

AMERICAN Swimming

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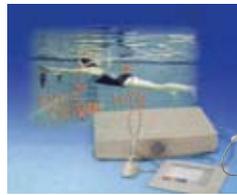


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ON THE COVER

Coach David Salo has been one of the USA's most productive coaches for several decades now. . . an acclaimed innovator in the sport, giving us many new ideas about the nature of training for competition, and the approach to world class performances. As the Head Coach at USC, he's coached both American and International Gold Medalists in international competitions at the World and Olympic Level, served on the ASCA and USA-Swimming Board of Directors and proven himself one of the "best and brightest" in American Swimming History. He was inducted into the ASCA Hall of Fame in 2009.

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If I Can Do This Anyone Can. By Dr. Dave Salo



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IF I CAN DO THIS ANYONE CAN

BY DR. DAVE SALO

Introduction

Coach Salo is one of the top club and national level Coaches. He is currently beginning his fourth year at the University of Southern California as the Head Men's and Women's Swimming Coach. In 2009 he coached three swimmers to World Titles as well as a double World Record performance by breaststroker Jessica Hardy. In 2008 he guided Rebecca Soni, Oussama Mellouli and Klete Kellar to Gold Medal performances in the 2008 Olympics, as well as a Bronze Medalist in Larsen Jensen. Coach Salo has served as an Olympic Coach for Tunisia. He has also been a USA Assistant Coach at both the 2000 and 2004 Olympic Games. Prior to coming to USC, Coach Salo served as the Head Coach of the Irvine-Nova Aquatics from 1996 to 2006 where he had the opportunity to work with several Gold Medalists, including Lenny Krayzelburg, Aaron Peirsol, Amanda Beard, Staciana Stitts and Jason Lezak. He was named the USA Swimming Coach of the Year in 2002. He has also served as the USA Head Coach for the 2005 World Championship for men. David has been the 2001 Goodwill Games Head Coach. Please help me, if you would, in giving a warm welcome to Coach, Dr. David Salo.

It must have taken Eddie's introduction about 10 minutes longer because he has gotten so many things behind his name. The best thing about doing a clinic now, when I did it 20 years ago it was they introduced me, and said my name. Now you get all these adjectives, it takes longer. I don't

have to speak as long, as we have to get out of here, because they have to set up for dinner tonight. What I said I would do in the second part is really to address the specific questions that everybody had and try to answer them. I did get a lot of cards back. One said, "You are still a wussy." Somebody wrote all over the front of it Notre Dame - Go Irish." When we kick Ohio State's butt this weekend, we will see what Notre Dame does. Anyway, I am going to answer the questions that you have. If we have more time to answer additional questions, I will do that. Like most coaches, I really enjoy talking about swimming. I love talking about my program and my philosophies, but I always temper that by saying that these are my principles. These are my ideas. If you want to share in them that is great.

There are so many ways to get it done in swimming. My goal every time I speak at a Clinic is to walk away from the experience that coaches feel comfortable that they can listen to a Coach Schubert and on the other hand listen to me and fall somewhere in the middle. They will borrow from Coach Schubert, from Eddie Reese, from Michael Bohl, from Coach Salo and find their nitch in the realm of swimming. Your circumstances will dictate a lot of the philosophies that you employ. As I said, some people think I could coach a workout in a bucket. I am challenged by that thought, probably could do that. I am not afraid to try to do that and feel, oh, I can't accomplish what I want to accomplish. I wanted to be an Olympic Coach.

To answer one of the questions that came up on the cards is that I always thought I could be an Olympic Coach. I wanted to be an Olympic Coach. I didn't know what that meant for sure. I went to my first Olympics in 1992, as a coach, with a Turkish swimmer. I walked on the deck and was so intimidated by the experience of being on the deck, and seeing the great coaches of the world walking up and down the deck. I really felt like I was incapable of doing that, but then I saw somebody who shall remain nameless. It was just somebody that I knew in the United States. He was coaching for a different country at the time. Oh, I felt, if he can be here I can be here! I really learned from that '92 experience that I can do this. I had to tell myself that I could do it because nobody was coming to a Clinic saying, "Hey Dave, you can do this." At these clinics, coaches were saying, this is the way I do it, and this is how I do it. I was writing down all these little notes. When the clinic was over, I went back home to do what they were doing.

I will tell you a real story and then go into answering questions. In 2003, I was on the staff of the World Championships in Spain. I was coming back from a session where Bob Bowman and Eddie Reese were getting ready for the 2004 lead up to the Trials and Olympic Games. We were coming back from a session talking about what we were going to do next year in training. Bob was talking about running 7 workouts a week and going two workouts a day. Eddie says we are going to go 8 days a week going to go three a

days. - He is not here is he?? He is recruiting, so I am okay. We are going to go 3 workouts a day and all these other things. I started getting caught up in the euphoria that is the 2004 Games. I am going to go 8 workouts a week, with 3 of these and 4 of those. Then on my way back from the meet I just say, that's not me, that is Bob and Eddie. I don't do that when I go into an Olympic year. I don't change everything. I don't change.

My kids know today that there are 1,079 days to the 2012 Olympic Games. It is not important that they start on day 1,078. What is important is that I know that it is 1,079 days and I am ready tomorrow. I am ready the next day and I am ready the next day and somewhere along that timeline they get involved with that. I did do something different though. I decided I had always wanted to go three days on and one day off. I went the other direction. That same year while everybody was going up to Colorado Springs to do altitude training, I went to Hawaii. That is kind of funny, but I went to Hawaii to do a sea level camp. We went to karaoke, had fun, and trained hard. We went to the beach while everybody was in Colorado Springs going to that bar across the street. Coaches, they don't tell you that.

I went to a 3 day on and 1 day off schedule, planned it, came in the fall and lined up all my athletes. I gave them a calendar looking over it, explaining to them the plan. The off day was going to be migrating throughout each week. It might be Monday off, or Tuesday off, or Wednesday off, so you might be going 2 workouts on Sunday. We got 2 workouts and then were off. The sprinters would train dry land, swim, swim, dry land, swim, day off. They all thought this

is intriguing. My mindset was going really hard for three days and then take a full day off, so you could recover. In the back of the room one of my athletes is thumbing through the calendar. She was dating Jason Lezak at the time. Anyway, she is frantically going through the calendar. I could see this look on her face of desperation. We finished the meeting and she comes back up to see me. She says, oh thank goodness! I said what's the deal Danielle? She says Jason and I are getting married and it is an off day. Thank God. Indeed, they took that day off, and had the wedding. They did miss the next day, but they were back the following day. It is amazing what we can get our athletes to do. It worked really well. We swam really well that year.

I am going to go through some of the questions that were handed up to me late to answer some of those questions. The first question, a lot of times people ask, what my opinion about long course training/ short course training. I always like to tell the story about a friend of mine, one of the best coaches we had in Southern California, moved away, and was in an area that wasn't really aggressive with swimming. He didn't have access to long course pools. Every summer he would drive over the hill to go and swim at this long course pool at another club to get some hours there. At the end of every year he would come to me and say, "I don't get it. My kids are doing well. They swim well long course and swim well short course, but every year I lose these kids at the end of the summer season to join this other team." I said, well the problem is that you are telling them they have to go long course because you are going over the hill taking an hour ride down the hill - to go get long

course training. You told them you can't compete unless you do long course training. You have just shown how easy it was to go over the hill and down the road to swim in that pool. No wonder they are joining that team. So every year they would all join that team, because it was so easy to get over the hill.

My opinion is that I don't care for long course. I love short course training. I love short course training because it allows me to be kind of innovative with tree branches and physio-balls. I love going 25's and 50's and 75's. I am not a big fan of going repeat 1500's. I like the ability to create a real innovative workout by going five rounds of 375's and 325's or ten rounds of 325's and 100 and descending the hundreds 1-5 and the 25's are fast swim - fast kick - fast swim. I like that kind of innovative opportunities that a short course presents. I think if you are convincing your athletes that they have to go long course, they are going to believe you. They are going to do what you tell them is important to their ultimate success. If you don't have a short course pool, get a bulkhead. Show them they can do it in a bucket and won't worry about it.

When Aaron Peirsol broke his first world record in 2002, he hadn't been in the long course water from August of the previous season, 2001, all the way until March of 2002. He hadn't touched long course water. When he got to the meet, he had a great swim in the morning. I met with the team that afternoon, and I said, "gang," we had a great meet. We did have a great meet. The kids were all swimming great. I met with the team and I said, "tonight you need to watch the 200 backstroke, because you are going to see something really, really special!"

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Aaron Peirsol

5-time Gold Medalist
and World Record Holder

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Remember, this was a time when we didn't see 50 World Records broken in a meet. You would see one once in a while. Aaron Peirsol broke his first World Record in 2002, without having been in a long course pool from August of the previous season. I really owe that partly to the fact that we didn't make a big deal about training long course, even though I had plenty of long course water.

This past year in 2008, I had a number of athletes that were very traditional type athletes like Klete Keller, Larsen Jensen, and Oussama Mellouli. I like to switch lanes back and forth from short course to long course to short course, and back to long course. It doesn't really matter to me! They all were complaining about wanting to go long course. I said, once we change long course, we are not taking them back out. We are not moving into short course, because I am tired of the time it takes to move in and out. I adapted to their needs psychologically to go long course. I just would go 25's and 50's and 75's and stop in the middle of the pool. Then, I would figure out what to do in the middle of the pool. I was able to adapt. I think adaptability is one of the key components to being a successful coach anywhere. I think we can do that in this country. It goes along with my idea that, if I can leave you with one message when you leave here, is it doesn't matter where you coach. You can get it done and be very successful.

