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Age Group Swimming

COACHING TEN YEAR OLD'S

BY BRYAN DEDEAUX, MISSION VIEJO



Bryan Dedeaux

My name is Jennifer Gibson, I'm a member of the ASCA Board of Directors. I'm very excited to introduce your speaker. He started coaching in Irvine, California before moving to the world famous Mission Viejo Nadadores where he's been coaching since 1999.

And being a true student of the sport, he found out really which age, which level of athlete that he loves working with, and was able to be with the great team in doing that. He became the Division Leader overseeing the ten and under age group, and that's the group that he's going to speak to you on - working with ten and unders. And his name is Coach Bryan Dedeaux. I'm very excited to introduce him to you.

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: Wow, there's a lot of you guys. How are you guys doing today? Good? Everybody had a safe trip here? Pleasant? Good. You guys get enough sleep? Are



Correction

ASCA Newsletter 2011 Issue
10 — 2011 ASCA Awards of
Excellence (page 3). The coach
listed for Delaware Swim Team
should be Bruce Gemmell.

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you guys awake? How many of you guys are here for your first World Clinic? Oh, awesome. How many of you guys are here for your first clinic period? Cool. I remember my first Clinic. I have no idea what year it was. It's a long time ago. And Coach Rose sent me to Palm Springs to listen to Jon Urbanek talk about things that, to be honest, I had no idea what he was talking about. He had shouts going on and lactate testing, test this, test that. Things were flying over my head. But in all that confusion, in all that craziness, I took whatever I could find in that clinic and I made it work for me. So, if you're here for the first time for World Clinic, just enjoy and have fun, and whatever you can take out of it can be extremely valuable for you and for your swimmers and for your team; so enjoy. First thing I'd like to do today is get you guys started with a movie, *Jaws*, *Saw V*, no. We'll get started with the fun little movie just to kind of give you a little idea of what I'm going to be talking about today and this weekend. And hopefully it all works out, it worked out perfect before. Of course, when the pressure is on, technology sometimes messes with you. Let's see, I think we're good. Here we go. So, it'll wake you up hopefully. Maybe get you up on your seats and dancing.

[Video starts] [0:03:54]

Male Speaker: What's fun about swimming?

Child Speaker: Being with your friends.

Child Speaker: Friends.

Male Speaker: Say it louder.

Child Speaker: Friends.

Male Speaker: Say it louder.

Child Speaker: Friends.

Child Speaker: We like hard workouts.

Male Speaker: So, what do you guys like about swimming?

All Children: Friends.

Male Speaker: What do you like about swimming?

Child Speaker: Having fun. And it makes me stronger.

Child Speaker: It's awesome.

Child Speaker: It's awesome.

Child Speaker: Friends.

Child Speaker: Hard workouts.

Child Speaker: I like swimming because I get to swim with my friends, I get to see my nice boat.

Male Speaker: Oh, you're trying to get out some butterfly today?

Child Speaker: It's fun.

Child Speaker: It's fun going to swim meets

[Video ends] [0:08:00].

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: How many times did you guys hear the word 'friends' in that video? A lot. And I pulled out the video camera and simply asked a question, "What do you guys like about swimming?" And that's what I got. And they simply just loved to have fun and loved to be around their friends. And that's pretty much what coaching ten unders is all about. And that's what we're going to talk about today basically - just having a time of fun. See this will come up here, and we'll get started. Any day now. Let me see. Hey, there we go. Oh, what's going on? Coaching ten and under athlete's. This is something I've been doing for many years. I started coaching when I was 13 with my summer league, and ten and unders were one of the first groups that I coached. And I moved to the

Mission Viejo Nadadores, coached all different age groups and then settled in to the ten under division. And I just love it. It's a blast. I'm sure that if you're here, you guys have coached ten unders or are apparently coaching ten unders, and you know exactly what I'm talking about. The things that you saw on that video are things that you do probably on a daily basis. Kids running around, laughing, having fun with their friends. You've got to ask the question, when you're coaching, what is fun to these kids? Being with friends had to be number one. They come back everyday to be with their buddies. And I'm sure all of you guys have best friends that started out as swimmers that you didn't know and grew to be your best friends. They love improvement. Kids love to continue to swim and improve. It doesn't have to be in swimming but in anything. They go to school, they want to improve their grades, they're taking piano, they want to get better at piano. So, improving is one of the things that's fun to everybody. It's enjoyable when you're improving in anything.

Competition: kids love to compete. They love to be aggressively competing with their friends, they love to compete against people they don't know. And how many of you guys have your kids go to these big swim meets and enjoy their competition and come back and say, "Oh, I made friends with this guy who just beat me?" I mean, they love it. They make friends through swimming or through competition. They love finding something they're good at. "Hey, guess what, I just learned how to do the underwater dolphin kick and I'm good at it." They love that. Playing games obviously is

a blast. They love playing games, again with friends. Demonstrating skills and abilities: kids have a wonderful time if they get to be picked to demonstrate. Check me out, spotlight's on me, I'm good at this, everybody can watch. Learning something new: kids enjoy learning. And that's one of the things that you really have to understand coaching these little kids. They do love to learn new things. So, teach them. Teach them as much as possible. Teach them new things. Accomplishing something they didn't think they could: your job as a coach - make practices fun, make meets fun, make practices and meets valuable so that they get a lot out of it, and create a positive environment for your athletes. You want to make sure that what they do is not only fun but they're learning new things, they're learning how to be a good person. And they're building self-confidence. And one of the most important things that you guys have to understand when we coach younger athletes is that we're coaching for the long term. We want long term success. You can coach a good ten-year old that is maybe seven feet tall, and most of his competition is this tall - four feet tall - and that kid might be able to beat most of the competition most of the time. But once you guys buckle down and really educate that swimmer and his or her parents about what swimming is all about - technique, hard work - and at some point all their friends are going to catch them and pass them as they get older. So, we are teaching for a long term success.

One of the things that I just threw in there at the last second was teach character values. I thought that I didn't want to leave

this out. You guys... it's pretty much your responsibility to teach these kids how to be good people, not just good swimmers. You have to be good role models. If you guys say, "Hey, you guys should have good nutrition, you guys should do this, you should do that," you guys, as coach, should do it as well. Be good role models, and teach them what good sportsmanship is all about; and character values - teach them how to be good people. The balance between hard work and fun: this is something that we have to do. And this is something that we have to figure out with the younger athletes. You need to have both, because a productive environment will lead to success. Hard work: hard work should be fun. When the kids are working hard, they get out and they feel good about themselves. Technique is hard, technique is very hard. I got in the other day, I tried to do a drill that I made my kids do, couldn't do it. And it was hard, but it was fun learning something new. Effort: they've got to put in the effort. And when you do that, man, you get out of that pool and you feel good about it. Focus: it's hard for these kids to stay focused - very hard for some of them. But it's one of those things they have to do. And we teach them how to focus. Too much hard work causes swimmers to quit, give up or simply survive. I think of one of the kids that I had in one of my groups, and pushed him pretty hard, and didn't give him the proper technique, the proper training for that particular group, and every single day the kid survived. And it was one of those mistakes that I made as a coach. And I've learnt from that mistake. We don't want these kids just keeping up. That's not good enough for ten and unders. They need to have some sort of confidence, some

sort of feeling of success when they're swimming. And just keeping up is just survival, and that's not going to teach them anything, that's not going to make them any better.

