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Dear Coaches,

Quote of the week:

“We can’t all be great players but we can all be great teammates.”

~Jay Bilas

Katie Ledecky, Michael Phelps Win Top Honors at USA Swimming Golden Goggle Awards

Olympic champions and world-record holders Katie Ledecky (Bethesda, Md.) and Michael Phelps (Baltimore, Md.) claimed top honors as repeat Athlete of the Year winners Sunday at the 2015 USA Swimming Golden Goggle Awards at the JW Marriott Los Angeles L.A. LIVE.

Ledecky was the night’s big winner, claiming three awards – Female Athlete of the Year, Female Race of the Year for the 200-meter freestyle at the 2015 FINA World Championships and Relay Performance of the Year for anchoring the women’s 4x200m free relay to gold at the FINA World Championships – for the second straight year.

Standout open water world champion Jordan Wilimovsky (Malibu, Calif.) also earned multiple awards on the night, claiming Breakout Performer of the Year and Male Race of the Year honors. He earned a spot on the U.S. roster for next summer’s Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro after winning the men’s 10-kilometer title at the 2015 FINA World Championships.

This year’s event, emceed by actor and comedian Anders Holm and featuring a performance by Andra Day, celebrated the accomplishments of the U.S. team at the 2015 FINA World Championships, where Team USA clinched the overall team titles in both the pool and open water competitions. The evening benefited the USA Swimming Foundation.

[Read more here:](#)

12 Performance Nutrition Thoughts for the Holiday Week By Alicia Kendig, USOC Sport Dietitian

1. It’s the holidays! A time to celebrate with family and friends, but during this small break from training, it’s wise to continue to make healthy performance based food choices...most of the time. With only eight months until the peak of the summer season, even small holiday set-backs can significantly push you behind in preparation for Rio.
2. When given cookies/treats, share them with your family. If given lots of treats throughout the holidays, freeze some to enjoy at another time.
3. As an athlete, lead by example. You are a role model for many, including your family and friends. Set a good example by eating performance based meals and snacks.

[See the rest here:](#)





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Building Powerful, Broad Shoulders

By Amanda Wittenmyer, U.S. Olympic Committee Strength & Conditioning Physiologist

Swimmers are notorious for their broad shoulders, but what's the foundation of powerful broad shoulders?

The scapula is the foundation of the shoulder girdle, more commonly known as the shoulder blade. Stroke efficiency is at its best, and risk for shoulder injury is decreased, when the scapula muscles are strong enough to handle the generated force and mobile enough to allow for proper glenohumeral function. Swimmers need to have incredible scapular strength and mobility to move powerfully and efficiently through the water.

Many swimmers are unaware of the movements of the scapula. Let's progress through the movements of the scapula by trying this:

[Learn more here:](#)

Facts on Vitamin B12

By Chris Rosenbloom, RHD, RDN, CSSN

A swim coach wrote to me expressing concern about age group swimmers taking shots of vitamin B12 without professional guidance. Let's clear the air about what vitamin B12 can and cannot do for swimmers.

Vitamin B12 is a vitamin found in milk, meat, fish, eggs and other animal protein-rich foods. It is not found in grains, fruits or vegetables, although breakfast cereals add vitamin B12, so fortified foods are a good source of the vitamin for those who don't eat meat.

Vitamin B12 has many roles in the body, but the primary ones are making red blood cells, maintaining a healthy nervous system, and making DNA, the genetic material that is a blueprint for all cells in our body. One symptom of a deficiency of B12 is fatigue. Every swimmer experiences fatigue, so you can see why so many people think taking vitamin B12, either by injection (shots) or through a supplement, will give them more energy. Couple that with the marketing of energy drinks and shots, touting that the vitamin B12 in the drink is the source of "energy," and it is easy to see why swimmers would turn to an easy solution to combat tiredness.

[Learn more here:](#)

USADA Launches New Supplement Education App in Conjunction with Federal Dietary Supplement Initiative

USADA, along with five federal agencies, announced the results of a national dietary supplement initiative. USADA stands together with the Department of Justice, Food & Drug Administration, Federal Trade Commission, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and Department of Defense to rid the U.S. marketplace from poorly manufactured or dangerous dietary supplements, especially those containing illicit or performance-enhancing drugs.

[Learn more here:](#)

Eight Tips for Feeding Young Athletes Without Going Broke

By Stack.com, November 13, 2015

Parents know that every child they bring into their family adds to their monthly food bill, and that food costs only go up as the kids grow up, get bigger and reach the age where they can play sports. For parents of multiple athletes, hefty grocery bills are a weekly occurrence.

"We easily spent \$500 a week on food," says Mindy Gallagher, a Cleveland-area mother of three boys who were all multi-sport athletes. "I would go to the grocery store almost every day."