I see Chuck Batchelor in the room. Chuck, I hope you don't mind, but I visited Chuck this last year recruiting one of his athletes. He introduced me as, "this guy is so good and he is a great coach." I said Chuck wait that is fine, I really appreciate that. Do you know where Chuck trains? Chuck trains in

a lower middle class neighborhood in a crappy pool, low roof, a not a very pleasant place to be, but he and his swimmers are busting their butts. He bought this van from somewhere. His assistant coach lives out in Boston and uses this van to drive these kids in to the pool. That is a great coach! That is not what I have to do. I have got three 50 meter pools. I got a great opportunity where I coach. A coach like Chuck, to me, is a great coach. I hope you don't mind me embarrassing you, but that is what I mean. Chuck is not sitting there bellyaching about the fact that he has got a crappy facility. He is getting it done in a 25 yard pool. I watched him do a workout and it reminded me of some of the work that I do where we are getting up and out of the water. We do some fancy stuff that is pretty cool. He is producing really great athletes. That is what we need to leave with when we leave here today is if you can do that in a bucket, you can do it in a 50 meter pool. You can get it done!

YOU TALKED ABOUT BEING A MOTIVATOR. YOU TALKED ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE INTRODUCING BOTH AMANDA BEARD AND AARON PEIRSOL TO THE IDEA OF MAKING THEIR FIRST OLYMPIC TEAMS. WHEN DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU COULD GET A SWIMMER TO THE OLYMPICS? Again, I think that goes back to my experience in 1992 when I went to the Olympics and I saw what it was. I saw a lot of coaches on the deck that I knew were not any better than I was. They were not any smarter. They were not even necessarily more experienced than I was. I came away from that '92 experience resolved to put somebody on the '96 Olympic team. I met with my team that year, '93 I guess, and sat them down. I said,

our goal should be to put swimmers on the Olympic Team. I finally told them that. I finally said, our goal as a team in Southern California should be to put athletes on the Olympic Team. I said, our goal is to put 3 people on the Olympic Team in 1996. I was not coaching Amanda at that time. She was still like 11 or 12. She wasn't in my group yet. I ended up with 4 athletes at the Olympic Trials in 1996. We put one on the Olympic Team and one of them was a 3rd place finisher in the breaststroke, so we came pretty close to our goal. Amanda then went on to win 2 silvers and a gold.

I came back from that experience in the fall of 1996, sat down with my squad again, and announced to my team at Awards Banquet, we've got four years to prepare for the 2000 Olympic Games. Our goal is to put four people on the Olympic Team in 2000. Everyone said, you put someone on the Olympic Team, so maybe he has got something going here. We ended up putting 5 people on the U.S. Olympic team in 2000. I came back from that experience and said okay, goal in 2004 will be to put 6 people on the Olympic Team. Now everyone said that he has a track record that is going pretty well. Everything he says seems to pan out. We ended up putting 6 people on the Olympic Team, which two included Aaron Peirsol and Amanda Beard, plus an additional four that previous to that had not been training with me. When I came back from the 2004 Olympics, Lenny Krayzelburg sat me down. He was kind of shaking his head. You are going to put 10 people on the Olympic Team in 2008! I said Lenny, naw. I don't think I am going to go that far. We had a few on the 2008 Olympic team.

What I am trying to tell you is that I didn't believe that I could do it until I walked the Olympic Games deck. Now, you are not all going to get that experience, but I can tell you again that I am not any smarter than any of you here. Once I told myself that was my mission and told my team and my squad that was my mission, that was our mission, that if they would buy into that we would get there, then the process by which we got there was doable. I think talking about what it is that you are trying to accomplish is one of the key components in being successful with your athletes. They have got to believe you and trust you. You have got to believe in yourself and that is my message this weekend, to tell you that you can do this.

When you leave here this weekend, get out there and do it.

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ON SPEED BASED SWIM PROGRAMS FOR AGE GROUPERS? I think age groupers, contrary to some of the talks that I listened to in the other room, should not be in the aerobic base mantra. I am not a believer in over-distance training. I really believe that age group swimmers should learn the skills and competitive repetition of the skills. That is really, really important and not the overwhelming need to swim volume upon volume to develop their skills. One of my top age group coaches that I had at the time when Aaron and Amanda were coming up was Brian Pyor who went on to start his own team. He is a really good age group coach who was just doing nothing but repetition after repetition after repetition. They would go 25's and 50's over and over again and when they were not doing it correctly they would do more repetition. They wouldn't do the thousands of

“I THINK IT IS REAL IMPORTANT FOR 12 AND UNDERS TO HAVE THAT FOCUS OF LEARNING THE SKILL, HAVING FUN WITH THE SPORT.”

yards, not hundreds repeat, but 25's and 50's, until they got it right. The patterning was so critical to their ultimate development in my group when I began to train them. They did not train until they turned 13. They were learning the competitive, repetitive learning at 12 and under.

I think it is real important for 12 and unders to have that focus of learning the skill, having fun with the sport. I will worry about training them when they get to be 13-14 and older. Then you start planting in their minds the idea of going to the Olympics and how you are going to do that, but keeping it in the perspective that they are still kids. I do not have a problem with 14 year olds making the Olympic team as long as the perspective is such that it is balanced. So, in terms of speed-based, it is repetitive technique that is coupled with that speed but it is not speed for speed sake either. It is not speed-based, it is not distance-based, it is really skill based and repetition based. You are trying to teach those 12 and unders to get to practice on a regular basis. Once you get them to practice, then you can start working on the fundamental skills and teaching them how to compete and teaching them to have fun in the sport.

DO YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS ON TRAINING ALL THE ENERGY

SYSTEMS OVER THE COURSE OF THE SEASON PLAN? John Leonard asked me about two years ago if I would do last year's physiology school. I said, well John, I am not sure I would do your physiology school, but I will do my physiology school, if you are okay with that. My opinions are a little bit different. I remember coming to clinics like this where coaches would put up on a slide three circles, these interconnecting circles, and they would say there is the ATPPC System. Here is the aerobic system. Here is the anaerobic system. I kept saying to myself, it is not the way it works. In reality physiology is a dynamic thing, but you can't have aerobic without anaerobic. To understand the physiology of glycogen breakdown, which we are not going to go into, you have to understand that you cannot have one without the other. By me just walking from this end to that end of the room, I am going to be engaging aerobic and anaerobic systems, so you cannot help but train all the systems.

I had enough background in physiology to look way back in the 70's to show that if you want to engage the entire musculature, you have got to engage it at pretty high intensities. When you do that, you get aerobic and anaerobic benefits that if you try to just coordinate

your efforts on just one system or the other system, you get into problems. Thereby, in my group, my program on Day 1 we are just going fast, going fast and working on technique. We go for about up to 2 hours of training. Now, the yardage changes as you go along because you can get a little bit more work in those two hours. For my training purposes, I don't worry about how far we go. The kids will tell me if we are going too far because sometimes I am getting like a mad scientist. I will get on the Hy-tek program to write workouts, not very often, but I will write workouts. I don't even worry about how that little yardage thing is adding up. I think this would be a cool set and this would be a great set and this would be really fun and this would be really cool, because I look at each set independent of the total. Everything is about the content and not how far we go.

I would finish those work-outs, and send them to my assistants when I am out of town. The assistants will tell me this is like 15,000 yards in an hour and a half. What I usually say is YEAH, that's right. That is what you are doing. The way I operate, just so you understand, as I said this earlier is that I don't write my workouts down. I have a sense of what I want to do. I kind of gauge my team and where we need to go and what it looks like. I come in with an idea of certain things that I want to accomplish in a workout and it just comes off my head. The coaches will come in and ask, what are we going to do? I say, I don't know, just tighten up the seatbelt and let's go. They are just kind of going what the heck? I never had assistants when I was coaching Irvine, so the kids were not asking assistants. Now I am in college. I have more coaches.

The kids are asking them about what are we going to do today? The coaches can only answer, we don't know, but we do know that it is going to be fast and hard. They used to get a little frustrated at me.

Is there anybody that doesn't write their workouts down? You do it like this? Okay, you are going four rounds of 5 x 25 plus 100. Sometimes, I forget what I tell them and what I do is I find myself putting it back on them. I am going six rounds of 3 x 25's and 75 plus 100. On the 25's, you are going to go a half lap kick fast streamline kick, etc. and at the end they say how many rounds coach? And I will respond, HOW MANY DID I SAY?? So they will say six, coach. I will say THAT'S RIGHT, YOU ARE PAYING ATTENTION, because I forgot. I have no clue. What I have started to do now, which is really kind of fun, includes my white board. I have got this big white board at the side of the pool. I want things to be interesting, so I get my big white board and tell them we are going to do this Triangle set. I am going to show you my triangle set. I love my triangle set. We might go 15 rounds of that, so I draw pictures. Some of the kids do not understand language. I have a lot of International kids. So, Dave is now into this hieroglyphic thing. I have fun with it and plus it takes a little time. They are resting a little bit on the wall as they get ready for my next set. If you are really into entertaining your kids, and I don't care how old they are, get a white board to draw up what you want. My workouts are so detailed that I need pictures because if I just give them language they goof it up.

I was telling you about one of the things that I like to do with my assistant coaches. I will tell the team, you are going to go ten

rounds of X, Y, Z at this interval and that interval, we will do that set and with about two minutes before they are finished I look at one of my assistants. You are doing the next set. They are like OH SHOOT, which they don't say shoot because they have to come up with the same kind of thing. It really tests their skills. I hope I answered that question. Oh, the energy systems. Look, a lot of you find that having terminology like VO2MAX and aerobic and anaerobic in describing sets helps give structure to your workouts. When I was getting my Bachelor's Degree in Exercise Science, I was like that. We are going to do an aerobic set, and then we are going to do an ATPPC set, and then we are going to do an anaerobic set. That is the way I was running my workouts. I had a professor say, what are you doing? I felt bad and then I stopped doing that. I think we are just training the entire system by doing what we do. I don't worry about which system I am training. You don't have to do it that way. You can do it the way you want.