Fun: fun should be hard work. Games: games are fun, games are hard. The dryland that you saw in there, that stuff is very hard. But, they have no idea that it's hard because they're having so much fun. Dryland, challenges: if you challenge a kid, you would get more out of them. "I challenge you to do this drill better." "Whoever has the best streamline on this lap gets a high five from Coach Bryan. High five from Coach Bryan is not that big of a deal, but everybody will work hard because if they win, they feel good about it. Too much fun leads to unproductive workouts and poor performances. I mean, at the practices, you can't have too much fun. And nothing's going to happen. You're not going to get much out of your kid. So, you've got to have a good balance between hard work and fun.

We're going to talk about two things, two main aspects today with the kids - the mental side and the physical side. The mental side we're going to go with validation, belief system and motivation and talk about those a little bit more. The physical side - technique, training and meet performances. Validation: this is something I took a class in in college, it's called Human Relationships and it was probably the most beneficial class I've ever taken, and it had to do more with me as a coach and coaching swimming than anything else - but really taught me how to relate to my athletes and how to coach and how to teach, and also to relate with other coaches and other adults. Motivation is a key in



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putting value in the life of a child. Each child must be important to you, the whole child, not just the swimmer. You need to appreciate everything about them. Make them feel that they are important to you. Get to know their video games, TV shows, music, other sports they play - the things that interest them when they are not swimming. I have so many games floating in my head from ipods and all these electronics. I know all the stuff that they play; and I know how to play them, and I play them myself. And it's a lot of fun. Some of the music that they listen to and the TV shows that they watch. If you get to know those things, then you bring it up in a little conversation with one of the kids, it'll blow their minds. They love that stuff. Open up, share stories about yourself, about your family, about your life when you're not coaching. My favorite thing and the kids' favorite thing is when I tell stories about my daughter and how she poops and then draws with it on the side of the crib - they love that stuff. They remember that stuff forever. You know, share what's going on in your life. Share your own experiences as an athlete. I like to tell the kids what I did when I was their age and what I was going through. And it was not nearly as intense as what they're doing but they appreciate that.

How do you create that sense of worth in your athlete? Well, how many of you guys have been out to dinner with a group of friends and everyone's having a good conversation. One person's talking and then, let's say, it's your turn to talk, and you start to explain what your story is all about and then two people to the sides start their own little conversation because maybe whatever you're saying wasn't very important. That

feeling of "Jeez, these people don't get me, these people don't want to hear what I have to say." That's the exact opposite of validation. But when people are making eye contact with you, they're looking at you, they're listening, that's the validation that you need. When you make eye contact with people, that's saying, "I'm listening to you, you're important, and I value what you have said." Listen to them when they have a story to tell. A lot of my kids run up to me first thing and go, "Coach Bryan, Coach Bryan, my dog got a haircut today." "Okay, that's great." And just listen. You just have fun and listen to them, because they have some crazy stories to tell. Acknowledge their concerns. Sometimes kids have things that are going on and they want to just tell you. "Coach Bryan, my dog died yesterday." You've got to listen and be sympathetic. Proactive compliments: just tell a kid, "Hey, I like your new Speedo. It's awesome," or, "I like your swim suit." "I like your hair cut," or, "Hey, your mom is a totally good cook, I love the snack that she brought the other day. I really appreciate that too." Human contact - high fives, pounded, boom, whatever, a little pat on the head. I tend to do that a lot. I'm always rubbing their heads and patting them on the head, sometimes I do with my ring finger. Once they know you care, then they have something to believe in. And belief is the catalyst that will ignite your group or your team. These three things I preach more than anything else when I'm talking to my kids. And I want them to believe in these three things more than anything when we swim. They have to believe in you the coach. They have to. And you guys have to sell yourself. It's not ego just

to go... it's not... you know, why the big head, "I'm the best coach in the world." It's not about that. But you have to sell yourself. If they don't believe that you're a good coach, what are you going to get out of them? You know, it's like their parents. They believe their parents are the greatest thing on the planet, and you have to get yourself up to that level of "My coach is the greatest thing on the planet." Sell yourself. Be the best coach to fit their needs as a swimmer, as a developing athlete. They have to believe in the team. They have to understand that your team has what they need to succeed in the future and to succeed now. And they have to believe in themselves. And it's your job to sell their potential. You have to let them know how important they are, how good they can be. You know, anything is possible. With ten and unders, you can't say, "Well, you're going to be a good breaststroker but you can forget the butterfly." It might be true, but you don't tell them that. Anything can happen. Anything is possible. And they have to understand that you as a coach believe in them. And once they get that you've got them hooked. Motivation, the biggest motivator obviously is being with your friends. That's number one. That's the only thing I can think of so much that I was kind of blinded by all the other things, and had to really think hard about all the other motivational things that go on. But establish early the connection between practice performance and meet performance and let them know that if they swim well at practices they should swim well at swim meets. Kids love to learn so teach them how to be their best. I love to sit down and do little classroom sessions once a week, or sometimes more than that, where we just

talk about swimming. Sometimes I'll talk about things that have no relation to swimming, just teach them how to be good people. Teach goal-oriented behavior. Teach them how to do goals, teach them how to set their goals, teach them how to think for themselves and how to get the most out of themselves through goal setting. Build self-confidence through preparation - everything you do at practice is about being prepared for a swim meet. So, when they have self-confidence going to swim meets, they're more prepared. That preparation that they've gone through over the last three weeks, four weeks to get to that swim meet will help them be calm, will help them be relaxed and will help them get what they want out of their swim meets and out of their swimming.

Teach thinking big. You guys, well, have heard it but if you think big, big things happen. You think small, small things happen. It's really important to teach thinking big. Again anything is possible. Test sets, they can help. They can see if they're improving or not when there is not a swim meet around the corner. I used to do the test sets almost every week. Now, I do test sets maybe once a month. I change my routine a lot but test sets can be very valuable. Teach purpose, there is a reason for everything. You're not just having them do six 200s just because they have to know why; and I think that ten and unders and even some of those eight-year-olds, they're smart enough to figure out what you're talking about. I don't think you should dumb it down for them. Age appropriate language obviously but you don't have to dumb it down. You can explain to these kids what's going on, why they're doing it, and if they want to swim fast and they

want to get better, they'll listen and they'll try to understand it, and they'll have questions for you. And that's exciting when they do have questions. Games, rewards, deals, fun, fun, fun, fun, fun - all those things are very motivational. When we do Saturday, sometimes we'll do a completely different workout and there'll be rewards involved - 'if you can do this, you can get out early' or 'we'll pick cards' - it's a lot of fun. Got to have fun, got to play games, got to do different stuff.

