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# SWIMMING WORLD

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arena

## WORLD SWIMMERS OF THE YEAR

SARAH SJÖSTROM OF SWEDEN - FEMALE WORLD &  
EUROPEAN SWIMMER OF THE YEAR

THE TOP 10  
PERFORMANCES  
OF THE YEAR



BUILDING  
CONFIDENT  
SWIMMERS



THE ELEMENTS  
OF COLLEGE  
RECRUITING PART 2

OUR ANNUAL  
HOLIDAY GIFT  
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Sarah Sjostrom has ended Katie Ledecky's four-year reign as the best female swimmer in the world, being named Swimming World's Female World Swimmer of the Year for the first time. Both Sjostrom and Ledecky won three individual gold medals and a silver at this summer's World Championships in Budapest, but the 23-year-old from Sweden eclipsed six world records in 2017. Read about all of this year's World and Regional Swimmers of the Year on pages 16-23 as well as the women's and men's Top 5 Performances of the Year on pages 24-27.

[PHOTO BY ROB SCHUMACHER, USA TODAY SPORTS]

# THE 10 MOST IMPACTFUL PEOPLE OF 2017

BY BRENT T. RUTEMILLER



**O**ur sport is graced with great people. Some are public figures, others work behind the scenes. As appropriate for this time of year, *Swimming World* recognizes 10 people (in random order) who are making an impact in our sport. Thanks to the following people for their contributions and inspiration.

**1. Paolo Barelli.** As the president of the League of European Nations (LEN), Barelli ran an unsuccessful campaign to become president of FINA. He was a late candidate who brought many issues regarding changes in how aquatic sports should be governed. Although Barelli was not elected, his platform for more transparency, athlete representation, financial oversight and higher ethical standards became agenda items for future changes within FINA.

**2. George Block.** As current president of the World International Swim Coaches Association (WISCA), Block is an advocate for the sport of swimming on all levels. He has been on the ground floor of many initiatives that have shaped aquatics over the decades. In 2017, he was the force behind creating the World Swimming Association (WSA) and currently sits on its founding board. Parallel to the WSA, Block has been instrumental in starting the Professional Swimmers Association (PSA) this year.

**3. Bill Kent.** As the International Swimming Hall of Fame (ISOFHOF) board chairman, Kent oversaw every detail of the merger between *Swimming World* and ISOFHOF. Kent's executive leadership and love of aquatics kept the process on track and focused—allowing for the first part of a three-phase merger to begin in November of this year.

**4. Commit Swimming.** Founded by three friends in 2015—Dan Crescimanno, Dan Dingman and Nico Gimenez—they have honed their web-based software to provide mobile solutions for coaches to write workouts, analyze training and record goals. Now in its third year, Commit Swimming hit stride.

**5. Carol Zaleski.** The most respected female leader in aquatic sports, Zaleski oversees FINA's 20-member Technical Rules Committee as its chairman. Under her successful guidance, the committee ensures that swimming, water polo, artistic swimming and diving continue to evolve in ways that improve each sport. Some of these

elements include rule changes, equipment upgrades and implementation, officiating standards and discipline procedures.

**6. Stu Isaac.** Made headlines this year as the consultant hired by USA Swimming to make recommendations on technical suit restrictions for age group swimmers. The issue got white-hot as parents, coaches, clubs and local swim committees voiced emotional and practical reasons for and against the use of technical swimwear by young swimmers. Isaac has been gathering information that will be used to form a national policy to hopefully end the controversy.

**7. Cornel Marculescu.** The long-time executive director of FINA continues to show his resiliency and power as he navigated the controversial election and governance issues of 2017. With many decades under his belt, Marculescu has mastered the politics of leadership in Olympic sports.

**8. Eve Julian.** As a rising star in high school swimming leadership, Julian has been a strong voice as the secretary/webmaster of the National Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association (NISCA) in the United States. Her behind-the-scenes support of the association's goal to recognize high school All-America athletes, lifetime coaching awards, rankings and communication mechanisms continues to reinforce the importance of NISCA in high school swimming.

**9. TYR Swimwear: Matt DiLorenzo and Steven Locke.** The chief executive and operating officers of TYR Swimwear have invested heavily in the sport of aquatics, and their strategy paid off in 2017 with the signing of major athletes, sponsorship of governing bodies and taking over the naming rights to the TYR Pro Swim Series in the United States. The swimwear company has shown a steady and deliberate approach to the business side of aquatics.

**10. Tristan Lehari.** The CEO of TritonWear continues to develop the software and tools for coaches to analyze the technique, training and race performances of their swimmers. The tools allow for reviewing data that ultimately leads to better starts, turns, streamlines, tempos and power and strength applications for athletes. TritonWear articles breaking down the World Championship races in Budapest were a highlight of 2017. ♦



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# LESSONS with the LEGENDS

SWIMMING WORLD  
CONTINUES A  
SERIES IN WHICH TOP  
COACHES  
SHARE SOME OF  
THE SECRETS OF  
THEIR SUCCESS.

BY MICHAEL J. STOTT

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## MARY FREEMAN

**B**efore Teri McKeever became the first female Olympic swimming coach for Team USA in 2004, there was a quintessential pioneer named Mary Freeman who removed herself from consideration in 1964. That choice was America's loss.

Born in 1933, Freeman had, by modern standards, a bright, but short athletic career. An early protégée of Jim Campbell's Walter Reed Army Hospital squad, Freeman began swimming at age 14. Three years later, she won the indoor AAU 100 and 200 meter backstroke titles as well as the 200 outdoor crown. In 1952, she represented the U.S. at the 1952 Helsinki Games in the 100 back. In 1953, she added crowns in the AAU indoor 330 yard medley relay and the outdoor 300 yard individual medley and 880 yard freestyle relay. In 1954, Freeman married Olympic rowing bronze medalist, John B. Kelly Jr., effectively ending her competitive days.

But it was as a coach that Freeman earned her chops. Strong, forthright, "arrogant," she says, "I wanted to run my own program." And so she did, founding one of the nation's first all-female swim teams as an arm of Philadelphia's renowned Vesper Boat Club. In 1954 from the confines of a narrow four-lane YWCA pool and, later, the slightly larger Penn indoor and the 50 meter outdoor Fairmount Park pool, Freeman fostered a culture of teamwork and excellence.

"This was a time when the sport experienced an 'explosion' of year-round age group swimming programs both in Philadelphia and throughout the U.S.," says Freeman. "Although there was already a swim league for boys in Philadelphia, there were limited opportunities for girls to compete year-round. 'Developing a girls' team with the goal of competing at the national level was what I had in mind,' she says.

The Vesper girls became perennial Eastern U.S. and Mid-Atlantic champions, and also excelled on the national stage. In 1958, Lyn Hopkins became her first national finalist. In August 1961, Vesper Boat Club won the AAU Outdoor National Championships before repeating in 1966. In total, Freeman produced 15 national champions who secured 26 national titles and set 10 world records.

She also mentored international champions. Six of her team members swam at the 1960 U.S. Olympic Trials, with Susan Doherr and Nina Harmer (also 1964) competing in Rome. Altogether, Freeman placed three others on U.S. Olympic teams, including



[PHOTO PROVIDED BY INTERNATIONAL SWIMMING HALL OF FAME]

medalists Martha Randall (1964), Jane Barkman (1968) and Ellie Daniel (1968, 1972).

Throughout her coaching career, Freeman was aware of and grateful for the lessons learned from the legendary coaches of that era. They included Jim Campbell, her own coach, who was extremely innovative with overdistance, interval training and swimming against resistance. Doc Counsilman schooled her in the finer points of stroke mechanics and the art of coaching. Peter Daland, George Haines, Don Gambril, Gene Lee and others were strong rivals on deck, but also colleagues who shared their experiences and ideas to improve all levels of swimmers.

Freeman was so well respected within the male-dominated coaching circles that she was being considered for the position of women's Olympic coach in 1964. In a surprise move, she decided not to be a candidate, positing that the honor was more important to men for whom coaching was their livelihood.

In addition to working poolside, Freeman, also the University of Pennsylvania women's coach, labored tirelessly to serve the sport in administrative capacities. She was on the U.S. Olympic Women's Swimming Committee, AAU Women's Swim Committee, AAU Joint Rules Committee for Swimming, chairman of the AAU Swimming Award Committee as well as a member of the All-American Women's Swimming Team Selection Committee.

In her brief coaching career, Freeman inspired many women, including more than a dozen of her own swimmers who opted for coaching careers. In 1968, Freeman, the mother of six, retired from coaching, turning over her Vesper swimmers to Olympian George Breen. She was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame in 1988 and the ASCA Hall of Fame in 2008. ♦

*Michael J. Stott is an ASCA Level 5 coach whose Collegiate School (Richmond, Va.) teams won nine state high school championships. He has been named a 2017 recipient of NISCA's Outstanding Service Award.*

# THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE

**In the second of a multi-part series, Swimming World explores social media and its effect on recruiting.**

BY MICHAEL J. STOTT

**J**uly 1 remains the most important day of the year for potential college swimmers. It is then at 12:01 a.m. when college coaches can legally reach out to rising high school seniors. But a seismic shift has been introduced into the courtship timeline, thanks to a change in NCAA rules and the accelerated use of handheld devices.

"As of last year, electronic communication (texting) is allowed Sept. 1 of the junior year. Recruits can call coaches and can use email/text to set up those calls during the junior year," says CSCAA executive director Joel Shinofield.

"Social media has changed the game for recruiting, marketing and everything news-related," notes Arizona State assistant coach and recruiting coordinator Michael Joyce. "I think social media helps both the prospect and the coaches in all components recruiting." Professional swimmer and 26-time NCAA All-American Olivia Smoliga agrees: "It is a really great tool for juniors and seniors who are looking to commit to college, to see what their future teammates may be like and to follow the progress of the team," she says.