DO YOU THINK YOUR METHODS WORK BECAUSE OF THE AGE AND MATURITY AND BACKGROUND OF YOUR ATHLETES? DO YOU THINK IT WOULD WORK FOR AGE GROUPERS AND YOUNG SENIORS WITHOUT AFFECTING THEM LONG TERM? The ways I can only answer that question are the athletes that have come out of my age group in Irvine-Nova Aquatics. I currently coach college kids. I have to deal with college kids coming from 40 different programs across the world, dealing with them and teaching them my philosophies. Aaron Peirsol, Amanda Beard, Jason Lezak, and Michael Cavic are kids who all came out of our age group program where the focus wasn't on over-distance or

aerobic-based training. Here is a story about Michael Cavic. About his junior or senior year of high school, he was so reluctant to come to morning practices. We would go two morning practices a week. We would go about an hour and 15 minutes and a lot of time it would be really specific stuff like doing underwaters for an hour. Just doing underwaters and getting better at your underwaters. Even with Eddie Reese's help, Aaron Peirsol's underwaters still are problematic. Michael is a really good swimmer, but he is so reluctant to get to practice in the morning. He is a sprint type guy with a lot of talent. In his last year he swam for me, I said okay Michael, after February 1, you will not have to go to another morning workout with me ever. We got to February 1 and I said Michael, this is your last morning workout. He goes really? I said yeah, you do not have to ever come to morning workouts again (until you go to college). I did not tell him that as that was between him and Mike Bottom.

Do you ever get this? The kids end up on the other side of the pool? You all get this. They end up over the other side of the pool and what do they do? You announce 7 rounds of whatever. You end up on the other side of the pool and they always say, but coach, we are going to end up on the other side. I always tell them we have got the technology to bring you back. It's okay! Did you ever find that kid's goggles break on the opposite end of the pool from where you are standing? That is why I stand on that part of the pool. The first time that you do that, they are like shoot, I can't stay here. Those are athletes who came out of my age group program. They didn't go to morning workouts until they got to

be 13. I kind of brought them into morning workouts. I rationalized morning workouts were about preparing them to go off to college because they are going to have to do morning workouts. It gave us a chance to kind of work on really specific things at those morning workouts. It was about an hour and 15 minute timeline, so it was not a huge amount of time that we are trying to put in. We were not trying to put in more yardage, but maybe a specific kicking set or something like that.

Those are athletes that to this day are still swimming. Jason Lezak is 34 or 35 and Aaron Peirsol, if he goes to 2012, is working on his 4th Olympic Games. Amanda Beard just finished her 4th Olympic Games. Michael Cavic was always kind of one of those guys to say I think I am going to quit and then he would stay. Again, he would say, I think I am going to quit and then he would stay in and do something special. Those are all kids that weren't harmed by a focus that was so different than a traditional mind set of you have got to have an aerobic base and you have got to pound them into smithereens. They have sustained their careers with no major injuries. I am really proud that they have been able to go on and that they were not negatively impacted by my philosophy. I would feel really bad if that had really been a detriment to their performance, but I don't think it has been.

IF YOU HAVE AN INCOMING FRESHMAN WITH CONSIDERABLE STROKE FLAWS, BUT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL AT A HIGH LEVEL OF SWIMMING - DO YOU IMPLEMENT TECHNIQUE CHANGES RIGHT AWAY OR OVER TIME - MIXED IN WITH THE TRAINING PROGRAM? My workouts are a mix of training and technical

drill type work. I will kind of give you my examples. I might do a set that looks something like that. I won't really worry about the intervals running at 5, 10 and 15 seconds rest. I might go 25's where I am using rotation kick and the 50 is the three minute 50. I love three minute 50's, because you can make a 50 last three minutes. I won't put all the details of this 50, but imagine going a 50 where you are going streamline kick to the half way mark going ten squat jumps, sprint swim into the wall, do 3 flip turns, do 4 wall outs, climb out of the water, do 4 pushups, do 3 more squat jumps out of the water, diving in kicking to the half way mark, going horizontal stationary kick for 10 seconds, going the rest of the way to the wall high elbow catch-up freestyle with a fast flutter kick. That might take 2 minutes. That is what that 50 is right there and the 75 might be pace 200 and look like a typical type of a set.

The rotation kick is a funny story. I went to one of these clinics where Mark Schubert was talking about one of Lenny Krayzelburg's favorite drills was rotation kick. You just alternate going 360 right and 360 left. Then Lenny came to train with me in 2004. Lenny, we are going to do one of your favorite drills. We are going to rotation kick 200. He says what is that? It is your favorite set. Mark said it was your favorite set. Lenny says, I have never done that. Well, it is one of my new favorite ones. It is just the body position thing, kicking, and teaching body rotation. It teaches kicking within the planes of the rotation, good body position, tight core, and all of those kinds of things. The 25's are and the 50's, like I said, all of these things that combine technique, high elbow, freestyle catch-up, the flat back,

and fast kick. It creates resistance so there is some power work going on. The 75 is a technical thing. It is pace work under stress, because you have gone three 25's and a 50 before it and that looks kind of like the sets that I draw up. It combines the technical components, the drill components at a high level of intensity and in turn I think what it does is it takes all of your stroke and components and puts them in a high level. My hope is that the corresponding result will be that you will go fast. We have been fairly successful with that.

So, let me give you a story that kind of epitomized my philosophy about coaching an athlete that is just coming to the program, especially in a collegiate environment. I am pretty confident in telling you that I was not Rebecca Soni's favorite person my first year. She was a little ticked off. She was coming from New Jersey to swim at the University of Southern California with Coach Schubert. She just left a very distance type program where she was with Tom Speedling. I have heard they do a lot of training, even right up into a race. She grew up as a distance freestyle swimmer that did a little bit of breaststroke. Tom designed the stroke for her, so she has a very unique stroke. She is kind of a distance-based athlete. She goes from Coach Schubert, who is famous for being a distance-oriented coach. She loves that. She loves the University. Here comes Coach Salo. He is a sprint coach. That is what Coach Rose said. He is a sprint coach. He has had some success with breaststroke, but it doesn't look like your stroke. Her biggest fear was that I was going to take her out of the distance group and change her stroke.

Let's just say that my job was not to change her stroke at first.

My job was to understand and appreciate how she moved so fast swimming the stroke that she swam. Now Coach Speedling gave me a few hints like how many strokes she takes in a 50 and things like that, but unfortunately for me - I am good at hearing stuff, but it never quite stays in there so you have to keep reminding me. If I met you once I may forget that I met you. It is okay. I forgot where I am now. So, getting back, Rebecca wasn't really happy. When I got on deck in the spring of 2006, I was her third coach in one year. In less than a year, I was her third coach, with all these background dilemmas that she had to deal with. The only reason why Rebecca, I had never asked her about it, but I kind of heard through the grapevine that she contemplated transferring from the University of Southern California because she was so conflicted with such a rapid change, but she loved the University so much (PLUG). You have got to catch these things quick I just move right through them. She loved the University so much that she was willing to just endure it and maybe not reach the goals that she might have had when she originally got there.

I will tell you real quick, well, none of my stories are quick, but one day we are doing a set with some breaststroke drill type stuff in long course. Rebecca stops at the end of this 50 and she is visibly upset. She is kind of crying about something. I had only been there a few months at the time. I say, what is the matter Rebecca? And she says, "I just hate your drills." I say, well Rebecca, I never wanted to do this, but I have coached some pretty good breaststrokers in my time and you are just going to have to be patient. She kind of settled down a little bit. She would

not have won the Olympic Games last year had she not begun to just kind of trust that I wasn't going to change her stroke. I had to let her know that I understood her stroke and we were going to work from the strengths of that stroke. We wouldn't modify unless there was a real need to make any kind of considered changes. There are some things that she does that I do not know why breaststrokers do this, as they recover and their hands kind of go like this. I hate that. For every breaststroker that I coach, if I see that, I am on top of them all the time. I want them to extend forward and turn the elbows out. When she is not swimming great, she will do this. She will kind of go forward like this. That is not a stroke change, but that is just to make her more efficient. She learned to trust that I wasn't going to make wholesale changes.

In my first year, she was always in the distance group. By my second year, late in my second year, as she began to trust what I was doing and was effective in her performance, she began to move out of the distance group and go into the breaststroke group sometimes. Sometimes, I would see her move over into one of the other different groups that I might have. I might have five or six different groups going on. Sometimes she would ask, should I go in the distance group or the breaststroke or the IM group? Today, why don't you go in the sprint group? Go do that for today or no, go to the distance group. I think we have some things planned for that. What I saw in her over the last couple of seasons is she has become more trusting in herself. That is one of the things that I am trying to teach my athletes is I am here to manage your decisions that you make in your training. I

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am there to guide you through it, but you have got to trust yourself as well. I will knock you up the side of your head if you are doing something wrong. She is an athlete that will always work hard.

I tried to convince her all season long that you don't have to go to World Championships coming off the Olympic Games. As successful as she was, she really struggled through this past year. I knew she was going to struggle, because I remember in 1997 how Amanda Beard struggled so much with everybody's expectation that this little girl would get up and go fast every time she swam. I encouraged Rebecca through most of the year, not to go to World Championship trials. Don't go to World Championships. Take a year off. Take some time off. Get your head in a sense that you can attack the next three years. She didn't take any time off and every race we would compete in last year, I wanted her to get beat. I wanted her to lose once. I wanted her to lose. I knew that she would get beat once during the year and I wanted her to get beat. She needed to learn that it was okay to lose a race and her world was not going to crumble. The sun was going to come up.

We got to the PAC Ten Championships and she wasn't really motivated. She wasn't really feeling it as she stroked to a 2:04 in the 200 yard breaststroke. That is not bad for someone that is not feeling it, who was having a really tough year motivationally. Then she went 58.1 in the hundred breast stroke. She will get to NCAA's and get beat in the NCAA's by a hundred, I bet. If she gets beat, she can just have this catharsis. No dice as she wins the 200 breast and the 100 breaststroke and had

some pretty good swims. I once again say, okay Rebecca, you do not have to go to trials, if you don't want to go to trials. Just take the rest of the season off. No, coach, I feel everybody expects me to go. I said, okay, but you don't have to go to the Championships, if you don't want to go. Just go to trials to swim, have fun, and take a break. NO, again, as she goes to trials and swims 2:20 and 1:05.