Okay. Technique: I'm not going to get too much into it. Tomorrow I'm going to be talking about free style and backstroke; but the bottom line is you guys - the technique is number one with the little kids. It's not about yardage, it's not about training, it's not about the intensity - it's about technique. We have to build the vessel before we build the engine. So, I always start with balance. I do three to four weeks of hard technique work at the beginning of the season, always starting with balance. I explain to them the difference between gravity and buoyancy. We go over head position and body position as that increases their balance and their kinesthetic awareness in the water, introduce breathing mechanics here for some of the strokes; while they're learning this balance and how to get on the surface of the water the right way you can teach them how to get their breath in without losing their body position. Core connection and stabilization: I like to teach them that they have ab armor and if they are strong in the core then they will be a stronger vessel. And you stabilize the body through that core connection. Well, we go to the legs: I think the legs are one of the

most important things that you guys can be working on with these kids in all four strokes. A strong kick is key to speed. And if you do it right, it's something that can definitely take them to the next level. I think kick technique is taught just like point of breathing; it took me a long time to figure this out. I thought you just threw a board to them and then say, "Kick." And some kids are very natural. I think a lot of the kids are very natural kickers. Obviously breaststroke is the hard one. But freestyle kick is taught just like a pull or a breath and you have to actually look at that kick, and once you really focus on their legs and what's going on, you'll notice a lot of funky things. Sometimes they are not kicking from the hips, they're not pointing their toes. Sometimes you'll see a little breaststroke kicking in there that you didn't notice before and you have to be on top of it because kicking can be done wrong. Even freestyle, even backstroke, it can be done wrong. And obviously butterfly kick. You flutter a lot and that can be done wrong as well.

The arms - pulling: this is actually one of the things that in the beginning of the season I don't even touch on. I don't really think about the point too much. We get to that as the season progresses; pulling is tricky and there's a lot of biomechanics involved that you have to get down. But I think the more important things are balance and body position at the younger ages. Then we start thinking about where that pull starts, the catch - you got the early vertical catch in free style right in front here. The early horizontal, just turn the body this side, the hands become horizontal. Outside vertical catch for breaststroke, front vertical catch for fly but vertical catch and

getting the form involved is really difficult for those little kids; and it's a great idea for them to have in their head early. But it's not something that you should expect them to perfect. Some of the kids that I coach are really good at it and some of them aren't. In fact, when I looked at the videos that I took, that we'll see tomorrow, not too many of my kids are doing too much vertical catch, but it's there. And as long as they have an understanding of it and they keep on working on it, and as coach you keep on working on it, they'll get it eventually. The national level kids are still working on vertical catch. Distance per stroke first and tempo when appropriate, teach them how to get as far as possible with every stroke and do that first. Focus on the longer strokes. Then when they have the distance per stroke pretty good, the way you want it, you can start focusing on the tempo and how to get that tempo up to master distance per stroke to get them out there faster. I think that's what I do more than anything, just work on distance per stroke. How can you get from point A to point B with the least amount of strokes? And hopefully your time starts to go down when you get good at it. Recovery, hand and arm exit, recovery style at the front in a lot of different styles especially in breast stroke. Freestyle you've got straight arm recovery or bent elbow, hand and arm entry. We have a lot of these things. There are ideas that the kids will figure out as you go through it. Drills: isolate or full body movements, repetition create habits. Notice I did not say good habits. Drills do not necessarily produce good swimming. If you're not on the ball as a coach and making sure they do the drills the way you want them, those drills can be really

bad. Drills can make it easier for swimmers to repeat the desired actions during the learning process. A drill done right will help establish good biomechanics and lead to good technical habits. That's a drill done right the way you want it done as a coach, and you need to teach the kids the right way. It's absolutely pointless to send the kids on sixteen 50s drill down swim back if they're getting no feedback, if they're not learning from what they're doing, if they're just swimming down and swimming back. Drills done wrong can sabotage progress and create bad habits. I noticed a lot of the drills that they do have created some interesting habits that I didn't like. And so, I learned how to kind of fix that as the kids are doing the drills.

Training: planning is probably the most important thing you guys can do before the season. Start with your season plan, if you don't have a season plan even for the little kids, you're just flying - you never know what's going to happen. And you need to have that plan early, you need to have it setup, so you know exactly what you're going to do and if you don't follow the plan, that's fine. I never follow my plan. But I have it; I know exactly what I'm going to do even if I don't do it. And if I don't do it I know what I can do to go around but I always backup with the season plan and get there. How much yardage is just too much yardage? How much yardage is too little yardage? I know this would be a big topic for most of the coaches and I'll probably get a lot of questions after. But this is what I do with my gold kids and these are my highest level swimmers as ten-year-olds, and I have some nine-year-olds in there too; they do about 3,500 yards per day and that's about

average. That's in the meet part of the season. The beginning of the season obviously is a lot different when we're doing so much of the technique. Then we get a little bit of the technique in training, the yardage just goes up. Sometimes we'll go 4,000 or over; I used to do a lot more to be honest, they used to do a lot more; but I realized that they didn't necessarily need the extra yardage even though I felt the extra yardage was being done right. Just felt like they're going to need it - getting the same results with less yardage. Yes?

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: Hour and a half. They are all pretty much go hour and a half. I have four groups in my division and they go an hour and a half and then the lowest division goes an hour and fifteen. And the other groups have gone anywhere between 1,500 and 3,000 yards per day. And, you know, the Gold Group is really the only group that we train. The other groups really don't train. They just work on the technique, they work on the skill work more than anything else and when they are ready to go to gold, then we kind of give them more of an eleven, twelve workout - what you might typically see as eleven, twelve with the training and technique that way. Yes?

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: Well, some of them are ranked top in the country and some of them are just getting their JO cuts. So, there are some real fast, fast, nine and ten-year-olds and then there are some average ten-year-olds. But the way we choose our groups, the kids get into the Gold Group when they can swim well, swim hard, swim fast, swim long and hold good technique - number one. And we have lots of kids in my Blue Group which is right below that have JO cuts. Some

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4. On breaststroke: Work to perfect the timing of your pull and kick.
5. On butterfly: Work to find a rhythm and build that into your stroke.
6. Believe in your coaches and your training regimen.
7. Fitness and nutrition are important. What you do outside of the pool counts!
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other times they are SCS or T10s. Their parents might say, "How come my kid is not in the Gold Group yet?" Well, you guys all know it. Just because they are fast, doesn't mean they are good. It's really hard to explain that to the parents. You put a kid that may be fast into a Gold Group where the training is a little bit more intense, then all of a sudden, they go backwards. I just don't let that happen. That's all about educating the parents and educating the kids. And sometimes, they don't like it. And I say, "I'm sorry," "I'm sorry but I'm not sorry." "You're going to do better in the Blue Group." Yes?

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: The Gold and Blue Group go five to six times a week. And that's what's offered - six times a week is offered. We encourage them to come four times a week. And sometimes, the kids will come six times a week. And the kids that come six times sometimes I'll have to ask them to come less because they are getting too into it and they are too young and they need to just relax and go play another sport. They usually do better. I had a kid that came six days a week in my Blue Group and technique was okay - really, really hard worker but just had no feel for the water whatsoever. And the parents asked me, "What do we do?" "We don't know if this is the right sport for her." "We think we should take her out because she is not succeeding." You know, "Calm down. Calm down. Calm down." Not succeeding as a 10-year-old, you've got the wrong idea. I do a lot of educating there. But I asked them and said, "Does she do any other sports?" "No." "Does she play the piano?" "No." "Does she do anything else?" "No." "Why don't you take a day off or two and go do something else?"

and their eyes went, "What are you talking about? Less swimming - how can that help?" Well, two weeks later, the next swim meet comes along, she swam a little bit better, started dropping her time a little bit and then for the rest of the season she dropped every single swim meet in every single event for the rest of the season. Sometimes, they need to just do other things. Take their focus off of swimming and you guys know those - some of those kids are so intense and some of their parents are so intense, they need to relax, they need to have a little bit more going on outside of swimming. We go through weekly cycles of kick, drill, pull and swim. For the kick, 100% effort 100% of the time unless we're focusing on technique but usually in practice, we are focusing on going as hard as possible during the kicks and the coaches will fix technique throughout the sets. So, you've got 100% effort, 100% time drill. There is no passing. We focus on the details, just make sure that they're doing it right - getting what they need to get out of it. Pull - focus on mechanics and feel for the water. If they are going through heavy pulling sets, they are not doing the technique right if they are not focusing on what they are supposed to do and gaining that feel for the water. For pulling, we don't use buoys. It puts a little bit too much pressure on them. And we don't do enough yardage to really have shoulder issues. So, we just really focus on the technique and feel for the water with those paddles. And then...