"No question," says William & Mary head coach Matt Crispino. "The social media we are producing in-house and putting out helps in recruiting. We know for a fact that recruits are consuming and devouring that information...so if you are not doing anything with social media, you are probably behind the times and missing out."

"But...it is a double-edged sword," he says, "because with today's high school prospects—who basically live a good chunk of their lives on social media—it becomes very attractive to post commitments as early as possible, which may not be a healthy trend for our sport."

## How important is social media to recruiting?

"Marketing is everything," says Adam Kennedy, former University of Pacific coach and assistant at the Naval Academy. "In the social media world, you have to play the game. You have to remember you are trying to imprint your brand as a university on middle schoolers, 13 and 14-years-old. Yikes!"

Kennedy is now executive director at SwimRVA in Richmond,



*Adam Kennedy, former recruiting coordinator at the U.S. Naval Academy, believes that "the best example of social media usage is Mike Bottom (next page, front, center, with 2013 men's NCAA champions). When he got to Michigan in 2010, he attacked social media. He was in kids' heads, imprinting 14-, 15-, 16-year-olds with what he wanted his team brand to be—cool, hip, hardworking and really committed to Michigan... selling the idea of being a Mike Bottom team."*

Va., a non-profit whose mission is to get every second-grader in the Richmond metropolitan area swim-safe. He has a small staff, but he has "1.5 people" dedicated to social media. "The content production done right for YouTube—the video editing, picture editing and overlap—takes an incredible amount of time. The ones who do it well have the staffs to do it. The bigger schools with large sports information staffs have actually farmed themselves out to the Olympic sports really well," he says.

"The best example of social media usage is Mike Bottom. When he got to Michigan in 2010, he attacked social media. He had success really fast (men's national championship by 2013). He was in kids' heads, imprinting 14-, 15-, 16-year-olds with what he wanted his team brand to be—cool, hip, hardworking and really committed to Michigan.

"He was able to tell that story through videos. He was shooting videos of what his sprint group was doing. Even if you were a distance swimmer, you loved it. He would shoot videos of the coaches joking around in the office, videos of the team, selling the idea of being a Mike Bottom team.

"We've gotten to the point where young athletes are drawing energy from seeing themselves on media, seeing the team doing great things." Kennedy points to Auburn's use of media. "Auburn graduate assistants would not sleep during NCAAs because they were putting together highlight reels to show on the bus ride to the pool the next morning. With videos, they were selling the message, the dream, the imagery that the coach wanted in athletes' heads all the time," he says.

## MICHIGAN'S STRATEGY

Seven years later, social media is alive and well in Ann Arbor. The Wolverines' sports information director, Brad Rudner, is swimming's driving social media force. "At Michigan, 95 percent of the content is posted by me. We primarily use Twitter—we have the most followers of any college team...over 10,000—Instagram and Facebook. I think each has its own use: Twitter is for distributing general news, Instagram is for recruits/younger audience, and



[PHOTO PROVIDED BY PETER H. BICK]

Facebook is for our alumni.

"My strategy is to keep an active voice, especially on Twitter and Instagram, and to show—not tell—unique things. Personally, I subscribe to the idea that more doesn't always mean better. Rather than flood someone's feed with five posts—such behavior might turn them off—I'd rather do one really good one. There are themes that are really important to the coaching staff that I try to include in everything—themes such as the feeling of team, creating champions, showcasing our history and tradition, promoting our student-athletes and coaches," says Rudner.

Several times last year, Rudner used Instagram Takeovers, giving control of the account over to a student-athlete to create a story. "It's like Snapchat," he says, "only on Instagram. The goal was to show what a day on campus was like in their shoes. It covered everything from waking up to morning swim to going to class to meals to studying.

"In another instance, someone shot a video of a few guys doing 'lifts' underwater. I took that and posted it to Facebook last summer, and it got THREE MILLION views. I have no idea how that happened, but clearly someone with a large following shared it. As a result, we gained about 15,000 new followers over the course of a week. It was an example of something unique that people probably hadn't seen before.

"We also did a gear giveaway on Twitter as a way to help us gain followers. We had some extra T-shirts lying around, so we asked for followers—prompted by saying something along the lines of, 'We may have some gear to give away if you follow us.' We picked a few people at random, and mailed it to them—it's a pretty easy way to create new fans.

"A friendly Twitter feud over Michael Phelps' allegiances during Olympic Trials got picked up by NBC Olympics. Michael is obviously a big Michigan fan from his time here. Anything we put out with him gets a lot of engagement. That particular example wasn't something that we planned ahead of time, but it was friendly, funny and drew some eyes during a pretty big event.

"Basically, I want to be creative by doing things that are new, different, active and strategic. Coaches certainly provide input and

feedback on what they'd like to see and even help on some occasions. Sometimes a member of the staff will post to our Instagram and put something in 'Stories.' They're at practice every day, and if there's something cool going on, it doesn't take much effort to grab it," Rudner says.

### THE PERSONAL TOUCH

While space-age technology abounds, not everyone is as facile with it as he or she would like to be. Three-time Olympian Josh Davis now directs the first-year program at Oklahoma Christian University. "I am sorry to say I am Old School," says Davis. "I get that from Eddie Reese, where I am more into personal touch and the on-site visit. I am good with parents and with swimmers when they come to the campus and giving them a vision of what it is going to be like here. No matter how savvy you get with social media, nothing can replace the in-person tour," he says.

To his credit, Davis has spurred great interest in the Eagle program. His opening day roster included 15 women and 36 men of whom 47 were freshmen. "I am now trusting that these freshmen will help me with my social media," he says.

*Next month, we look at early commitments and the way social media is altering (for better or for worse) how prospects are navigating the college recruiting process.♦*

*Michael J. Stott is an ASCA Level 5 coach whose Collegiate School (Richmond, Va.) teams won nine state high school championships. He has been named a 2017 recipient of NISCA's Outstanding Service Award.*

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## SWIMMING TECHNIQUE MISCONCEPTIONS:

BY ROD HAVRILUK

*Many people believe that it is worth copying the technique of the fastest swimmers. In reality, even the fastest swimmers have technique limitations, but they offset them with strength and conditioning. The purpose of this series of articles is to address scientifically the technique misconceptions and related skill-learning strategies that have become "conventional wisdom," and to present more effective options.*

A previous "Misconceptions" article on breaststroke breathing (SW June 2015) explained the common technique misconception of lifting the "head, neck, and upper chest out of the water." One coach described this ineffective technique by saying that the angle at the neck was fixed so that it was like the head was "in a cast with your neck and your shoulder" (Urbanchek, 1995).

To achieve a more effective breathing position, a swimmer must extend at the neck while keeping the chin at the surface of the water. The result is less vertical motion and a more level body position that generates less resistance and more propulsion.

This month's article presents a continuation of that article with examples of elite swimmers.

In most cases, conventional wisdom develops from observing and modeling the technique of top swimmers. A fast performance time is usually sufficient justification for adopting a given element.

A technique element based "only" on science and research, however, requires considerably more justification! This article offers a scientifically-based technique element used by a fast swimmer as part of that justification.

# BREASTSTROKE AND BUTTERFLY BREATHING REVISITED



FIG. 1

**Fig. 1>** These images show Michael Andrew (left) and Michael Phelps (right) as they breathe in breaststroke. The yellow line shows the surface of the water, and the red line is even with the top of Phelps' head. Obviously, vertical motion is much greater for Phelps.

### AN ELITE SWIMMER EXAMPLE OF EFFECTIVE (BUT UNCONVENTIONAL) BREASTSTROKE BREATHING

Michael Andrew is a top swimmer who uses an unconventional, science-based, breaststroke breathing technique. Specifically, he has less vertical displacement of his head and shoulders than most other top swimmers. In Fig. 1, his breaststroke breathing position (left image) is shown next to that of Michael Phelps (right image).

In a 2014 interview, Andrew credited Dr. Brent Rushall (see Fig. 2) for his unconventional approach to breaststroke breathing. When Andrew breathes, he extends at the neck and keeps his chin near the surface of the water. Minimizing vertical motion also means that he can better apply propulsion.

The point of this article is not to suggest that Michael Andrew is the new standard for breaststroke technique. The point is simply to show that his breaststroke breathing position is consistent with the principles of physics, as well as fast swimming.

Like any other top swimmer, Michael Andrew also has technique limitations. For example, his hands are separated as he recovers his arms in breaststroke (see Fig. 3). A swimmer can more quickly achieve a more streamlined position by having the hands together on the recovery.

### EFFECTIVE BREATHING MOTION IN BREASTSTROKE AND BUTTERFLY

Conventional instructions for butterfly breathing are similar to breaststroke. For example, Richard Thornton's (1995) directions were consistent with not extending at the neck to breathe, as he stated, "Never unhinge the head." As explained in a previous "Misconceptions" article on butterfly breathing (SW May 2015), it is important to extend at the neck to reduce vertical head and body motion and, therefore, maintain a relatively level body position.

This is another effective technique element that Andrew has mastered. Compare the breathing position of Andrew and Phelps in Fig. 4. Andrew has his chin just below the surface, and his shoulders are partially submerged. In contrast, Phelps has a more vertical motion with his chin and shoulders completely above the surface.

The limitations of excess vertical motion are also apparent below the surface. For example, the middle image in Fig. 5 shows a swimmer (Phelps) in a typical position after completing a butterfly arm entry. His distorted body position generates far more resistance than that of Andrew (top image).