Alright, let's go to World Championships, which everybody knows the story. She breaks the World Record in the 100 breaststroke. She comes up on the 200 breaststroke and goes out in a 1:05.7. I am up in the stands thinking this is going to be great and at the 150 mark she is still a second and a half under World Record pace. She pushed off that wall for that last 50, with me going, oh my gosh, I wish I could be there to help you Reb, because this is going to be painful. She faltered and faded to 4th place. I thought oh, she got beat, but not really when I wanted her to get beat. The PAC-TEN's would have been alright. So I was a little concerned about that and went over to see her at the team area. I am not sure what kind of response I am going to get. She looks at me and I kind of look at her and draw a little closer to her. She looks up at me and says "you know, with that 1:05.7 split, I would have won a medal in the hundred breaststroke!" We both kind of laughed and I said, Rebecca, you are going to be okay.

HOW DO YOU TRAIN FOR DISTANCE? I think that is the thing that everybody wonders. Coach Daland, one of my favorite people of all time, talks with me once every month or so. He is a great mentor. I will give you another real, one of those long, quick stories.

I was coaching with him from '85 to '90. He comes into the office one day, which I shared with the diving coach. I don't know what prompted it, but he sat down and shut the door. He says, "You know Dave, these ideas you have about training, they are interesting, but do you really want to crawl out on that limb? Maybe you want to tone it down a little bit?" I didn't know that I was going to stay in coaching, so I didn't really care about what anybody thought. I appreciated his effort, but Coach is one of my biggest fans and it is great to have a fan. My mom, Marty, and Jon Urbanek are big fans, and that is about it.

My philosophies haven't changed a whole lot. I still believe that you train by race pace training. My distance guys do volume. They go two hours. They train for about two hours and whatever we do in that two hours, I don't really sweat it. It could be 5,000 or it could be 6,500, or it might be 7,000, but I don't really worry about it. As I said earlier today, my distance guys don't go 1500 straight in practice. We don't go 400 straight in practice. This is what we might do is a training set for the distance kids. We might go something that looks like this. I am also not a big fan of driving performance by interval. I think that is a big mistake that we have a lot of distance kids, especially women in the United States, driven all by interval. It is such a fast interval that they just get their arms going and try to make interval. They end up on a touch and go. I don't do that.

Here is a set that might be a typical type set that I would do in practice where you go an 800, four 50's, 600, four 50's, 400, four 50's, 200, and four 50's, where I am not really worried about 8, 6, 4, 2

in terms of how fast it is. A lot of times what those longer swims are is negative split. I might say the last 50 is full speed and then these 50's are generally a foot touch or I might go two at pace plus 3 and then two at pace minus 1 or minus 2. I don't care as maybe it is a 400 pace, maybe it is an 800 pace, maybe it is a 1500 pace and that might change. The intervals for the 50's might give them about 10-15 seconds rest or it could be anywhere between 5 and 15 second rest. I do not get too caught up in intervals that much. It depends on what I want to see. I want to test them. Sometimes I want 5 seconds fast, so we will go on 35.

I went six 50's on 35 long course the first week of the college practice that we were allowed to go, one of my former athletes came by and said "Oh, I heard workout is really hard." I said six 50's on 35? It was six 50's on 35. It wasn't six 500's on 25, but the kids all thought it was really hard. 8, 6, 4 and 2 might be such that they get 30 seconds to 45 seconds rest - not putting a whole lot of intensity into it. Other than the specificity of what I am saying about negative split and really focus on technique. Go really fast that last 50. Really get things motoring that last 50. Take the neuromuscular adaptation of the stroke technique. The first part of that they would go a little bit faster the second half and then the last 50; you just go as hard as you can. That is what I want, so the 50's are more of a race pace type thing.

Again, I don't worry about volume. We go about two hours of practice. I am trying to introduce a little bit more dry land with the distance kids because a lot of times they are kind of reluctant to take up more time in the dry land component as I think they really should. I think they can get faster by focusing in on having a really good 400 speeds and 200 speed and not just thinking of the mile.

to say she really wanted to swim on my team. It is Junior College, so everybody can swim. I said that is fine. I said, "Ok," and she lasted about a week and then took something else up. At Orange Coast College, we were coaching kids that if they could break a minute in the 50 free was really exciting. At Irvine Nova Aquatics, we had some pretty good kids with Aaron, Jason, Amanda and kids like that.

"MY PHILOSOPHIES HAVEN'T CHANGED A WHOLE LOT. I STILL BELIEVE THAT YOU TRAIN BY RACE PACE TRAINING."

OUTLINE GENERAL RACE PLANS OR STRATEGIES FOR SECTIONAL LEVEL SWIMMER FOR 400 IM, and 800 FREE. IS THIS A DIFFERENT PLAN THAN AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL SWIMMER? I don't really think of myself as a different coach for different populations. At one point in my career, not too long ago, before I went to USC, I was the head coach at Irvine Nova Aquatics, the head coach at Soka University and the head coach at Orange Coast College in the same year. I was transitioning out of one and going into another. Now you know why I get about three hours of sleep every night just trying to balance my responsibilities. At Orange Coast College, I had a girl at the beginning of the season, probably 5' 1" and kind of roundish, come in my office

Then, Soka University was a brand new program. I was starting the program out at the small private university. We were taking kids who had never swum before. We were teaching them how to streamline. I took them to our first meet in San Diego. We have a few people that saw that meet. I have all these girls up on the block, because we were really slow. There were a couple of other teams there. The girls all get up on the block and the starter gets ready to start them. So, what does the starter do? He blows the whistle. I forgot to teach the kids how to start. Here is this heat of women, one going off and the other one going off and they are looking at each other. The other one is going early and the other one is going as the whistle is blowing and they do not know what is going on at all. I felt so bad. They were so mad at me. You didn't teach us how to start. You embarrassed us. I didn't mean to. I forgot. So, I had a broad collection of athletes. I don't know that I have a different strategy for the inexperienced kid

or the advanced kid.

I can tell you my basic plan. I look at the distance events in components, so the 1500 free I love to descend three 400's and then descend the last three 100's. I had a lot of fun this summer when Takeyka Ho was going to the prelims of the 400 IM. I met with her and said, here is what I want you to do. I want you to kind of cruise through the first 50, get into your stroke, then the next 25 just kind of hold steady with a little bit more speed and the last 25, I want you to really go into that wall like you are going to race for the final at night. I am watching her do exactly that. I love it when you get an athlete who does exactly what you ask them to do. It is so much fun! It was all preparation leading up to the 400 final where she would put her whole race together, but I wanted the last 25 of each 100 to be more of that final race type mind-set and physiologic set. So, generally in the 400 IM's, I am probably like all of you. We always want them to come back the second 50 faster than the first 50 obviously, except for the first 100 fly. I am not a pure negative splitter. Trying to break it down into three components or descending three components and descending the last three 75's. We go from a pretty good pace that is coming down, then we really get into some real sprint speed, as we come down to the last 150 or so. We might descend the last three 50's on 800 freestyle.

WHAT IS A MAIN SET SINGLE PROGRESSION FOR 1500 FREE? I think I went through that a little bit. I like to break things down. We do not go repeat 400 IM's. We don't do repeat 1500's. I break it down into its components. I like some of the things that Mike showed with Stephanie Rice today. I like that

set where they go 50 plus three 100's - plus a 50. I like doing those kinds of transitional type swims, but I like to break things up. We don't do anything straight up 400 IM or straight up 1500 free. I want the technique to be really good. I want the technique well done. I want them also to have the speed component to it and not just swimming 400's for the sake of swimming 400's. I am not as much a backstroke coach as I was when I was coaching Aaron Peirsol and a few others at the time, back in the early 2000's. I really like to do a lot of work on backstroke where we are connecting the body position, rotational skills to the rates of swimming. What do I think about stroke count? I don't do stroke counts on backstroke. I do stroke counts more on breast stroke. On backstroke, I work more on the acceleration of stroke into recovery and looking at turnover rate trying to fine tune that turnover rate.

I love doing backstroke sets like 5 times X + 2 Y + Z. I will show you a set when I want my whole team on the same interval. Let's say, I am going 1 minute, 2 minutes, 3 minutes. This is great if you want to combine your distance workout with your sprint workout. X is = to 25, 50, 75 or 100. Y is = to 50, 75, 100, 125 or 150. Z is = to 25, 50, 100, 150 or 175. These are just examples. You can put anything in that you want. Now, I give a set like that, especially if you get closer down to our Conference Championship, where I want everybody to be on the same page. The intervals are all the same. The X is on 1 minute, the Y is on 2 minutes, and the Z is on 3 minutes. I want to prove to the kids I earned my page from USC, so I do these algebraic sets. They are like what the heck? That is ridiculous.

I really don't worry what people think about me anymore. I am way too old for that. So, it is 5 rounds, X they do it once, Y they do 2 of those on 2 minutes, and they go Z on 3 minutes. What is the sprinter going to go? The sprinter is going to go a 25, 2 - 50's, and a 25 almost always. The distance kid gets to go a hundred, two 150's and a 175, but I give them that option to pick and choose.

What I try and do with my athletes is manage the decisions that they make. I haven't told them what the interval is. I might say X is equal to build. 2 Y might be a differential of 5 or the second one is 5 seconds faster than the first one and that Z is fast. Really fast! I will give them the detail to that. They choose the stroke. Now they are going 5 rounds, so you might have individual IM athletes go a round of fly, a round of free, a round of back, a round of free, and a round of breast. They might figure out how to do an IM in this set. I let them make those decisions and then manage the decision they make. If the backstroke swimmer is doing this set, I might tell him to work on very specific components to the set, but this is how I work my sets. There are no main sets in my workouts. Every set is important. Every set means something and every set is generally broken down into its components. Now don't ask me what is the next set. I don't know what it is yet.

REFERRING TO HARD AND FAST OF REHEARSAL SWIMMING - HOW MUCH REST IS APPROPRIATE? I think this is one of the things that we as coaches just have some instinct for that. Sometimes you don't want to give them a whole lot of rest and sometimes you want to give them a lot of rest. Now my athletes tend to think that I don't give them a

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whole lot of rest. They all think that I do not believe in tapering. They all think a lot of different things, but I mix it up. A lot of my work for my sets is designed around the idea of creating fatigue. I have got to learn how to spell fatigue. Creating fatigue and then working on specific speed or specific race speed, I should say. So, what I mean by that, like Marty said at lunch, you get a 3 minute 50.