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: Paddles: Every once in a while, throw buoys in there just to change it up, but for the most part, we do a lot of paddles without... and then I like them to kick. I like them to kick

a lot. They kick hard on everything. Yes?

Male Speaker: Why don't they like the buoys?

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: It's not that they don't like the buoys, they just think they don't necessarily need them... the feel for the water, you've got the paddles and you're already increasing surface area, and for these kids who are still trying to figure out how to get their hands in the right position. And yes, I definitely had success using buoys or using anchors to kind of slow them down, so they can get that catch. But for the younger kids, it's a little less effective for my style of coaching.

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: The eight and unders use paddles. They use them usually just for kind of feel for the water. They are not like obviously training or anything. But we start them pretty early in paddles. "Hey, put on the paddles because you are having a little trouble feeling the water here," that type of thing. Yes?

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: We have the smallest paddles possible, pretty much for the young, small kids. The Tyr Catalyst paddles are really awesome. I swim with those. As a masters swimmer, I like them. So, I had my little kids get the extra small. And some of them, you can go even smaller but you just have to use good judgement. They shouldn't be too big. They shouldn't be big at all. Yes?

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: I love fins and paddles, love fins and paddles. Yes, I like to stick the fins on with the paddles. They get a really good feel for the water and going fast. So, you know, definitely. And then, swim race pace all the time - I just have them swim fast. When we're doing any sets that are

just swimming, we swim fast. We swim fast all the time. And if I see technique issues then I stop them, we talk about it and then they go back in and they swim fast. Yes?

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: Teaching focus - wow. You know, it's not about teaching focus as much as it's about just staying on top of them and holding them accountable. When they are swimming, and they are just a bunch of goofballs, you pull them out and you explain to them that this is inappropriate behaviour and we want to gain something out of these practices. A lot of the times my kids would behave awesome. I mean I don't really have behavior issues but as we all know, they are just one lap and they're done. You know, they can't focus. Yes?

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: I tend to talk way too long. I see them playing with sticks and I still talk but I really try to hold them accountable and make sure that the validation goes both ways. I'm making eye contact with you, you're making eye contact with me. So, that way somebody's talking to you, you're not going to get in trouble but that person may get into trouble.

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: Yeah, kind of all the above, but I don't do a lot of descending sets with the kids. I do some descending sets to help them get prepared for the eleven, twelve division later in the season but for the most part, they do a lot of fast swimming whether it's a 200 or 400 or 50s or 25s - everything, as fast as they can hold for the set and the bases are doable. All the bases are doable. I try not to have them fail when they are swimming. They are going to swim fast, with good technique. They are going to swim strong and they are going to get to the wall

and they are going to get some rest. And they usually get a lot of rest. I just like them to swim as fast as possible, for as long as possible that they can hold their technique and then they'll get the rest at the wall.

Yeah, and you know, again with the Gold Group, you are going to get more into training techniques, into training like eleven, twelve or thirteen, fourteen. But yeah, we'll go ten 100s on 1:50 and have everybody make it and get a ten to twenty second rest rather than ten 100s on 1:30 and half the group makes it and the other is just touching and going. That way you're going to see more quality swimming, you're going to get a little bit more rest and they are going to have a better feel for what they are doing. Okay, let's see, swim race pace.

Next, training: my weekly plan looks a lot like this. And I have it like this because it is really easy. If I know it's Thursday and for whatever reason I forgot to write a workout, it's really simple, and I keep things simple with my kids. On Thursday, we will kick freestyle, drill fly, pull back, swim, breast. And then, if we have time, we'll do skills work; and try to keep skills work pretty much the same throughout the week, so that they're getting the repetition. And it looks... if you can see, we cycle for each stroke in each discipline for the week. And then the next week we start the kick, it'll be backstroke. So, we'll start on the Tuesday schedule. And that way, if the kid usually comes Monday, Wednesday, Friday, then they're not going to be missing the same particular thing every week. So, I really like this, it's very consistent and the kids really get a lot out of that consistency. The workouts: I like to make them hard, really hard,

they're going to work hard, but they're going to be fun and they're going to be doable. I don't like to overwork them and have them fail too much. Keep your workout simple. I like to keep my work out super simple for one reason, for myself. I can't handle multiple bases and multiple lanes, my brain does not work that way. But too many layers make it hard to control the workout and can confuse the kids. I have an issue with layers and I know most of my kids have an issue with layers. So, if you give them a set of four rounds of six 50s, one 100 and a 200, I already lost myself and the kids are going to get lost and they're going to be asking questions, and somebody's going to mess it up and then you're going to get frustrated as a coach that they're not doing it right, and a frustrated coach isn't going to lead to very good swimming and happy swimmers. I keep it really simple, basic five 100's work on this, swim fast, really simple. Take time to teach how to use the clock. I had trouble using the clock from when I started up until now. And it's not easy and you have to really take the time to teach them and how to work it. The kids that are good with the clock, they get it right away and usually they end up going first because they know how to read the clock, and the kids that aren't, they go behind. But I teach the kids to use the context clue. If that guy is going second and you're going second, leave when he leaves. If you know that this guy is good at reading the clock, just watch him. They tend to go, "Okay, we're going 10 seconds apart, so I'm going to go 10 seconds behind the person in front of me always." And that works most of the time unless the person in front doesn't make a base and you did and you're not making a base

because you're leaving 10 seconds behind the person. But teach him how to use the clock, it's very important. Once they learn how to use the clock then they can swim hundreds and get their times. They get their times then they can see how fast you're swimming, they can see, "Hey I took one stroke less and I went faster. That's awesome." Some of the kids are smart enough to do those types of things and you got to let them know, got to teach them. Kids, they really like consistency and predictability. So, I keep it consistent for myself and for my kids and predictable for them so that they don't get too upset. Some of my kids I've had where I just say, "Okay, you're in lane one. You're doing so well, I'm going to move you into lane two," and panic sets in. "I'm not in lane one anymore. I'm not in the same spot. I'm not with my same friends and they freak out and they swim terrible and they go back to lane one. Yes?"

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: It follows the same order every day. The kids will be like, "Okay." So, they will get their paddles out.

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: Yeah, it really settles them in, it really settles them down. And then in the later phase of the season I'll go to more of an open practice where for a couple of weeks before the big swim meet or something, we'll go into just kind of a 'Whatever Coach Bryan wants to do; and some of them get a little freaked out about that. But some of them like that because they get tired of the same old, but for the most part I keep it really consistent.

