys – now grown men with families of their own – who were on that team. One was a school guidance counselor in Durham, N.C. Another was living in Japan with his wife and two children where he was teaching and had recently started to coach basketball.

Both mentioned specific memories from that long ago season, things I didn't remember, but things that were obviously important to them. One even apologized for being difficult to work with, when in fact he was perhaps our best player and one of the easiest kids to coach. It's funny how time affects the way we perceive things.

Aside from my own dad, the man who perhaps has had the most influence in my life is Ed Hockenbury. That's not likely a name that is known to most people reading this blog, but Hockenbury's name is very well known in the basketball circles out East. Hockenbury was an All-City basketball player in Philadelphia and went on to play at Boston College, where he captained the 1966 team coached by Boston Celtic legend, Bob Cousy.

After college Hockenbury got into coaching and served as an assistant at Georgetown, Army and Villanova. In 1976, he took the job as head basketball coach at Norwich University, a Division III private military school in Northfield, Vt.

About that time, I had recently completed my Master's Degree and was looking for a coaching position, and I had two offers. The first was to be the full-time assistant basketball coach at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn. The second offer was to serve as a volunteer assistant at Norwich University. It wasn't an easy decision, but after meeting with Hockenbury I signed on to be his assistant, knowing that it was a volunteer assignment.

I was only with Coach Hockenbury for one year, and it was a tough year with a lot more losses than wins. But working under "Hock" I learned just how important it was to be a



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coach, how big the responsibilities were, and how much of an impact a coach can have on an athlete.

Ed Hockenbury saw the profession as an honorable calling. He loved every minute in the practice gym. Everything was about being thorough, being prepared, comporting yourself like a professional, and above all staying true to a set of values regardless of outcomes. He saw the coach as teach and a role model, and expected his assistants to embrace those roles as well.

Ed Hockenbury died of cancer in 1995. I still think of him often, and I know that any time I have the opportunity to meet or work with a coach in any sport, that I judge them against the principles that Ed Hockenbury lived by and taught to me. These principles of accountability, discipline, having a strong work ethic, teamwork, sportsmanship and fair play, respect for oneself and respect for others are the life lessons that a coach teaches to athletes and others. These are the stories we want to share during "CoachesAre Month."

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USA Swimming Highlighting Swim Coaches in April

#CoachesAre is doing a month-long campaign highlighting USA Swimming coaches across the country. If you would like to provide content for this campaign, please send an email to tschild@usaswimming.org

Top Tips For Eating In The Off-Season

By Chris Rosenbloom, PhD, RDN, CSSD

Recently, a swim coach asked me the following question:

"My team trains 5-6 times per week, but we do take April and August off. Should anything change with their eating habits when swimmers are not in the water for many hours each day?"

Great question, coach. Although most athletes do train year round, there are times when they are not expending as many calories.

Here are some tips for the down time from swim practice and competition:

Downsize the portions. During the off-season, calorie needs are not as high as when you are in the pool for hours each day. Off-season is a good time to learn the difference between a portion and a serving. A portion is what you choose to eat (for example, the entire box of Wheat Thins) versus a serving (about 15 crackers). The calorie difference is about 1120 calories! Young athletes may need more than a serving, but by paying attention to the calories in a serving, you will learn how to balance calories to match activity. No need to hunt through the kitchen for measuring cups when you can use visual cues to judge serving sizes. Your fist is about the size of a cup of pasta, a baseball is the right size for a baked potato serving, visualize a large egg for a serving of ¼ cup of trail mix, and a 2-Tablespoon serving of peanut butter is the size of ping pong ball. For more serving size comparisons see the card that you can [download here](#):

Ditch the extra snacks. If you are not swimming hard every day, you don't need the recovery snacks.

[Read more:](#)

Men's 50 Freestyle: Different Numbers, Same Conclusion

By Katie Arnold, USA Swimming High Performance Consultant

A few weeks ago I discussed the women's 50m freestyle and asserted that it is always in a swimmer's best interest to exploit the underwater portion of this race. This week it's the men's turn. In setting out on my research, I wanted to see how similar the two races are. In addition to the obvious difference in speeds, there are a few other key differences that should be noted.

[Read more and see charts:](#)

NGB's Create 'Trio to Rio' Package

By Tripp Mickle, Staff Writer, Published March 31, 2014

USA Swimming, USA Gymnastics and USA Track & Field are bundling media and hospitality inventory for all three national governing bodies into a single sales package ahead of the 2016 Rio Games.

Billed as the "Trio to Rio," the partnership marks the first time national governing bodies have pulled together their sales assets since USA Swimming, USA Gymnastics and USA Track & Field sold their media and marketing rights to Wasserman Media Group in 2007. That effort was abandoned in 2009.