In addition, a more level body position also has a benefit for propulsion. Andrew's body position is more similar to the biomechanical model of optimal technique

FIG. 2



FIG. 4



in the bottom image. The angle at the shoulders shows that Andrew must move his arms through a smaller range of motion (40 degrees vs. 70 degrees) than Phelps before he is in a position (like the model) to begin to generate propulsion. Research shows that the hands must submerge below the level of the shoulders before there is a significant increase in hand force (Becker & Havriluk, 2010).

While performance is a primary reason for controlling head motion in butterfly, shoulder stress provides an even more important reason. A recent study found that the “prevalence of shoulder injuries is high” (van Dorssen & Stubbe, 2017), consistent with numerous studies over the last five decades. Maintaining the head at the surface and a level body position are prerequisites for a downward arm entry angle that minimizes shoulder stress.

### EXTENDING THE NECK TO BREATHE IN BREASTSTROKE AND BUTTERFLY

A swimmer will not naturally use the full range of motion at the neck to breathe in either breaststroke or butterfly. In fact, learning to completely extend the neck may initially be awkward or even uncomfortable. Some cues can speed up the learning process:

- As the neck begins to extend, a swimmer can feel the chin move forward through the water.
- As the neck completely extends, a swimmer can feel the limit of the range of motion at the back of the neck.
- When a swimmer’s head is in position to breathe, the swimmer can see the wall at the end of the pool. ♦

*Dr. Rod Havriluk is a sports scientist and consultant who specializes in swimming technique instruction and analysis. His unique strategies provide rapid improvement while avoiding injury. Learn more at the STR website: [www.swimmingtechnology.com](http://www.swimmingtechnology.com). You can contact Rod at [info@swimmingtechnology.com](mailto:info@swimmingtechnology.com). All scientific documentation relating to this article, including scientific principles, studies and research papers, can be provided upon demand.*

## SUMMARY

*Following the conventional wisdom for both breaststroke and butterfly breathing results in excess vertical motion that has a negative impact on performance. An effective breathing motion requires a swimmer to extend completely at the neck so that the body remains more level, thereby minimizing resistance and maximizing propulsion.*



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FIG. 2 > (Top left) Dr. Brent Rushall is shown lecturing about Ultra-Short Race-Pace Training (USRPT).

FIG. 4 > (Above) Michael Andrew (right) keeps his chin at the surface during a butterfly breathing stroke. In comparison, Michael Phelps (left) has his chin above the surface. The yellow line indicates the surface of the water.

FIG. 3



FIG. 3 > Michael Andrew is recovering his arms in breaststroke with his hands apart (yellow circle).

FIG. 5



180°



220°



150°

FIG. 5 > These three images show the completion of the butterfly arm entry. The top image shows that Michael Andrew has his head much closer to the surface than Michael Phelps (middle image). Consequently, his body is more level and more like the biomechanical model of optimal technique (bottom image). The red lines represent the surface of the water. The yellow lines show the angle at the shoulders.

## WORLD

### FEMALE

1. **SARAH SJOSTROM, Sweden (13)**
  2. Katie Ledecky, USA (1)
  3. Lilly King, USA
  4. Katinka Hosszu, Hungary
  5. Mireia Belmonte, Spain
- (First-place votes in parentheses)

### Top 5 World Swimmers of the Year

### MALE

1. **CAELEB DRESSEL, USA (12)**
  2. Adam Peaty, Great Britain (2)
  3. Sun Yang, China
  4. Chase Kalisz, USA
  5. Gregorio Paltrinieri, Italy
- (First-place votes in parentheses)

TWO THOUSAND SEVENTEEN  
*Swimmers  
of the  
Year*

WOMEN'S STORIES BY ANNIE GREVERS  
MEN'S STORIES BY DAVID RIEDER

**SARAH SJOSTROM**  
*Female World and European Swimmer of the Year*

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For the first time since 2012, *Swimming World's* Female World Swimmer of the Year is not Katie Ledecky. Sweden's Sarah Sjostrom has dethroned Lady Ledecky. The 23-year-old collected the same individual medal haul as Ledecky at the 2017 World Championships—three golds and one silver—but Sjostrom upped Ledecky by uncorking two world records in the 50 and 100 free. And she set four short course meters world records days later.

Sjostrom unleashed something remarkable to lead off Sweden's 4x100 meter freestyle relay at Worlds: her blistering 51.71 split broke Australian Cate Campbell's world record by 35-hundredths.

On Day 2 in Budapest, Sjostrom came close to another world record—her own—in the 100 fly, touching in 55.53 seconds, a mere 5-hundredths off of her record time from Rio. Sjostrom became the first woman to win four world titles in a single individual event with the victory. She now owns the 11 fastest times in history in the 100 fly!

Four days later, Sjostrom settled for silver in the 100 free—4-hundredths behind the USA's Simone Manuel—but her world record from the first night remained intact. Surely the unexpected silver fed Sjostrom's fire. The next night, Sjostrom reigned supreme in the 50 fly, touching in 24.60 to win by nearly 8-tenths of a second—a

massive margin in a 50.

Sjostrom was having the meet of her life, so when she busted out another world record in her last event, the 50 free (23.67), no one was particularly surprised—but everyone was awed. The swim nixed a 2009 super-suit record by 6-hundredths, this one by Germany's Britta Steffen.

The Swede's world-record-wrecking tour had only just begun at Worlds, which ended July 30. Three days later, Sjostrom began an 11-day journey in which she added four more WR performances at two World Cup meets. First, in Moscow, Aug. 2-3, she clocked 23.10 in the 50 free, followed by a 50.77 100 free the second day of the meet.

Then in Eindhoven, Aug. 11-12, she lowered her 100 time to 50.58. The next day, Sjostrom swam the 200 free, an event she did not swim at the 2017 World Championships. But maybe she should have—Sjostrom hit the wall in 1:50.43 for another SCM world record. (Her records in the 50 and 100 were later broken by Holland's Ranomi Kromowidjojo—50, 22.93, Aug. 7—and Australia's Cate Campbell—100, 50.25, Oct. 26.)

This is Sjostrom's first World Swimmer of the Year title. Six world records in one year—that's one successful 2017 campaign! ✦

## Top 5 Female European Swimmers of the Year

### 1. SARAH SJOSTROM, Sweden (14)

2. Katinka Hosszu, Hungary
3. Mireia Belmonte, Spain
4. Federica Pellegrini, Italy
5. Yulia Efimova, Russia

(First-place votes in parentheses)

## Top 5 Male American Swimmers of the Year

### 1. CAELEB DRESSEL, USA (14)

2. Chase Kalisz, USA
3. Ryan Murphy, USA
4. Matt Grevers, USA
5. Kevin Cordes, USA

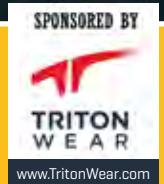
(First-place votes in parentheses)

[PHOTO PROVIDED BY SIPA USA.]



## CAELEB DRESSEL

*Male World and American Swimmer of the Year*



**H**e was on the verge of making history, but Caeleb Dressel insisted that he had no desire to be compared with Michael Phelps, a man whose athletic accomplishments had long since transcended the sport.

Dressel twice declared his admiration for Phelps, with whom he had crossed paths at the Rio Olympics—the fifth Games for Phelps and the first for Dressel. But the 20-year-old Floridian also uttered these words: “I just want to keep doing my own thing.”

His “own thing” had, to that point, produced six World Championship gold medals at FINA’s global showcase meet in Budapest. One day later, he would win a record-tying seventh. The only other man to win that many was, of course, Phelps.

And now, for those efforts, Dressel is the winner of an award that Phelps won eight times: Male World Swimmer of the Year.

Before the meet in Budapest, Dressel’s best shot at gold appeared to be the 100 meter free, with 2016 Olympic gold medalist Kyle Chalmers absent from the meet because of health issues. Indeed, Dressel would storm through that event, winning in 47.17 and becoming history’s seventh fastest man in the process.

Two days later, he put together arguably the greatest single session in swimming history. On the seventh night of Worlds, he won three golds in the span of two hours. First came the 50 free, which he won in 21.15, making him the third fastest performer in history.

Minutes later, he faced off with Olympic gold medalist Joseph Schooling in the 100 fly. Dressel dominated, winning by nearly a second and posting a time of 49.86, just 4-hundredths off Phelps’ world record.

Finally, he gave the American mixed 400 free relay team a lead of more than a body length, and the outcome was never in doubt after that. Said U.S. team captain Matt Grevers at the end of that night, “It’s awesome seeing the birth of a superstar.”

Dressel took part in three other American relay wins as well—the men’s 400 free and 400 medley and in the mixed 400 medley. Sure, he benefited from extra medal opportunities with the addition of the mixed relays to the World Championships slate, but he provided the decisive leg in each of those relay wins.

Differ as they may, Dressel has become what Phelps was for so long: the world’s male premier swimmer. ♦

## AMERICAN & EUROPEAN

### Top 5 Female American Swimmers of the Year

#### 1. KATIE LEDECKY, USA (10)

2. Lilly King, USA (4)
3. Kylie Masse, Canada
4. Simone Manuel, USA
5. Leah Smith, USA

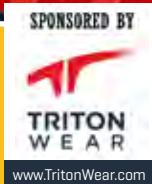
(First-place votes in parentheses)

[PHOTO PROVIDED BY SIPA USA]



## KATIE LEDECKY

*Female American Swimmer of the Year*



Katie Ledecky has won 26 medals in the last five years between the Pan-Pacific Championships, World Championships and the Olympics. Zero bronze, two silver and 24 international gold medals. It's impossible to appreciate fully the breadth of Ledecky's accomplishments over the past five years.