Alright, Fridays are fun days: I did that when I was a kid and I promised that I would always do that because it's fun. I like doing Friday fun days. We play games;

and it is a little bit of a change of pace. So, we'll do a lot of technique work at the beginning, maybe some skill work that we didn't get to earlier in the week and then we'll play games for the rest of the practice. And every lap is about practicing good techniques. So, if you are swimming 100s, you know, it doesn't matter, the yardage doesn't matter. You have to focus on the technique; and if they're doing it right then you're good as gold. If they're doing it the way you want, you're fine. Let them swim, if they're not, stop them, pull them out, talk to them or just give them a "Hey, come on work on that." With a sign language and they understand it. They fix the problem. But it really doesn't matter how much they're swimming or how little they're swimming as long as they're swimming right. As long as they're swimming the way you see they should be swimming. So, I think that's important. And I used to do a lot of yardage, probably a thousand more a day average, and I got really good results. But I realized I didn't really need to do that. And I got the same results. Yes?

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: We do videos, we watch videos. We have a couple of really good videos, the Go Swim videos are awesome for the little kids. Yeah, we definitely use videos, and sometimes I'll take videos with the kids. But it's really difficult to do the videotaping during practice of the specific swimmers and have them get out and watch it. You have to have assistance and you have to plan it out really well. But we use visual aids - the videos and things like that. Definitely, they're helpful. Kids learn in different ways. They're going to learn... some of the kids they hear you, they hear

you, they hear you and they see but when you actually show them a video, it changes things out. They're real visual sometimes.

Yes. Whatever I can think of. Relays are the funnest, easiest thing for me and for relays we'll just change it up, we'll usually go through a cycle of all the strokes and then we'll have them do a periscope relay, get out and do 20 jumping jacks and then jump back in. Just change it up. So, there're tons of games. Most of the time I forget games and I do the same ones and I forget the old ones and I go back. Yes?

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: If I'm [Indiscernible] [0:46:45]? Well, I generally have an assistant with me most of the time but we have about anywhere between 20 and 30 kids. My gold group will sometimes be really small with 15 kids, 15 or 20, try to keep it on 20 and my blue group will be around 20 to 30, sometimes 35 swimmers. I always have an assistant with that group and the other groups, the silver and the reds will have about 30 kids each. It's all manageable or doable. We have good coaches. And if you know how to use your assistants, you'll get a lot more out of it.

Okay, where was I? Every lap, okay. Next slide. Dryland: how many of you guys do dryland? How many of you guys do dryland every single day? How many of you guys do dryland just once a week or twice a week just because people want to do dryland and your parents think you should? Dryland is a lot of fun. This is one of the things that motivate the kids to come back. They love doing dryland and it's really hard. But it's really fun and I love it. I think that with the little kids, it's about creating kinesthetic awareness, it's about creating

athletes. So, we focus on running, jumping, pushing, pulling, crawling, coordination, balance and we don't do your typical medicine ball stuff and typical just abs and pushups. We do those things but dryland for these guys is - like you saw in the video they're crawling on fences, they're doing bear crawls and crab walks and all these different types of things that are fun to them but where the whole body - good body weight exercises and they have no idea they're doing dryland. They have no idea they're really working out. But it's all about kinesthetic awareness and just having them develop athletic skills, agility and such things. Yes?

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: Yeah. That was tag, and tag is the greatest game on the planet for little kids. And you can just come up with hundreds of different ways to play tag. That was just - if you got tagged you had to stay still and the only way you can be free is if you got the ball. And if you got the ball then it is your duty to give it to somebody else. And I do that with medicine balls as well. So, they got medicine ball and then I get the biggest, heaviest medicine ball I could find and have them play with that. That's a lot of fun. Three to five times a week, we don't go on Saturdays and usually I like to spend a day or two doing motivational, just talking with the kids or watching videos, things like that. So, we'll do dryland sometimes five days a week but for the most part we'll go three or four. We go half an hour and we make them sweat.

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: During practice. Well, we go a two hour workout, half an hour dryland, hour and a half in the water. And all the groups do dryland and we think it's really important. We really believe that doing the dryland will help

them become better athletes which will help them become better swimmers.

Awaking kinesthetic awareness: these kids are just learning how to feel different parts of their bodies, the muscles in their body, and they're learning how to figure out why am I sore? Because you did squats and lunges and you did the crabwalk this day, that kind of thing. We want to make athletes out of the swimmers, that's number one. Body weight exercises are perfect, so, you shouldn't put these kids on the weight rack. Plyometrics are awesome; we have a little step in the front of our pool and it's long enough to put pretty much almost 30 kids and do... I mean, I'll go half an hour at just legs practice, jumping, jumping, jumping, jumping, jumping back and forth, twist, things like that. I wouldn't say a lot of that one, and I've tried myself at the gym and I'm like, "No way, I'm not even trying that," it's too hard. But, they do like it. So, I don't do the plyometrics too much because it is very, very hard. Games, you can do relays and it's like you saw, there's tons of games for dryland - it's awesome. Use stability balls: you can use stability balls like you saw for everything. You can have them just sitting down on the stability balls, listening to talks or watching a video and the stability balls engage their muscles and they have no idea they are even working them. But, use stability balls for everything, it's fun. I don't use them very much because it is a little bit hard to control the atmosphere with all these balls flying around the kids, but when I get a chance it really is awesome.

Meet performance, let's see. Okay, I'm running out of time, we better hurry up. Good practice leads to good meets.

Unfortunately, that's not always true for any athlete. Sometimes your kids will train and they'll have the best month of training that they have ever had and they are making bases that they couldn't make before and all of a sudden they step onto the block and boom out in go, "What's going on?" Well, you swam well all week, all month, and you're 10. Sometimes it doesn't all work out the way you want. But, we plan for success, we give them the confidence to do it, and sometimes it doesn't work, but as coaches we just need to educate the kids and have them understand that. A lot of times it works out. If you know kids are swimming well at practice as long as there's nothing wacky going on up here, usually they're swimming pretty good. But, you should be emphasizing that consistently, that's number one with those kids as far as, "Hey, why are we practicing?" "So you can swim well at the swim meets." Meets should be fun. "Go for your goals, it's the time to go out there and attack it and try to hit those goals." And every one of your kids should have goals and they should be written down and they should have them there at the meet, they should know what it is that they are shooting for. Enjoy the moment, coaches enjoy the moment, swimmers enjoy the moment. We don't want them to go there and be so intense that they can't enjoy it. I have kids that will drop two or three seconds but they didn't get first, so they are all upset and they come back with bad body language and they are all grumpy and I was like, "What is wrong with you kid? It's okay, enjoy the moment." As coach, I've got to enjoy the moment. Hold them accountable; don't allow excuses from the kids with their parents. When the kid gets DQed, and the parent goes,

