



# ORINDAQUALETTER

Issue 3 - April 12 2020



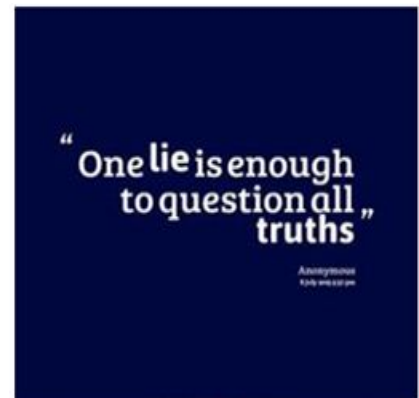
*We miss you!*

**In this issue:**

- ★ Character corner - reminders and articles
- ★ Senior Group feedback
- ★ Backstroke tips and technique
- ★ GoSwim login
- ★ Don't forget to breathe (and think)
- ★ Question of the week - Clovis/Sectionals
- ★ Meet two Junior swimmers
- ★ Senior homework
- ★ Captain's Corner and Zoom meetings
- ★ College information
- ★ A swimming joke
- ★ Perspective

## **Character Corner**

**“What you do makes a difference, and what you have to decide is what kind of difference you want to make.” Jane Goodall**



### **The Comparison Trap** ([Link](#))

### **Three Questions You Should Regularly Ask Yourself That Can Transform Your Life** ([Link](#))

### **Dear Parents: I Want Your Kid to Fail** ([Link](#))

### **An inspiring note from Elsa Hartley** (13) Junior Group

Hey Coach Donnie!

I just thought I'd check in and see how things are going with you. My family and I are doing very well. As good as these things are, the thing I miss most is being in the water with my team. My teammates, the meetings, and tough workouts have been on my mind recently, and I don't think I realized how much I enjoy every part of the team until I was without it. There was always a certain energy about the group, and I miss challenging and pushing myself with the help of my teammates.

I've been staying busy with schoolwork and other small hobbies, and recently I've taken up writing letters to my friends. As I hope for everyone, I have taken this period as a time for self-reflection and evaluation, and have spent a lot of time thinking about the person I am becoming and the person I strive to become in the future. I am excited to come back better than ever, as an athlete and a person of character. I know that the timing of our return is currently unclear, but I can't wait for when that day comes.

I think one lesson that everyone can take away from our current situation is the ability to better adapt to change. Life isn't a smooth road all the time, and the people who come out most successfully are the ones who can be sensitive and respectful to the situation, but also find ways to better themselves during this period. My gratitude goes out to all of the doctors working long hours to help the current situation. I wish there was more that I could be doing to help.

I hope all is well with you and that we will be back in the water soon! Elsa

### **Note from Ronnie to the Senior Group**

In the Zoom Meeting with Maddie, we talked about the reality of what you have lost and what you can gain from this. You certainly have lost training in the water, but you have the opportunity to improve in two areas. First, there is no reason to not increase your physical fitness both with strength and aerobically. Please exercise every day and commit to getting more fit than you have ever been. The second thing you can do is to re-evaluate your training and your

mental focus about swimming to be better when you get back. I mentioned in the talk that most kids in the senior group who have had breakout seasons have done so through a (mental) commitment to train harder and to be better in every way. Next week we are going to send you a link to a Google doc which asks you to reflect on how you can be better as an athlete, person, and teammate.

## Zoom Meetings

Thanks to all of you who joined the Zoom Meeting with Maddie. Thank you so much Maddie. I know we were enlightened and inspired by your message about working hard every day, in every set, every lap, and your mental discipline which allows you to do that through fatigue, injury or frustration. We are going to plan 2 to 3 meetings per week (see the schedule below in the Senior Group Section). Please make every effort to join. It is a nice way to reconnect not only with your teammates but with the values you miss from OA. [link to Maddie's Presentation](#) [link](#)

## Senior Group Swimmer Feedback Form

We appreciate you answering the questions so honestly and thoughtfully. It helps the coaches to get to know how you are doing and what you are doing. We wanted to share some responses.