Now a 3 minute 50 can again be 3 minutes of intense work that if you just look at the yardage, it is only 50 yards. Within the 3 minutes of active work, you are doing push-ups and pull-ups. You are doing in the water and out of the water. You are doing some kicking, some pulling. You can do all these things in 3 minutes and the distance covered is only 50 yards or 75 yards or 100 yards. It is 3 minutes of intense work and then you go something like a 75 race pace, hold stroke count, hold the speed, and finish with a flip turn. The time should be equal to your goal pace 200, so you are creating what it is going to feel like the last 75 of a race so that is how I operate. If I go thirty 75's and I say easy on the odd and fast on the even, it is not as much fun. Hold a tree branch above

your head, kick vertically for 30 seconds, do 2 flip turns, and then do a pace 75.

Well the take away message is you don't have to go up and down the black line over and over and over and over and over again. I have such a blast figuring out triangles. How can you do triangles? How can I use the bottom of the pool? Have you ever taken an athlete with a stretch cord? Go and buy a stretch cord. I love stretch cords. Put a 25 kilogram weight on the end of it. Put them in the 12 foot end of the pool and have them vertical kick for a breath, it is pretty intense. There have been times when I have had to grab for their arm. They had better hope I like them. A stretch cord, where it is not going to go 12 feet, but it only goes 9, is a great workout.

When I was coaching Jason Lezak, he is a funny guy. If you ever talk to him about his high school days swimming for me, it was like, I hate you and you hate me. Let's just get over it. That's just the way it is because I am a perfectionist. He would swim through the water like crap during warm-up. He would tick me off and I would tick him off. Every year he would come back.

He always came to practice. He would never miss practice. Jason, never ever missed practice, as he got older and more focused. He stretched really well. He just didn't like swim training. He was good in the weight room, as well, but I had to learn how to keep him engaged in training. Otherwise, he would just not be swimming today. He wouldn't be able to coach himself. He trains himself because coaching is about watching. He doesn't coach himself. He trains himself. I think we gave him the skills to be able to do that competently, but I had to learn how to make him a better swimmer by making workouts more interesting. Putting a stretch cord on him, saying you have got to go 20 meters down as fast as you can. Then you have to go stationary kick without moving, then you have got to finish into the wall full speed, pull yourself out of the water, go ten push-ups, dive back in, and then kick all the way back. You will then get 40 seconds rest. I could challenge him to go four 100's really fast. Sometimes I would do sets. Jason, we are going to go eight 50's. I want them all out full speed on 2 minutes. You go full speed and inevitably I would get 5 full speed 50's. I could tell as he would laugh to himself, ha, ha, ha, I only did 5 of them full speed. I would say to myself, ha, ha, ha, I only really wanted 3. You have got to play those games.

Nobody wants to have kids specialize at a young age. I am talking a lot about 14, 15, 16, and older type kids. We do not want to run our kids out of the sport, because we think they are lazy. Michael Cavic was not a great trainer, but that guy is so talented. He was faster in high school than Aaron Peirsol was in the backstroke, because he had great underwaters.

“A LOT OF MY WORK FOR MY SETS IS DESIGNED AROUND THE IDEA OF CREATING FATIGUE. CREATING FATIGUE AND THEN WORKING ON SPECIFIC SPEED OR SPECIFIC RACE SPEED, I SHOULD SAY.”

High school championships came around in 2002 or 3 and Michael Cavic had a better 100 backstroke time than Aaron Peirsol, but they swam in different leagues and never competed against each other. He was not a trainer. Jason Lezak was not a trainer, but Jason got better technically over and over and over again. Every year we would sit down at the end of a season when I would say Jason, here is what I think you need to work on. What do you think? I would try to get him to use a tempo trainer for a couple of years. He was resistant, resistant, and more resistant. Then finally one year, he says, yeah, let's try that tempo trainer thing again. I said, okay, you are ready for it. You have to be prepared for that. Some of you, if you do this right, you might end up with a Jason Lezak that you are coaching well into their 30's.

I will give you another quick story. Jason got so mad at me. We were at a workout. This was before the 2004 Games or maybe the Trials. It was spring. He got real mad at me because I said something derogatory like, "you are lazy." I didn't call him a wussy like John or anything, but I just said you are lazy. I had a bunch of post-grad guys that were swimming for me at the time. Jason gets out, just so mad and is storming over to get his stuff. He turns to look at the rest of the team and he says, "I AM LEAVING. I AM STARTING MY OWN TEAM. IF YOU WANT TO JOIN ME LET'S GO." I just looked at him and was like whatever. The rest of the team was like you are going to stop him aren't you? I was like NO. He is going to go and start his own team. The next day he wasn't at practice and the next day he wasn't at practice. His good friend, who was swimming for me at the time says, "Dave, you have to talk to Jason!" I said

"ONCE YOU CREATE A VISION FOR AN ATHLETE LIKE AMANDA OR AARON, HOW YOU SELL THE VISION MAKES THE DIFFERENCE."

well, Jason knows where I am. I am here every day at the same time. He knows where I am. Jason is not going to do that because he is too proud. He tried working out by himself for two days and said he just couldn't do it. That gave me some satisfaction, so I called him up. Jason, I said, look, I am going to come over to talk with you. We are chatting at his house and he says Dave, I just couldn't do it by myself. I said, that's okay, we will start fresh. We will start anew. We will move on forward. You can start your own team later when I leave to take over USC, so I had planned on doing that anyway. No I didn't. I was kidding!

HOW IMPORTANT, IF AT ALL, IS STROKE COUNT TO BUILD STROKE RELIABILITY? I like stroke count for some components. I think breaststroke count is important. I think that really keeps kids narrowed in on their stroke. I will tell you the problem that we had with Rebecca in the summer with the 200 breaststroke. We looked at Rebecca's analysis of her stroke from USA Swimming after the semi-finals of the breaststroke. She is pretty good about always taking about 22 strokes per 50, but somehow in the prelim session or the semi-finals she was taking 18. She had finished that swim. I hadn't looked at the analysis. She got out

and she said, "it just didn't feel right. It just felt really crummy." She had gone 2:20.9, which is pretty good and just off her lifetime best and the World Record. Russell said, "look at the results. She was like 18 strokes." I said, that is just really odd. So, in preparation for the final, we said just get back to your regular stroke count of about 22 strokes per 50 or 21 and you'll be fine. Just, you know, don't worry about it. Lo and behold, like I said, she goes 1:05.7, which was the end, but she took 22 strokes. It was good. Next year, when we go that fast, we will be better.

I do like stroke counts on breaststroke. I don't worry about stroke count too much on fly, but a little bit on free. I am constantly reminding the kids, be aware of stroke count, but I don't count. You know, I don't have enough time to do that. I can't remember that. I can remember Rebecca's 21 or 22 because Tom Speedling told me that she needs to take 22 strokes. I better remember this because Tom was a good guy. I don't want to screw him up. He has produced this good athlete. I don't want to screw her up. So, I remind the kid of her stroke count. It is the simplest, easiest way to coach somebody to better performance is be aware of your stroke count. Reduce the number of strokes it takes per lap.

That is my opinion on that.

Once you create a vision for an athlete like Amanda or Aaron, how you sell the vision makes the difference. I mentioned that earlier in my first part that with those two, they never verbally accepted what I suggested in making Olympic teams. They just kind of went OK, whatever, like it was never a big deal. What I would do is continue reiterating my belief in them. I remember Aaron coming to practice one day and he goes, "Dave, I can't be at practice tomorrow, I have got some thing to go to." It's probably like an exam for school or something so I said, "Well you know, I am going to Trials, and maybe you won't be going to Trials?" I always give them that guilt trip. You know coaches are really good at that. Is it alright if I have a milkshake? Yeah, sure go ahead, but you know, I am going to Trials. You might not be going to Trials, if you have that milkshake, but go ahead, that's fine. A lot of us over time developed the look. You know I am not sure what my look is, but the kids know when I am not real happy. So I think it is just reminding them periodically.

I have a little clock on my desk that tells me how many days it is to 2012 Olympic Games. I will come out at practice and announce we have got 1,079 days until the Olympic Games. They say, what an idiot, what a crazy guy! We have got 1,078 days. At my age, everything goes by really, really fast. You forget half of it, so you have got to keep them on top of that. My biggest concern, when I put together a season plan, is when are entries due for Nationals? I start from there. A Blackberry is one of the best things that I have ever had, so I will just plug in a meeting that I am supposed to be at and it will

beep me and tell me where I am supposed to be. It is great! I have never, well, once in a while will forget things.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PREPARATION IS HOW AND AT WHAT AGE DO YOU IMPLEMENT THIS IN YOUR PROGRAM?

Let me tell you how my program at Irvine Nova really got started. We were not very good in Southern California Swimming. My age group coach, Brian, met with the top age group kids. There were probably about 25 of them. He sat them down and gave them the old Top 16 times, the list for the 9-10 and 11-12 year olds. They were having this meeting while I was running my workout. The kids came back after the meeting was over, coming behind me because we used to have the age group kids right next to me where I was coaching. One of the kids was laughing and he thought it was so funny. I said, "What is so funny Quinn?" He says to me, Brian thinks we can go this fast, as he was pointing to the list. That is a joke. Oh, I thought, that is kind of disappointing that you didn't think you could be a top 16 swimmer. Well, all it took was two kids in that group to really believe they belonged on the top 16 list and their focus and attention became all about getting on this top 16 list.

Once those two started focusing in on it a lot of those other kids started going. Gosh, Donnie and Kristen are going to practice every single day trying to make this top 16 list. Maybe I need to do that. It wasn't okay for parents to come to me and say, "Coach, can't you reduce the expectations? Can't you just say they only have to come to practice three days a week?" It's like, no, we want them there regularly. This is contrary to what Mike does with his program. We are trying to teach those top age

group kids that regularity and focus helps your performance. Once their kids got caught up in that, we were pretty good. They did a pretty good job. Of that group, I think Kristen Caverly, Aaron Peirsol, Amanda Beard, and Michael Cavic went on to the Olympic Games. We had a number of kids out of that one group who got psyched about Top 16 Times and began a more focused approach to swimming. I don't think that it is ever too young to introduce those components, but I do not think you have to tell every kid that they are going to make the Olympic Team. I have only told like three kids in my life that they are going to make the team and they have.