"Oh, I saw it, she didn't do it, she didn't do it, she didn't do it." "Back up mom," it doesn't matter what you saw. The kid got DQed, let's take responsibility for that, let's use that as a learning experience and make sure that we don't do it again. So, we know what we have to work on at practice. I love mistakes, it drives me crazy at swim meets but I love them because they are great opportunities to learn. You can make a mistake, no big deal, just try not to make the same mistake twice. That way you know you're learning from those mistakes. I think that's one of the most important things that you can teach those kids. Make your mistakes, it's okay. I had a couple of kids that I really have to get on their case and sometimes yell at them for doing stupid things and the parent will always come back and make excuses for their child, "Well, you know my kid couldn't see the clock." "Well, I don't care." The kid didn't do what he was supposed to do, it's okay. Let's not make excuses. If these kids never think they are doing anything wrong, they are not going to learn from it, and they are not going to get better. So, let them make their mistakes, take the responsibility and learn from it. That's super important. It's one of the most important things you can teach your kids and the parents that go along with them. Watch their kids not the clock. I have a stopwatch and I have a cool little leash that I put it on, so I don't throw the watch because all I do is spin it, but I don't really use it. I think it's important to watch the body language and the attitude of the kids and see how they come up to the block, watch the stroke techniques, turns and finishes, and just watch the kid swim. I go to swim meets and to be honest

I watch it like a proud parent. I just want to have fun. I try not to take it seriously, I try to go, "Okay, let's do this, let's have fun, let's swim fast." Everything that you've done at practice will happen here. Okay. When the kid comes back, I got DQed for doing a flutter kick, I'm like, "I know, you do that at practice everyday, we talked about it twice a week. It's okay, it's alright, we know what we need to work on, it's okay." But just watch the kids and learn at the swim meets. As coaches that's what you need to do, that's important. I think if you've got too much into the splits at these swim meets, you're missing what's important. Are they doing the technique that you guys work so hard to teach them.

Coach Bryan Dedeaux: I just... Again, I'm not a numbers guy myself. That maybe a part of it, but I find there is so much more value in watching the kids. If they are swimming 500s, I might have some splits for them. 200s maybe, but, I mean, the races are so short for these little kids, it really doesn't matter what the splits are to me. You can see if they are swimming well at the beginning or are swimming well at the end. You can see what their race plan turned out to be just by watching. And the splits are going to be all up and down no matter what. So, the kids feed off your attitude and I learned this the hard way at some swim meets. You know, I was grumpy and the kids came up to me and asked me questions and I gave them grumpy answers and then they swam terrible and it was at a big important swim meet, and I learnt a lot from that. So, you've got to come to these swim meets and you've got to come happy, you've got to come hopeful saying let's

swim our best, let's have a good time, drink your coffee, your fiber energy, your rock stars, whatever you do, but you come to that swim meet with energy and be excited to be there. They could tell you to make it, that's my favorite line, take your time and make it. Even if you're not feeling it, those kids should not know that you're not feeling well. Well, you're grumpy. Don't be reactionary, or reactive or emotional, have a professional response ready for any performance mistake that can arise. I've made the mistake again of... a kid came up to me at a championship meet and said, "Why am I not dropping time?" and I just snapped, "What do you mean, why you are not dropping time? Blah... blah... blah..." and, wow, that's the worst mistake a coach could make. Now, I've come prepared for those questions. "How come I'm not swimming well?" "Because you are 10." You swam great all season long, it's okay, here's what we do, here is what we need to do. And just give him that ease-their-mind attitude. Don't take it personally or bring it home with you. I have a problem with this. I take a lot of things personally at the swim meet and sometimes I bring them home with me, and my wife is back there smiling right now. She knows, she hears it from me. But you've got to really try to separate yourself emotionally from the swim meets. And like I said, go to swim meets and just enjoy it. Enjoy the moment.

A lot of the things that are on the next couple of pages were things that kind of popped into my head as I was going through the presentation, and I just want to make sure I got them down. It's not that they are important, they didn't quite fit into my presentation. But

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approach skill work as if each child was learning for the first time. So, you got to basically step up and say, alright you guys are learning something that you may not have ever heard before and I'm going to teach you with enthusiasm and I'm going to be excited about it. And that's kind of the way I was trying to approach my presentation today with you guys. Because the first time I did a speech, I was looking at the audience thinking they know more than me, what the heck am I doing up here. But it doesn't really matter. You've got to go out and you've got to teach it like they are learning it for the first time and be excited. Use variety in teaching styles; kids learn through verbal, visual and tactile senses. So, they are going to learn by doing, they are going to learn by listening and they are going to learn by seeing. So, teach in different ways, use the visual cues, put the videos on, get them out of the pool, help them do it with their arms and legs. I got in the water with the kids recently, and in the teaching pool. Oh, what a great experience that is, that is a lot of fun and the kids got a lot out of it, getting in the water. If it's in a deep pool, it might be a little difficult because then you are treading water and most of us coaches aren't in the best shape. Absolutely, a little hard.

Don't sweat the taper, there really is no taper, but I really like to have a big meet atmosphere when the big meets come up and I kind of run it like a regular taper that I did when I was younger but they are not tapering. Physiologically it's not the same, so I just like to have a taper atmosphere, a big meet atmosphere, peak performance type of practices so that they get the feeling of what it's like. And they usually swim really well and you

are most likely working on the skills and the racing work anyway at that time. So, don't sweat the taper, just make sure they are having fun and they are ready to swim fast. Communicate, share these with co-coaches and everybody here and this is an opportunity to do that, so do it. Look to other sports for inspiration, I did jujitsu for a year and there are a lot of interesting techniques that they use to teach us and I took that and I use it with my swimmers. That was really interesting; I got a lot of ideas from different sports. Read training magazines and books for good ideas. I found an awesome one at the bookstore the other day that was just like about little kids and how to get to the little kids. And I learnt so much. And I use ideas from the book all the time. It's really cool. It's got the one with the kid and he's got these big glasses on. I can't remember the name. Kate, do you remember the name of that book? No, I'll get it. I'll figure it out. Spend a day in an elementary school classroom and observe. Has anybody ever done that? Do it. Learn from teachers that do it everyday for longer than us. They have to deal with these kids. And those kids... they have to be there. We coach kids that don't have to be there. So, we have the kids that even though they might be wild and crazy, their parents are paying for it, they want to get better, they want to be there. We have it easy. Go to a classroom and watch these professional teachers do their thing. It's pretty awesome. When my little brother was growing up, I helped out in the classroom and I learnt a lot from watching the teachers there. Never play favorites: I learnt a lot from some of my coaches in the past. It's not cool. Every kid

is awesome. So, treat them that way. Proactive fair means to save you a lot of trouble. Make sure that you're on top of it. I know that that's one of my weaknesses. You know, call up the parents and say, "Let's have a meeting and talk about your kid; not because it's a bad thing or a good thing, just so that we can figure out what we need to do to get your kid where we think they should be." Relays are always done on a computer for big meets. It's the only fair way. I don't go off, you know, this kid's attitude or this or that. Hey, don't. There's your relay right there. And the kids get it. You start to make judgment calls at this age, we can run into some serious issues. Kids will, "Oh," leaving the team - and they get all worked up. But if they know it's just, "Hey, you have the fastest time, you're on it. You have the fourth fastest or fifth fastest time, you're on the next relay" - whatever. They get it, it makes sense, and the parents don't jump down your throat too much.

Random thoughts: try getting with your kids. That's what I was talking about earlier. It's awesome. Set personal goals, practice what you preach. Set personal goals - if you tend to yell a lot and you don't want to yell, set a goal to not yell. If you do something that you don't like, set a goal to not do that or to do it in a positive way. I really, really believe in setting personal goals for yourself, not really necessarily about swimming or coaching, but just to be a better person. And when you're a better person, you're a better coach, and the kids like you more. And that's what you guys want, you want the kids to enjoy what they're doing. You want them to like you.