### How are you doing in general?

- I'm trying to be resilient and not let my daily routine change too much in order to stay productive.
- Starting to bounce off the walls.
- It's been somewhat difficult to adjust to not having swimming in my life. It's also interesting for me to see how much less efficient I am without the regimented schedule swimming gave me.
- I am trying to balance my emotions. I am keeping a positive attitude and keeping perspective. Most importantly, I know I am so fortunate to have my family and I am grateful we are all healthy.
- My life has been more relaxing and less stressful.
- Enjoying extra time with my family, dogs, and trying new things. Just trying to stay positive :)
- Pretty well; there are times where the situation seems daunting but as long as I keep working and trying to improve myself I am able to cope with this drastic lifestyle change and all the suffering happening in the world.
- Alright - bored but not panicking.
- **I'm enjoying spending more time with my family and spending more time by myself reading books or reflecting on things. I can take time to think about my life and how I can become better in all that I do.**

### Have you been doing anything new in terms of personal growth, a hobby or an activity?

- Cooking more often. Gardening.
- We got a treadmill so my exercise is better. I have become much closer with my sister.
- My parents got a subscription to Masterclass so I've been watching Frank Gehry, the architect, and trying to design buildings myself for fun :)
- I have been sleeping a tremendous amount which is good for growth in terms of height.
- I have started drawing, and got a pen pal.
- I built an electronic device.
- I am starting to learn how to juggle.
- I've been doing watercolor painting and learning songs I like on the piano.
- Reading personal growth books. I have decided to reach out to someone I haven't talked to in awhile each day.
- I have been able to play more electric guitar.
- I am working on meditating daily.
- I have been reading the OA book.
- Practicing my handstands.
- Doing some woodworking with my dad.
- I've spent at least an hour everyday just taking time to think to myself and relax
- I've been drawing portraits of many of my friends.
- Working on building my character during this time
- **I've been cleaning my house.**

## **Technically Speaking - Backstroke**



**OK backstroke**



**Better backstroke**

### **Backstroke Drill Sheet (Link)**

### **Backstroke Tip**

Before every backstroke race, or IM race, check the flags from two positions. First, go to the flag pole at the side of the pool you will be swimming at and stand directly behind the pole in line with the flags. Check for two things: first, any wind that may be blowing flags in a certain direction (this will be especially true if they are not tight, AND will affect both ends), and second, that they are in fact lined up correctly.

Once you get your heat and lane assignment, go behind the center of your lane from either end and find the colored flag that best centers your lane. As you race, look for that flag as you pass under the flags. This will let you know where you are positioned in the lane and how best to approach the wall.

### **Video - [Ryan Murphy, Rio 200m Back](#)**

### **SAH (Stay at Home) Backstroke**

Ah, the mirror has another use. Your new backstroke coach!

There are many areas where backstroke breaks down. These all lead to imbalance and thus resistance in the water, thus leaving swimmers fighting through the stroke vs. flowing with it. First, the head **MUST BE** set and stationary, as if you are balancing your phone on your forehead (assuming it's not a high-end water-proof phone). Next, imagine two lines through the body; one from above moving right through the spine creating a long axis. The body should rotate on that axis without pushing against it and breaking that line. The second line is from the side. Imagine watching yourself swim from the side and seeing a perfectly straight line from the neck/head on through the spine and hips. Hold that line. The final aspect to support balance is the arm stroke. Think of a perpendicular exit. The shoulder rolls or rotates out of the water with the pull of that side of the body, and the arm lifts as if being pulled up by a string. The shoulder rolls toward the chin and the wrist is above the ear (perpendicular – see fast guy in photo). As the body rolls back into the water (opposite arm rolling out), the little finger slides in (clean entry) palm out at the shoulder line, about twelve inches deep, the elbow flexes, and a “throwing” motion is set up, similar to throwing a ball toward your feet.

Backstroke breaks down for any or all of these stroke issues - head moves or rides high, hips low in the water creating drag and a flat entry, or arm swings wide on exit and behind the head on entry.

So.....stand in front of a large mirror and swim slow-motion backstroke, looking for these key points: set head, good body line, perpendicular exit, “clean” entry, arm wrestle out “throw to your feet”. When this feels conformable and consistent, speed up the stroke rate. Yes, this activity will create muscle memory to swim with a better, more balanced stroke.

# Be a TUF swimmer!



## Thought of the Day

"TUF Technique Under  
Fatigue."

--Coach Bill Sweetenham  
(AUS)

### GoSwim Videos

OA will be using GoSwim .....

GoSwim has partnered with USA Swimming and has the largest library of swimming videos in the country. The coaches will be sending you an invitation to your group. **It is important you REDEEM the invitation from the email sent so you join the correct group (make sure you follow through and complete the process as the invitation is only valid 1x).**

- Once you select the **REDEEM INVITATION!** Tab in the email
- You will be directed to the GOSwim page
- You will be asked your Name and birthday\*\* **If you already have a GoSwim account, sign in to your existing account first ,then select REDEEM INVITATION.**
- If you **DO NOT** have an account,fill in your name,birthdate and select the **REDEEM INVITATION AND CREATE ACCOUNT** Tab

Once you have created your account, you will be receiving videos from the coaches. Please reach out to coach Kati if you have any questions.