This past summer, the world expected the world of Ledecky yet again. And she delivered, whether swim fans and the media agree or not.

On Day 1 of the 2017 World Championships, Ledecky defended her world title in the 400 meter free, setting a championship record (3:58.34). Later that session, Ledecky threw down a 53-second 100 free as the third leg of the 4x100 freestyle relay, helping Team USA to gold and an American record.

Day 3 saw a landmark victory for Ledecky—her win in the 1500 free (15:31.82) marked her 12th gold medal at a World Championship meet, surpassing Missy Franklin as the top long course gold medal-hauling female in World Championship history.

On Day 4, Ledecky lost an individual race on the international stage for the first time ever. She tied for second with Australia's

Emma McKeon in 1:55.18. This was especially disappointing to the superstar since she had swum a time (1:54.69) in the semifinal the night before that would have won the final...and that swim came less than an hour after the mile! She had the speed, but on Day 4, Italy's Federica Pellegrini had more, winning in 1:54.73.

The next day, Ledecky anchored Team USA's 4x200 free relay with a scorching 1:54.02, the fastest split in the field by more than a second. Team USA won gold, and Ledecky affirmed her 200 speed with that split.

Ledecky capped off her marathon meet with a victory in the 800 (8:12.68), her fifth straight title in the event between the Olympics and World Championships.

Despite not setting a world record in 2017, Ledecky still had a spectacular summer. She holds the record among female swimmers for the most individual (10) and overall (14) gold medals earned at the World Championships. Ledecky's times from Budapest in the 200, 400 and 1500 were world-leading times in 2017, as was her 8:11.50 in the 800 at the World Championship Trials in early July. ♦

## Top 5 Male European Swimmers of the Year

1. ADAM PEATY, Great Britain (13)
  2. Gregorio Paltrinieri, Italy
  3. Gabriele Detti, Italy (1)
  4. Evgeny Rylov, Russia
  5. Anton Chupkov, Russia
- (First-place votes in parentheses)

[PHOTO PROVIDED BY SIPA USA]



## ADAM PEATY

### Male European Swimmer of the Year

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If you ever get the chance, go watch Adam Peaty race in person. Sure, you can watch him on television and can read all about his breaststroke excellence here in *Swimming World Magazine*—which has earned him the European Swimmer of the Year honors for a fourth straight year—but the in-person viewing experience is a little different.

For one, the six-foot-two-inch Peaty is not a dominant physical specimen. His starts and pullouts are average among world-class breaststrokers. But on the surface, no one has ever swum the stroke like Peaty does—the snap of the kick, the strength in each pull and the fluidity of the entire motion.

A virtual unknown four years ago, Peaty broke his first world record in the 50 meter breast in 2014 (26.62). The following year, he became the first man to break 58 seconds in the 100 breast (57.92 in April), then became world champion in the 50 and 100 breast at Kazan that summer, while again breaking the 50-meter world record (26.42). And then in 2016, Peaty won Olympic gold in the 100 breast

in 57.13, very nearly becoming the first man to swim a 56-second 100 breaststroke.

Those three years won him accolades as our top European male, and his 2015 performance earned him World Swimmer of the Year. In 2017, Peaty continued his dominance, and he remains the best there is on the continent and still, by far, the best sprint breaststroker in the world.

Peaty won his second straight world title in the 100 breast in 57.47, just 34-hundredths off his world record and still a full second faster than anyone else has ever swum!

And when the 50 breast rolled around at the World Champs in Budapest, Peaty proceeded to cut nearly a half-second off his 26.42 world record from Kazan, first with a 26.10 in prelims, then 25.95 in semifinals...and he won gold in the final (25.99) by more than a half-second.

Yes, a half-second! And he won the 100 breast by 1.32 seconds. No other swimmer dominates his events right now like Peaty. ♦

## PACIFIC RIM

### Top 5 Female Pacific Rim Swimmers of the Year

1. EMILY SEEBOHM, Australia (12)

2. Emma McKeon, Australia (1)

3. Li Bingjie, China

4. Yui Ohashi, Japan

5. Fu Yuahui, China

\* Cate Campbell, Australia received one first-place vote, but did not finish in Top 5

(First-place votes in parentheses)



## EMILY SEEBOHM

*Female Pacific Rim Swimmer of the Year*



Australian swimming icon Emily Seebohm shouldered lofty expectations prior to the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. Seebohm busted onto the international swimming scene at the 2007 World Championships when she was only 14. She's amassed five Olympic medals and 14 World Championship (LC) medals in her decade on the international stage.

In the 2012 Olympics, she took silver in the 100 meter back and helped Australia take gold in the 4x100 free relay and silver in the 4x100 medley relay. In 2015, Seebohm won both the 100 and 200 back at the World Championships in Kazan, Russia. She seemed primed for backstroke dominance in Rio.

But Seebohm underperformed at the 2016 Games. She came away with only one Olympic medal—a silver—from Australia's 4x100 medley relay. She fell to seventh in her signature event, the 100 back, and failed to make the final in the 200 back.

She revealed in late 2016 that she had been suffering from

symptoms caused by endometriosis. The condition was not confirmed until December of 2016. Seebohm underwent surgery, which helped reduce the cramping and fatigue that come with the illness. She was determined to make it back to her 2015 form, and remarkably, she nearly did.

At the 2017 World Championships—her fifth appearance at Worlds—Seebohm defended her title in the 200 back in 2:05.68 and nabbed a bronze in the 100 back (58.59). She picked up a silver medal in the 4x100 free relay and a bronze in the 4x100 medley.

Seebohm proved she's bouncing back and hopes to match Australian legend Leisl Jones' storied four Olympic appearances by qualifying for the 2020 Games. She concluded 2017's long course season with the No.1 world ranking in the 200 back, No. 2 in the 100 back (58.53r) and No. 4 in the 50 back (27.37). Seebohm is back. ♦

## Top 5 Male Pacific Rim Swimmers of the Year

1. SUN YANG, China (10)
  - 2.. Ippei Watanabe, Japan (2)
  3. Xu Jiayu, China (1)
  4. Mack Horton, Australia (1)
  5. Daiya Seto, Japan
- (First-place votes in parentheses)

[PHOTO PROVIDED BY SIPA USA ]



## SUN YANG

### Male Pacific Rim Swimmer of the Year

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If Sun Yang had been named Pacific Rim Swimmer of the Year three times, claiming the award in 2011, 2012 and 2013. Back then, he was the heir to Grant Hackett in the 1500 meter free, finally breaking the Aussie's decade-old world record (14:34.14 in 2011) while winning an Olympic gold (14:31.02 WR in 2012) and two straight world titles.

But since 2013, Sun has not been what he once was in the mile. Under mysterious circumstances, he did not show up for the event's final at the 2015 World Championships, and then he fell short of the final at the 2016 Olympics after apparently feeling sick. In 2017, he didn't swim the mile at all after finishing fifth and more than six seconds out of the medals in the 800 free.

No, Sun is not the world's best distance swimmer anymore. Now, he's the world's best mid-distance freestyler.

Since he won gold in the 400 free at the 2012 Olympics, he has

lost the race just once internationally: when Aussie Mack Horton got the better of him at the Rio Olympics. Out for revenge at this year's World Championships in Budapest, Sun got it, beating Horton by two-and-a-half seconds for gold with a time of 3:41.38.

His 200 free, too, has taken off, as Sun followed up a gold medal-winning performance in Rio with another at the World Championships. He won the event in 1:44.39, making him the only man to break 1:45 this year.

So at 25 years old, Sun has put the 1500-meter event behind him to become the dominant man in the 200 and 400—hardly the outcome some would have expected when he first broke Hackett's world record six years ago. But it's good enough to earn him the title of Male Pacific Rim Swimmer of the Year for the first time since 2013. ♦

## AFRICAN

### Top 5 Female African Swimmers of the Year

#### 1. FARIDA OSMAN, Egypt (14)

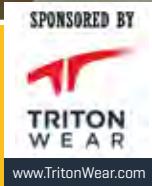
2. Tatjana Schoenmaker, South Africa
  3. Rebecca Meder, South Africa
  4. Mariella Venter, South Africa
  5. Kate Beavon, South Africa
- (First-place votes in parentheses)



[PHOTO PROVIDED BY PETER H. BICK]

## FARIDA OSMAN

### Female African Swimmer of the Year



Egypt's swimming phenom, Farida Osman, almost became a synchronized swimmer. But at age 11, she chose the confines of lane lines. Osman found immediate success when she decided on racing through the pool instead of dancing through it. She represented Egypt in the 2007 Pan Arab Games when she was just 12. She won the 50 meter fly, becoming the youngest Egyptian and Arab woman ever to win the event and break the Arab record.

Ten years later at the 2017 World Championships, Osman made history yet again in the 50 fly, winning Egypt's first World Championship medal of any color. Osman took the bronze in Budapest and set an African record in the process. Her record, 25.39, is faster than the American record in the event—a rare feat.

Osman has held the African record in the event since 2013,

breaking her own mark many times over. The 22-year-old also set an African record in her 50 meter free (24.62) in Budapest, but she missed the final by 3-hundredths of a second. In addition to her performances in the 50 free and 50 fly, she rounded out 2017 with the top times in Africa in the 100 free and 100 fly (55.38, 58.67) as well. At just 22, Osman is undoubtedly the fastest female swimmer in Africa.

