



ASCA's COACH of the YEAR

Bruce Gemmell and Tim Welsh at the ASCA World Clinic Awards Banquet, September 12th 2014

BRUCE GEMMELL

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COACHING AWARD WINNERS

Congratulations to Bruce Gemmell, who won the ASCA Coach of the year award for the second consecutive year at the 2014 ASCA World Clinic in Jacksonville this September!

The Nation's Capital Swim Club was recognized for his role in the engineering and stunning successes of Katie Ledecky, who set world records in the 400, 800, and 1,500-meter freestyle events this summer. Under Gemmell's tutelage, Ledecky won gold in the 200, 400, 800, and 1,500 freestyles plus powered the United States to gold in the 4 x 200 freestyle relay at the 2014 Pan Pacific Championships in August.

Gemmell is also the "Coach of Record" for the 2014 Jr. Pan Pacs team swimmer Isabella Rongione, who won a bronze medal in the

1500 meter free at that meet. On September 12th, Gemmell accepted the Coach of the Year award at ASCA's awards banquet.

Upon accepting the award, he thanked his entire coaching staff at Nation's Capital. He mentioned the two swimmers, Andrew and Katie, who were instrumental in helping him win his award. Gemmell noted not only Ledecky's valiant physical achievements, but also noted her generous personality outside of the pool as well.

Gemmell beat out a who's who of coaching names to win this award including fellow National Team coaches Bob Bowman, David Marsh, Greg Meehan, Gregg Troy, Dave Salo and Mike Bottom. **(Continued on p.3)**

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ASCA Coach of the Year Nominees



Pictured from L to R: Bob Bowman, Mike Bottom, Greg Meehan, Dave Salo, David Marsh, Gregg Troy

Bob Bowman

Head Coach and CEO of the North Baltimore Aquatic Club since September 2008. Has been named National Coach of the Year by the American Swimming Coaches Association four times and USA Swimming five times.

Inducted into the ASCA Hall of Fame in 2010. Swimmer Michael Phelps earned three gold medals (100 Fly, 800 Free Relay, 400 Medley Relay) and two silver medals (200 IM and 400 Free Relay). Coached two other gold medalists, Connor Dwyer (800 Free Relay) and Matt McLean (800 IM). Swimmer Cierra Runge earned a silver in the 400 Free Relay, and Chase Kalisz earned a bronze in the 400 IM.

Total FINA Points: 8477

Mike Bottom

Head Coach of the University of Michigan Men and Women's Swimming and Diving programs. Swimmer Connor Jaeger earned

a gold in the 1500 Freestyle, and two bronze medals (400 Free Relay, 800 Free Relay).

Total FINA Points: 2765

David Marsh

Current CEO/Director of Coaching at SwimMAC Carolina in Charlotte, NC. Swimmer Ryan Lochte earned a gold in the 800 Free Relay and two silver medals in the 100 Fly and 400 Free Relay.

Also coached Cammille Adams to a gold in the 200 Fly, and Tyler Clary to a gold (200 Back) and a silver (400 IM).

Total FINA Points: 5523

Greg Meehan

Head Women's Swimming Coach at Stanford since 2012. Swimmer Maya DiRado earned a silver in the 400 IM and a gold in the 200 IM.

Total FINA Points: 1841

Gregg Troy

Head Coach of University of Florida Swimming and Diving. Inducted into the ASCA Hall of Fame in 2012. Named the 2010 USA Swimming Coach of the Year and the 2010 and 2011 ASCA Coach of the Year. Swimmer Elizabeth Beisel earned a gold in the 400 IM while also setting a Pan American record, and also earned a bronze in the 200 Back.

Total FINA Points: 1864

Dave Salo

Current Head Coach of the University of Southern California Trojans. Inducted into the ASCA Hall of Fame in 2010. Swimmer Jessica Hardy earned a silver in the 100 Breaststroke and a gold in the 400 Medley Relay. Kendyl Stewart earned a bronze in the 100 Fly and a silver in the 400 Medley.

Total FINA Points: 3861



Pathways to Leadership

JIM WOOD, PROFILED

By Amy Montgomery, ASCA Fellow 2013

CHOICES

Jim Wood

“Man is made or unmade by himself. By the right choice he ascends. As a being of power, intelligence, and love, and the lord of his own thoughts, he holds the key to every situation.”

- James Allen

Jim Wood was born to a working class family in New Jersey. Jim's father, Jim Wood Senior was a field auditor for a nationwide company. The time spent with his family was precious. From the time he can remember Little Jimmy Wood aspired to be like his dad. Jim's father was a great role model for his three children, he spent much of his free time volunteering in their activities. From Boy scouts and Church and the school PTA, or helping to fund the local community pool or volunteering to coach little league, Jim Wood Senior gave selflessly out of his belief that volunteerism made a community stronger. By watching and admiring, young Jimmy grew to understand the impact a caring leader could have on others.

Jimmy Wood's father, was the kind of coach who viewed sports as a way to develop good character. He saw sports as a way to bring out the best in people. It didn't hurt that Jim Wood Senior loved sports, all sports. Growing up in a rough Brooklyn neighborhood did not afford Jim Wood Senior a place to play the sports he loved. As an adult he jumped at the chance to be involved in sports. In his role as coach, Jim's father helped kids learn to work collaboratively, he taught them good sportsmanship amongst many other desirable character traits. Jim Wood Senior helped the youth under his guidance develop their skills in a positive environment. Most importantly, Jim Wood Senior provided the kids he worked with opportunities to grow and learn as a people. Watching his dad teach life lessons through sports, showed young Jimmy Wood that sports are one means by which great people and leaders develop.

Jim spent his youth playing more traditional sports like football, baseball, basketball and track. He excelled as a young athlete. Both school and sports came fairly easy to a young Jim Wood, and he performed well without much struggle. Through his experiences with mentors, coaches, and his father, Jim learned what good leadership and selflessness could accomplish within youth sports. Jim Wood attended Union Catholic High School, in New Jersey. Given the options available, Jim chose to focus on track as a high school athlete. He had always been a fast runner so this seemed a good fit to the teenager's mind. From the first day of school, competing on the track team was Jim's driving motivation to get high grades. Good choice as it turns out. Though just a freshman, Jim proved to be one of the fastest sprinters on the team. He did well at the first meet and the second. He loved to compete and it showed. As one of the fastest sprinters on the team, Jim expected to be placed on one of the relay teams in the next meet. Jim attended all of the practices the next week. He gave his usual effort, he completed the workouts. He wasn't always the fastest, he rested, saved it for the meet. He socialized with his teammates, and generally enjoyed practices. Meet day came. All individual events, no relays. Jim performed as he expected. He ran fast and he ran well. Frustrated with the lineup and confident in his performance, Jim went to speak to the coach after meets end. Respectfully, Jim made an impassioned plea to Coach Murphy to be on a relay team at the next meet. Coach Murphy patiently waited for Jim to finish. In response, Coach Murphy quietly and sincerely said, "Since

you have started school here we have had 92 meets and practices. You have been the best at three of them." Coach let that sink in for a moment before continuing on, "the rest of the days you haven't done anything. When you start thinking about being the best every day, I'll start thinking about putting you on a relay team."

That moment was a wakeup call for Jim. He went home and considered what coach had said. Jim realized he loved competing, but was not so fond of training. He began to understand that although during a race he ran alone, the team succeeded through each member's effort all the time. Each team member owed respect and responsibility to themselves, each other and the coach. As one of the fastest runners on the team, he had a responsibility to lead. Lead by actions. Jim came to many realizations, some in that moment some later as gleaned from new experiences. Forever, this moment has impacted Jim's thinking and influenced his leadership.

During his senior year in high school Jim had injured his ankle running track. His injury resulted in much of the next two years spent in and out of cast and crutches. Jim missed competing desperately. He tried many different endeavors to replace the void left by the injury. Jim missed running, he missed competing competently at a high level, and as many athletes do, Jim tried to return to track, but found he was incapable of competing at his former level. Struck by the reality that his dream for a successful track career had ended, Jim was crushed. At first it was a struggle, trying to find his new identity. Jim eventually realized that he was not defined only

by his accomplishments as an athlete. He slowly began to build his identity with a much more encompassing attitude.

High School provided Jim with experiences that proved formative to the leader he would become on and off the deck. Jim and a few friends ran for leadership positions in school. Jim served as president of the student body his freshman, sophomore, and junior years in high school. He learned to work with others to accomplish goals and successfully organize groups of people to complete tasks. Senior year, Jim was elected to the Executive Committee as Treasurer. Along with his friends, Rob Mathers and Gary Buffington, who filled the roles of President and Vice President respectively, the group was charged with overseeing all student body activities and governing groups. As leaders of the high school the obligation of raising funds for new electronics

Jim... learned to address many issues at once, to act with honesty and integrity, and that organization and sharing of responsibilities, along with some creative problem-solving can lead to success..

was placed on their shoulders. The teenagers threw around a bunch of ideas, but settled on something novel. With bravado that comes from not knowing what one can't do, the teenagers formulated a plan to raise funds and have the adventure of a lifetime in the process. The ambitious leaders were not certain how the plan would be received by the school, nor were they confident the new principal would even consider allowing them to take such a risk. The boys spent their time bombarding Principal Damian with presentations of their grand scheme. The teenagers approached the situation intelligently, the group presented well thought out ideas and a good plan for putting on a successful fund raiser. Damian finally gave his consent. The teenagers put into action their plan to stage a fundraising concert. The boys managed to book a date with a relatively unknown band. The Who headlined the concert, raising large sums of money for Union Catholic High School's student body in 1967. The boys were so successful in their endeavors to raise funds, they decided to try their luck once again. In 1968, they hired another up-and-coming band. Again the risky venture paid off. With the help of Cream, Jim and the other

ASB leaders proved quite successful at raising money to help their school. This experience helped develop Jim's ability to think quickly on his feet. He learned he had an ability to process information rapidly and respond with thoughtful intent in a timely manner. The teenage boys were fortunate to find the kind of support experienced under the tutelage of Principal Damian. The high school administrator had enough confidence take a chance on a group of boys with an outrageous idea, allowing a young group of leaders to see an idea from start to fruition. Jim and his accomplices learned to address many issues at once, to act with honesty and integrity, and that organization and sharing of responsibilities, along with some creative problem-solving can lead to success. The teenagers were given the resources and support needed to accomplish their goals. Jim Wood had been given the opportunity to experience real world responsibility as a leader and found that he performed well in the role.

During the warm months of his youth, Jim had spent much of his time at the local community pool playing with friends and family. His parents felt community pools were important and provided a healthy place

to spend the summer months. As a teenager, the self-titled "pool brat" had landed the perfect summer job working as a lifeguard at the local pool. Fred Dimuccio and Coach Paul Miller were Jim's first bosses. Coach Miller had been a positive influence in Jim's life for many years. Jim admired Coach Miller as a mentor from years as an official and as his coach in little league. Both Dimuccio and Miller were excellent role models of good leadership, and held their employees to high standards. If the teenagers saw something not done that needed attention they were expected to take charge. Hard work, responsibility, leadership, and efforts to make the workplace better or to improve patrons experience were noticed and positively reinforced by the two men. Jim loved working at the pool, and excelled in his position there. At the end of one of his swim practices a parent approached Jim. It was the summer before he went to college, and Mr. McMullin wanted to know what Jim aspired to become. Absentmindedly, and rather quickly, Jim responded, "I want to be a swim coach and own my own pool." Mr. McMullin proceeded to lay out the path Jim should follow if he wished to be successful in his vision. Jim listened politely as

he was told he had to finish college, become an assistant coach at the college level and discover if you really enjoy the job. Then, think about moving on. Jim filed the information away, and gave no more thought to the subject.