SHOULD DRY-LAND TIME VERSUS WATER TIME DECREASE AS THE SEASON PROGRESSES?

With our age group program at Irvine, we did dry-land with all the kids. Our entry level novice kids were doing just introductory type dry land things. Maybe it was just stretching for about 5 minutes, before they get in the water. As they got older and a little bit better, up to the 12 year old range, they would go more. I know our program now which I manage I have some coaches that introduce Pilates as early as 12 - 13 years of age. They become pretty skilled at that. They will spend at least 30 minutes to 40 minutes every day on some dry land component. Yes, I think as you draw closer to your championship meets some of those things back off. One of the things at USC that I am doing that might be a little bit different from what it was before is there is this huge emphasis on dry land. Every morning we have a practice. Every single morning! You have to be at practice about 6 o'clock every morning. Part of the reason that I do that is because it really changes

their behavior at 11 o'clock at night.

How many of you coach college? You know what I am talking about. If you have a practice at 6 o'clock, you are not going to be out at 11 o'clock at night and hopefully, you are not drinking at 11 o'clock at night. So every morning we have a 6 o'clock practice which everybody is required to be at practice. Every morning for most of the groups, is in the weight room. They only swim about 35 to 40 minutes following the weight room workout. Then the afternoons tend to be more of our swimming workouts. Yes, I think as you draw closer to your championship part of the season, backing off both your dry land and the water time is appropriate obviously. I think we all figured that out.

MIX OF DRY-LAND WITH SWIMMING SETS: Again, I kind of alluded to that I like the idea of doing some things out of the water, as well as in the water. You might go a 50. Finish the 50, climb out and go 20 stretch cord butterfly pulls or triceps extension, jumping in or diving, doing a 25 fast kick, the last five yards fast swim into the wall, getting out and doing 10 pull-ups or 10 push-ups. When you have real limited space it is a way for you to use your space more effectively. If you only have three kids in the water at a time, but you have another three kids that share that same lane, they are out doing something out of water like pull-ups or push-ups or stretch cords or Pilates stretch, then they are in the water. You are just constantly moving in and out of your

“WITH OUR AGE GROUP PROGRAM AT IRVINE, WE DID DRY-LAND WITH ALL THE KIDS.”

water. It is a real effective way to use your space more effectively, so there are not ten kids in a lane on top of each other.

One season we lost our pool. My age group coaches, for almost a whole season, did no swimming at all or very rarely were in the water. Saturdays, were the only day because we didn't have the pool time. He was doing all this stuff in the park adjacent to the pool. They were out swimming through the park. He had them all convinced that they were going to swim fast at the end of the season and in fact, they did.

HOW MANY TIMES PER WEEK DO YOU SPEND TRAINING BREASTSTROKE? I manage the decisions that my athletes make. For our breaststrokers, I do not do straight out breaststroke all that often. Rebecca does less pure breaststroke. It is more IM and distance free, but she started to do more breaststroke. Keri Hayne does a lot more breaststroke type swimming during practice. Jessica Hardy goes about 60% freestyle and 40% breaststroke. Usually the full stroke breaststroke is at full speed and then it is mostly a lot of components. Somebody mentioned doing kick, kick, pull. I like kick, kick, pulls or it is swimming breaststroke with a flutter kick with or without fins. Or maybe doing it with a dolphin kick or doing vertical work. So I let the kids determine which strokes they are going to

do a lot of times and manage the decisions that they make within the framework of my workouts.

HOW DO YOU GET QUICK FOOT RECOVERY IN BREASTSTROKE? I do a drill that we call the piston kick. If your body position is like this with your hands out in front, it looks like a piston. The kids don't know what a piston is. They are in the water horizontally and just bring their heel up to their butt and then push their legs straight out. Toes are pointing down. They are just pushing against the water and go that as fast as you can. That is one way we teach quick recovery of the heels. The other thing that we do with our breaststrokers is even when we are doing slow breaststroke kicking we remind them to get their heels up really quickly and just glide longer so that they are not bringing the heels up slowly.

HOW DO YOU TEACH BREASTSTROKE TURNS? I will tell you how I teach breaststroke turns. You go into the wall. The hands touch the wall at the same time. The left hand comes off the wall and you are pretending you are cutting through a tropical forest. You extend out; pretend you crashed a plane in a tropical forest, okay? You gotta go with me on this. This is kind of funny so you have got to cut through the forest and build a runway. Then you have got to guide your plane down the runway and off the wall. Wasn't that a good image?

Okay, I think you have got to tell good pictures. I do this to the college kids. They are like, what? The tropical forest? Cutting through a forest, what? We are in

college, man! Yeah, well some kids need pictures. So, that is what my analogy is to the breaststroke turn. Some of you do the hand behind the head. I don't do that. I come over more the top towards the front of the head. Those are the things that you decide yourself, but I like pictures. I like them to get their knees bent and draw the heels to a wall as quickly as they can so their legs are not straight. That is what my focus is.

HOW DO YOU HANDLE HELICOPTER PARENTS? How many of you have helicopter parents? Anti-aircraft, I don't know. I don't know if you ever can handle helicopter parents. Everybody thought oh, coach, it is going to be so cool when you go to college. You won't have to worry about parents anymore. BULL! I have had to deal with more parents in my three short years at USC. My first year, I would get a call every day or my boss would get a call. He would come ask me, Dave, what is going on now? Here is what I did when I was in my club environment. I gotta page Steve for a reason, okay? Imagine this. You are sitting down with a parent who is complaining about what you are doing. They say well, Coach Salo, I just do not agree with you. You say, Um, it is Doctor Salo. I did that once and the parent just melted. You want to be a successful club coach get, a PHD or an MD or just JD. I don't know. It really can set the tone for parent meetings.

I had a parent come in once, when I became manager of my club team. I get calls from my coaches asking, Dave, do you mind coming in? We have got a parent that we have to deal with. I come in one day for a meeting with a parent of an 8 year old boy. My assistant coaches were there as well as the coach

that coached the kid. The parent pulls out one of these Power Point deals. He has got every swim his kid has swum. He has got bar graphs and charts and he says, "My son is not improving in the backstroke." It's like yeah, but it looks like he is improving in everything else. So, he is not improving in the backstroke as much as he needs to. It's like your kid is 7. Then he started to call the kid an athlete. I got a chuckle. I said, your kid ain't an athlete. He goes, YES HE IS AN ATHLETE! I coach baseball. I know athletes. Ohhhhhhh, I said, I don't want my kids on your team. So I just said, look, this isn't the team for you. He said, YES, IT IS! I said, no, it is not. We do not do that with our 7 year old kids. They are not athletes. We are going to teach them to have fun and teach them strokes. He ended up quitting about a month later. The guy was so high strung.

Beware. When a parent comes in with a Power Point presentation, it is time to move that parent away. So how do you deal with helicopter parents? You just tell them the honest truth. You tell them the honest truth. It is okay to say look, our program is not for you. What I have been telling my coaches at Irvine now is I want them to interview families that want to join the team. If you feel comfortable that they shouldn't be on our team with our values, you need to tell them to move on. There are a lot of other teams to go join. Go and ruin Mission Viejo's program, not ours. Just kidding, Bill.

WHAT DO YOU WISH YOUR RECRUITS KNEW COMING INTO YOUR PROGRAM? OF COURSE, I LEAVE THE RECRUITING ONES TO THE END. College coaches are no different than anybody else. I just want kids who want to come in and work

hard. I want the kid who will come in, work hard, trust me as quickly as they can, and is really good as they come into a new environment. I never ever, ever, ever got a call from Amanda or Aaron or Mike Cavic or Jason Lezak. I never got calls from those kids, calling me up in their first year of college saying Eddie is not doing it right or Frank is not doing it right. I never got those calls. They never called me. I would see them at some meet somewhere down the road, but they never called me. I felt bad, but at the same time I felt good that I had taught them to be self-reliant and to rely on their new coaches to help them out. I wasn't their coach anymore. Having that kind of trust in your coaches I think is so important. I think that is what they need to learn. They need to learn to go away and move on. Learn from all the people they get a chance to learn from.

What I am looking for is a kid who is willing to work hard, trust the coaching staff, and not have self-perceived notions about the way things can and cannot be.. As I said, I used to get calls from Jason. He was at UC Santa Barbara and it was funny. He would call me up and say Dave. Yes, Jason, this is Dave. Dave, I have been kicked off the team again. He was kicked off the team so many times. He would call me up for workout. I would say Jason; I will send you some workouts. Then, of course he was put back on the team and swam really well. Anyway, I have had a good time. My message again is, please, if I can do this then you can do this. There are lots of ways to get it done. I hope I have inspired you or kept you chuckling for the last couple of hours. Thanks again, I appreciate it! ●

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COMPILED BY COACH ALLEN KOPEL

Friends and Fellow Coaches. If not a direct quote or if I elaborated on a statement, hopefully I captured the essence of what people tried to convey. Maybe something here resonates, validates and perhaps invigorates your coaching and the journey with your athletes and team. Enjoy and be well.