### Health/Diet/Nutrition

**Deep Breathing and Relaxation** are important techniques to use at any time, but they are particularly useful now:

Hold your breath for 10 seconds and breathe out slowly for 5 seconds

Do this six times. It only takes 90 seconds or so!

On each breath do the following:

1. **First breath** - Notice your physical body and what's going on for you. Do an internal check as you release as many muscle groups as you can and enjoy the process of breathing in and out.
2. **Second breath** - Appreciate anyone who did something kind for you today. Appreciate anything kind you did for someone else. Appreciate anything kind you did for yourself.
3. **Third breath** - Plan what you may do tomorrow that will bring a smile to someone; plan something new you may try doing for yourself.
4. **Fourth breath** - Notice your physical body and how it feels right now, are you allowing yourself time to move and exercise during the day. Notice how your body feels when you give yourself activity and movement. Stretch or reach out during this breath cycle.
5. **Fifth breath** - Appreciate your physical body and how it feels to be breathing and moving as you stretch and breathe.
6. **Sixth breath** - Plan what you will do tomorrow to support your health and happiness, plan a project or activity that you can think about or share with another.

Breathe out and notice how you feel.



## Question of the Week

What was your favorite memory from Sectionals or Clovis? [Favorite Moments](#)

## Get to Know Your Team:

### Happy April Birthday to YOU:

April 4 - Drew Ebner (15); April 5 - Luke VandenBerghe (18) & Zach Hoffman (15); April 6 - Henrik Barck (16); April 8 - Jalen Evans (17); April 10 - Theo Holtzman (14); April 17 - Lily Struempf (14); April 24 – Whitney Wilkalis (14); April 26 – Nate Levy (15); April 27 – Cole Griscavage (17); April 29 – Olivia Woo (15)

## Meet Your Junior Group Teammates:

**Junior 2: Ava Anderson**, age 12, lives in Danville and is a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student at Los Cerros Middle School where her favorite subject is science. This is Ava's first year on the year-round team, but she has participated in fall swimming and clinics with Orinda Aquatics in the past. Ava's summer rec team was Del Amigo. Although her favorite stroke is butterfly (just made her first JO time in the 100 fly), her favorite swim drill is 2-kicks/1-pull breaststroke. One of her best swimming memories is competing with her Del Amigo friends in the relay at championships, "it was the most fun to race with my friends." Ava's favorite food is any type of pasta, she has a dog named Jake and she also loves to read and draw. The person she looks up to most is her Dad because he always supports her, and he is very hard working. "My favorite part of swimming with Orinda Aquatics is that everyone is so positive, supportive and friendly!"

**Junior 1: Dylan Felson**, age 12, joined Orinda Aquatics from Rancho Colorados swim team in Lafayette. He is a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at Stanley Middle School and his favorite class is PE. He has two younger siblings, Jeremy (9) and Ally (7) and a dog named Luke. This is Dylan's first year on Orinda Aquatics. His favorite stroke is breaststroke, his favorite drill is 2-kicks/1-pull breaststroke and one of his best swimming memories is winning the 50 breaststroke at the Lafayette Swim Conference meet when he was 8. Dylan loves steak, sushi and Indian food. His hobbies are swimming, playing other sports and just hanging out with his friends. Dylan looks up to his parents because they are very supportive of Dylan and they always try to be respectful to everyone. "I like Orinda Aquatics because the swimmers and coaches are very nice and supportive".

## JUNIOR GROUP SPECIFIC

- Dryland schedule week #3 schedule will be emailed (more daily specific)
- Track all workouts - fill out the tracking sheet (google form)
- Chore Challenge - Make it Auto - matic!
- Coming to a phone screen soon - Jr Group Check In #4

## SENIOR GROUP SPECIFIC

### Senior Group To Do's

#### this last week

- ❑ **Conquer the Pool** - review last week's section (**Part 2: The Process 56-68**) and submit the Google form [Link](#)
- ❑ **Dryland Test Sets** - do as many of the test sets as you can and submit the Google form [Dryland Tracking Form](#)
- ❑ **Swimmer Feedback** - if you haven't already submitted it, please do so [Swimmer Feedback Form](#)

#### this coming week

- ❑ **Conquer the Pool** - [read the section Deliberate Practice \(pages 79-93\)](#). We will send a Google form next **Sunday** asking you what you learned from the chapter and how you can apply what you learned to be better when you get back in the water.
- ❑ **Zoom Meetings** - be aware of the Zoom Captain's Meetings scheduled for the week (see below)
- ❑ **Dryland General** - do aggressive dryland either from the information we provide or from what you have. Do more. Challenge yourself.
- ❑ **Dryland Test Sets** - prepare for the Test Sets as we will send a Google form next Sunday to get your results.