After graduating high school, Jim was accepted to John's Hopkins University. Due to the injury in his ankle swimming was the only option for competition. Jim approached the head swim coach and introduced himself. The swim program was just forming under the newly appointed Frank Comfort. He gave Coach Comfort his background in the last few years as an athlete (including his lack luster swim performances), a student, and employee. Jim was accepted on the men's swim team despite his lack of swim credentials. With guidance and encouragement from Comfort, Jim's swimming improved by leaps and bounds. Though by his own accounts Jim was still only an average collegiate athlete. Jim had learned in high school that hard work was expected, Frank Comfort was no different in his demands. Jim knew that to be part of the team he owed his best effort to himself, his coach, and his teammates. He trained hard, he gave his best, whatever his best could be that day. Jim proved to be a solid reliable teammate.

While attending Johns Hopkins University, Jim was recommended for a position at the University Pool as pool manager and coach for the summer swim league program. Given his past experiences working at the pool back home and thinking it might be a fun way to earn money for the summer, Jim took the position. The job was fun, though more demanding than he had originally expected. The obligation to ensure that patrons had the best possible experience, maintaining the pool, running the swim program, along with numerous other tasks were serious business. As the summer progressed Jim took every opportunity to seek out others he felt were more knowledgeable, those that could possibly mentor him. Jim was always looking to improve in this new role. He also began speaking to other coaches in the area to learn what they knew, building networks with people doing the same job. Performing every task himself was impractical, Jim learned to select good people to work with to run a good summer program. He honed his ability of fitting the best person to the different tasks and responsibilities. From this experience was born Jim's ability to effectively delegate as a leader. He learned that to be successful he had to clearly communicate the outcome he desired and what he expected.

Jim discovered that trusting people to perform the tasks given, allowed them ownership, therein leading to best efforts being put forth. A lesson Jim took to heart.

It was during this summer job that Jim fell in love with coaching, it was the most rewarding job he had experienced. The pool was running smoothly, the team was cohesive, parents were gracious with their time in volunteering to help the team. At times, as do many new coaches, Jim sometimes found parents had unrealistic expectations or goals for their young swimmers. Through trial and error Jim found a way to change the focus after a race for these swimmers, when their parents were less than supportive. Jim found that if he asked the athlete if they had tried their hardest and if they had tried to improve their technique and the swimmer answered in the positive, then a pat on the back and “great job” really reinforced what was important to them and helped bolster their confidence. Jim decided if he ever ran a program, parents, athletes, and coaches would all have a common understanding of the individual and team expectations.

After graduation from Johns Hopkins, Jim was accepted to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Jim had a head for math and science, but found his heart wasn't in what he was doing. Often, he found himself daydreaming about coaching in the summer, things he might try or do differently to encourage the swimmers. Coach Pat Earey was UNC head swim coach at the time, upon introduction the two clicked. Coach Earey quickly hired Jim to work as his assistant coach. Happy to be back on deck, Jim felt full of life once again. Opportunities arose, Jim didn't hesitate to leap. Coach Earey was retiring and had highly recommended the University hire Jim as his replacement. Following the highly regarded coach's advice, the UNC offered Jim the position. At the age of 24, Jim accepted the job of head swim coach at UNC, one of the youngest head swim coaches to take over at a major university. Jim was stepping up to a high pressure role in the daunting world of NCAA. One might think the scariest part of such a risk would be leaving behind a promising career with a doctorate, for Jim following his passion, following his heart felt exhilarating. He knew he was finally on the right path.

Jim's tenure at UNC is marked with success.

Under his leadership, UNC scored its first points at NCAA. Jim had a vision. He wanted UNC to be competitive in NCAA's, to create an atmosphere where swimmers could grow their potential and have opportunities to progress their swim careers to the international level. Jim

The Keys to Effective Delegation:

- Select good people to work with that you can put your trust in
- Assign well defined areas of responsibility
- Give them the tools and resources necessary
- Be approachable if they need guidance or further resources
- Step back and trust them
- Check-in and give support

discovered he had skill in recruiting, as such the program grew, attracted promising swimmers, and improved its standings. Coach Woody, as he was known to the athletes at UNC, took every opportunity available to develop and grow. He learned to listen carefully to other coaches, to the athletes, to their interactions. Through listening he learned, through observation he absorbed. Jim took advantage of any chance to further educate himself in his chosen career. He attended workshops, conferences, lectures, whatever was available to further his knowledge and improve his ability to help his athletes and the team reach their goals. He began to meet coaching greats at such events and at meets. He was always a careful observer, he wanted to see why those coaching greats were so effective, what was special about the relationship they had with their athletes.

and off deck. Jim had a clear idea of the leader he wanted to be, and what he wished to avoid.

From his first day coaching at UNC, Jim always had a clear vision for his team. While recruiting or painting the picture of the season to come, Jim was careful to clearly communicate this vision, a skill he had developed during his time managing the pool at Johns Hopkins. In 1976, UNC acquired a new Athletic Director. The new AD had come with a clear and vastly different philosophy in mind for the swim team. After several meetings between the new AD and Jim, it became quite clear that their philosophies were not compatible. Jim believed in his

vision and his philosophy, and was unwilling to compromise his principals of coaching in order to stay in the position. Jim realized he had no power to change the situation. As a result, Jim's coaching contract was not renewed. He found himself in an unexpected place, faced with a life altering decision, remain at UNC teaching and running the aquatics program or leave altogether. As the year progressed, Jim continued to perform his duties. This left Jim on deck watching his team practice under another coach. It did not take Jim long to realize that his passion was coaching swimmers, and that nothing else could take its place in his heart, nothing else was going to fulfill him in the same way.

Jim was disappointed in the fact that he wasn't going to be able to continue coaching at UNC.

“...Watching mentor coaches and how they lead, taking the time to acknowledge a new young coach, and being approachable showed him the importance of leading by example...”

- Jim Wood

Jim did not hesitate to ask questions and began building networks with other like-minded coaches and mentors that he respected. Jim became involved in dry side of college swimming, joining committees, in particular he was heavily involved with the AAU (Amateur Athletic Union). He volunteered his time to better the opportunities for collegiate athletes to compete at the highest level they could. The relationships and networks Jim had built would prove invaluable. It was with this careful attention that Jim developed his coaching philosophy and developed as a leader on

He ran through a gamut of emotions from grief to anger, frustration to disbelief. He agonized over what to do next. He looked to his mentors, professors he respected that deeply wished Jim would stay and continue his doctorate and teaching at the university. As well as fellow swim colleagues, like Bill Lam and Pat Earey, both of whom felt that swimming would lose a great coach if he walked away from swimming.

Ultimately, Jim realized that he could talk and listen to others, but the bottom line was he had to listen to his heart, consider his passion and

make a decision.

Looking back over the past few years, Jim had learned much about himself. He discovered he was a very positive person who looked for the opportunities to learn from difficult situations. Jim had always believed himself resilient, but discovered he was even more so than he had

“...I look for the best people. I am looking for someone intelligent, yes. But more importantly, someone outgoing, friendly, enthusiastic. I can't make a duck an eagle, but I can teach an eagle everything they need to know to be successful.”

- Jim Wood

Jim that he had made a hugely positive impact on those swimmer, until this juncture he had been oblivious to having made any impact. Jim also had the epiphany, if he wanted to be really good at coaching this sport, he needed to extend his knowledge about coaching. He realized that he had been an effective recruiter, and that much of the success he enjoyed at UNC was due to the talent of the athletes. Jim realized he needed to approach coaching as a profession if he wanted to do justice in this role. From this situation, Jim developed the conviction:

Coaching is based on your philosophy. It is important to find a program that has the same philosophy or to create that philosophy within that program.

At the end of the school year, Jim had made his decision. He knew he would never be happy continuing on at UNC as he had the last few months. While contemplating his future, Jim went to visit his parents in New Jersey. Jim was weighing the options of collegiate coaching and moving back to New Jersey. While he was out

wandering the city looking for a place to live, Jim happened across an old green house. The commercial green house had lost its purpose years before when the internet market developed, creatively the owner had turned it into a pool to service the community. By chance, the complex was looking for a new coach and new leadership. Jim decided this was something he could do while he was figuring things out. Jim's parents were retiring at the time and offered to sell Jim the house he had grown up in. The timing worked out perfectly, the house was just blocks from the pool. Jim was extremely grateful to find himself back on deck, though he wasn't at all happy with the programs philosophy or dynamics. Jim saw opportunity, and took action. He had a vision, Jim believed he could take this team of summer league recreational swimmers, parents, and staff and together build a great club working collaboratively, dedicated to creating great swimmers and great people. Jim knew in order to turn his vision into reality he was going to have to purchase the team and gain control of its destiny. It was at exactly this moment that Jim was approached and offered a job coaching at one of the nation's most prestigious colleges. Jim had to choose, security and prestige coaching at a coveted university or taking an enormous risk and purchasing Berkeley Aquatics Club (BAC) and the uphill battle of developing a new club. Jim knew where he belonged as soon as he walked on deck and saw the faces that had bought into his promise, he made his choice and never looked back.

Jim Wood would never be employed by someone else again. He would 'own' his future in swimming.

In the beginning Jim coached all the groups, in doing so he got to know the swimmers and the families and they came to know him. Owning the team afforded Jim the luxury to implement his philosophy and vision unimpeded by a parent board focused on revenue and numbers. Jim believed that with time and support, his philosophy of hard work, character development, and volunteerism would pay the bills. So Jim pressed forward, he raised the bar and began to paint the picture of his vision for BAC. Jim knew the drastic change would drive off some of his swimmers. The culture of the program had been very relaxed, many viewed practice as more of a social gathering than a workout. In the first month, the program went from around 120 swimmers to less than 40. Instead of dismay, Jim was encouraged. For the first

time he could see hope on the young faces, the swimmers were beginning to trust Jim. Slowly they started to share his vision, and before long the parents followed. He now had a core group of swimmers who believed in the vision he had painted and were willing to put in the work to see it through. Berkeley Aquatics began to grow, as did Jim's need for assistance. He had learned through his previous experiences as a leader that he could much more effectively reach his goals if he had support from group of great people, striving toward the same goal. Armed with this knowledge, he implemented a system of interviewing athletes, coaches, and volunteers. Jim quickly learned that being consistent and clear in his message when describing what BAC stood for and was trying to achieve, and having people understand the message before they commit was crucial to avoiding future conflict.

From the moment Jim dedicated his future to Berkeley Aquatics Club Jim wished to purchase the facility. The owner had no intention of selling the facility and was perfectly content to collect yearly capital from his holdings. With a partner, Jim invested his money in Metro Swim Shop, to help support himself and continue coaching. In time the opportunity to purchase the facility presented itself. The owner was going through a divorce and needed the cash. Jim sold his share in the swim shop and used the money as down payment. The decision to sell his investments and purchase the facility was easy, what proved to be quite difficult was locating someone willing to finance the mortgage. Jim approached one bank after another only to be turned down. He was told again and again there was no model of success, as such they deemed the venture too risky to approve a loan. Jim understood the banks were looking for guaranteed income, so he began to look more carefully at how BAC and the facility was run. He was determined to reduce operating costs and tend more closely the financial costs of running BAC.

Jim passionately believed in his vision, he knew in his heart he could build something successful. Knowing he needed the support of the athletes and parents to have a successful outcome, Jim held a team meeting. He told them what he was

“Jim found his own path, the one that was right for him. Not the one others thought was right for him.”

- George Block



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trying to accomplish in purchasing the facility. He explained the difficulties he was having in obtaining financing and that he needed their help to make the dream a reality. The parents had by this time gotten to know Jim. They believed in BAC and saw how it transformed the team and their children in a positive way. No convincing necessary, the parents formed a “not-for-profit” parent club. This club made a commitment to support the athletes to achieve their goals. They started by raising money to pay for meet travel, helping to pay for various athlete fees and the like. The parent club also decided to require hours of service to the club. They scheduled volunteers to clean bathrooms, paint, perform repairs, and many other tasks. This dedication by the athletes and parents led to a significant reduction in operating costs, thereby freeing more of Jim’s time to spend focused on their children. With these new numbers and a much clearer picture of how to successfully operate a facility and team, Jim persisted in his search for financing. After being turned down repeatedly Jim was finally successful in convincing a foundation to take the risk and invest in Berkeley Aquatics. Jim purchased the facility and BAC as we know it was born. Pausing on deck one night after practice, Jim had a moment to reflect. In the quiet Jim realized he had followed exactly the plan Mr. McMillon had mapped out for him years before when he was just a teenager.