The University of California-Berkeley graduate showed early signs of having a wildly successful 2017 at the Division I NCAA Championships in March. To conclude her final season as a Cal Bear, Osman won her first individual title in the 100 yard butterfly (50.05) and served as anchor in three of Cal's relays (two of which won NCAA titles). Egypt's Madame Butterfly has emerged.♦

## Top 5 Male African Swimmers of the Year

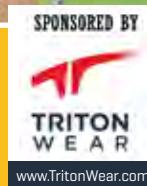
1. CHAD LE CLOS, South Africa (14)
2. Cameron van der Burgh, South Africa
3. Brad Tandy, South Africa
4. Akram Mahmoud, Egypt
5. Marwan El Kamash, Egypt  
(First-place votes in parentheses)

[PHOTO PROVIDED BY SIPA USA]



## CHAD LE CLOS

### Male African Swimmer of the Year



**C**had le Clos has been an Olympic gold medalist, one of the superstars of the sport. The latest in a long line of talented swimmers to come out of South Africa, he was first named African Male Swimmer of the Year in 2012, and he has won the award every year since!

But after 2016, he was anything but satisfied. He had expected to repeat as Olympic champion in the 200 meter fly, and he failed to do so. In a much-publicized rivalry with American Michael Phelps, le Clos could not keep pace in the final—despite peeking one lane over to check on Phelps at least twice during the race—and he ended up falling out of the medals entirely.

One year later, he reclaimed his world title from 2013 by taking down Hungarian hometown favorite, defending champion and his good friend, Laszlo Cseh, to win the race in 1:53.33. And that night, on the medal podium, he teared up.

Le Clos thought then of his parents, both of whom have battled cancer. He admitted that 2016, despite two Olympic silver medals in Rio (200 free and 100 fly) was the “lowest moment of my career.”

He called his world title in the 200 fly the biggest win of his career outside of his Olympic gold medal from 2012—“maybe even bigger than London,” he said.

Le Clos would end up leaving Budapest with a bitter taste in his mouth after he was surprisingly eliminated in the 100 fly semifinals, but he rebounded to pound out victories on the World Cup circuit on his way to a first-place finish in the series for the men.

But years from now, as le Clos looks back on 2017, it’s that emotional victory in the 200 fly in Budapest that he will never forget. And it’s that victory that secured him a sixth straight honor as the Male African Swimmer of the Year. ♦

# THE TOP 10 OF 2017

**Nothing can quite top the magic of the Olympic Games, but as far as encores go, this year's FINA World Championships emphatically delivered, with nine of this year's top 10 performances coming in Budapest.**

**By David Rieder**

**Photos by SIPA USA**



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To find out who just missed making the Top 10 list.

**P**lenty of superstars competed at the 2017 World Championships in Budapest this past summer—including Katie Ledecky, Sarah Sjostrom, Adam Peaty, Katinka Hosszu and Lilly King...all gold medalists from the Rio Olympics. But there were also those who stood atop the podium for the first time after using Rio as a launch pad, turning modest success in their first major international meet into top honors a year later.

With so many great performances in Budapest—not to mention other outstanding swims throughout the year—*Swimming World* was presented with quite a challenge to determine the very best of the best for its annual Top 10 Performances list. And to make it even more interesting, this year's list comes with a twist: we decided to narrow the choices to the top five performances for women and the top five for men. (As usual, only a swimmer's single best swim of the year was considered for the list.)

## THE TOP 5 WOMEN'S PERFORMANCES



**1**

**LILLY KING, USA**  
**Women's 100 Meter Breaststroke**  
**World Championships (1:04.13 WR)**

She chopped 8-tenths of a second off her best time in the women's 100 meter breaststroke—you know, the one she set on her way to winning Olympic gold as a 19-year-old one year earlier. She broke a four-year-old world record by 2-tenths of a second. But that's not why Lilly King deserves the top spot on the list.

King had watched in the World Champs semifinals as Russian rival Yulia Efimova had come up just 1-hundredth shy of the world record. Suddenly, King had to defend her title as the queen of the event while not actually being the fastest. In the 24 hours before the final, Efimova had a clear on-paper advantage, and King did not let it affect her one bit. Instead, she delivered the best performance of her career.

Yes, she gets some style points. But how can she not? Two years in a row, King has delivered when everything was on the line. When it comes to winning gold medals, she's clutch.

Oh, and her 50 breast win from Worlds—29.40, also a world record—merited consideration for this list, too. An upstart teenager who stormed to Olympic gold last summer has made a case for herself as the greatest sprint breaststroker in history.



# 2

**SARAH SJOSTROM, SWEDEN**  
**Women's 50 Meter Freestyle**  
**World Championships (23.69)**



# 3

**KYLIE MASSE, CANADA**  
**Women's 100 Meter Backstroke**  
**World Championships (58.10 WR)**

Kylie Masse swam in Rio, but Budapest was her first World Championships. One year before the Olympics, Masse had missed out on competing at the Pan American Games in Toronto, just a few hours' drive from her hometown of LaSalle, Ontario. Since then, she has quickly developed into the world's premier sprint backstroker.

After tying for Olympic bronze in the 100 back, she set out on a mission to break the world record—Gemma Spofforth's 58.12 that dated back to the tech suit era of 2009.

At Canada's World Championship Trials, Masse touched in 58.21, a half-second under her own Canadian record and 9-hundredths off the world record. In the semifinals at the World Championships, she got a little closer to Spofforth's mark with a 58.18.

Then in the final, surrounded on either side by defending world champion Emily Seebohm and Olympic silver medalist Kathleen Baker, Masse came through. In 58.10 seconds, she became the first Canadian woman to set a world record in swimming since Annamay Pierse in 2009 (200 breast, 2:20.12).

You don't see the letters "WR" next to Sarah Sjostrom's time in the 50 meter freestyle, but only because she had swum 2-hundredths quicker in the semifinal one day earlier. But it was in this race, her final swim of the World Championships, that the 23-year-old Swede won her first-ever long course World or Olympic gold medal in a non-butterfly event.

A world champion and world record holder in the 100 fly as long ago as 2009 and the Olympic gold medalist in the event last year, Sjostrom began working with Johan Wallberg this season, and she quickly turned herself into the best sprinter in the world.

She now ranks as the best ever in the 100 free (51.71, 35-hundredths faster than the previous WR), and then she became the first woman to swim under 23.7 in the 50 when she clocked 23.67 and broke Britta Steffen's eight-year-old standard of 23.73.

The 50 free final was something of a coronation for Sjostrom. She had challenged the world records in the 50 and 100 free all year and eventually broke both in Budapest, but she had to actually win gold in at least one to earn the title of the best sprinter in the world.



# 4

**SIMONE MANUEL, USA**  
**Women's 100 Meter Freestyle**  
**World Championships (52.27 AR)**

Entering the race as the reigning Olympic co-gold medalist, Simone Manuel was the favorite for a world title in the 100 free in the eyes of absolutely no one—well, at least in the eyes of the so-called "experts." A medal contender? Sure. But with all Sarah Sjostrom had accomplished in the sprint free events over the course of the year, gold seemed like a foregone conclusion.

But Manuel has her way of pulling off magical finishes—like she did at the Olympic Games, when she blasted her way home to pass heavy favorite Cate Campbell and finish tied for gold in the 100 free with Canada's Penny Oleksiak. In Budapest, Sjostrom was an even bigger gold-medal favorite—especially after setting the world record at 51.71 five days earlier leading off Sweden's 4x100 freestyle relay—but Manuel again pulled off the stunner.

Just like at the Olympics, Manuel let the field go out hard on the first lap—she was out in 25.21, while Sjostrom was more than a half-second quicker and under world record pace. But the 20-year-old American reeled in her Swedish rival and sneaked past her, 52.27 to 52.31.

The times were slower than the world record, but it didn't matter. For the second straight year, on the biggest occasion, Manuel had come through when it mattered most.

—continued on 26



**5**

**FEDERICA PELLEGRINI, ITALY**  
**Women's 200 Meter Freestyle**  
**World Championships (1:54.73)**

Katie Ledecky looked vulnerable, in a spot where she might come up short of winning gold for the first time in a major international final. The threat, it seemed, was Australian Emma McKeon, but perhaps Ledecky should have been looking at the 28-year-old Italian swimming on the other side of McKeon. After all, Federica Pellegrini did hold the world record at 1:52.98, albeit from 2009 during the tech suit era.

Over the first 150 meters, Ledecky was indeed chasing the speedy McKeon. With 50 meters to go, Pellegrini was in fourth place, a half-second behind the leaders. But as she has been known to do over the years, she made her move on that last lap, storming past Ledecky and McKeon and touching the wall almost a half-second ahead.

It was the first time since 2011 that Pellegrini had been on top of the podium in a major meet. At the Olympics one year earlier, she had not even earned a medal in the 200 free. And now, here she was, back on top.

That her time was nearly two seconds slower than her own world record did not matter. After the race, Pellegrini hinted that she will likely never again race the 200 at a major international meet, so if the Budapest final was her swan song, what a way to go out!

## THE TOP 5 MEN'S PERFORMANCE



**1**

**CAELEB DRESSEL, USA**  
**Men's 100 Meter Butterfly**  
**World Championships (49.86)**

Caeleb Dressel could have made this list for many of his races in 2017: his 100 free final at Worlds (where he won in 47.17, an American record); his 50 free final at Worlds (he won, 21.15, also an American record); or either of his record-breaking performances in the 100 yard free (40.00) and 100 yard fly (43.58) at the NCAA Championships.

So why does our World Swimmer of the Year get the nod for the 100 fly? Well, for one, he beat the reigning Olympic gold medalist (Joseph Schooling) by nearly a full second. And he came within 4-hundredths of breaking a Michael Phelps world record.

Only three men, by the way, have ever broken one of Phelps' long course global standards (Ian Crocker, Paul Biedermann, Ryan Lochte). And this particular record was set at the height of the polyurethane suit era when Phelps out-dueled Milorad

Cavic for gold at the 2009 World Championships.