## Juniors in high school

- **IMPORTANT:** You will receive a Google doc which we (swimmer & coach) will use to help guide you through your college search process. We will send a link to the Google doc to your email. When you receive it please fill in as much as you can to help us start the process.

**Dryland Program** - will include the following:

- **Weekly Dryland Workout Plan** [Dryland Workout Plan week April 13-19](#)
- **OA Exercise Library** - a collection of exercises for stretching, legs, abs, body weight, aerobic and circuits [link Dryland Exercise Library](#)
- **Videos** - recommended exercise [link video library](#)
- **Challenge Set** - look for in the workout plan
- **Test & Tracking Exercises** (these should be done later in the week).  
**A Google Form will be sent to each swimmer on Sunday.** The form will ask for your results for the test/track exercises. **Test/track exercises are in the Weekly Dryland plan.**

## Captains' Corner

**Instagram** - The captains will be posting on INSTAGRAM with updates on dryland, as well as tips and motivation. Questions can be directed to Tay Thomas.

**GroupMe** - The GROUPME app link has been sent to all senior swimmers. Please make sure you join the group. Questions can be directed to Maddie Smith.

**Strava** - The captains have set up a dryland group connection through STRAVA. The link is:  
<https://www.strava.com/clubs/oapb> Questions can be directed to Vincent Castillo or Maggie Buckley.

**Captains' Zoom Meetings** - We will host Zoom Meetings during the week in which the captains & coaches will discuss various aspects of swimming, training and personal growth. Please make every effort to join the meetings. The sessions will run for approximately 45 minutes including Q&A. Parents are also welcome to join.

## **Zoom Meetings this week:**

- **Tuesday 4/14 4:00** - topic: [IM & Off-Stroke Training plus Time Management and Self Discipline](#) (Margaux McDonald)
- **Thursday 4/16 4:00** - topic: [Doing Whatever the Team Needs \(plus High School and LSC Support\)](#) (host Tay Thomas)
- **Saturday 4/18 10:30 am** - topic: [The Path to Swimming in College](#) (host Donnie & Ronnie)

## Group Meetings:

In addition to the Captain's meetings, the coaches will host group meetings in the coming week. Please look for the schedule in an email.

## College Corner

Juniors, please find and fill out the Google Doc that will be emailed to you (see above)

We are excited to announce that **Education Advisor, Liz LaPorte** will become an Orinda Aquatics team partner. Liz has generously offered to provide important academic information to OA High School athletes. We are in discussion about kicking this off with a Zoom meeting for Sophomores and Juniors. We will provide information as soon as we know. Feel free to reach out to Donnie or Ronnie with any questions.

## Cute (kind of funny) joke

Where do ghosts like to go swimming?

Answer: Lake Eerie



You got this. We got this.

**Relevant quote** - “To say my fate is not tied to your fate is like saying, your end of the boat is sinking.” Hugh Downs

## Perspective (an insightful article)

**Coronavirus is not just a tragedy. It’s an opportunity to build a better world.**

“Coronavirus is a great moral drama taking place before our eyes. And the script has not yet been written. Epidemic diseases are not random events that afflict societies capriciously and without warning,” writes Yale historian Frank Snowden. “On the contrary, every society produces its own specific vulnerabilities. To study them is to understand that society’s structure, its standard of living, and its political priorities.”

Today’s tragedy can be, sometimes, tomorrow’s possibility. According to Snowden, pandemics don’t only reflect a society’s existing vulnerabilities — they present an unprecedented opportunity for transformational change.

In his new book, *Epidemics and Society*, Snowden explores how infectious diseases across time have altered the outcomes of wars, inspired political reform, demolished revolutions, transformed entire societies’ relationships with God, and **fundamentally changed the course of human history**.

According to Snowden, we face a “fork in the road” as a species. We could either use coronavirus as a justification to retreat into xenophobia, ethnonationalism, and tribalism — as we’ve already seen in many places; **or we could use it as an opportunity to build a better, more just world**. Epidemic diseases throughout history have prompted both sets of responses, but **the history of this moment is not yet written. How we respond to coronavirus will be one of the most important choices of our lifetimes**.

