

SCSC Alumni information.

Name: Michael Messner

School: University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Year: Senior

1) Is your college experience how you imagined it would be?

Going into college I did not know what to expect in terms of the workload in the classroom and in the pool. Honestly, I imagined classes being a lot easier and swimming to be very similar to my training in high school. My first semester was pretty challenging for me as I did not really balance classwork with my effort in the pool. It's a lot harder to stay motivated and go to class when your mom isn't there nagging you. I also picked a major that I didn't really want to pursue and ended up switching midway through my freshman year, which I learned is fairly common. Other than my rough first semester academically, college was mostly what I expected. I met a ton of new people with various different backgrounds and made many new friends. I left my swim family at Santa Clara but gained a new one at Minnesota.

2) Did Santa Clara Swim Club prepare you for this experience?

Santa Clara Swim Club did an excellent job of preparing me for collegiate athletics. The training that I went through at Santa Clara is very comparable to what I am doing at the University of Minnesota. Although training trips in college are very intense with minimal days off, I was well prepared for the intensity of the workouts I faced throughout my collegiate career.

3) What is the best thing you have learned about yourself while at college?

The best thing I have learned about myself at college is my ability to overcome adversity. I overcame multiple challenges throughout my collegiate career and it has made me a tougher person. I dealt with multiple illnesses, such as mono, and injuries that forced me out of the pool. I had to stay focused and remain positive because there are some things in life that you cannot control.

4) Do you have anything you have experienced that you were not prepared for?

The only thing that I was not prepared for was the independence you have while at school. You have to make your own choices and mature in order to stay on top of your courses, manage your sleep, and perform in the pool.

5) If you were to give any advice to swimmers preparing for college swimming and the college experience, what would you tell them?

I would tell them to choose a school that they would want to go to regardless of swimming. Academics are extremely important after your swim career and you want to go to a school that will help you reach your goals. On your recruiting trips make sure you fit in well with your future teammates and that they have a culture that you want to be a part of. You will be spending countless hours grinding through practices with your teammates and they will become like a second family to you. Lastly, ask your head coach which group you will be training with and who will be coaching you. Every coach has a different coaching style and you want to make sure that you have the same vision and goals as they do. You might want to ask for sample workouts to see if you fit in with their style of training and philosophy.