Schooling had been mentioned as a possible threat to break that record, but Dressel? The man who hardly considered himself a butterfly one year earlier?

Dressel's magnificent effort came during one of the great single sessions in swimming history—less than an hour after his 50 free final and an hour before he led off the gold medal-winning USA team in the mixed 4x100 free relay. Most swimming experts would call that a solid triple.



**2**

**ADAM PEATY, GREAT BRITAIN**  
**Men's 50 Meter Breaststroke**  
**World Championships (25.95sf WR)**

As far as elite breaststrokers go, Adam Peaty's pullouts are fairly average. When he races a 50 breast internationally, he typically pops up behind his competition in the surrounding lanes. But when he does pop up, boy, can he move.

No one has ever swum breaststroke with that combination of tempo and power, and even when his 100 breast was just a tick off his best at the World Championships (57.47, the second fastest time in history), Peaty came back one day later and demolished his own world record in the 50 breast.

Entering the race with the world record standing at 26.42, he promptly swam a 26.10 in prelims and then a 25.95 in the

semifinals. He won his heat by a jaw-dropping 9-tenths of a second!

Peaty went on to win gold in the final in 25.99, while no one else was under 26.5—in the race or in history. But it was the moment when he broke 26 seconds for the first time that brought one word to the lips of thousands inside the Duna Arena and watching on television around the world: “Wow!”



# 3

**IPPEI WATANABE, JAPAN**  
**Men's 200 Meter Breaststroke**  
**Kosuke Kitajima Cup (2:06.67 WR)**

For nearly four-and-a-half years, the world waited for a man to crack 2:07 in the 200 breaststroke. The world record stood at 2:07.01, set by Japan's Akihiro Yamaguchi in 2012. And despite several swimmers turning under world-record pace at the 150-meter mark in nearly every major 200 breast final, no one could close the deal and get under Yamaguchi's time.

Until, finally, Ippei Watanabe. The swim did not come with the world watching, but rather at the Kosuke Kitajima Cup in January—not the time of year you typically see world records getting broken. It happened on a Sunday afternoon in Tokyo, which was the middle of the night in the United States.

But Watanabe had not only broken the world record—he had crushed it...by more than 3-tenths of a second. It's only fitting that the effort happened at a meet named for the man who is arguably one of the greatest breaststrokers of all time, a man who was the first to crack both the 2:10 and 2:08 barriers years earlier.

However, Watanabe would have to settle for bronze in the event at the World Championships behind Russia's Anton Chupkov (the second man ever to break 2:07) and Japanese countryman Yasuhiro Koseki.



# 4

**CHASE KALISZ, USA**  
**Men's 400 Meter Individual Medley**  
**World Championships (4:05.90)**

One year after Michael Phelps stepped away from the pool—this time, he insists, for good—his protégé officially took the mantle that Phelps had long owned: as the best IM swimmer in the world.

Chase Kalisz's victory in the 200 IM at the World Championships was less expected, but he out-swam pre-meet favorite Kosuke Hagino and touched a half-second ahead. That race was a reversal of the finish from the Olympic final of the 400 IM one year earlier, when a spirited final sprint from Kalisz had not been enough to run down Hagino.

But winning silver instead of gold in Rio, Kalisz has said, was “the best thing that ever happened to me.” He returned to the pool determined, and come the last day of the World Championships, in the 400 IM final, he left no doubt.

Kalisz is typically a slow starter who charges on the breaststroke and freestyle legs.

On the contrary, Kalisz swam away from the field. He touched the wall in 4:05.90, making him the third fastest man in history, quicker than Hagino or Laszlo Cseh had ever been. The only two quicker: IM legends Phelps and Ryan Lochte. Good company for the 23-year-old Kalisz.

In his bid for a repeat Olympic gold in the men's 400 free in 2016, Sun Yang came up short—13-hundredths short, to be exact, as young upstart Australian Mack Horton had gotten his hand to the wall just in front after eight laps of back-and-forth racing.

In this year's major final of the 400 free, the very first event of the World Championships, the 25-year-old from China got his revenge.

Sun trailed Park Tae Hwan, the 2008 Olympic gold medalist in the event, through the first 100 meters, but from that point on, he took off...and Horton was never going to catch him, with Sun winning by more than two seconds.

Sun's time was history's 12th fastest—ninth fastest without the tech suit-aided performances—and his best since winning Olympic gold five years earlier in London (3:40.14). Sun climbed up on the lane line, balled his fists and roared. The title was his third straight at FINA's global championships in the 400 free, but in this moment, payback was sweet. ♦



# 5

**SUN YANG, CHINA**  
**Men's 400 Meter Freestyle**  
**World Championships (3:41.38)**



## GOLDMINDS BY WAYNE GOLDSMITH

**Here's a "babies-to-the-best" way of developing confidence in swimmers.**



[PHOTO BY MATT RUBEL OF RUBEL PHOTOGRAPHY]

# BUILDING CONFIDENT SWIMMERS

Is confidence important when it comes to realizing your potential and performing at your best? Absolutely!

So, how do you develop confidence?

Is it merely a matter of showing up at your championship meet and repeating over and over, “Yes, I can...yes, I can...yes, I can”?

Is it about having a motivational speaker yell slogans at you such as, “If it is to be, it is up to me” or “The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little ‘extra’ you do.”

Or is it about preparing to the best of your ability so that you know with certainty that there’s nothing you could have done to be better prepared to perform at your best?

Actually, it starts a lot earlier than that—way back when you were a little kid when your mom and dad took you down to the local pool to learn how to swim.

### BABIES

*(Really young children just commencing their lifelong swimming journey)*

There’s a great saying: “Start the way you want to finish.” In other words, if you want to end up a calm, composed, confident swimmer—start that way!

All too often young swimmers (and even adults learning to swim for the first time) feel fear and other negative emotions from their early experiences in and around water, and as a result, never learn to relax completely in aquatic environments.

When young swimmers are introduced to the pool, it is critical that they develop a trusting relationship with their swimming teacher and take those first steps into the wide world of water in a safe, comforting and friendly learning environment.

The term, “water confidence,” is very appropriate when teaching and coaching young swimmers.

So many of the swimming skills and physical training processes that form the basis of a competitive swimmer’s long-term development pathway are founded on how effectively they learn water confidence and relaxation during their first experiences with water.

The role of parents in helping their children build water confidence is vital. They, too, should learn to be positive, confident and relaxed around water so they can model these characteristics to their children.

Water experiences around the family home—e.g., bath time, showers, a home swimming pool, etc.—need to be fun and safe so that young children learn that water is something to be enjoyed with their family and friends.

So much of the confidence that older and more experienced swimmers possess has been fostered during these very early experiences with water.

### BEGINNERS

*(Children 6-10 years of age in stroke schools and junior squads)*

It is common for swimmers 6-10 years of age to be learning more

advanced swimming skills and techniques in “mini-squads,” stroke schools and junior squad programs. In doing so, they’re able to build the confidence to move more easily, effectively and efficiently through the water.

Around these ages, young swimmers are also beginning to develop a sense of “self” and an understanding of “who they are.”

It is imperative that the development of confidence in young swimmers takes place both in the water and in other areas of their lives.

Confidence comes from “knowing,” which comes from “doing.”

By providing young swimmers the opportunity to do things for themselves and helping them learn the importance of doing even simple, day-to-day things, they can build a strong sense of self-confidence. These activities can be as easy as packing and unpacking their swim bags, making their own breakfast and cleaning up afterward, making their own bed every day and helping out with chores. Doing leads to knowing—and knowing grows confidence.

Parents play an important role in shaping the way swimmers feel about themselves as individuals. Parents should progressively introduce simple activities that encourage independence during this period.

Now—perhaps more than at any other developmental stage—parents should aim to provide their children a strong sense of self-belief. They should teach young swimmers to love and accept themselves for who they are as human beings, independent of their swimming performances.

It is through the gradual development of independence (“I can” mindset) and a strong belief and acceptance of themselves as individuals (“I am” mindset) that swimmers can build the foundations of confidence to be built upon in later years.

## BETTER SWIMMERS

*(Swimmers in their early teens in regular competitive training)*

Swimmers can experience significant challenges to their self-confidence during their teenage years, often related to the acceptance or non-acceptance of their behaviors by their peer group and owing to a wide range of complicated social situations.

Coaches and parents need to be conscious of these often competing and contradictory demands on the swimmer’s emotional development, and they need to ensure all possible efforts are made to help the swimmer find an appropriate balance between sport and other aspects of his/her life.

During this period, swimmers should be encouraged to “learn to lead”—i.e., to take responsibility and accept accountability for their own preparation and performance.

Building on the theme of doing = knowing = confidence, swimmers in their early to mid-teens can grow confidence by “owning” their swimming—i.e., by getting up on their own, ready to go to the pool for morning workouts; by monitoring and managing their own diet, sleep and recovery programs; by setting their own swimming performance goals...and so on.

## THE BEST

*(High-performing competitive swimmers)*

Swimmers expecting to achieve excellence at the highest level need to be confident in their ability to perform when it matters.

Confidence for the competitive swimmer comes as a result of the athlete knowing with certainty that their preparation has been uncompromised, and their commitment to their training has been without fault.

It is this reliance in the quality and attention to detail in their

preparation that provides the competitive swimmer with the confidence to perform under pressure and to meet and overcome the challenges of elite-level competition.

As a general guide, swimmers preparing for elite-level competition should regularly include “simulations” in their training sessions in which they try to replicate the competition environment that will be experienced at the targeted event.