The new effort is simpler than the previous one, which was designed to create a digital Olympic network around the three sports. This time the NGBs are combining to offer a sales package that will include digital, print and TV advertising for all three sports and hospitality at marquee events like USA Swimming's National Championships, USA Gymnastics AT&T American Cup and the 2016 Olympic trials. They also will manage the sales themselves and have no plans to hire an agency to work on their behalf.

The NGBs are still working through pricing and specific assets for the packages, USA Swimming chief marketer Matt Farrell said, but the idea is to create packages that emphasize TV inventory during broadcasts of the three NGBs' major events by NBC Sports.

"If the partner wants to go further for more customized assets or entitlements, we'd be glad to have that conversation," Farrell said. "But it's really an Olympic NGB starter set."

The goal is to give companies that aren't Olympic sponsors a simple and cheaper way to affiliate with all three national governing bodies. It's also designed to give U.S. Olympic Committee sponsors a way to promote their sponsorship during the two years between an Olympics. The hope is the packages show companies the value of working with an NGB and inspire them to sign sponsorships with one, two or all three NGBs.

Each NGB will have staff pitching the packages, and they will split the revenue evenly. If there's a conflict in a category such as insurance, where USA Swimming has a sponsorship with Mutual of Omaha, it could be a two-sport deal with USA Gymnastics and USA Track & Field.

"We've made the benefits of the package so that it's a media and activation package rather than a full sponsorship package, which gives us more flexibility," Farrell said.

There haven't been any obstacles to date in the partnership. It only required a willingness to work together, which all the parties had.

"When the pie is not huge, you can divide it or try and grow it," said Jill Geer, USA Track & Field's chief public affairs officer. "Combining forces is the best way to grow it."

The packages give buyers a chance to affiliate with the three biggest sports in the Summer Games. Swimming, gymnastics and track and field receive more prime-time

programming during the Summer Olympics on NBC than any other sport. At the London Games, the U.S. swimming, gymnastics, and track and field teams accounted for 63 percent of the medals Team USA won.

The USOC last year encouraged the three NGBs to start working together. Its marketing team saw an opportunity for the NGBs to pull their media assets together and create a more appealing opportunity for advertisers than they could offer individually.

"We went down this road with Wasserman a few years ago, but it never got off the ground the way we wanted it to," said Steve Penny, USA Gymnastics president. "We've finally put something together we think will work. I've been doing this a while, and I've felt more invigorated [by this] than I have in a while."

Swim-A-Thon Update

by Joseph Bloggers

Earn money, have fun and compete for a club visit from Olympic gold medalist, Conor Dwyer

Your club could earn a chance at winning a personal visit from Olympic gold medalist, Conor Dwyer by hosting a USA Swimming Foundation Swim-a-Thon™ between December 2013 and November 2014. Last years' gold medal contest club winners, WEST Coast Aquatics, Splash Aquatics-Makiki, Mt. Hood Aquatics and Katy Aquatics received a stellar prize package and an entry into our grand prize contest drawing, with Katy Aquatics walking away as winner of a personal club visit from Olympic gold medalist Ricky Berens!

The benefits and participant incentive awards you receive by hosting a Swim-a-Thon are incredible. But more importantly, thanks to a robust online fundraising platform offered by our fundraising partner, TeamUnify, teams are raising far more money than ever before! Visit <http://info.teamunify.com/raise-far-more-money-from-your-swim-a-thon> to schedule a chat with a TeamUnify representative.

Check out USA Swimming Foundation's Swim-a-Thon™ today at www.usaswimmingfoundation.org/SAT and get started on your way to earning money and prizes the fun way, the Swim-a-Thon way!

SwimToday 101 - Grow the Sport

Swim clubs can join the SwimToday campaign where 10 industry partners are combining resources with the goal of increasing participation in the sport of swimming. The campaign will show the "fun" side and the benefits of swimming, encouraging parents to consider putting their child on a swim team.

The SwimToday campaign will launch the first week of May with an advertising campaign, television public service announcement, digital advertising, public relations outreach and more. Visit www.SwimToday.org to sign your club up now to receive a free promotional kit! Supplies are limited so apply for the kit today. Want to watch the Build the Base webinar? Visit www.swimtoday.org/welcomewebinar

If you have any questions or would like to set up a customized webinar for your club, please contact swimtoday@usaswimming.org

Model Aquatic Health Code "Knitted" Version Released for

Final Round of Public Comments

Posted March 28, 2014

Thank you for your interest in the [Model Aquatic Health Code](#) (MAHC), a collaborative effort of public health, academia, and industry working to protect individuals, families, and communities from preventable waterborne diseases and injuries through evidence-based guidance. Our vision is “Healthy and Safe Aquatic Experiences for Everyone.” Read below for the latest information. MAHC milestone reached!