“Overnight success happens quietly over a long period of time” (Coach Sean Hutchinson - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

“Get a sandwich” : Meaning do not over react to good or off swims. The coach and the athlete need to be able to praise and criticize objectively. (Coach Sean Hutchinson - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

“If you want people to hear you, then yell. If you want people to listen to you, then whisper” (Coach George Block - ASCA World Clinic - 2010 - referencing legendary coach Jim “Doc” Counsilman)

“SAID” = Specific Adaptations to Imposed Demands (Auburn Coach Brett Hawke - ASCA World Clinic - 2010 - talking about coaching Cesar Cielo)

Pre-Race anxiety can be debilitating or facilitating based on one’s perceived level of control at the moment. Better performers seem comfortable owning and accepting responsibility for their swims (the good and bad), which seems to provide a better sense of personal control for the perceived risks and rewards. By seizing ownership of one’s swimming, better performers seem able to relax, process, focus and stay in

the now. (Texas Women’s Coach Kim Brackin - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

Absolute and Relative Excellence: Absolute excellence is the best in one’s sport or at least the absolute best one can possibly attain. Relative excellence is positive and may be one’s best to that point in time, but too often young athletes see relative excellence as absolute excellence; as the top of the mountain or the peak of the journey. Educate athletes to appreciate all successes but realize they and their journey can often go much further; much higher. (Coach Ira Klein - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

False Evidence Appearing Real - Fear destroys motivation. Fear of the unknown is the greatest fear. Something in the future can not really be known unless we choose to believe it is real. Effective goal setting can overcome this negative outlook. (Coach Lanny Landrop - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

There is a tendency to grab what is easy by doing what others do that seems effective. Great teachers find ways to make a unique difference. (Steve Fair - Teach for America - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

It takes five times longer to correct something learned incorrectly than to teach something correctly the first time. (Coach Guy Edson - ASCA / FINIS Eastern Age Group Clinic - September - 2010)

Great teaching requires a purposeful plan but great teaching is being able to adjust the plan based on needs (opportunities) in the moment. (Steve Fair - Teach for

America - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

“Change Is Inevitable. Growth Is Optional” - (Coach Lanny Landrop - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

How is my team perceived? Be a leader and sculpt that. Own it, teach it, create it. (Coach Ira Klein - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

Routines form habits. Choose routines (in thought and action) that form productive habits- to build confidence and bring you closer to your goals. (Coach Lanny Landrop - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

Give people a task, then let them do it. Do not nit pick. Let them develop ownership for the process. (applies to coaches, athletes and support people). (Coach Ben Sheppard - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

Read and re-read Chapter 7 on teaching -in The Science of Swimming by Doc Counsilman (first published 1968). (Coach Guy Edson - ASCA / FINIS Eastern Age Group Clinic - September - 2010)

There may not be one ultimate right way and there may be few wrong ways. (Coach Guy Edson - Referencing Doc Counsilman - ASCA / FINIS Eastern Age Group Clinic - September - 2010)

Apollo XIII - In the movie, they rebuilt the model from its pieces to identify the problem of the ship in space. Build a stroke from its beginning to identify what causes it to break down. Is the line OK? Is the kick OK? Is the breathing OK? Start at the beginning and add pieces to see where the stroke breaks down. (Coach Guy Edson - ASCA /

FINIS Eastern Age Group Clinic - September - 2010)

Good teaching and good leading have few patterns. Great teaching and great leading have consistent, strong patterns. In coaching, the workout is important, consistent energy, delivery and execution of the workout are critical. (Andrea Pursley - Teach for America - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

Leadership: Get others to reach for ambitious goals because they want to. Get them to see and embrace the possibilities. (Andrea Pursley - Teach for America - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

Convey high expectations. We focus on and gravitate toward that which we expect and therefore believe - even though there is nothing factual about the future;

about those expectations. Nurture belief and high expectations. (Andrea Pursley - Teach for America - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

Never belittle, dismiss, minimize or give up on people or let others do those things to themselves. (Andrea Pursley - Teach for America - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

Nurture a limitless mindset to see great possibilities, and then help them negotiate baby steps toward their big dreams. (Coach Ben Sheppard - ASCA World Clinic - 2010)

Words create images and impact belief systems. Choose words carefully to create an atmosphere of belief that inspires people to motivate themselves and

reach for high goals. (Coach Russ Kasl - ASCA / FINIS Eastern Age Group Clinic - September - 2010)

Encourage action; going after success rather than being tentative or playing to avoid failing or avoid mistakes. Praising effort is uplifting and nurtures action but praising states of being such as "talent" or intelligence" can lead to tentative behavior as people identify with and want to protect that "state of being" . (Coach Russ Kasl - ASCA / FINIS Eastern Age Group Clinic - September - 2010)

The only difference between rehabilitation and pre-habilitation is the existence of the injury so take time to "Pre -Hab" . (Coach Guy Edson - ASCA / FINIS Eastern Age Group Clinic - September - 2010) ●

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SUCKING WIND

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BY COACH EMMETT HINES

What's normal?

For most swimmers, the part of their swimming technique most flawed is...well...everything done while trying to snag that next gulp of air and then recovering from the experience over the next stroke, or two, or three. Yet, because this is repeated thousands of times each workout, the struggle for air and the attendant loss of performance - head-lift, hip-drop, neck craning, pushing down on the water instead of making a proper catch, etc. - eventually begin to seem “normal” to the neuromuscular system and soon become habit. Repeating this every second or third stroke means that the swimmer simply cannot establish sound fundamental stroke technique habits based on rhythmic motions around a well-postured core cutting javelin-straight through the water. This is because it takes at least one additional full non-breathing stroke to fully recover balance. And, depending on how out of balance the swimmer gets, it may take more like two or three non-breathing strokes to recover balance. This means he is forever locked in the vicious cycle of :

- during one stroke, using a going-for-air motion that gets him out of balance,
- then during one or more subsequent strokes, trying to recover from the most recent awkward or destabilizing breathing motion,
- then repeat

with no opportunity for uninterrupted well-balanced swimming - the only kind of swimming from which good habits might be built.

Your vicious cycle

So if your current going-for-air habits destabilize your balance, even a little, you too have some form of this cycle at work in your swimming. And your neuromuscular system, and maybe even your brain, accept this as “normal” (and worse, maybe even think of it as “OK”). Sound good to you? I hope not.

The solution

Try a snorkel. Yeah...I know... you're flashing on images of grandpa in big ol' shorts, sporting a scuba mask, a plastic tube flapping around by his ear, swimming turtle-crawl in the slow lane and doing face-in-the-water U-turns a couple yards shy of each wall.

But what you need is a snorkel designed specifically for swim training; one that mounts in the center of your forehead and curves up from your mouth, runs in front of your nose and over the top of your head to allow for a proper head position while not getting in the way of your strokes and not creating useless extra drag.

How it helps

A training snorkel eliminates the distraction and complication of turning the head to breathe, giving you an opportunity for

uninterrupted focus on, and repetition of, other aspects of swimming. Following are a few areas, vitally important to highly effective swimming, where the snorkel excels as a training aid:

- Learning to maintain the tight line of good aquatic core posture while simply inhaling. Keeping your tight line is greatly complicated by the action of inhaling, especially when taking deep breaths. The secret here is to expand your lungs to the sides and back instead of heaving your chest and letting your ribs pop out. Use of the snorkel gives you great feedback about what happens to your tight line as your diaphragm, chest and back muscles work to fill your lungs. By not having to turn your head to breathe, you can isolate and refine your swimming-while-holding-tight-line-while-inhaling skills...something you simply cannot do without a snorkel. Using the snorkel on long, high-intensity sets that require full ventilation gives plenty of time to work out postural details while forming strong habits that elude most swimmers who insist on always breathing the old-fashioned way. (See the What Floats Yer Boat?, Critical Mass In The Twilight Zone, and Claim Your Lollipop articles for more about “tight line”)

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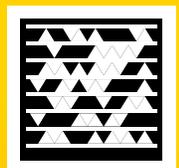
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- Keeping your central line on the desired line of travel. Even with good core tension, it is easy to stray away from the chosen path while swimming. You have no accurate visual feedback about the line you are really traveling, except when keeping your eyes firmly focused on a thin line directly under your nose. Most swimmers, including you, traverse a zigzag line to some degree without being aware of it. This is most often the result of pulling the head and/or upper body toward the breathing side each time a breath is taken. Once that zigzag becomes a habit, it feels “normal” and is hard to quit. Yes, you can spend some time doing no-breather swims in order to spot the problem. But only a snorkel gives you enough uninterrupted straight-line visual feedback to really feel what it is like to swim continuously in a straight line - a first step toward correcting the problem.
- Eliminating ups and downs of your moving vessel. Imagine rowing a boat that has lots of up and down motion where the front end and back end alternate elevations. Your job as pilot and power source is clearly a lot tougher than that of the other guy whose boat skims along on an even keel. So too with swimming. If you watch nearly any non-elite swimmer closely you'll see that either the head or the entire front end of the body has some upward motion on each breath. And, consequently, the hips tend to

dip toward the bottom at the same time. A snorkel allows you to learn what it feels like to swim distances without up and down motions of your head or hips.

Even if right now you think you do not lift your head or upper body to breathe and, consequently, that your hips do not drop at all while you are sucking in air, once you spend some time with a snorkel you will likely realize that your original self-assessment was wrong.

How to start using it

Even if you are a veteran of conventional snorkel use, a training snorkel takes some getting used to. Here is a progression that starts from scratch and builds to full-stroke swimming. People of different ability and experience levels will benefit from different amounts of time and experimentation in each step. If in doubt, spend more time on a step rather than less.

- First, while wearing the snorkel, simply put your face in the water and breathe through the snorkel enough to get comfortable. Experiment with different size breaths. People who've never used a snorkel, or who've only used snorkels with a face mask that covers their nose, are often surprised to find that they do not know how to keep from inhaling through their nose, thus getting a snootfull of water every time they try to inhale. While this can usually be overcome through patient practice, a nose clip can quickly render the issue moot.
- Now spend some time doing easy kicking with fins. The general idea is simply to kick

from your hips with fairly straight legs instead of kicking from your knees. If your knees bend it should only be as a reaction to water pressure, not because of a direct action of your muscles. If your kick involves contracting muscles to bend your knees, you are lost and need to start over. (If this concept is new to you, try holding your legs stiff as planks. Yes, this is a simplification, but does express the most important aspect: don't build your kick around bending your knees.)

- Next, experiment with inhaling, going under water deep enough to allow the snorkel to fill with water, then resurfacing and blowing out briskly to purge the snorkel of water. This will come in handy after turns and when you make mistakes that swamp the snorkel.
- Next, while still kicking easily on the surface, work on assembling your tight-line posture and balance (see the What Floats Yer Boat? article), holding both as you breathe. It is important to spend time working with the full range of ventilation. Breathing deeply while holding the abdominal tension required for tight-line posture is complex if you aren't used to doing it. Remember, expand your lungs to the sides and back instead of heaving your chest and letting your ribs pop out.
- Add core rotations to your kicking (see the What Floats Yer Boat? and Bottom Up Swimming articles). The idea is to build a good feel for what it means to remain 100% horizontal and keep

your tight-line posture fully engaged as you cruise the length of the pool. Done properly, the back of your head, shoulder blades, hips and legs remain right at the surface at all times. Be aware of a patch of flesh on each thigh, just beyond the edge of your suit. As you rotate down the lane you want to have one of these patches, or the cheeks of your butt, exposed to the air at all times. Anytime you don't have one of these exposed to the air there is a problem with posture. (Note: the "patch of flesh" thing isn't operative if you are wearing a jammer suit.)