In his decision to become owner and operator of

“Jim was the first to realize that a successful swim school could support his coaching habit.”

- George Block

BAC and the facility in which they swam, Jim had instantly become leader, businessman, manager, and coach. Jim worked hard to build Berkeley Aquatics into a successful swim team. With the help of the parents and becoming more business savvy, Jim had managed to keep BAC afloat, but it was hard work and not exactly a comfortable living. Jim looked for ways to bolster the facilities revenue. Jim saw potential to put BAC in the black if he opened a swim school. He believed with lessons he could increase profit, help local kids learn to swim, which in turn benefited the community, and create a built in feeder system for the swim team. Jim knew that he could build a program based in good character, steeped

with morals and values if he started at the very beginning. Teaching his young swimmers not just great swimming but integrity and ethics from the first lesson on up to the highly competitive athletes on the club team.

It took a few years for Jim to put his plan into action. Knowing he would overextend himself, Jim’s first step was to hire one of his age group coaches that had worked for him from the beginning to run the program. Jim knew that new business took time to build and planned to lose revenue at first, he thought he was prepared for what was to come. The first year the swim school at BAC was open it had 29 students enrolled for the entire year, Jim had expected an uphill climb though maybe not quite so steep. The first three years of operation the swim school did not break even. Jim continued to believe in his vision and that he had chosen the right person for the job. Jim continued to advertise, his swimmers, parents, and coaches continued to talk to everyone they knew about the swim school. He didn’t lose perspective or patience as he let the program grow and develop and eventually blossom. The 4th year of operation Jim finally broke even. It took several more years to reclaim the loss, but in time BAC grew to be one of largest swim schools in our nation. Currently the program serves over 6,000 students annually.

Jim has worked diligently to build a positive environment at Berkeley Aquatics. He has been an exemplary model of selfless giving to others, respectful attitude, ethical fair behavior, and following through on his commitments. Jim has created a committed and cohesive group at Berkeley Aquatics of swimmers, staff, and volunteers. One of the tools Jim used to successfully accomplish this was effective delegation. Jim learned to delegate early in his career, and further refined this ability while growing Berkeley Aquatics. Those that work with Jim are eager to point out, he never asks more of anyone than he is willing to give himself. The coaches at Berkeley describe Jim as a committed and selfless leader who gives his best effort always. Though Jim expects the same focus and devotion from his swimmers and staff, they are more than willing to follow his example out of admiration, trust, and respect.

From the beginning of Jim’s involvement at Berkeley Aquatics he has made himself approachable. He is committed to interacting

with all of his swimmers. Jim can be found in the shallow end having his hair styled, or pretending to steal a new novice swimmers goggles, to having a serious conversation with one of his senior swimmers looking for guidance. He never fails to remember that the elite swimmers were once those same silly kids he is building relationships with at the other end of the pool.

“Choices Equal Opportunity.”

This is the most important lesson Jim imparts to everyone at Berkeley Aquatics Club, accountability is the key that unlocks opportunity. He encourages those around him to make good choices, be aware and take advantage of opportunity, and to be responsible for choices made. Jim challenges his athletes’ to demonstrate strength of character on and off deck. One of the requirements to join Berkeley is a commitment to volunteer a specified number of hours for both swimmer and family. To some this may seem unfair or not politically correct, but at BAC the policy has had an enormous positive impact, and not just fiscal. Having to give back to the program builds character in the athletes, commitment from the families, often it helps promote a more cohesive atmosphere, most importantly this helps promote an environment of accountability. Along these lines, Jim was once again a role model to his coaches, swimmers, and their families. From the time he first acquired the team, Jim began attending the local LSC meetings. He volunteered for various committees, wherever he felt he could help the LSC. He strived to perform the tasks given to the best of his abilities, his efforts didn’t go unnoticed. Jim’s reputation as a competent, reliable person of integrity grew. The opportunities to have influence in the administrative side of the sport did as well. Jim never turned down such chances, he felt a strong commitment to the betterment of the sport and realized this was the greatest way to have a voice. The coaches at BAC were not exempt from volunteerism, nor would they want to be. The coaches at Berkeley are proud to serve the sport of swimming and set an example for their swimmers in the process. Though required, the way in which they donate their energies is left to their creativity. Many serve on local committees for the LSC, some volunteer at inner city aquatics programs, and a few have moved into leadership roles at varying levels from local to national.

Education and taking advantage of learning opportunities has been an essential element of Jim Wood’s success in life. Therefore, it is no surprise that development and improvement

Leaders know they are not the smartest nor most experienced in the room:

- Through effective delegation, leaders empower others
- Through empowerment, leaders encourage cooperation
- Delegation, empowerment, and cooperation equal a positive outcome

- Jim Wood

through education has been a founding philosophy at Berkeley Aquatics Club from conception. Jim has been an exemplary model for education as a means for personal growth and improvement. After leaving UNC, Jim vowed to do everything possible to learn how to be a great coach. Never forgetting that promise Jim has committed himself to attending clinics, conventions, classes, and most importantly seeking out mentors. Jim is quick to point out that learning from one's athletes is essential to coaching education. Jim continued to learn from mentors, as his career progressed he found he learned valuable lessons through acting as a mentor. Jim's philosophy on education is ever evolving focused on swimming as a whole, not stagnant with a definitive end. There are those in coaching that have fallen prey to the misconception that clinics

and classes are a waste of time. Jim, always on the lookout for new information, new perspectives, and new science, has a slightly different take, "I believe that if I come away with only one good idea, it was worthwhile. It was one new idea I did not have before." His athletes are supported and encouraged to be successful in school, many go on to attend top universities and colleges.

Not to be left out of an opportunity to better themselves and "walk the walk," the staff at BAC attend educational opportunities both locally and out of town. By paying for his staff's education, Jim removes barriers and elevates the reservoir of knowledge at Berkeley Aquatics. For the past few Olympic Trials Jim has arranged attendance for some of his coaches, giving them an opportunity to listen and absorb competitive swimming at the highest level in our nation. Jim wished to expose his coaches to different methods of interaction, different personalities, different styles and implementation and how it lead to success. Jim's coaches are exceedingly grateful for the

opportunities to continuously elevate their level of knowledge and improve for their swimmers.

Volunteerism and contributing back to one's sport have been key aspects that helped grow BAC into the club Jim envisioned. Involvement in the administration, or "dryside" of swimming beginning in his days at UNC was a way to give back to the sport. Being involved had the added benefit for both the team and coaches by allowing them to know what current issues face swimming and how those issues may affect their swimmers. Being "in the know" allowed Jim to have a voice in the direction of the sport. Jim tried to look at the bigger picture, he wanted to improve swimming for all involved, not just his athletes. As Berkeley grew and established its reputation so did Jim Wood. He was recognized as a leader on deck, a strong coach with high expectation for his athletes. Through his efforts for the LSC, Jim's reputation as a leader off deck grew as well. He proved to be trustworthy, competent, and accountable. Jim was asked to run for various positions such as; Age Group Chair, Senior Chair, and eventually General Chair. In this capacity, Jim learned to effectively run a meeting in which all sides of an issue were given the opportunity to speak. In these volunteer

"The most important positive impact Jim Wood has had on the sport of swimming or anywhere is as a role model, Jim has shown that you can be a coach, run a business, and be involved in the governance of our sport at the highest level and do so successfully."

- Tom Avichious

roles of leadership Jim further honed his skills of delegation. His willingness to give of his time, to the benefit of others became part of Jim's reputation. Jim proved to be reliable, accountable, and trustworthy as a committed leader. Jim knew what he believed was right and what he deemed wrong. He had a clear vision of what world swimming should look like. In his holistic view of swimming, Jim approached challenges and issues within the sport from the perspective of all swimmers, from the age grouper to the collegiate and national swimmers. In his capacity as a leader Jim dedicated himself to providing the best for the world of swimming.

Jim's hard work, integrity and unyielding ethics on and off deck helped build his credibility within the world of swimming, leading to more and varied roles of leadership and volunteerism. With his usual dedication and reliability, Jim performed each task to the best of his ability and in doing so built his reputation as an effective leader. Jim revealed himself to be a leader with vision and conviction, one who was willing to stand behind his ideas and values.

Jim was diligent in preparing himself for every meeting, knowing every angle, every side of the issues concerned. Jim came with an agenda. What was highly unusual about his agenda? That it was not self-serving, "do what was right for the world of swimming, not let's do what's right for my club, or my swimmers, or America....let's do what is BEST," John Leonard. In performing roles of leadership, Jim discovered he could never be an expert on every issue. To be effective as a leader, Jim needed to find the most knowledgeable people in each situation and let them have the floor. In doing so, Jim spent less time trying to be the smartest in the room, more time leading effectively and employing the talents of the other members, ultimately accomplishing more with high quality results.

Jim was elected as Chairman of the United States Swimming Olympic International Operations Committee (OIOC) in 1992. The goal of the OIOC is to act as an advisory board to the National Team Director. He believed it was the role of the committee to help provide our athletes the opportunity to perform to the best of their ability in international competition. During this time FINA was pushing to shift the focus of world competition from

the Olympics to the World Championships. Jim, the committee, and the director were devoted to keeping the highest level of competition at the Olympic Games. As Chairman, Jim spent his energy fighting for the rights of our athletes. Many leaders bring with them a personal agenda, and are threatened by those with opposing ideas. Jim was known for allowing everyone the opportunity to express their ideas or concerns, whether or not he was in agreement. OIOC meetings can be contentious, passions run high. Jim became masterful at keeping the focus on what was most important, the athletes. Under Jim's

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guidance the OIOC meetings became productive and useful to the National Team Director at the time, Dennis Pursley. The Director gave Jim access to see how the National Team operated, hoping this would benefit the team when the OIOC was contemplating issues. This experience allowed Jim to grow as a coach, by listening and observing what other coaches did. Jim took advantage of the opportunity, he saw different styles of successfully interacting with athletes in a high pressure environment. Jim applied this new knowledge both on and off deck.

One might think that devoting himself to so many different causes within swimming would negatively impact Berkeley Aquatics. Indeed, this is the reason given by many coaches who do not volunteer within their LSC, let alone on the national stage. BAC did not suffer from Jim's absences. Careful selection of his staff, communication, and painting a clear picture allowed Berkeley Aquatics to continue to flourish. Through his successes as a coach, business owner, and selfless volunteer to the sport, Jim serves as a role model. He has shown that a coach is not just a technician, but is capable of effective and successful leadership in the "dry" side of swimming.

Jim knew from experience that swimming was built best from the base. He had learned from his time spent with OIOC and the National Team that swimming was best modeled from the top down. He took that experience and knowledge and developed his philosophy on how best to organize and grow USA Swimming. In 2005, Jim

and using that model of excellence to improve the organization at the local level. Jim felt it important not just to maintain but improve USA Swimming's relationship with other governing bodies within swimming including NISCA, OIOC, and YMCA. USA Swimming was facing a loss of funding from United States Olympic Committee,

“If we had plastic bag suits that cost \$400, then we do not have many age group swimmers. As soon as parents realize you have to be rich in order to compete, they are on the soccer field.”

- John Leonard

supplementing lost funding was an upcoming challenge Jim felt confident he could help resolve. Jim was deeply devoted to increasing diversity within the sport, making it more accessible and inclusive at all levels. Many felt at the time, Jim was the right person for the job, but the wrong candidate. Meaning Jim was never willing to do what was necessary (politically) to be elected.

The credibility Jim had built through years of dedicated service, success in coaching and business, and years spent protecting the integrity of the sport paid off. Jim was elected President of USA Swimming in 2006, becoming the first coach elected to the post. Jim took his position as president during one of the most controversial periods competitive swimming has experienced. Times had changed in the world of swimming, the sport had grown by leaps and bound in the past few decades. A young new phenom within the sport was grabbing headlines, public

a dizzying pace. Times that had stood for years were not just beaten, but obliterated.