Today marks an important milestone in the development of the MAHC, the nation’s first science-based model guidance for swimming pools and other aquatic venues. The first complete [“knitted” version](#) of the MAHC has now been released for the MAHC’s second of two 60-day rounds of public comments. This [knitted version](#) blends together the 14 modules that have been developed, opened for public comment, and revised based on your feedback. Be a part of history—[send us your comments](#)

Are you an environmental or other public health professional, aquatics facility designer or operator, scientist specializing in waterborne disease or injury prevention, other professional, or a member of the general public interested in protecting and advancing public health at aquatic venues? If so, you are invited to review this version of the [MAHC and submit your comments](#) by May 27, 2014.

Spread the word

Please remind your colleagues that this complete, knitted version of the MAHC is now open for public comment. We encourage you to forward this email and/or to use your social media channels to spread the word. You may use, edit, or customize the following sample posts for use on Twitter, Facebook, Google+, etc.:

- Submit comments on first complete “knitted” version of [Model Aquatic Health Code](#) released today. Deadline 5/27.
- Be part of history! Submit comments on 1st complete [national science-based code](#) for swimming pools.
- First complete “knitted” version of [Model Aquatic Health Code](#) released for public comment. Submit comments by 5/27

Thank you for your review! We look forward to your comments. We will revise the knitted version of the MAHC based on the comments we receive and are excited to release the MAHC 1st Edition in summer 2014.

Stop Focusing on Training Systems

By Alex Slezak, M.Ed, YFS, YSAS, HSSCS., International Youth Conditioning Association, April 2014

I estimate that I have been directly coaching youth in some manner for 15,000+ hours and counting; hopefully I have many more years to go. My off time has been devoted to discovering the best systems and methods for my physical education and tennis programs. One day I came to a profound realization that it is not all about having the best system or newest fad, instead it really is about the interpersonal relationship you have with the students you are teaching. In my opinion the relationship is more important than the system. What I mean by that is that even the best methods and systems fail when the teacher cannot find a way to have their knowledge and message resonate with the students. Children are not empty vessels that teachers just fill up with knowledge. Kids are dynamic human beings and if you really want something to stick they have to engage in the teaching and learning process. The old saying, “no one cares what you know, until they know you care” comes to mind.

[Read more:](#)

The Power of Positive Interactions

By Jon Gordon, Author, Speaker, April 7, 2014

John Gottman's pioneering research found that marriages are much more likely to succeed when the couple experiences a 5 to 1 ratio of positive to negative interactions whereas when the ratio approaches 1 to 1, marriages are more likely to end in divorce. Additional research also shows that workgroups with positive to negative interaction ratios greater than 3 to 1 are significantly more productive than teams that do not reach this ratio.

So what does this mean for you and me? For most of us it means we need to increase the number of positive interactions we have at home and at work and reduce our negative interactions.

We need to engage each other with more smiles, kind words, encouragement, gratitude, meaningful conversations, honest dialogues and sincere positive interactions. And to foster these actions we need to create personal and team rituals that help us interact more positively. If we make them part of our organizational process and individual habits they are more likely to happen.

For instance, at home you might decide to take a walk with your spouse each night after dinner and talk about the positive things that happened at work. The more you practice this the more it will become ingrained in your life. At work you might make it a point to smile at your co-workers and customers more often. As a manager you would spend more time praising your employees for the things they do right rather than always focusing on what everyone is doing wrong. A manager I know makes it a point to personally praise 5 people every week. As an organization you might gather all of your employees on a call once a day to share a positive message. Or perhaps you might gather your sales team together each week and have your team members share success stories. The ideas are infinite. The key is to intentionally cultivate more positive interactions to fuel success.

However, please know that this doesn't mean we should never have negative interactions. Barbara Fredrickson's research from the University of Michigan shows if a work group in a company experiences a positive to negative interaction ratio of 13 to 1 the work group will be less effective. This implies that no one is willing to confront the real problems and challenges that are holding them back.

Sometimes we need to confront a situation to move past it and, as we know, ignoring problems that stare us in the face doesn't work. Negative interactions are necessary so long as they should occur much less frequently than positive interactions.

Positive interactions are essential to a healthy marriage, positive work environment and individual and team success. In this spirit when you are finished reading this, I encourage you to go thank someone at work or at home and let them know how they impacted your life in a positive way. Then make it a habit.

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