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- 1935 Illinois HS State Championships - sets a world record, 100-yard backstroke.
- 1936 Wins the gold medal for The United States in the 100-meter backstroke at the 1936 Berlin Games at 17 years old.
- 1944 First instructor for U.S. Navy SCUBA Divers.
- 1947 Adolph Kiefer and Associates is founded.
- 1948 As aquatics supplier to the U.S. Olympic Swim Team, Kiefer debuts the nylon swim suit.
- 1965 Inaugurated into the International Swimming Hall of Fame.
- 1966 Kiefer patents the first design for a non-turbulence racing lane.



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Stay active and healthy: very important. Teach nutrition, go over nutrition with the kids, it's very important. Introduction of psychological training is appropriate. Visualization skills and things like that. So, if you're good at the psychological part of it, you can really do some good things with them and have some

fun with it. And I think this is one thing that I needed to make sure I put in there - your family comes first. If you're married, if you have kids the family comes first. Every decision you make has to be done with the family first. And I think that's... You're not going to go very far as a coach if you're not taking care of your family first. And that's

one of the reasons why I brought my wife here, so she could help me and support me; and when she gets the opportunities, I'll be there supporting her then I will - that's what is important to me.

So, I really appreciate you guys being here, Thank you. •

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SPIRE INSTITUTE INTRODUCES SWIMMING POST GRADUATE PROGRAMS AND RESIDENTIAL ACADEMY.

SPIRE INSTITUTE, OCTOBER 18TH 2011

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There is a constant quest in finding the best and most innovative resources possible and searching for ways to increase practice time to maximize results.

Now more than ever, coaches and athletes are incorporating intensive dryland training to increase speed, power, agility, strength and endurance. But that isn't enough. Athletes are also looking at nutrition and how to optimize their results. As a backdrop, athletes and coaches are always in search of state of the art facilities for their training and a program's growth.

SPiRE Institute, located in Geneva, Ohio, has brought together leaders in swimming, sport performance preparation, pool technology and nutrition to create an unmatched training and competition complex, for post

graduate athletes beginning in 2012 and residential high school Academy athletes soon after. SPiRE Institute also accommodates large-scale events and club team opportunities. It is truly Olympic caliber at every level and the USOC has taken note.

Recently, United States Olympic Committee (USOC) Chairman Larry Probst and President & CEO Scott Blackmun toured the facility, and came away impressed.

"This is an amazing facility," Blackmun said. "I am 100 percent confident that we will have an important relationship with SPiRE and SPiRE will play an important role in the success of our athletes moving forward."

SPiRE partnered with Myrtha pools, provider of the 2012 Olympic Trial pools. "SPiRE Institute has the most technologically advanced and state of the art pools we have built

to date," conveyed Kevin McGrath, President and CEO of Myrtha Pools USA. "The technology incorporated should make it one of the fastest pools in the world, if not the fastest."

It is rare to find world leaders in these areas, let alone resources at such a level brought together in one training environment as USA Swimming also acknowledges. "USA Swimming is excited that SPiRE has made the commitment to the sport by building this world-class facility," reiterated Mick Nelson, USA Swimming Facilities Development Director. "They will undoubtedly be a key player in the development of future Olympians, and will offer clubs and individuals from the state of Ohio, surrounding areas, and throughout the country, the extraordinary opportunity to train in a state-of-the-art residential camp

and school environment. Models like SPIRE can play an important part in the future of swimming in America.”

Starts With Coaching

Like any great program, it starts with the coaches. SPIRE’s coaches have over 40 years of expert coaching experience that has been used to develop innovative training programs for any individual or team.

Jim Bocci, head coach for SPIRE Swimming, leads the program. A nationally recognized high school and club swim coach; Bocci previously spent six years as Aquatics Director and Head Swim Coach at Fork Union Military Academy in Virginia building a nationally ranked high school and post graduate program. Bocci’s swimmers won two Virginia State Championship titles, three Virginia Prep League titles and one USA Swimming Virginia Senior Championship division title. In addition, Bocci coached over 25 individual state champions, state record holders and All-Americans.

Joining Bocci is Olympic Gold Medalist Diana Munz. After winning gold as a member of the 800-meter freestyle relay team and silver in the 400-meter individual at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, Munz won bronze in the 800-meter freestyle at the 2004 Athens Olympics.

Jerry Holtrey, long considered one of the top distance training coaches in the world, and a Hall of Fame coach, caps off the team at SPIRE. Holtrey’s USA Team, the Lake Erie Silver Dolphins, was recognized as one of the top 16 clubs in the country in 2003 earning a Gold Status designation. In September 2011, Holtrey merged the Lake Erie Silver Dolphins with SPIRE where he will continue to coach.

The Facilities

SPIRE has fused in-water and dryland training, and nutrition and conditioning together in Olympic-grade facilities to create the ultimate training program and experience.

SPIRE’s aquatics center features state of the art technology throughout the facility. A 50-meter, 10-lane pool with two moveable bulkheads highlight the center, along with a 25-yard multi-purpose pool and four therapeutic pools. With a seating capacity of more than 1,800, SPIRE is the ideal location to host large national and international competitions.

All dryland training programs at SPIRE are developed by Michael Johnson Performance (MJP) and designed to create the Complete Athlete and in this case, customized to what is optimal for swimming, short or long distance. Founded by four-time Olympic Gold Medalist Michael Johnson, MJP tailors the program for each individual sport to achieve unprecedented success. SPIRE houses only the second MJP Center in the world. Each swimmer who trains at MJP receives an initial functional assessment to identify specific areas of need and to create an individualized development program. Periodic follow-up assessments will continue throughout the training cycle to measure progress. MJP has developed phased training plans for sprint, stroke and distance swimmers that maximize and mimic muscle recruitment patterns while enhancing metabolic energy production and utilization.

Nutrition is also a central component to SPIRE training programs. Athletes who train at SPIRE have access to SPIRE Fuel. SPIRE Fuel is an innovative dining

experience that gives everyone access to the same nutritious, fresh meal options that professional athletes and Olympians enjoy. SPIRE partnered with FLIK International who provides nutritious meals to sports teams including the NFL’s New York Giants, New York Jets and Philadelphia Eagles; and Olympians including athletes at the 2002 Winter Olympic Games. SPIRE Fuel specializes in prepared-to-order cuisine with zero added trans-fat, no artificial flavors or coloring and an emphasis on local produce, fresh ingredients and whole grains.

The Programs

Coach Bocci and his team of experts have designed a series of programs at SPIRE to appeal to a wide variety of competitive swimmers. All are geared to develop better athletes, more technically proficient swimmers and individuals who embrace the qualities of leadership, commitment, self-discipline, teamwork and service while training in a world-class facility. SPIRE offers training camps in various lengths for individuals and teams and stroke-specific programs to meet the needs of any competitive swimmer or team.

Post graduate athletes training at SPIRE in 2012 will be exposed to the ideal collegiate coaching network. They will maximize training in preparation for a full 4 years of college and improve their scholarship opportunities in the process. A high school residential training Academy will open in 2013.

SPIRE Institute provides a rare opportunity for swimmers to have unique Olympic caliber training resources available in one setting, helping them maximize their full potential in the pool and in life. •

SWIMMING IN CHINA

BY BRUCE WIGO, PRESIDENT OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SWIMMING HALL OF FAME

I recently spent six weeks in China, beginning with the FINA World Championships in Shanghai and ending with the World University Games in Shenzhen. During this time I had the opportunity to visit a number of pools, meet with facility managers, swimming coaches, teachers and talk with ordinary people who swim for fitness or fun and these are my observations about the present and future of Chinese swimming.

