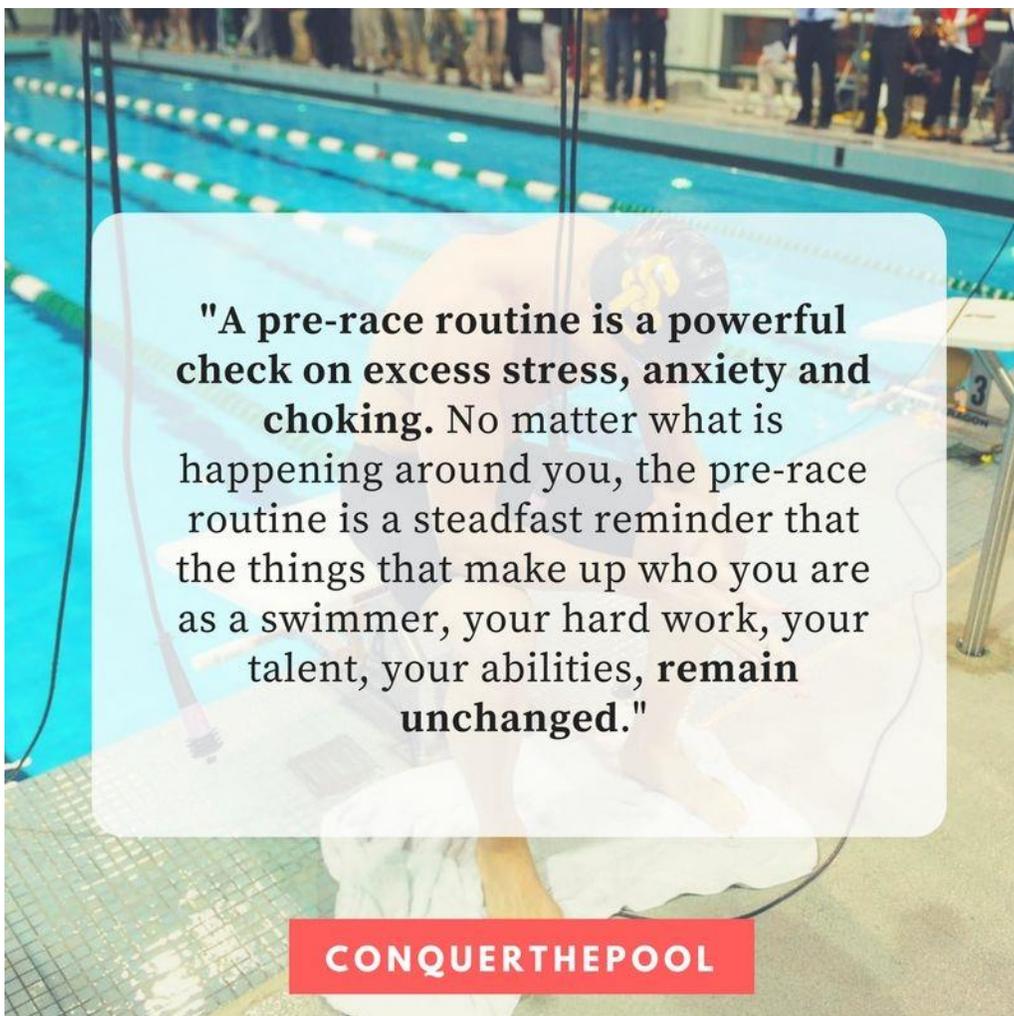


Have a Wonderful Wednesday!



"A pre-race routine is a powerful check on excess stress, anxiety and choking. No matter what is happening around you, the pre-race routine is a steadfast reminder that the things that make up who you are as a swimmer, your hard work, your talent, your abilities, remain unchanged."

CONQUERTHEPOOL

**"YOUR BODY
DOESN'T GIVE UP ON
RACE DAY, IT'S YOUR
MIND THAT HAS THE
FINAL SAY."**

MICHAEL D'AULERIO

**"THE RACE
ALWAYS HURTS.
EXPECT IT TO
HURT. YOU DON'T
TRAIN SO IT
DOESN'T HURT.
YOU TRAIN SO YOU
CAN TOLERATE IT."**

Are You Ready?