Money isn't the only obstacle athlete parents face. For many, time is also a problem. They spend hours preparing meals and snacks, obviously. But Gallagher and other parents confirm that when kids play different sports with varying practice and game schedules, getting everybody together for a family meal is especially challenging.

Several moms and dads shared tips on how they kept everybody fed without losing their house in the process.

[8 tips here:](#)

An Unexpected Way to Achieve a Better Work-Life Balance

By Jeff Haden, Ghostwriter, speaker, Inc. Magazine, Nov 12, 2015

Work-life balance. Everyone talks about it. And everyone struggles to achieve it.

Yet finding a reasonable work-life balance is easier than you think. While it's true the equilibrium point is constantly shifting, most of the same attitudes, perspectives, and skills apply to both "work" and "life."

So why not take advantage of that fact? Pick the right "life" pursuits and they inform and enhance your professional skills -- and add a healthy dose of perspective and humility along the way.

In my case I like to take on extremely difficult (at least for me) physical goals. (Granted my approach to goal achievement in general is a little unconventional. Just like Fight Club, the first rule of achieving a goal is you don't talk about achieving that goal. And achieving a goal has a lot less to do with the goal itself and a lot more to do with the routine you develop to support that goal.)

So a few years ago...

[Learn more here:](#)

A Bad Idea Whose Time Has Come... and Gone

By Phillip Whitten, Guest Blogger

The following blog was written by Dr. Phillip Whitten, the former Executive Director of the College Swimming Coaches Association of America. Dr. Whitten's views and opinions do not necessarily represent those of USA Swimming.

Pay to Play. The idea has been kicked around for years, during which time it has enjoyed steadily growing support from the American public.

No wonder. At first glance, it seems to appeal powerfully to the American concept of fairness. And, it seems to make good sense too. A no-brainer.

Since 2014, P2P has been analyzed and re-analyzed countless times in venues ranging from formal, sports law classes to the local Starbucks hangout, where folks from nearby offices gather before work to sip their lattes and listen to popular, sports talk radio shows. It also is the subject of many an impassioned, on-campus debate from dorms to locker

rooms, and from Boston to L.A.

But last year, football players at Northwestern University and Ed O'Bannon, a former UCLA basketball star, plucked it from the realm of "what if?" and deposited it squarely atop the national sports agenda.

The initial rulings favored the athletes. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruled that the student-athletes could unionize as "employees" of the university, while U. S. District Judge Claudia Wilkens supported O'Bannon's assertion that he – not UCLA nor the NCAA – should profit from the use of his likeness to promote UCLA basketball. However, this year both those decisions were reversed. So, at this point, nothing has been decided. You can be sure, however, that neither side is likely to throw in the towel. Most likely, the athletes will appeal all the way to the Supreme Court, if necessary. And that could take years.

[Read more here:](#)

Letting Go of Fear of Failure-Part IV

By Dr. Jim Taylor, Prime Alert, November, 2015

To close out my 2015 Prime Sport Alert! e-newsletters, I'm giving you a bonus of an in-depth four-part series on fear of failure among athletes. I recommend that you read them starting with Part 1 and progressing through to this final Part 4. As I noted at the end of Part III, a recent email from a reader asked the obvious question, "I now understand why my child keeps getting in his own way in his racing. He has a fear of failure! So, what can I do about it?" This question led to extending my Fear of Failure series and discussing ways in which athletes can let go of their fear of failure. Let me preface my thoughts by saying that there are entire books devoted to fear of failure and how to overcome it. Also, in severe cases, months of psychotherapy are required. My point is that, as with most things in life, there are no magic pills or quick fixes. At the same time, if you (as an athlete) or one of your children (as a parent) has a fear of failure, there are some things you and they can do to relieve the burden of fear of failure and begin to pursue success rather than avoid failure.

[Read more here:](#)

The Science Behind Effective Coaching

By Tim Elmore, Growing Leaders, November 24, 2015

I recently finished watching video coverage of the last batch of inductees into the Baseball Hall of Fame. It prompted me to watch even more footage from the last three years of inductees. I focused my attention on the managers who were given an honor representing the pinnacle of their career. The last three managers inducted into the HOF used what I would call a "new school" style of coaches, rather than "old school." They embraced a different approach to connecting with athletes. Whether conscious of it or not, they found ways to coach and connect with players from Generation X and the Millennial Generation in another manner than, say, Billy Martin or Leo Durocher did back in the day.

After studying effective coaches, in both professional and NCAA levels, I have come to some intriguing conclusions, at least for me. While "old school" coaching was the norm decades ago, replete with yelling, anger, distant personalities and the focus on improving weaknesses, today's "new school" coaches motivate young athletes using new methods. What "old school" coaches used to call a "soft" approach is working far better these days. Whether or not we like it, it's actually getting results.

And now, we can peer into [the science behind why this is.](#)