- Next add strokes to those rotations. Start with a single-arm stroke cycle, several rotations, then another single-arm cycle. Go a length using one arm, then a length using the other, then a length alternating arms.
- Next, execute cycles of two strokes (one with the right arm and one with the left), several rotations, and another cycle of two strokes. Alternate which arm goes first in each cycle of two strokes.
- Then sets of three strokes, with several extra rotations between each set. Alternate which arm goes first in each cycle of strokes.
- Then sets of 5 strokes, etc.
- Then full-stroke swimming.

(See my book *Fitness Swimming*, 2nd Edition for lots more detail on this progression from simply kicking with core rotations to swimming some, then progressively more, strokes powered by leg-driven core rotations.)

The real payoff

The greatest value in the snorkel comes from wearing it through a large portion of your full-stroke swimming - 50% or more (and some days maybe even 100%) of your workout swimming. This is where real habit-building happens. You want to make continuous tight-line, impeccable balance and javelin-straight core your "normal" feelings (as opposed to something that involves no posture or intermittent posture and up-and-down and/or side-to-side motions). Creating new habits requires lots of time and repetition. Overwriting current bad habits with new good habits requires even more time and repetition. So lots of time spent swimming with the snorkel will have big payoffs in the habit department.

Then, for short segments (in the beginning, just a length or two), remove the snorkel and swim with breathing motions. Your job here is to have great awareness of where your head, lead arm and hips are while breathing without the snorkel then compare and contrast that to swimming with the snorkel. After much time spent swimming with the snorkel it should now be much easier to sense and identify balance, posture and timing errors that result from your going-for-air motions.

Because the snorkel has allowed you a bunch of uninterrupted time focused on good posture and balance, you will have new knowledge and skills (and, eventually, habits) to apply in correcting those going-for-air errors.

Shortest path

What you eventually want is to be able to count on a zero-head-lift, zero-loss-of-balance, zero-performance-hit breath any

time you want air. Learning how to get, and making a habit of such breathing motions is much easier to do when you have the right foundation ingrained in muscle memory - and the shortest path to such a foundation is traversed with the training snorkel firmly attached.

Added bonuses

Darn near any other swimming skill you might desire is easier to learn and habitualize when you use a snorkel to remove the distraction of "how do I get air". And when your workout calls for kicking drills you can eschew the kickboard (which teaches you to kick uphill instead of in a straight line) in favor of the breathing tube - you'll go faster and be creating better habits.

Where to find it

Finis Inc is the only company currently offering a proper training snorkel. They have several to choose from. I strongly recommend the Swimmer's Snorkel which you can likely purchase at your local swim shop.

Once you get really good using the Swimmer's Snorkel you may derive increased benefits from the Freestyle Snorkel, also offered by Finis Inc. This snorkel is designed specifically for freestyle swimming, and is particularly beneficial at higher speeds. It requires a higher level of skill to use properly but promotes further skill refinement in more-skilled swimmers. (Warning: If you make the mistake of saying to yourself, "I'm just going to shortcut the learning process and get this snorkel as my first training snorkel" you'll likely just end up frustrated and unhappy. Get and use the Swimmer's Snorkel first - then, after maybe a year of using it, consider the Freestyle Snorkel.) ●

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SELF-DISCIPLINE

FROM ORINDA AQUATICS (RON AND DON HEIDARY)

Why are some people more successful than others? Why do some people make more money, live happier lives and accomplish much more in the same number of years than the great majority? I started out in life with few advantages. I did not graduate from high school. I worked at menial jobs. I had limited education, limited skills and a limited future. And then I began asking, "Why are some people more successful than others?" This question changed my life. Over the years, I have read thousands of books and articles on the subjects of success and

achievement. It seems that the reasons for these accomplishments have been discussed and written about for more than two thousand years, in every conceivable way. One quality that most philosophers, teachers and experts agree on is the importance of self-discipline. As Al Tomsik summarized it years ago, "Success is tons of discipline."

Some years ago, I attended a conference in Washington. It was the lunch break and I was eating at a nearby food fair. The area was crowded and I sat down at the last open table by myself, even

though it was a table for four. A few minutes later, an older gentleman and a younger woman who was his assistant came along carrying trays of food, obviously looking for a place to sit. With plenty of room at my table, I immediately arose and invited the older gentleman to join me. He was hesitant, but I insisted. Finally, thanking me as he sat down, we began to chat over lunch.

After we had chatted for awhile, I asked him the question that many people in this situation would ask, "Of all the one thousand success principles that you have discovered, which do you think is the most important?" He smiled at me with a twinkle in his eye, as if he had been asked this question many times, and replied, without hesitating, "The most important success principle of all was stated by Thomas Huxley many years ago. He said, "do what you should do, when you should do it, whether you feel like it or not."

He went on to say, "There are 999 other success principles that I have found in my reading and experience, but without self-discipline, none of them work." Self-discipline is the key to personal greatness. It is the magic quality that opens all doors for you, and makes everything else possible. With self-discipline, the average person can rise as far and as fast as his talents and intelligence can take him. But without self-discipline, a person with every blessing of background, education and opportunity will seldom rise above mediocrity. ●

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IN MEMORY OF FRAN CRIPPEN

BY CHUCK WIELGUS, USA-SWIMMING

There are no words that can adequately describe the roller coaster of emotions that the swimming family has traveled this past week. Nor are there enough words to adequately translate for those not in Conshohocken these past few days what took place here. People from around the country, and indeed even a few from other countries, made their way to this special place to gather, to place arms around one another's shoulders and to embrace the Crippen family in a circle of love and affection. There was much crying, some laughing, much reminiscing and overwhelming moments of solemn private reflections as we listened to those who spoke and shared such deep and heartfelt memories, thoughts and sentiments with us.

Virginia Swim Coach Mark Bernardino opened the ceremonies with rich and warm stories of what Fran meant to his family and to the swim team at the University of Virginia, where Fran was the team captain and leader. He took us on a short journey with words that conveyed images of Fran's many qualities and characteristics, and he painted pictures that made us smile and made us cry. Fran's Germantown Academy brothers were represented in Geoff Meyer's first reading of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 and others who spoke after were equally composed, but perhaps none more so than Fran's girlfriend, Caitlin Regan who spoke in a manner that conveyed the deepest of love and respect not just for Fran but for the entire Crippen family. Whatever Caitlin's future might become, it will be impossible for anyone who heard her speak in such a strong and composed way not to think that perhaps there will in some way always be four Crippen sisters.

At the end of the service, Fran was carried from the church by his GA and UVA brothers and the long procession to the Calvary Cemetery ensued for the burial. As the church emptied, so too did the adjoining hall where those who could not get into the church were able to watch via video. People had come to the church 2-3 hours early and still had to wait in a line that stretched around the block.

Following the burial, a reception was held at Germantown Academy. There, many of us lingered in the hallowed space that is the swimming pool at GA and the place where Dick Shoulberg has shaped both swimmers and souls for decades. When you step in, you don't want to leave and you know you are in a cocoon of passion, of heart, of commitment, of success and accomplishment. It is a sanctuary where the greatest of teaching takes place, and where young men and young women grow and emerge and blossom into adults ready to make a difference in the world.

Back in the GA field house, where the reception was going on, the UVA brothers circled up, locked arms and began their college cheers. Not to be outdone, the GA brothers responded in kind and amidst the exuberance of their youth the attending adults could be seen with both wide smiles and teary eyes. And then another special moment, Eva Fabian, the young 17-year old swimmer who also competed at the race in the UAE with Fran stepped before a microphone and played a rendition of the national anthem on her violin that stirred every heart and punctuated the day.

As things drew to a close and people began to drift away, it was hard not to begin turning one's thoughts to what happens next. How will family and friends respond to this tragedy? How will life go on for those most deeply affected by the loss? What will be done to help the young athletes and others who will struggle with their ongoing grief? What will organizations and others do to ensure that a tragedy like this never happens again? Many, many questions.

Many things have been quietly in the works below the surface this past week. Counselors and others with experience have been made available to the family, to friends and to athletes who were Fran's teammates. FINA has already announced plans to conduct an investigation, and so too has USA Swimming. Investigators of the highest caliber with international experience and specific experience in the UAE are already engaged and at work in the fact-finding that must be done. USA Swimming's is forming its review commission that

will receive the investigator's report and consider many other things in an effort to provide the Crippen family with information on what happened before, during and after the competition; and to come forward with recommendations necessary to improve safety at future open water events so that nothing like this ever happens again.

Many people are reaching out and want to share information, offer suggestions and offer their own time and expertise to the work that needs to be done. USA Swimming will establish a means by which everyone who has information and recommendations to share will be able to do so. However, it is important for people to understand that these efforts will take time. Investigators have an enormous task in front of them, with many people from different parts of the world to talk to. The process of fact-finding will take several months and people should not expect progress reports along the way while this work is ongoing. I would urge those people with information and recommendations they have to share to take the time now to write things down while things are still fresh and to have this ready to share with the commission once it is established and a conduit has been set up to receive information.

USA Swimming President Bruce Stratton and I will continue to share information as we can. Bruce and I remain in constant contact and we have a "kitchen cabinet" of wise and experienced people helping us. We will do the best we can to respond to any questions and queries that come our way, but we also trust that people will understand that there will be some things that – at least for a time anyway – may have to be quietly withheld. However, please know that the efforts going forward are very in-depth and that we'll seek to be as transparent as we can be along the way.

With the deepest of sorrow, and the strongest of intent to ensure that no other family has to carry the weight of a similar tragedy -

Chuck Wielgus, USA Swimming



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