The first thing that struck me while swimming in pools like the Water Cube in Beijing or in the South China Sea resorts was that I saw almost no one swimming the crawl. For the majority of Chinese adults, swimming means the breaststroke. It is the stroke Chairman Mao used in his famous river swims and it is the primary stroke that is taught in swimming schools.

Where pools are available, swimming is taught to primary school children as part of their physical education classes. I observed large group lessons in both Pudong (Shanghai) and Shenzhen and they were all about the breaststroke. Instructors are very proud to claim nearly a 100% success rate after only 10 lessons. It's not today's competitive stroke, but reminiscent of the style and teaching methods used in America in the 1950's.

If a student shows exceptional talent in the water he or she may be invited to attend a special

“LARGE GROUP LESSONS IN BOTH PUDONG (SHANGHAI) AND SHENZHEN AND THEY WERE ALL ABOUT THE BREASTSTROKE”

provincial sports school, which may be close enough for them to remain at home with parents or if too far to commute, they can board. There are no additional incentives, but because sport training takes priority over subjects like math and science, many parents decline the invitation, as they have higher aspirations for their children than life as a sportsman. For those who do accept the invitation, financial or other benefits may come as early as age 12, the age when a swimming instructor from Jinan University in Shandong Province says she started receiving money for swimming. With an average factory worker's salary being about \$250 a month, there will still be millions of parents with dreams of their children emulating Sun Yang's (2010 World Champion and World Record holder in the 1500 Freestyle) superstardom.

In the People's Republic of China there are 33 administrative districts, known as provinces, municipalities, autonomous or administrative regions. In each the government has built at least one world-class, multi-pool aquatic training center, in addition to other

pools. Each province also has an age group swimming championship. In Shandong Province this year, for example, there were approximately 400 swimmers, male and female, competing in age groups from 8 & under to 18 & under. A tiny number for a province that has a population of over ninety-five million people, but which reflects a system that relies upon talent identification and incentives, rather than a large talent pool like in the USA.

The importance of a sizeable talent pool may have been demonstrated by the success of the US team at the 14th FINA World Championships in Shanghai. Americans once again dominated the swimming events, bringing home 32 medals, including 16 Golds to China's 5. However, a large base seems to be less important in the minor aquatic sports where China's talent ID reliant system has achieved remarkable success in diving. Using the same principle of identifying talent and working full-time with small groups and high coach-to-athlete ratios, China has also become a power in both synchronized swimming and

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women's water polo. There may be no more than 250 females of any age playing water polo in China, compared to approximately 15,000 in the USA, but in Shanghai China finished ahead of the USA.

The difference between the USA and China, according to US Diving coach Hongping Li, is that in China athletes and parents look at sports from an early age as a serious profession, while most American athletes start in aquatics as a fun hobby or part-time sport. As for diving, says Li, "China has an unbeatable state-run system. Divers with the best bodies and best physical condition are selected and brought together for intensive and

time-consuming training. Compared with them, US divers are amateurs who have spare time for study, work and socializing."

The question is, can the system that has led to China's success in the three minor aquatic sports be replicated in swimming? So far the answer is no, although the Chinese are becoming increasingly competitive. If they adopt a broader based system and attract more talent from their population of 1.3 billion, the world had better watch out, and that may be starting. You can see it in the number of world-class aquatic facilities that are being built across the country, in the celebrity

and wealth accruing to Sun Yang, whose billboard sized image and appearances on CCTV could be seen all across China within hours and days of him setting his first world record - and in the great desire by the government to achieve international athletic success.

Diving, synchronized swimming and women's water polo may provide a glimpse of what may be coming to swimming as the size of the talent pool and number of facilities grow - and where the old style breaststroke may soon be replaced by the butterfly, backstroke and crawl in the swimming pools of China. •

RUMINATING ON THE STATE OF THE COACHING GUILD

BY JOHN LEONARD

One of the common threads I hear from Coaches my age (in their late 50s and early 60's) is the idea that young coaches today "lack the passion and fire" that young coaches "our age" had in the 70s. They back this up with some story about the young Mark Schubert, young Skip Kenney, young Richard Quick, etc. etc. All these stories are more or less true. The "young group" at that point in time were pretty aggressive, pretty radical, pretty passionate.

And certainly today, there are a lot more coaches, period. A LOT more coaches. And therefore, numerically, a lot more coaches are laid back, easy going, and perhaps got into the guild (or the fringes of it) by "accident" and not by plan. A lousy economy for a decade will do that.

From where I sit, I know just as many crazy, passionate, and VERY eager young coaches as I ever saw in my early years. But they are "hidden" pretty well...among the forests of

young coaches today. In the 70's we had a LOT fewer swim teams, a LOT fewer swimmers and a LOT fewer coaches. So despite the lack of today's modern communication devices, we were all a lot more "aware" of each other than we are today. A smaller coaching population made everyone stand out more, and also provided a lot of young coaches a much quicker leg up into the saddle of success than exists today, as today's young coaches wait for an older generation to retire or die, to get those good jobs.

In reality, I believe we have AT LEAST as many passionate and committed young coaches today as we had in the 70s. And probably a lot more. But just like every job in society, as our numbers have grown, it has become harder and harder to distinguish yourself.

Out of curiosity, I asked a few of the "old coaches" what the perception was in the heydays of

Daland, Councilman, Gambriel, Haines, and Chavoor on this topic.

You guessed it...the great historic coaches, when they reached the "advanced age" in their 60's, discussed the terrible state of young coaches in the 1970's, who lacked the work ethic, passion, etc., to be successful.

Time of course has proven that those "youngsters" like Schubert, Kenney, Quick et. al did pretty well for themselves.

There is an enormous amount of passion and dedication and commitment out there...and as soon as a few more of the "old folks" make some room, we'll see it.

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All the Best, JL



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Many coaches talk about Character building, the Heidary brothers do something about it everyday. In this one day clinic on Sunday, January 15, they will present the skills they teach and how they teach them. Whether you coach 8 and unders, age group swimmers, or high school swimmers, this one day clinic will prepare you better to help your team be a team of character.

ASCA Executive Director John Leonard says "no team in the USA impresses me more than Orinda Aquatics when it comes to 'walking the talk' of teaching 'more than swimming.' The good brothers have made what many of us aspire to, a reality in their team. I can't wait to learn more about HOW they do it."

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Educational Investment for the Level 3 course is \$99.00

You may register for either course, or both courses. Discounted price for registering for both courses is \$170.00

Clinic Schedule:

Friday, January 13 – 2-6 PM – SwimAmerica Directors and Site Supervisors Training. (contact 1-800-356-2722 if interested.)

Saturday, January 14, 2012 – Level 3 School – 8 AM to 12 Noon, 1:30-5 PM.

Sunday, January 15, 2012 – "Teaching Character and Life Skills" – 8 AM to 12 Noon, 1:30-5 PM.

Date: 1/15/2012

Location: Sheraton Suites at San Diego Symphony Hall

Speakers: Coaches Ron and Don Heidary, ORINDA AQUATICS, Miramonte High School, Campolino High School.

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