Concern grew. Many of the world's coaches saw the advanced suits as a threat to the integrity of the sport. In an interview with Robert Siegel of Swimming World Magazine, Jim described the

suits as “more performance enhancing than just allowing athletes to compete at their ability level. The suits changed the complexion of strokes, they allowed athletes with less strong core to experience core-stabilization, the suits allowed less technically proficient athletes to float higher in the water.” Jim Wood and many others felt the world was heading down the wrong path. Jim strongly felt the suits would turn swimming into an elitist sport. High-tech suits can cost hundreds of dollars. Many young age group swimmers and third world nations alike cannot afford high-tech suits, and would thereby be rendered incapable of fairly competing against those who can. Unwilling to stand by, Jim lead USA Swimming to take a stand against “plastic bag” suits, as they had commonly come to be called. FINA (Federation Internationale de Natation), the world governing body for water sports, had deep financial ties to the companies profiting from the endorsement of such suits and chose to stand by and continue to advocate for the use of the high-tech suits. Many felt a fight with FINA was too risky, though the overwhelming consensus among the world's coaches and national governing bodies were opposed to the suits. FINA was considered by many to be all powerful, the governing body was unaccustomed to losing battles. Jim was warned, opposing FINA was dangerous, the act could have lasting and dire consequences for the US.

True to his nature, Jim did not back down. Through his years of serving on local and national committees and his years of leading the OIOC, Jim had developed an uncanny ability to get people to join forces for a common cause. Jim clearly stated what USA Swimming's stand on suits would be, and went about unifying those in the US for a common goal. Jim Wood and USA Swimming would directly oppose FINA in

Jim Wood on balancing personal and professional life:

“Its all about quality versus quantity. I would rather have one quality day with the people that matter than six distracted meaningless days.”

was approached by a group of peers and mentors and asked to run for the presidency of USA Swimming. Jim felt in this role he could positively impact the direction of swimming in the US. He was not the first coach to run for presidency. Jim was told repeatedly a coach could never be president of USA Swimming. He listened, then with the encouragement of those who knew him best, ran anyway. Jim ran on a platform of issues that he felt were important to the world of swimming. Jim's primary goals were to promote excellence throughout USA Swimming by continuing the success of our national team

awareness and perception increased, and young people were flocking to the sport as never before.

New suits arrived on the swim scene in the form of a woven elastane-nylon and polyurethane material made into a technologically advanced swimsuit. Speedo, USA Swimming's sole sponsor, quickly capitalized on the trend. The suit allowed swimmers in competition to experience better oxygen flow to the muscles and improved body position in the water. The suits increased a swimmers flexibility, kept muscles compressed while stabilizing the core. World records fell at

“If the U.S. had lost the fight to ban high-tech suits, we would have been blocked from all FINA committees, the US would have lost our ability to have an impact or influence on the sport of swimming for years. Because Jim Wood took the risk and fought for what was right, we have Americans on all FINA committees. “Not only did Jim win when he was President, he won for the next cycle as well. We now have more power within FINA than we ever had before.”

- John Leonard

its endorsement of the high-tech polyurethane suits. USA Swimming had turned its back on Speedo, its number one fiscal contributor, by voting to ban the suits in the states. In doing so, USA Swimming opened the door to countless opportunities with other sponsors. Under Jim's leadership the US banded together with other competing nations. Jim gave people who could gain support for the fight against high-tech suits a multitude of opportunities to speak. John Leonard, the international voice of ASCA, in particular was given the leeway to speak and the forums to do so. John had spent years gaining credibility and influence in the world of swimming both nationally and internationally, and used that capital to fight for an international ban on “plastic bag suits.” With the US leading the way, the fight for a ban on high-tech suits was won. Jim Wood lost USA Swimming's biggest sponsor, risked international credibility and influence to stand up for what was right. The integrity of competition within swimming had been preserved.

At the same time the world of swimming seemed to be in an upheaval, Jim had begun searching for land to build a 50 meter complex to better serve Berkeley Aquatics Club's needs. At every turn Jim was thwarted. His character, his club, his athletes came under vicious attacks by those who opposed a new complex in their community. Rumors and outright lies plagued Jim through the process. Many would have quite, given in. Not Jim Wood. He deeply impressed everyone at BAC by the calm, level-headed way in which he handled himself. Jim never became vindictive, he fought intelligently, presented only facts, and pushed forward for what he knew was right. Jim expanded his search for land and a community willing to receive the new aquatics complex. In March of 2014 Jim finally won approval in Providence, New Jersey. The new 50 meter complex is due to open its doors in 2015.

No one at Berkeley was surprised, Jim had always modeled strength of character and conviction. Jim has a motivational tool he uses to help teach such concepts to his older athletes. He asks on such occasions if his swimmers are willing to meet “Mr. Pain”. Those challenges that help us grow often are uncomfortable and unpleasant, that doesn't mean they aren't necessary. One's willingness to meet Mr. Pain in workout, and persevere, build better swimmers. In the same way facing challenges in life may be painful, Jim's swimmers know they can face them with hard work and integrity.

From his experiences working with inner city kids at the Newark Boys and Girls Club, Jim developed an understanding for the need to reach out and make swimming accessible to everyone. He had witnessed the struggle to find constructive out of school activities. Following his father's example of service to the community, Jim dedicated himself to improving the outcome, to finding a solution. Throughout his involvement at USA Swimming, serving on various committees and his involvement from conception in the Foundation (the philanthropic arm of USA-S), increasing diversity at all levels of swimming has been one of Jim's motivating passions. As President of USA-S he had a deep desire to improve the diversity of his sport. Jim first identified the barriers facing the underrepresented: basic needs not met, low income, single parent, and absence of heroes. Jim led USA Swimming in hiring John Cruzat

as a Diversity Specialist. With data driven recommendations, USA Swimming developed a plan to address the lack of diversity within its sport. This effort led the foundation to develop the Make-A-Splash program. Funded through the USA Swimming Foundation, its aim was to provide opportunities for all children in the US to learn to swim. In partnership with celebrity names like Rowdy Gaines and Cullen Jones, Jim Wood set out to change the face of swimming. Make-A-Splash partners with local learn to swim programs in an effort to educate and spread local awareness, with the intent of fostering strategic partnerships to prevent drowning. To date, Make-A-Splash reports that it has touched the lives of nearly 2 million children through the lifesaving gift of swim lessons. Children that otherwise would grow up with a fear of water and a vastly increased risk of drowning.

As Make-A-Splash (MAS) grew it needed increased means of funding, the program had largely been funded through generous corporate grants and private donations. While Jim was looking to expand MAS, the opportunity to collaborate with members of congress and the CDC to fund a pilot program in New Jersey and Chicago presented itself. Make-A-Splash proved exceedingly successful, but the partnership with Congress and the CDC was not meant to be and the collaborative effort ended. In 2009, Phillips 66 stepped up to sponsor Make-A-Splash in an effort to raise awareness about the importance of learning to swim and to create the opportunity to do so. Make-A-Splash continues to grow and touch the lives of countless children and families. His ability to bring together the right people, at the right time, in the right place once again set the stage for continuing success to the benefit of the youth of our nation and swimming.

...The grinding of the wheels of the train pulled Jim back to the present. He had arrived. Jim inhaled, a slow, deep breathe. Determined to put everything he had learned to good use and

“Coaches are here for one thing only, our athletes. Not just making them go fast, offering them every possible aid to becoming healthy, good adults. I think we all need to be vigilant as to what can happen. The best way to prevent abuse is education for parents and athletes and making sure everyone understands the importance of reporting. Abuse does not happen in isolation.”

- Jim Wood

to the benefit of making the sport he so loved better and safer, Jim stood to disembark. This was one of those momentous occasions in life, failure was not an option.

Jim traveled to Washington DC to meet with a group of women who had experienced abuse at the hands of their coaches and mentors as young swimmers. Jim was hoping the women would open up, that "they would be able to shed some light on what they think, not just within our sport, but for everyone... could have been done differently back when they were living the horrors of abuse." Jim was admittedly a little anxious. He was accustomed to entering a meeting knowing the stand of each party, in this situation he had no preconceived notions. He felt it crucial to convey to the women his sincerity in addressing this issue. Jim truly sympathized with the women in that room, and was there for their help. He was there to hear their stories not because he could do anything to help the women years after the abuse, but so they could help him figure out the best way to stop this from occurring now.

The air in the room was thick with tension. As Jim stepped through the doorway, he could hear the buzz of the can lights overhead. He looked around and saw a gamut of emotions on the women's faces, ranging from apprehension, sadness, to anger and mistrust. With honest sincerity, Jim did his best to convey his need for their help. Slow to speak in the beginning, the women showed immense courage in reliving their personal horrors in hopes of preventing future abuse. As the meeting progressed, tensions eased a bit, though emotions for all parties surged to exhaustion. Selflessly, the women gave back to the sport, baring their wounded souls so that others might be saved suffering.

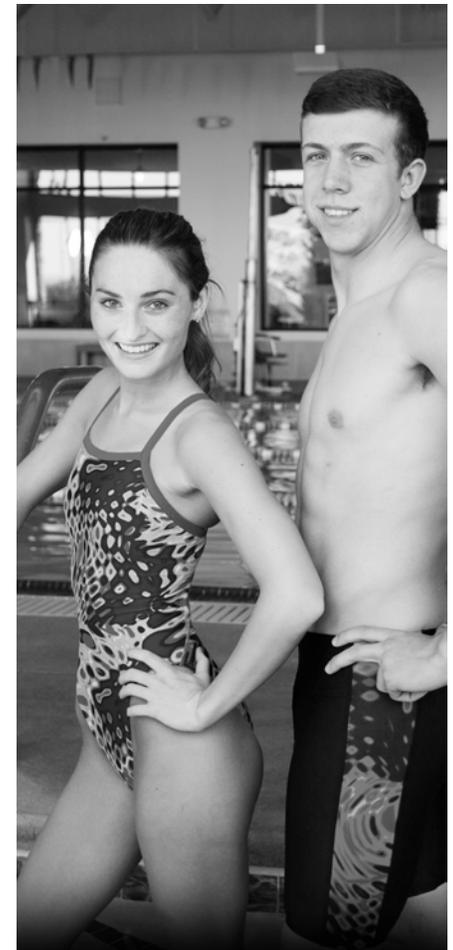
For Jim, the meeting had been eye opening. The devastating and lasting impact evil people had on these women's lives, the severity of grooming. Jim knew it would be the most important fight of his last term. "I realized that I would not do a more important thing in my career as President of USA Swimming than getting the Safe Sport Initiative started. "I left that room with a renewed sense that I would not, could not let this legislation fail!" Every time Jim was given the chance to speak, from interviews to lectures, anyplace, he pushed for the passing of the proposed Safe Sport legislation. Jim was resolved to convince everyone in the world of swimming how important passing the legislation was to the protection of our young athletes.

In the same moment, USA Swimming was facing a host of allegations that it had not done enough to prevent abuse of its underage athletes by coaches. At the beginning of Jim Wood's first term as president a committee was put in place to re-evaluate athlete protection policies and make recommendations for improvement to policies already in place. The legislation proposed addressed three separate areas; policies and guidelines, education and reporting. Then the media storm hit, finger pointing began, accusations flew. Deeply saddened for his sport, Jim focused his attention on what was best for the athlete. He knew that addressing the issue from this angle would most effectively serve the athletes and help the organization move forward in a manner that was not continually stuck in the quagmires of the past. He sought to learn from the past mistakes of the organization, to educate himself on the issue.

USA Swimming Convention 2010 witnessed the passing of the Safe Sport Initiative with the overwhelming approval of its delegation members. The initiative created a Code of Conduct for the interaction of athletes and adults. It requires all adults working with our athletes to undergo rigorous background screening. Safe Sport requires that all coaches enroll in and pass Coaches Safety Training and Racing Start Certification. The legislation provides for the education of parents, athletes, coaches, and club leaders. One key element of the Safe Sport initiative was the enhancement of reporting system to USA Swimming and law enforcement. Periodic auditing is essential to identify opportunities for improvement of the legislation. The athlete protection program is designed to be ever evolving so that it can effectively safeguard our athletes.