It might be the #1 question you are asked going into a race or a meet. Your parents, teammates and coaches all asking if you are ready to race. Hopefully, your answer is YES! If it's not, we need to think – why not? As coaches we will do everything possible to prepare you to perform, but come race day, once you dive off the blocks, the effort and execution is up to you. The more prepared your race plan, the more successful you have designed yourself to be.

I know you have listened to me, or your coach, talk about race strategies. These strategies also including warming up before, stretching, eating, hydration, talking to your coach, the race itself and warm down. It isn't just walk up and dive in... maybe it was when we were younger, but as we go through the swimming process, more thought is required in what we do.

Today we are going to be talking about race strategy. Creating your routine leading up to a race and then having the visualization of how your race will go. Read through the information and guide below to create your perfect race.

My Perfect Race Routine

The information below was taken from Olivier Poirier-Leroy, a former national level swimmer from Victoria, BC, who also developed YourSwimBBook, a swimmers log book and goal setting guide.

Think of the pre-race routine as a swimmer's personal recipe for being physically, mentally and emotionally ready to swim like a chlorinated gangster.

As you full well know if you've ever trained your butt off only to choke on the big day, being mentally prepared to race is critical.

How does it do that?

The pre-race routine is a primer. You do the things that get you jacked up and hyped. Your pre-race routine helps you adjust intensity and stress/excitement levels to a point that promotes high-grade swimming.

It gives you familiarity in unfamiliar situations. The pre-race routine is a plan that allows you to ignore distractions and pressure. By focusing your energy inwards on things you can do, you are spending less anxiety-drenched attention on what's happening around you.

It gives you confidence. Done enough times, your pre-race routine becomes, well, routine. You have a set of concrete, reliable steps that you *know* will give an excellent performance. This kind of confidence is hard to fake.

It can be wielded in all types of competitive scenarios. With some tweaking and consistency, you will be able to use your pre-race routine anytime, anywhere.

- Local meet with nine people in the stands? Pre-race routine that thing.
- First appearance in finals at nationals? Oh, yeah, pre-race routine the chlorine out of that.
- Walking behind the blocks at the Olympics? It's pre-race routine time, baby!

The goal of the pre-race routine is simple: to allow you to stand on the block, take a big old breath, and know that you are ready to completely rock and roll.

How to Create Your Routine

Think back to the last time you swam out of your mind. Where you performed exactly as you hoped you would, where you swam effortlessly and quickly and achieved what you set out to do:

- How did you feel before the race? Calm? Focused? Think back and try to remember what was going through your mind in the moments and minutes before the race.
- Did you give yourself enough time to fully warm-up and stretch out before the big race?
- How was your nutrition and hydration that day? Do you remember what you ate that morning?
- What did you do to get focused in the 20-30 minutes leading up to the race?
- Were you feeling exceptionally confident that day? And if so, why?

What does it take to feel ready?

Stretching

Keep your muscles ready to race

Do Your Own Thing

What works for them
might not work for you

Warm-up Swim

If you have been sitting around...
warm up your muscles

Stay Warm

PUT CLOTHES ON
UNTIL YOU RACE

Nerves are Normal

Control Them

Nutrition

Eat & Hydrate

Performance

Phrases/Cues

Snap & Explode

Hulk Smash

Throw Forward

Don't Rush, Slow Down

Stick to your process

Avoid New Things

Try it out before race day

Visualize

The good, the bad, but
successful in the end

Music

Pump up or calm down,
but stay focused

Another form of visualization that you should practice leading up to a meet is **Coping Imagery:**

“Specialized form of mental rehearsal where you deliberately practice experiencing and then successfully coping with the things that could go wrong for you either before and/or during your event.

Read the article below to gain a little more insight into this strategy. Today on Zoom we will talk about the types of scenarios you might think through if you use coping imagery before a race.

<https://www.usaswimming.org/news-landing-page/2019/06/03/use-coping-imagery-to-develop-mental-toughness-and-strengthen-weaknesses>

Take the time to think about your pre-race routine. How can you evolve it to the swimmer you are now or the swimmer you want to be? Write out what your routine is and work from there. We will talk more about race routines today in our Zoom meeting.

Let me know if you have any questions. As always, send responses to me at kranzlaureno@gmail.com