For example, a swimmer might be traveling to a high-level competition that involves swimming heats in the morning, then finals at night. The week before this event, the swimmer might:

- *Schedule a training session early in the morning*
- *Practice and rehearse his/her race warm-up*
- *Do a time trial in the same event he/she will be racing at the targeted competition*
- *Return to the pool at night—and do it all again, with the goal of swimming a time trial even faster than what he/she swam in the morning.*

By doing this, swimmers will “know” that they possess the physical, mental, technical and tactical abilities to race at their best in competition in a heats-and-finals format, thus giving them the confidence to complete the task when facing it in reality.

Confidence—like dives, starts, turns and finishes—is a skill that can be learned, practiced and eventually mastered.

Confidence is so much more than just thinking, “I can.”

It’s a lifelong journey of learning about yourself and about your swimming that begins with “blowing bubbles” and singing “nursery rhymes” in a learn-to-swim program and continues throughout your swimming career as you strive to realize your swimming dreams. ♦

*Wayne Goldsmith is one of the world’s leading experts in elite-level swimming and high-performance sport. Be sure to check out Goldsmith’s websites at [www.wgaquatics.com](http://www.wgaquatics.com) and [www.wgcoaching.com](http://www.wgcoaching.com).*

## SUMMARY

1. Confidence is a vitally important mental skill, and like all skills, it can be learned.
2. It all starts from those first cautious moments in the pool...during those first experiences with water. Whether working with babies (or even adults who’ve never learned to swim), parents, swimming teachers and coaches all need to be aware of providing fun, engaging, safe learning experiences that build confidence. “As the twig is bent...so shall it grow.”
3. Like any other swimming skill, confidence builds and grows over the lifetime of the swimmer. Just as swimmers learn to swim longer distances and swim at faster speeds as they become more experienced, confidence can build and grow over the lifetime of a swimmer, and strengthen their potential to achieve remarkable things.

# DADS ON DECK

## DAN SMITH

BY ANNIE GREVERS

**L**eah Smith has emerged as one of the world's finest distance freestylers...and 400 IMers (her winning time at the U.S. World Championship Trials ranks fifth in the world this year).

In Rio, Leah collected an Olympic bronze medal in the 400 free and a gold in the 4x200 free relay. In her years at the University of Virginia (2014-17), Smith was a four-time individual NCAA champion (500 and 1650 in 2015 and 2016)—the most by a Virginia student-athlete (all sports). At the 2017 World Championships in Budapest, Smith bagged a medal of each color—bronze in the 800, silver in the 400 free and gold in the 4x200 free relay.

Consider Smith's upbringing, and it's not a shocker that she's passionate about winning: her great-uncle, Billy Conn, was a world light heavyweight boxing champion. Her great-grandfather, Jimmy Smith, was a World Series champion. Her older sister, Aileen, swam at Columbia. Her dad, Dan, was a pole vaulter and decathlete at UVA.

Leah is the third of four siblings—no doubt her brothers and sister unintentionally refined Leah's competitive drive. *Swimming World* recently spoke with Dan Smith about his daughter, Leah—a girl who hates to lose.

### When did you and Margee [Leah's mom] realize Leah was a gifted swimmer?

It wasn't really in the pool...it was out of the pool. One day, we were sitting in the car, coming home from practice. She said, "You know, Dad, I'm going to the Olympics." It was so matter-of-fact, so definite. She wasn't telling herself—it was more like, "Just so you're aware, this is what I'm doing." I had nothing to say.

I went to her coach and asked, "How do you respond to that?" He asked, "What did you say?" "Nothing." "Perfect response," Coach said. She was 12 at the time. She had just come back from Eastern Zones, where she had won the 200 free. She was down by more than a body length in the last 50, but came back and finished a body length ahead.

That fall, it was definitely, "I'm going to the Olympics." This wasn't a dream—she could taste it, she could feel it.

### What advice would you give to new swim parents?

I was a team manager at Zones four times. I would always pull the 10-year-olds' parents aside. I lectured them on what their role was there: "Your job is not inside the pool...it's the stuff outside of the pool—sportsmanship, kids meeting kids. You're only making their life miserable if you're focused on performance goals. Let kids and coaches do their thing inside the pool. Focus on the dry side: helping them enjoy the sport and develop as a person."

### How has the sport of swimming shaped Leah's character?

Accountability. Work ethic. Making the connection between showing up and giving 100 percent. She knows you can't build it with 99 percent. ♦

"Moms at Meets" and "Dads on Deck" is a quarterly feature sponsored by TRISWIM about swim parents for swim parents. Check out the website at: [www.sbrsportsinc.com](http://www.sbrsportsinc.com)

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Leah Smith with  
her dad, Dan



[PHOTO PROVIDED BY DAN SMITH]



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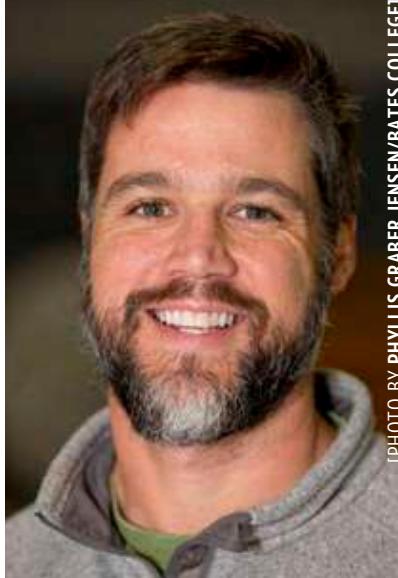
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## Q &amp; A



[PHOTO BY PHYLLIS GRABER JENSEN/BATES COLLEGE]

# PETER CASARES

BY MICHAEL J. STOTT

Once an also-ran, Bates College has joined Williams and Amherst as a NESCAC force. The Bobcat men and women were fourth at last year's conference meet. The women achieved second in 2015 and third in 2016.

The teams completed the 2017 season at D-III NCAAs in 13th (women) and 24th (men).

**Q. SWIMMING WORLD:** Why did you choose swim coaching as a career?

**A. COACH PETER CASARES:** At Gettysburg, my two academic strengths were education and psychology. By senior year, I knew a lot about swimming and loved summer league coaching, so it made sense. I pursued a master's in sports psychology at Miami University because of its tremendous applied sports psych program. I had amazing professors, and head coach Pete Lindsay let me volunteer coach, saw my enthusiasm and gave me ever-increasing responsibility. His knowledge of the sport and life was simply amazing. I owe him a lot.

**SW:** Any other significant influences along the way?

**PC:** Mike Rawleigh at Gettysburg and Jim Steen (Kenyon). In addition to Pete, each man taught me something important about college swimming coaching.

**SW:** Since your arrival, the Bates roster has doubled, and the team has moved from an afterthought to a player in the NESCAC ranks. How so?

**PC:** Hard work and enthusiasm. Our kids don't mind making swimming a priority in their lives. They also love high fives, laughing and bear hugs. We've tried hard to make love a part of the program.

— continued on 43

## Coach Peter Casares

Director of Competitive Swimming  
Head Coach,  
Men's and Women's Swimming  
Bates College  
Lewiston, Maine

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## HOW THEY TRAIN: SARA DAHER

BY MICHAEL J. STOTT



[PHOTO BY PHYLLIS GRABER-JENSEN/BATES COLLEGE]

"Gone, but not forgotten" barely describes the impact that 2017 Bates College graduate and 23-time All-American Sara Daher had on Bates swimming. In four years, she led the Bobcats to four NCAA Division III finishes among the top 17, including 11th in 2015 and 13th in 2017. The Marblehead, Mass. stalwart was a six-time A-A her senior year, setting school records in the 100-200 yard free (51.26, 1:50.6) and back (55.49, 1:59.62) and 200 IM (2:02.42).

Daher was team captain and Bates Athlete of the Year in her final season, four-time team MVP (voted on by the swimmers) and the 2017 Bates Senior Citation winner (Hall of Fame award). Says Coach Peter Casares, "Sara was a no-nonsense and hardworking

athlete, but more importantly, fiercely loyal and a tremendous teacher. She was a professional from Day 1. Her ability to work hard and her attention to detail was exceptional."

Casares attributes part of Daher's success to the background and relationship with her North Shore YMCA club coach, Jim Houlahan. "He helped her create an aerobic base through very tough IM-focused sets.

"We did fewer yards at Bates, but our workouts allowed for faster daily speeds. Sara also bought in to our lifting goals 100 percent. She improved in every event from the 400 IM to her 50 free. That improvement can be traced back to her aerobic background, coupled with her ability to work hard—and be totally engaged in all the weight room and pool workouts.

"We preach that engagement in practice is more important than volume. She lived that daily. From dolphin kicks to breathing patterns to percent effort and heart rate goals, she was always doing things right. Even if we asked for something ridiculously hard—or something she hated (e.g., three-breath 50s)—she found a way to do it right. That truly created an athlete who could perform well in every environment—from dual meets to NCAAs. Whether she felt great, or fatigued, she was fast when she needed to be," says Casares.

"One of her top goals every day was to make sure her teammates were having fun. Even if she was disappointed in her practice or swim, she would put that aside and find a teammate. Inevitably, I would hear an uproar of laughter from her and the group around her. She understood how hard this sport was and wanted everyone to realize how much fun it was to be together, united, like a family.

"Psychologically, she had an idea of what time she wanted to go at meets, but never talked times. It was more important for her to know her plan and execute. She bought into our philosophy of, 'If you swim the race right, the right time will be on the board,'" he says. ♦



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to see Sara Daher's progression of times as well as some of her sample sets.

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Send email/letter and resumé with references to: Bill Roberts, Navy Swimming Camp, 566 Brownson Road, Annapolis, MD 21402 or [navyswimmingcamp@usna.edu](mailto:navyswimmingcamp@usna.edu).