Throughout his life, Jim Wood has demonstrated accountability and resilience as well as an ability to learn and grow as a leader by making good choices. Jim has developed into a leader that is highly regarded in the swimming community and the world at large as a leader who is willing to take action and having a vision for the future. He has deeply impacted the lives of those he has touched through living a life of example. ■

Amy Montgomery is a member of the 2013 ASCA Fellows Class. She is a coach with the Fallbrook Associated Swim Team and was elected to the ASCA Board of Directors as of September 2014.



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2013 Max Ritter Award TO NICK THIERRY

Introduction by Craig Lord

Lord: Nick Thierry won the 2013 Max Ritter Award which is presented posthumously and in recognition of his life-long affair with swimming. United States Aquatic Sports honors the memory of a man whose unselfish contributions included keeping the history book of swimming straight, simple and true for the benefit of athletes, coaches, national federations as well as the international body of aquatics, FINA.



“Before his passing on October 2, 2012, Nick invested in the development of a database that contains 40 years of swimming rankings and statistics. That immense work is part of his legacy.

When swimmers race head to head in elite international competition, their foremost goal is to beat the opposition. Once the race is over and they glance up to the scoreboard to see their finish place, their next thought is, “My time, did I do a personal best? Was it a record?”

Moments after swimmers hit the finish wall, Nick Thierry took over. He kept the record of the sport alive for more than four decades as the keeper of the world rankings. He was the bastion of swimming statistics and a pioneer in the art of swimming news. His guardianship of the record of athletes performances has been treasured by swimmers, coaches, sports scientists, journalists, sports institutions and swimming federations since he first started to register and chronicle all meets that produced performances worthy of a place in the top 300 across all events.

Born in Hungary on December 2, 1938, Nick spent the first eight years of his life in Budapest. In 1948 his family moved to Havana, Cuba, where his father had been transferred. Nick saw the need for good communication in 1958 as a writer for Bob Kiputh’s newly formed *Swimming World* magazine. He never wavered in that mission.

Nick swam competitively for three years while in Havana and another three years in Canada, while studying at the University of Toronto. He obtained a Bachelor of Architecture degree in 1964. For the next four years he worked in an architect’s office; that experience was partly responsible for Nick’s overriding philosophy in life: keep it simple.

In 1961, at the University of Toronto, he served as assistant swimming coach and for the next 21 years he placed swimmers on the Canadian Olympic teams of 1964, 1968 and 1972. He was Canadian Head Coach for the 1970 Commonwealth Games team which competed in Edinburgh, Scotland and two other international competitions.

It was while coaching that Nick saw the value of keeping swimming statistics. “It was a very effective training tool for my swimmers,” he said when inducted into the International Hall of Fame in 2005. “The need to know what was going on worldwide was becoming critical in the sport.” He launched *SwimCanada*, a monthly magazine publication that later became *SwimNews*. At its inception, the publication attracted thousands of subscribers from around the world. The online site evolved from pioneering status to a portal that attracted several million hits during the eight days of swimming at the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

Nick was publisher, editor, writer and, above all in later years, mentor to a team of writers in whom he saw promise and encouraged to use their skills in the interests of keeping a true record of the sport of swimming. His encouragement and support in the role of “second father” set sail many on a fine media career. His generosity was second to none. The requests and demands for help with

rankings, statistics and biographies were often overwhelming, but Nick's standard reply was "Sure, I'll send it straight through."

It was Nick's quest to locate and publish every available swimming performance that led to the formation of the International Swimming Statisticians Association at the 1986 FINA World Championships held in Madrid, Spain. In 1992, statistics in SwimNews were supplemented by printing monthly FINA world rankings and yearly short and long course FINA annuals. Originally, record keeping was done manually with Nick personally hand typing each line of statistics. With the introduction of the fax machine, records and dates could be instantly received and transmitted for publication. With the advent of the computer and swimming software programs, data became available on demand.

Nick was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame in 2001 as Honor Contributor for his dedication to the sport. The ISHOF citation included the following: "Sorting through the seemingly endless volumes of numbers and times, Nick makes order out of chaos and assures every swimmer that his or her time will be accurately placed in the pecking order of performances. Nick's no-nonsense approach to his work, his coolness under pressure and his unique style and perseverance, in a very unassuming way, have contributed to his success as publisher/editor of SwimNews and as swimming's top record keeper.

Nick was the recipient of the Al Schoenfield Media Award from ISHOF and was honored by Swimming Canada, the American Swimming Coaches Association and the World Swimming Coaches Association. Nick was a member of

the FINA Press Commission.

Nick loved the classics, in literature and music, his collection of classical composers fit to challenge the volume of his swim rankings. A fine chef, he loved to entertain friends at his home in Toronto. His wealth of knowledge was not only in the pool, but also in the kitchen, library and the concert hall. Nick was an accomplished painter; his water colors lived proudly alongside his collection of fine art.

If his work on rankings, records, results and biographies will be sorely missed, it is for a man of many more talents who those closest to him will mourn." ■

By Craig Lord, who established the website www.SwimVortex.com in Coach Nick Thiery's honor.

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Motivating Swimmers: 10 Fundamentals to Reaching Success In and Out of the Water

By Todd Larkin, Saint Xavier High School, From the 2012 ASCA World Clinic

My name is Todd Larkin; I am the head coach of Saint Xavier High School in Louisville, Kentucky. I really want to thank you: we have got a great... We have got a packed room here. I want to thank you for really giving me the opportunity to talk to you about motivation today and speaking to you on, kind of, maximizing your team through principles and fundamentals that are necessary to do that. But there are so many choices over this ASCA track, I really appreciate you putting this on your schedule and then taking the time to be here.

This is my first time presenting at ASCA, but I have attended many of these World Clinics in the past and I wanted this presentation to be a little different. I have been to some that were fantastic and phenomenal presentations; I have been to others that basically just defined theories but did not really apply them. So, I wanted to kind of apply a personal touch to give you a little bit of some examples that can maybe be applicable to your program. Obviously, I want to affirm things that I am teaching, and I want you to learn. I do not know how mind-blowing this is going to be, it might be more of an affirmation to you, but I hope that you do learn something or really understand these ten fundamentals a little bit better on how to maximize your program and be more consistent.

(Asks for a show of hands to see what level of coaches are there. Wide range.)

I am up here and I am representing pretty much all of you in the coaching profession, and it is something that I have done pretty much all my life. I have so much admiration for what you do, or what we do, and I want to highlight that a little bit in this presentation. But what you do is something that is very beneficial; it is beneficial to our youth.

You are an asset, and I want to thank you for really what you do and how you represent the sport. Because I think it is very, very important, and I think coaches deserve that credit and I think coaches deserve that pat on the back.

Really today I think what we have is, we have an opportunity to come together to really congregate and share ideas. I think a lot of times coaching can be a copycat profession, where we kind of borrow things. I know that in my coaching I have borrowed some things from some coaches that have coached me that I have liked; maybe some things that deterred me as a swimmer, I do not use in my everyday routine—I think that is really what it is about. But I think we have this great opportunity to improve and to learn. Really what my goal is, is to give you bits and pieces of information that you can add to your toolbox. You hear that term mentioned a lot in these talks, because I think everybody here... You would not be here if you did not have a strong foundation. I might be going on assumption there, and I apologize to any new coaches that we have. But if you are at this clinic, you have some type of foundation probably already built. So what I want to do is I want to increase that awareness and I want to add to that, is what I want to do. I think any information that you come out of this with can help build your team in the future.

I have got a quote on there... and I am a big quote guy. On all of my workouts that I put out for my students, I always try to put a quote. I learned that from Roy Williams, the coach at North Carolina, if we have got any North Carolina guys down here, or UNC fans. He does that and I think that is really neat. What it does is it really stimulates them; it kind of gives them a mental picture to start. I always try to put some physical things on the workout, and really try to spell that

out for our athletes to let them know and kind of introduce what they are doing. I came across this one and I really like it; I think it really coincides nicely with my talk today. It is: Look closely at the present you are constructing; it should look like the future you are dreaming. I think if you can get Age Group kids, club kids, high school kids, college kids to really pay attention to the moment at hand; and to have that future in the back of their mind, that what they are practicing on, what they are working on, is so important. I think it eliminates a lot of anxieties for down the road. I just thought it was a new quote and I really liked it. I thought it was something that was really evident to what I am talking about.

Today, more or less, the goals or objectives of the talk, what I want to get across, is: I want to talk to you about the keys to motivating swimmers. We are going to talk about motivation a little bit more in depth. I do want you to understand team dynamics when you leave here; I have got some different models that I am going to show you. It goes back to my roots with teaching business to seniors, so a lot of that is going to be along the lines of that—kind of my comfort zone. I want to define what a positive environment is. It sounds very simple, but I think it is the key. It is the key to winning championships, it is the key to getting results; is being positive with your athletes, being positive with parents, and being positive with your staff. I want to discuss the ten proven fundamentals that are in our program, something that we work on daily that has really helped define our program. Also talk to you a little bit about expectations that I think are important, that really need to be understood between coaches and swimmers.

I put all this up there, but it comes with a warning. That warning is that I want you to understand



that any of these behavioral changes, they are going to take time. I think a lot of times I have come out of these clinics as a participant and you have got this overload of information. Everybody is just really... if you come out here as a staff, you are excited, you are ready to get down; you go back to workout, you are excited to see the swimmers, the kids again, and you just start throwing these things out there. I think you have to know your audience, you have to know what they really are competent of understanding. I think if you introduce these over time, and you are consistent with that goal setting, I think long-term that is going to be better-off for your program. Basically the bottom line is: **take it one day at a time. I think if you do that, I think you will find a lot more success with what I am introducing today, and just more-or-less how to pace yourself, is the best thing to do.**

I think every program, I think it starts with passion. I think that comes from coaching leadership. But if you have that passion and if you have that love, I do not think that is something that you can fake; I think that is something that is real. I think kids realize that. Whether you know it or not, those kids and those students that you work with—or those athletes that you work with—they are watching you all the time. That may be one of the downsides. You cannot go anywhere: if you are at a ball game, if you are in a mall, if you are on the pool deck, if you are sitting in your office, if you are playing on computer; those kids are watching you. They are watching exactly what you do. That is why it is important to take your responsibilities as a role model with the utmost importance, because they are doing that.

I think that motivation, it is a combination, it is

a formula. If you can bring your passion, your belief and vision to your coaching, to your team, to your athletes, that is how you develop a well-rounded and motivated swimmer.

I have got a video on here, and I went outside coaching a little bit. I brought a celebrity that really... I do not know if swim coaches know who this is, because in Louisville she used to air in the afternoons when everybody was at workout—so you might not even know who this person is. But I wanted to play it anyway; just kind of sit back and watch it and enjoy.

Video begins....

What I know for sure, from this experience with you, is that we all are called; everybody has a calling. Your real job in life is to figure out what that is and get about the business of doing it. Every time we've seen a person on this stage who is a success in their life, they've spoke of the joy and they've spoke of the juice that they receive from doing what they knew they were meant to be doing. We saw it in the volunteers who rocked abandoned babies in Atlanta. We saw it with pie ladies; those lovely pie ladies from Cape Code making those delicious pot pies. We saw it even with prisoners, training puppies behind bars to be adopted by our wounded soldiers; many of those inmates for the first time got to experience what it meant to love and be loved, and it took a dog to do it. We saw it every time Tina Turner, Celine or Lady Gaga lit-up the stage with their passion. Because that is what a calling is: it lights you up and it lets you know that you are exactly where you're supposed to be, doing exactly what you're supposed to be doing. That is what I want for all of you.

And hope that you will take from the show to live from the heart of yourself. You have to make a living, I understand that; but you also have to know

what sparks the light in you so that you in your own way can illuminate the world. You know when I started, not even I imagined that this show would have the depth and the reach that you all have given it. It has been a privilege for me to speak to you here in this studio, in this country and in a 150 countries around the world, on this platform that is the Oprah Winfrey Show. You let me into your homes to talk to you every day, this is what you allowed me to do; and I thank you for that. But what I want you to know as the show ends, each one of you has your own platform. Do not let the trappings here fool you: mine is a stage in a studio, yours is wherever you are. With your own reach; however small or however large that reach is. Maybe it's 20 people maybe it's 30 people, 40 people, your family, your friends, your neighbors, your classmates, your classrooms, your coworkers. Wherever you are, that is your platform, your stage, your circle-of-influence. That is your talk show and that is where your power lies.

In every way, in everyday, you are showing people exactly who you are; you're letting your life speak for you. And when you do that, you will receive in direct proportion to how you give and whatever platform you have. Of course the circumstances are all different for all of us, but the power, I know, is the same. You could help somebody, you can listen, you could forgive, you can heal. You have the power to change somebody's life; look around and you'll see. You may not have to look any further than your own family or maybe even your own self. The power is the same.

Everybody has a calling. Mine aligned with my profession, my job. But not everybody gets paid for it, but everybody is called. It may be your skill at listening, your talent from nurturing and mothering. Do not get it confused; it does not have to be some highfalutin something, or something that makes you famous—we're all confused about fame versus

service in this country. One of my favorite stories is Marcia Kilgore, who founded the successful Bliss spa; she was here years ago. And I remember going to her spa and getting a beautiful facial from her—so great. And I stood up on the table and said, “This is the best facial that I’ve ever had.” She said, “That’s because extractions, popping zits, are my passion.”

My great wish for all of you who have allowed me to honor my calling through this show is that you carry whatever you are supposed to be doing, carry that forward. And don’t waste anymore time: start embracing the life that is calling you and use your life to serve the world.

Larkin: I think it is a great message. I saw that and I came across that when I was putting this presentation together. Does everybody know who Oprah Winfrey is? I think she is pretty recognizable. That video was from her last show. But I think what makes Oprah great is she is a great communicator. What makes her a great communicator, whether you agree with her or not: she could walk onto a movie set with million-dollar directors, communicate clear and precise; she can turn around in the same day and talk to the average Joe watching her show, and still get through to that person. I think that is what makes her so unique.

I guess, maybe, I might have a little chip on my shoulder, and I do not know if any of you all have ever been this. When I was coaching club—I coached club for 16 years that I put in my background—I remember when I would be out or I would be with my wife or I would be at one of my kids functions. People would say, Well, what do you do?

“Well, I coach; I’m a swim coach.” The next thing you got was, Is that full time? Is that what you do? “Of course.” If you coach club, you are on a deck for weekends and weekends out, you are traveling. You are at the pool in the morning, you

are at the pool in the afternoon. I took kind of offence to that, a little bit, like this was a hobby. But this was my career. So I started to play around with language a little bit and I got smart in my old age. Toward my older club-days, people would ask, What do you do?, and I would be, “I’m a professional swim coach.” Wow!, they were, this guy is a professional; he coaches professional. I think that just that one word, putting that one word in front of coaching—I’m a professional swim coach—changed their image about what I had been doing for 16 years. I think Oprah illustrates that really well; and I think she does pick her language and communicates so well with that. I think that is why I chose that clip, and I think that it is important to choose your language when you communicate, and we are going to talk about that a little later on in the presentation.

This book is kind of in the works and it should be out in November. I have been working on a book; it is called Bright Lights. Basically, it was born out of this presentation, and it is still in kind of the editing phase. If you are interested in what I am speaking about and you want to look at that more in depth, it is basically a larger volume of what this presentation is about. It will be available in November. I am really excited; I have got Pat Forde, former ESPN writer, as my editor; he is with Yahoo Sports right now,

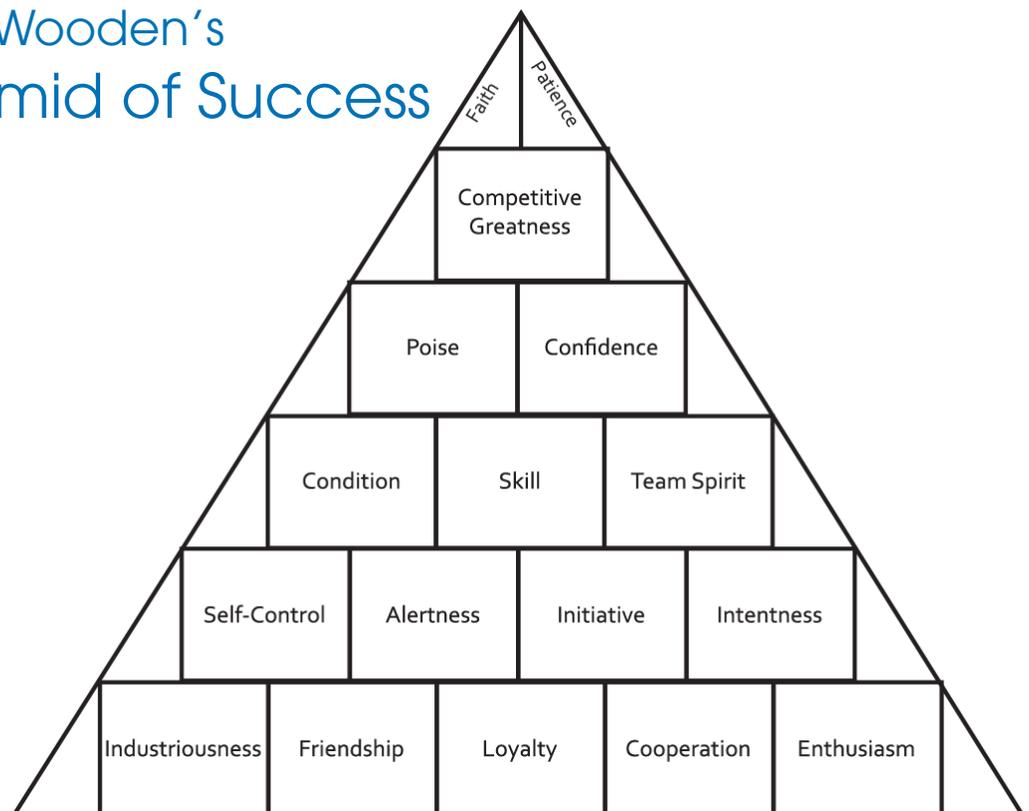
and he does a really wonderful job. I am really looking forward to see this come about. We have a campus store at Saint X and if you just look-up saintx.com, it will be available on there. I have got my contact information up here if you are interested in purchasing that or want to get some for your athletes. It has been a culmination of work. I think it is a really, really special piece, so I am really looking forward to putting that out.

Wooden’s Pyramid of Success:

Is anybody here familiar with John Wooden’s Pyramid of Success? What a great document. If you are not familiar with it, familiarize yourself with it—it is fantastic. Coach Wooden, what he put together here is something that I used early-on in my coaching. I want to walk-you-through the pyramid a little bit, but not spend too much time on it. Basically you are going to look at the foundation first. Coach Wooden was an excellent teacher; he was an excellent coach. I will go through this slide of success here in a little bit.

If you look at the cornerstones of his championship teams, on the one corner is industriousness and the other one is enthusiasm. He really built all of his teams around those two principles. With the industriousness, it is about the work. Everybody knows that; everybody knows the work has got to be put in. But when it

John Wooden’s Pyramid of Success



Source: handshakecolumbus.org/image/pyramid.png

is fused in with the enthusiasm, that is what makes it special and that is what makes it unique. That is what builds success, and that is what climbs you to the apex of the pyramid. Now also on the bottom there, on the foundation there, he has got your life skills: he has got your friendship, your loyalty, your cooperation. Then you step-up, and he has got intentness, he has got initiative, he has got alertness, he has got self-control. Things that all athletes need to have; things that all teams need to have. Then you go-up a little bit more and you have got condition, skill; but I really liked how he still puts that team spirit, he still puts that team pride even, that high up on the pyramid. Then you have got poise and then you have got confidence; which is something that has to be earned, it is not something that is given out. It is something that you have got to go through the work to understand that; you have got to go through the work to get that. Then the top, it is about competitive greatness.

What I like so much, and what we are talking about today, is: how to maximize that moment, how to get your athlete at the big meet, how to get them to perform, and how to get them to reach that goal. The secret is every day. It is not... and I think that is one of the hardest things about coaching is that constant evaluation process. It is so time consuming. When a kid sits down and writes down their goal, and then it gets crumpled away or gets taught, and all of a sudden the big meet is here. You have to track that, and you have to hold them accountable to that every day in workout. I think that is one of the number one things in our program: it is accountability. It is accountability on a daily basis. I never feel like we go into any meets... I feel we are always prepared, I feel like our students are always ready-to-roll, and I think they understand what they are about-ready to achieve—I think they get that. I think the more time that you can spend and the more energy that you can put into that daily effort, I think the more rewards...

Overview:

This is my model that I am going to talk about. It is a basic business model, but it is the one that we have built our program, or we built our foundation, around. A little different from Coach Wooden's, but it was influenced by that. You are going to see some of the same influences. What you are going to find is... I really picked a 360-degree model—it is big in business right now. From Louisville, one of our big corporations in town is Yum! Brands. I do not know if you have heard of Yum! Brands. I am sure you have heard of Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, KFC; that is all under their umbrella,

their corporate umbrella. They are really big into the 360 feedback, the evaluations of employees; trying to get their employees to maximize their on-job performance.

So what I did was the circular flow of it is your environment; those were going to be your five Cs: where you got your communication—I am going to go through each one of these on each slide, so do not feel that you have got to write them all down right now. You have got your consistency, you have your training culture, you have what you create, and then you have your competency. In the middle of there, those are your fundamentals. They are not in any listed order, they are basically pretty much just revolving around the circle. You have got technique, you have passion—which we have already spoken about—positive thinking, enthusiasm, confidence, attitude, goal setting, discipline, leadership and then competition. In the center, it is your athlete—it is your individual. This model encompasses that athlete. What it does, it brings that motivation, or it brings that dynamic or that safety net, of allowing them to believe through the support of the team, of the program, of the coaching staff.

You will see... you are going to find within that, you are going to find different things that do coincide. You are going to see that enthusiasm and attitude, they are going to play off each other. You have got technique in leadership; you have got competition with passion and discipline. You know, how you control your pace? How do you control your speed? How do you hit take-outs? You are going to see all of that, and we are going to go into that a little bit. But that is basically what I am going to speak to you about in simple business type form.

Really what this does, this simply builds a trust—that is what this does. It builds a trust in your program, it builds a trust in your athletes; that is what it does.

Environment: the 5 C's

Communication: One of the things that really I think is a cornerstone or something that has to be established right away in your program. You have to employ, really, a triangular relationship. What I mean with that is communication has got to flow with the parents, it has got to flow with the athlete; and it has got to form that triangle. If not, credibility will be lost. If you have got... and maybe some of you are parents; I have got four children, here, and I try to practice what I preach. When one of my kids get in the car... believe it or not I do not really have any swimmers: I have got a runner, I have got a club baseball player; they

all stayed away from swimming—imagine that. (They are around it enough when dad comes home.) My son will get-in after baseball practice, and Ah man, the coach just wrote.... I am not going to side with him; I am not going to say, "Oh yeah, you're right that coach is nuts, he's a lunatic; I've seen him out there." The credibility is lost, I am basically cutting that coach off at the knees, and you cannot do that. You cannot do that to your athletes. I think that is why it is important to have that professional relationship or have that good communication flow.

I really think technology backs that up, with social media, with websites, with handbooks. There are so many different venues that you can communicate [through], I really do not really think you have an excuse there. It is just finding the right one and finding the right model or that sense of communication that works for you. At school I am limited; I use something called Edline is what I use, and you cannot send attachments and you cannot send documents. So I have to be a little bit more creative. If you are a club team, you might have a little bit more room, or you might have a little bit more room to build that.