**PETER CASARES**

- Gettysburg College, B.A., psychology, '98; Miami University, M.A., sports psychology, '00
- Two-time Gettysburg captain, five-time NCAA Division III All-American, eight-time school record holder
- Predominantly a butterfly, he had the top time in seven events at the end of his freshman year at Gettysburg
- Guided Kenyon men and women to 2002 NCAA D-III national championship as interim coach
- Bates head coach (2007 to present)
- Named New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC) Women's Swimming Coach of the Year (2014)
- Wabash College coach (2002-07), North Coast Athletic Conference COY (2005)
- Inducted into Gettysburg College Hall of Honor (2014)

**SW:** How do you challenge NESCAC's Williams and Amherst and powerhouses Emory, Kenyon and Denison?

**PC:** We have the right athletes and institutional support to be competitive. I'm not sure if we'll win a national title or beat those greats, but we can build a program that will force them to swim their best against us. If we don't end up winning, those other teams better be hurting from all the tough races. We can definitely get Bates to that level—and that is motivating.

**SW:** You've been described as a "quirky, caring, multi-talented guy who can be hard to understand"...and someone who "knows how to connect with people outside of the pool." Fair assessments?

**PC:** Amazing. Talented and quirky I can't really speak to, but caring is something I've hoped for. People outside the pool are those who take a program from good to great. You need all the help you can get, and I would hate to think I missed out on building a relationship with someone that could help my swimmers.

**SW:** As interim coach, you led the Kenyon men and women to national titles in 2002.

**One current coach described it as one of the greatest coaching moves I've ever seen."**

**PC:** It was a magical year—full of athletes and coaches having too much fun together. I credit Jim Steen for knowing the team would benefit from change. He completely stepped back, gave me all the credit, and reinforced the change. Jim is extremely confident in himself and proud of what he created at Kenyon—and yet he also has no ego at all. What other coaching legend would have been one mile away and never stuck his nose in the season? His trust in me motivated me to work harder than I knew I could.

**SW:** How did you manage your mother's passing in 2000 when you were an assistant at Kenyon and maintain a positive interaction with the swimmers?

**PC:** My mom loved supporting me—and that meant a lot of time at the pool. We shared many happy times there together. It was somewhere for me to go to be distracted, and move forward. For me, nothing was better than a pool deck surrounded by a team that I loved.

**SW:** The juniors and seniors on that Kenyon team credit you as the reason they are still so close. Do you consider that one of the psychic rewards of coaching?

**PC:** That is better than any paycheck you could ever get. It literally brings tears to my eyes.

**SW:** How does a coach channel the academic passion into athletic excellence?

**PC:** By first appealing to their intelligence, and then being honest with them. You show them how to be fast, what it will take, and what the best do. Then you level with them and talk about the hours and dedication and sacrifices it will take. I promise them the harder they work, the harder I will.

**SW:** You make mention of "little victories." What was a "little victory" in 2017?

**PC:** During our training trip, the team was working hard and accomplishing a ton. Halfway through, they hit a wall physically. I wanted to see how they reacted. They hadn't been truly tested yet—and it made sense to me to see how they handled it...sooner rather than later.

We wrote a mentally and physically demanding practice, and the swimmers seemed to get more and more supportive of one another. They got louder with their encouragement. They told each other how good they were. They made each other laugh more. And it all started with just one swimmer—that was all they needed for the ball to start rolling.

The little victories are the things that you can't plan for, yet they make such a huge impact on your success. That day ended up defining us last year. They wouldn't be broken. They were too tough together. When the training trip was over, a coach came up to me and said he had never seen a team with more spirit and chemistry. Truly the highest compliment one could pay me.

**SW:** You like fast suits before Christmas for a meet. Why?

**PC:** To go fast. I don't think once a year is enough. To me, swimming fast 11 months after your last suited race is a crazy way to get better. I also figure if they are going to put those things on, they expect to swim fast—and it's a good idea to practice that.❖

*Michael J. Stott is an ASCA Level 5 coach whose Collegiate School (Richmond, Va.) teams won nine state high school championships. He has been named a 2017 recipient of NISCA's Outstanding Service Award.*

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# UP & COMERS

## AGE GROUP SWIMMER OF THE MONTH

BY TAYLOR BRIEN

# Michael Petrides

There are many honors available to young swimmers in the sport of swimming, but one of the greatest for young swimmers on the rise is being invited to the USA Swimming National Select Camp. That honor was recently bestowed on 16-year-old Michael Petrides of the Kamehameha Swim Club in Hawaii.

Petrides, a native of Honolulu, was one of 48 male athletes, 14-16 years of age, invited to attend the camp held at the Olympic Training Center (OTC) in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Says Coach Natalie Nation, "Petrides is a great competitor. He thrives when the level of competition is high and he is challenged."

Petrides' accomplishments speak for himself. He won both the 200 and 500 yard freestyles at the 2017 Hawaii High School State Championships and took home the high-point award for his age group at the 2017 Santa Clara Futures Championships. He was also selected to represent Team Hawaii at the 2016 XVI Oceania Championships in Suva, Fiji.

Outside of the pool, Petrides loves to surf and is an All-American water polo player. He's even a little accident-prone, having broken 14 bones in the last two years! But even through adversity, Petrides made the most of it: one of his old casts is signed by three-time Olympian, seven-time Olympic gold medalist (five gold, two silver) and world record holder Aaron Peirsol. ♦

**WHAT IS THE BEST THING YOU DO IN SWIMMING?**

I always concentrate on my end goal.

**WHAT ARE SOME OF THE TOUGHEST WORKOUTS/SETS YOU'VE DONE?**

100 x 100s, 24 200 IMs, 10 x 300s fly

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT SWIMMING?**

Nothing comes easy. Everything requires work!

**WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS YEAR?**

Watching Caeleb Dressel go 39 in the 100 yard free...and Towny (Townley Haas of Texas) going 1:29 in the 200 (at the 2018 men's Division I NCAAs).

**WHO IS YOUR SWIMMING IDOL...AND WHY?**

Duke Kahanamoku—he was able to accomplish so much for Hawaii, reaching amazing heights while "training" in the ocean...and only the ocean.

**WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE HOBBIES?**

Surfing, spearfishing and video games.

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[PHOTO BY NATALIE NATION]



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## WHEN DID YOU FIRST REALIZE YOU HAD SWIMMING TALENT?

BY ANNIE GREVERS



**JOSH DAVIS** / 1996 and 2000 Olympic Medalist;  
Head Coach, Oklahoma Christian University  
[PHOTO PROVIDED BY JOSH DAVIS]

It was 1985, and I was at my final summer at Hermann Son's youth camp in the Texas Hill Country. Every year I would sign up for horseback riding, archery, trampoline, pottery and swimming. Before this last camp, I had just started swimming summer league and had shown rapid improvement. I felt pretty confident about my new swimming skills from my first coach, Fletcher Watson. When one of the college counselors who was lifeguarding challenged me to a 25 freestyle race, I gladly accepted. With my improved start, streamline and stroke, I easily touched him out—and the look on his face and the feeling of satisfaction of beating someone bigger and older than me was something I knew I wanted to experience more! Now, 32 years later, I get to beat younger kids at the BREAKout! clinics and older "kids" at Masters all the time. I never get tired of it.



**MICHAEL ANDREW** / 10-time World Junior Championship Medalist; 3-time SC World Championship Medalist  
[PHOTO BY PETER H. BICK]

I first realized I had swimming talent after breaking my first national age group record! It was the 50 freestyle in Lawrence, Kansas—my current hometown...we lived in Aberdeen, South Dakota at the time.

After the race, I was so amped-up, but long story short, that was when I signed my first autograph. My mom jokes that it took me longer to sign my name than it did to break the record.

It was then that I first started to believe that I was made to move fast through water. I've loved every moment of the journey thus far and am excited for whatever the future may hold!

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**CLARK SMITH** / 2016 Olympic Gold Medalist;  
American Record Holder in 500, 1000 and 1650  
Yard Freestyle [PHOTO BY PETER H. BICK]

I don't really think I ever stopped to think about it. I always tended to focus on what I didn't have in the sport when I was younger. It always seemed like there was always someone a lot better than me when I was an age-group—I never came close to the NAG records. So if anything, I probably wished I had more talent (back then) and looked in the opposite direction.



**ALYSSA ANDERSON** / 2012 Olympic Gold  
Medalist [PHOTO BY BILL COLLINS]

I definitely didn't realize it on my own. I had a coach, Dianne, suggest we—me and Haley, one of my younger sisters—start swimming year-round at a local club team. She knew that we had something special and needed more than just the summer league months to build upon that natural talent she saw.

That was age 10 for me when I transitioned to swimming year-round. Age 14 was when I started to see that my swimming accomplishments could take me to places I never dreamed of!



**LACEY NYMEYER-JOHN** / 2008 Olympic Silver  
Medalist; 2009 NCAA Woman of the Year  
[PHOTO BY PETER H. BICK]

I can't really pinpoint an event where I realized my swimming talent. I have always loved the water and the feeling of moving through it at full speed.

Like many other athletes growing up, I participated in different sports like volleyball, track and field, cross country and soccer in addition to swimming. However, no other sport offered the freedom and intensity of the pool. I loved racing and pushing myself to new challenges.

In high school, I decided to specialize in swimming, and I remember winning the Arizona state meet and getting all of this attention for my success. The thoughts started to set in: "Was I really good, and if so, how far could I go in this sport?"

It was at that point that the challenge was set, and I set my sights on a college scholarship and a career in swimming. ♦

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