Be professional. It drives me crazy when sometimes on the pool deck and I hear the coaches when the swimmer gets out, Hey K-dog, and all the slang that is thrown across the deck. They get that from their peer group; they really do not need that from a coach. Kids want their coaches to be leaders. They want that communication and they want that language to be strong. They want that sense of security. They do not want the same thing they get from their buddy that they drive to practice with or they would go home from the meets. So, I think you have to be different, and I think you have to have that in the back of your mind when you do choose your language.

When you choose that language, treat all of your students with dignity. I think it goes... I think everybody probably has had that time where maybe they have lost their cool, or they have been flustered, or they have had maybe a bad... something is going on in their personal life and they have brought that to the pool deck; be careful. I think that you have to treat your athlete with dignity; you have to show them that you care. Unfortunately, maybe getting back to the Oprah video, sometimes we are not all paid to go that extra mile. But if you are going to be a great coach and you are going to be in charge of an elite program, you have to do that. I do not think kids are disposable—I do not, I have got four kids myself. I think you have to treat them with that love and I think you have to care about them every

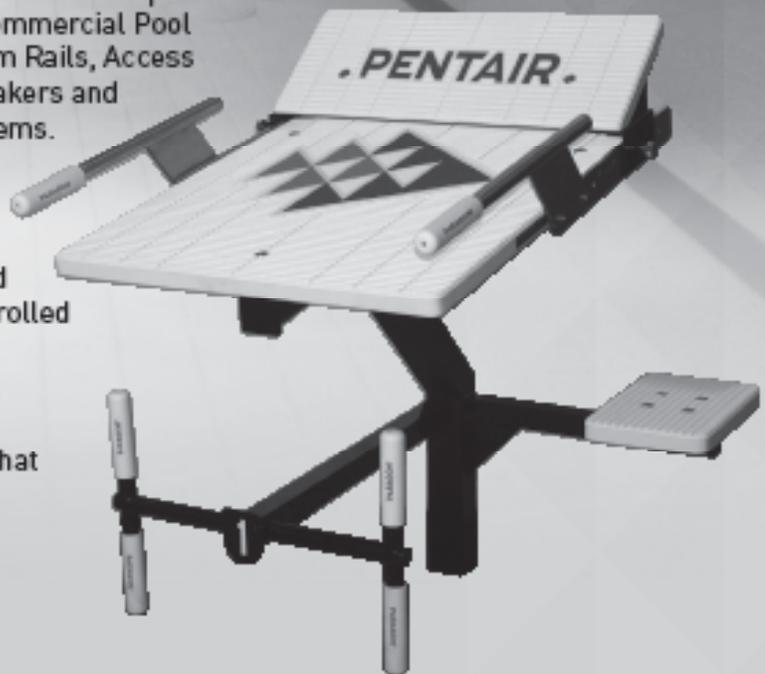


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day, even throughout differences.

Culture: I think it is very important to distinguish this early. If you have not already done so, I think you need to know how to handle that. It really is what sets your team apart, and I think this gives your team definition. It is a simple way to define. I am giving a talk tomorrow about coaching leadership and team design; and I will go into leadership and I will go into culture a little bit more in-depth tomorrow—at this same time and I believe I am in the same room. But it sets-up your developmental stages on how to progress the athletes. So they have kind of some mind... this is where you teach them how to control what they can control.

I have got on there in caps: you have to turn in a positive way. If you do not, the model collapses, the model falls apart. I cannot reinforce that enough, how you have to do that. I do not think programs... you are not going to get the long-term success by fear. You are going to get it through love; you are going to get it through that positive reinforcements and through caring about those athletes.

Your culture is where your team is going to form. I heard a great talk a few years ago in Indianapolis from Coach Teri McKeever about the storming and the norming and how teams come together, how you bring them to the performing phase, and then you basically transform: you say goodbye to the ones... we say goodbye to our seniors, we recognize their accomplishments, and then we start building for the upcoming year. Your team will go through those phases: you are going to go through that endurance phase, you are going to go through that wrestle for control stage... it is there, and you all know what I am talking about. I think having the structure and having the culture to handle that, and having those definitions, help you through that adversity.

The deep practice... has anybody read *The Talent Code*? Anybody familiar with that book? Good book. Basically, bottom line, it talks about just practicing correctly over and over again; no shortcuts, no cutting corners, you [have] got to hold that line, you got to hold that discipline with your athletes, you got to hold that discipline with your students. When we get into technique, we will talk a little bit more about that. But it is getting involved and being comfortable when uncomfortable: all of that philosophy. It is very, very important to your culture.

Consistency is another key to environment. It basically backs-up all of your training and your

discipline. Basically you are backing what you sell, is what it is. When you map-out and say, we're going to do this this month; and we're going to train this way in this month; we're going to go to this meet and we're going to perform this way; we're going to swim fast when we're not rested, we're going to rest, we're going to swim even faster. It is having that consistent structure—is what it is. Swimmers feel comfort in this, I think; as having that and understanding. You do not have to go too deep into it, but I think you do need to provide that outline.

You know, another form: it is like starting on time. Like I said, I coach high school boys and they are... ugh. I mean, I started right when I step on the pool deck. I had it in my mind that we were going to have an elite program where we were going to have one of the top teams in the country, so we were going to act like it. I refused to go in the locker room and pull those guys out. They know we start at 3:00, they know they have got four minutes to change-out of their coats and ties, they know they need to be in their suits and they know they need to be in the water, not coming out. At 3:00 we start; we are moving forward. If they are not there, they are missing out. I do not put up with it; I refuse to put up with it. That is not the way... coming in late and being unprepared is not the way that we want to define our program. I back that up with my coaching every day, and the boys know that. Sure enough, we had some freshman that come into the program and do not know that, and boy, they learn real quick. I do not even have to get on them: our upper classmen, our captains, the leaders of our team, they get on them for me. They say, "Welcome to Saint X. We don't do that here." They get it real quick.

I think positive habits... we talked a lot about positive thinking, we talked about it does need to be there every day. I think really coaching that standard, where athletes understand your language, they understand your coaching. And this is where the team goals come in:

- What do you want to accomplish as a team?
- What do you want to do?
- What do you want to achieve?
- How can you get your athletes into that?

Create was also a part of the environment, or part of the five Cs. This is where you introduce change. I do not know how many of you like change; I do not think anybody likes change; I know high school boys do not like change. If I go into my desk in my office and there is a pen

moved, I do not like that; I am kind of a creature of habit. But change is going to happen. You really cannot do anything to stop it, so you have to embrace it—is what you have to do. It is taking the initiative of the coach and being in control—is what you have to do. That helps you create and that helps you control that.

Embrace innovation—I have that. Never to stand still. I know that is something that we are always trying to push in our program. We came out with a really good handbook that really defines our program. We have it listed online; we have it basically in book form. It has got records, it has got information, it has got rules. We came out with these—the swimmers love these. We came out... these are actually our swimmers, and we came out with cards for our swimmers—is what we do. we use it for recruiting. Our school is \$14,000 a year to attend our school; so recruitment is part of the process. But what we do is we put little simple facts on the back of them. We will put meet schedules on them. We will put some did you know about the program. We will pass these around at our open houses; we have prospective students coming into our building, they will walk out with it. Just little things like this. Did not take much, these... beside the photography, these cards to print-up about 700 of these cards costs me about \$50. But every kid that walks into our school that is interested in Swimming, they walk out with them. The guys love it, they think it is great—I have got my own baseball card, how cool is that?

It is little things like this that keep your program or define your program. We do college résumés. We do different things for our kids. We do a lot of homework for parents so they do not have to do it. It is a way that basically we say, this is where you want to go to school; this is why you want to be a part of this program. A lot of your inspiration is going to come from here. I think you always want to push to be the best, but you want to have fun. I think in our program, we do.

Take the time to recognize that achievement. It is a critical skill, but I think it is hard in coaching because there are always the breakdowns, there is always the film analysis. You will go in this trade show and you will see 18 million things on how to breakdown a stroke and how to make that stroke better. It is understanding the achievement, understanding that effort, that human spirit; I do not know if there is something that measures that. It is up to you to let them know they are doing a good job and to recognize that.

Be involved with your team unity. I like to think

of myself as a swimmer's coach. I do not ignore kids when I see them in the hallways. You know, they are, "Coach". If you yell that in the hallways, we have got so many coaches at our school everybody turns around. It really is... embrace that. I think it is something that is important, and understand that they are talking to you and they do understand you.

Competency. It is pretty much why these clinics take place. We are here to improve our skills; we are here to add to our toolbox. I think we all are students; that is why we are here. I think this clinic provides... there are resources like this. I have got a NISCA form that I have got to promote because I am a high school coach; these forms are up on the table. Another great resource is NISCA [National Interscholastic Swimming Coaches Association], where you can see... they have great literature. It is easy for you: pick-up one of these applications, fill it out. Join some different organizations, expand your portfolio. Like I said, I rely on this because I am a high school coach—but it is not limited to that. Understanding technology and how to use technology is important. Just reinforcing those skills on a daily basis, it really allows you to do so much more.

I have got a question for you—and you do not have to answer out loud—but just take a moment to think about it. It is about your working environment and your program. The question is: Who wakes up every day and is excited to go to the place where they work? Take a moment to think about that; it is not something I have to think about. I have been at Saint X, I graduated from Saint X, it was a great opportunity to go back and coach there. A lot of teachers who taught me thirty years ago are still there. I go to work every day and I am excited to be there; I am excited to walk in that building. I hope I never lose that; I am not planning on that. If you said no, and you might be feeling a little burned out, your swimmers will be feeling the same way. So sometimes you have to put yourself in their position. So, I hope you answered yes to that.

Kind of some proof; I have spent a lot of time talking about environment. I have got a little two-minute video here—this is Swimming-related. It is a relay. We set a State record a couple of years ago, and somebody put this together for us. I think what makes it amazing is not the time—they went 1:23 in the 200 Free Relay which broke the State record by a couple of seconds—but it is who is on it. What we put-together on this relay in a year's time.

We had a student that was cut from the basketball team; 6'6"-guy jumped-in the first time, swam a 26, 50 freestyle. But could jump out of the gym, and could dunk the ball. His split on the relay was 20.6—in a matter of a year's time. His athletic existence was over at our school, it was done. He was cut! He walked into the pool as a last-chance, walking to his car, because at one time he swam country club. Now he is an All American.

We have a kid on this relay who had two picks for touchdowns that year as a safety on our football team. Not too many people say this. These are not club guys; they are guys that just jumped into a high school program and decided to buy-in to what we were doing and swim very, very fast. There is a kid that came to us all the way from Dubai, because he had grandparents in Louisville and was never really that disciplined. Really... when we talked about kick, he really did not know what we were talking about or any of the training. So he had to learn a new language, learn a new school, learn a new training; in about five months. Then we had a wild-card on there: a kid who had bounced around but never really found his way in any of our club programs in town. Got into trouble a little bit: got into a fight two months before and could not put his goggles on because his eye was so swollen. It is accepting that; it is pulling that kid in, to be a part of this and be a part of something really special. (Video Plays, the relay was swum and set a state record that finished a full four seconds ahead of the seconds place relay) Pretty cool, and really cool how it all came together. It is kind of one of those moments that... it just all came together beautifully, and happened at the right time.

10 Fundamentals

Ten fundamentals: I do want to go into this. But basically here is your list; this is what was in the circle that you saw:

1. Technique,
2. Passion,
3. Positive Thinking,
4. Enthusiasm,

10 FUNDAMENTALS

1. Technique
 2. Passion
 3. Positive Thinking
 4. Enthusiasm
 5. Confidence
 6. Attitude
 7. Goal Setting
 8. Discipline
 9. Leadership
 10. Competition
5. Confidence,
 6. Attitude,
 7. Goal Setting,
 8. Discipline,
 9. Leadership, and
 10. Competition.

If you look... I mentioned the success that Coach Wooden has had with his, and kind of matched-up—not to compare to Coach Wooden—put our success over there on the side. And if you are not familiar with the UCLA Basketball Dynasty that happened in the '70s, it is pretty amazing what they did with all the championships and the wins and the 88-consecutive victories. But I think what Coach Wooden did such a great job of, and what I know from his teaching, is how he really reinforces the parallels between life and sports. I think we have to recognize that as coaches.

A little bit about our program and our undefeated seasons, our dual meet record, our victories. I think one thing that defines us is we know who we are. We know where we want to go, we know where we want to be, and we are on track to do that. I think you have to know who you are when you create a program.

#1: Technique

Technique is everything. I think you probably heard a lot over the talks about quality-over-quantity concept in training. You know, fast swimmers are going to be the ones that hold their races together at the end—that is how they finish. That is the key to swimming. I think understanding that deep practice, that perfect practice, and really stressing kids. Your warm down: do not let your kids jump-in the showers to go to warm down. Like I said, I coach high school boys—like herding cats—do your warm down. So we went to a philosophy of: I want you to do

Technique is everything.

Passion and loving the sport really shows that willingness to work. Fear is short term, **positive promotion** is long term. **Enthusiasm** is about bringing it everyday. **Confidence** unlocks all the locks to your obstacles. **Attitude** is about showing sportsmanship and having class. **Goal setting** is a final destination. **Discipline** is going to be your detailed work. **Leadership** is the ability to get individuals to work together for a common good and the best possible results. And **competition** is the moment.

4x25, and I want you to do perfect technique. I want you to leave here, I want you to leave the pool deck, practicing perfect. That's how I want you to set-up the next day.

Do not cut corners, and you constantly have to evaluate that technique—I think we all know that as coaches. I think this encourage kids to be engaged in what you are doing. You know, we work a lot of quality in our program. We have kind of gone to a system where we will go... we do not do a lot of recovery. We will just hammer-out four days of quality, and then do a day of recovery, and then we will just hammer-out another four. We do really try to do that. I think that we do that also in the weight room. You know, you saw that a lot in the Olympics, if you saw some of those pieces on Lochte. Do not forget that, obviously from an injury stand-point, you need to obviously stress good technique if you are in charge of the weight program or strength-and-conditioning in your program. It is something that we really put a lot of emphasis on in our program.

#2: Passion

Passion. To go back to the video a little bit, it needs to be demonstrated every day. I think loving the sport, promoting the sport, really shows that willingness to work. I think as a coach you need to display that for your students. It is like anything else, when you are coaching... and I made mention of this earlier in the presentation about how the swimmers are watching you, they are constantly looking at you. Do not try to beat them out the door, to your cars. I have seen so many coaches do that with my kids in some of the sports—not swim coaches. You have to take the time. They might not want to approach you,

they might even be afraid of you a little bit; but try to engage that conversation, engage that communication. Because if you do not, you are going to lose them. I do not think anybody in this business, or any of us or any of our teams, want to lose them; we want to retain kids—is what we want to do.

I have got on their pride is much more than words. If you saw our records, it is 36-1. I remember the loss to this day, and one of the reasons why I remember is because it was a big meet. It was a rival meet, and we did a special t-shirt for it and we put pride on the back of the shirts. We got stomped; I mean, we got absolutely crushed. I remember talking to the boys: they had lost to this team for twenty years in a row before my staff and I had gotten in there. I had never gotten beat that bad, never. I just said enough, we got to do things differently. They were not really that overwhelmed with it as much as we were. I said, "This is a wakeup call or this is a setback." I wanted all the shirts back because I told them that the pride that was on the back was false advertisement. It is not just something that goes on the t-shirt; it is something that you have got to believe. We came back, we beat the team the next year, and have continued to roll on through with what we have been doing. It was a real eye-opener, it was a real defining moment for me at Saint X; and one the boys, they really responded to and did a really good job. I think it did relate back to that passion and that commitment that the coaches had to that excellence.

#3: Positive Thinking

Positive thinking. Positive mental attitude: it has been around for years. We have something in our

school called study skills, where we have all our freshman take it; it kind of sets them up for our school. We do a swim camp in the summers, and we happen to do it in the viewing room where they have this study skills program. I found one of the manuals. I attended study skills at Saint X in 1982, and the same picture that I had in 1982 was the same cover shot. What it is, our mascot is the tiger and he is walking up the steps to success. It is that self-motivation through that P.M.A.; through that positive mental attitude.

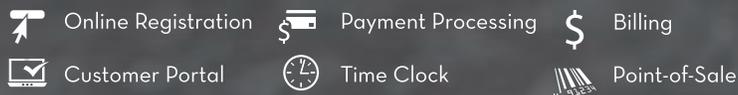
As many things that have changed in the world since 1982, I was glad to see that we were teaching our students exactly the same thing. That it starts with that positive attitudes, there was comfort in seeing that illustration, and it gave me a good laugh when we were putting on our camp. But I think it is true: it starts with that, it starts with that belief. I think really positive thinking, we have talked a little bit about how this needs to be one of these cornerstones. It starts with being great. I think believing that and displaying that positive attitude really is how you become great. I have mentioned that fear is short term, but positive promotion is long term. I think you need to keep that mind when you are really selling the positive thinking. You have to believe it; you have to buy into it.

#4: Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is about bringing it every day; you have to build that excitement and you have to create that buzz. When I was coaching Age Groupers, this was their socialization for the day: they came to workout to hang-out with their buddies. Getting them to step-up and set State records and getting them to achieve

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results in the water, that was kind of the by-product of that. I never wanted them to peak in the Age Group program; I always wanted them to continue, I wanted them to enjoy the sport, and I wanted them to get better as they matured physically.

But I think that if you bring... our workouts were fun. If you bring that enthusiasm to the deck, sure it is tiring; but the investment is great. At Saint X, we really play on this brotherhood thing; it is an all-guy school, and we try to create that sense in workout, we try to create that sense in really anything we do. It is not... enthusiasm just does not have to happen at meets; it has to happen on a daily basis, it has to happen in workouts—is what it has to do.

#5: Confidence

Confidence. I do feel like this probably unlocks all of the locks here, to your obstacles. It is getting them to understand that, and getting them to realize they can be confident. It really helps maintain and creates that success. It reaffirms that environment that we talked about

creating and setting-up that belief. Obviously it allows you to reach heights as a program that maybe you never thought you could. We just came out of an exciting summer with the Olympics. I try to tell all of the kids that come into our program that: sure that's a great dream. The people that make it to the Olympics are the people that do not place limits on themselves, or allow others to place limits on themselves. It is that belief and understanding that: yes, people do make it to that level. Getting kids and students to realize that is very important.

Speaking of that—we do not really have a whole lot of time. I have got to touch the Michael Phelps-thing, because we all watched Phelps. I think we were all spoiled in '08. But did he swim as inspired in London as he did in Beijing? You know, I don't know. I was not there, I was not on the pool deck—and maybe some of you all were. But at least from a TV standpoint, I do not know. I was really proud of Michael for coming on one of the Today shows, or one of the things, when he got out-touched in the 200 fly, and said I got what I deserved. I didn't

practice that; I practiced floating my walls for two years in practice, got out touched. I thought that was a great message, and I thought that was really great of his character to step-up and really admit that to the world. I think it really reinforces what we do as coaches, and how he was willing enough to admit that. That maybe he was not as locked-in or he did not quite have that tunnel-vision like he had just four years ago.

#6: Attitude

Attitude. Walking and talking like a champion, I have got that on there. It is about body language. I think it is about getting your athletes to believe in that attitude and then demonstrate that body language. Watching when they step-up to the block. I do not think you really need to grill them if they believe in that goal or if they understand that goal; just look at them. Look at their body language, look at how they represent themselves.

Take a look in the mirror, too, as a coach. I am not going to lie to you; I would love to say I am always confident as I am here and I am on the

pool deck standing-up straight. I have got a great coaching staff—my coaching staff is with me here today—and I am up here today talking to you all because of them and the support they give me. My grandma passed away a year ago, and I remember walking into the big meet—the State championship meet. And I remember one of my best friends, Manny, who has been with me 11 years, 12 years; he pulled me aside and said, “Stand-up straight”, because I was letting something from my personal side kind of creep into my profession. And you have to be careful. So I think it is something that we all need to practice. Luckily I had that strong support system to say Hey man, pull it together, because I am human, I make mistakes all the time. And I try to make mistakes to get better.

The attitude... you will see the clever phrase of the swim to win or the refuse to lose. But I think, really, attitude is about showing sportsmanship; it is about having class. You know, we are upon the NFL, football, and you are going to see a lot of touchdown-dances over the course of the weekend. I do not know if there are any from last night that made Sport Center, but... I mean, act like you have been there. Somebody who has scored thirty touchdowns, I do not know if that is really needed, if you have that kind of talent to play on that kind of level. I think it is one of the things we try to teach kids and boys in our program.

#7: Goal Setting

Goal setting. You know, it has been referred to as a final destination, which it is. But it also, I think that some coaches the way that we try to play on goals, I think we do try to start with that dream and we try to do it deductively is how we set our goals in our program. We start with that dream: Where do you want to go? Where is your vision? Then we go to the long term, then we go to the short term, and then we work on that daily goal. And I think if you can get kids locked into that, I think it is true. Sure, goals have got to be specific, but I think if you can start and you can really hone in on that dream, I think that it really, it does carry them and carries them through their training—is what it does.

#8: Discipline

Discipline. It is going to be your detailed work, is what it is going to be. It is about taking ownership and it is about really exploiting those excellent fundamentals, which are very important to a high caliber or an elite program. It is really bringing that every day, is what that basically boils down to.

#9: Leadership

Leadership—what I am speaking about tomorrow. I put that quote on there from Coach Wooden because I think it is a great quote: the ability to get individuals to work together for a common good and the best possible results, while at the same time letting them know they did it themselves. Ownership, accountability. Leadership is about making decisions; it is about assuming risks and having the guts to stand-up there and pull the trigger when you need to pull the trigger. And it is courageous. Being a follower is courageous also. But no doubt about it, leadership, the position, might be more glorified, but it is still about the same. It takes courage and you have to reward that courage. It is about being unselfish and it is about really just teaching others and setting that example. But that will be a little bit tomorrow.

#10: Competition

Competition. We talked about that, the moment; and about how, really, you want all of the fundamentals to come nicely together, to really help you maximize that moment and seize that moment. And, you know, it is really about: training can only take you too far. I think there is the training aspect of it, there is the competition aspect. Some of you have heard, maybe you have coined that or heard that phrase: they are a good practice swimmer. And I think it is getting that student, or getting that swimmer, to really step-out of that and to embrace that. To put the workout into the meets, and really understanding the magnitude of that competition. So it is important. And as I talked about earlier, it is the moment of truth, it is about hitting your mark. And it is really about performing when the lights come up.

The Athlete

I put on there: don't forget about the center, the athlete. We have spent 90% of this talk about environmental things and about fundamentals that you need to teach your athlete; but you have to engage the center. And the swimmer is the upmost core of the model presented, and you have to engage them. You have to communicate. You have to make sure that they are doing things correctly. You have to promote their self-esteem on how their hard work is going to pay off. I try to coach everyday like it is my last. And I think if you can get swimmers to swim every race, every workout, every set, like it is their last—and if they can bring that intensity—the results will be outstanding.

I think we are all here to make our programs better. I think the way you do that is you do make mistakes. I think you move forward from those mistakes, you take those expectations and you just be better. I think everybody is qualified, not even knowing where you are from or what club you are associated with: you have those skills, you do. You have to make it personal, put that stamp on your program. Promote being positive—you would not have gotten into coaching if you were not.

It can be as simple as making it... just knowing your kids' names. I have coached some... at Lakeside we had 400 kids. You have got a whole bunch of new kids that come into the program. I have 115 guys on my high school team; I always try to take the time when those freshman come-in to get to know them right away. And I always put pressure on myself to know their names that first weekend. And it is hard, because they wear ties every day to school and then I have got to try to identify them in the hallways. So it is work, but you have to do that—you have to do that. We talked about dignity and understanding that: that is what it is all about.

So to kind of close the loop on this: what does this hour mean? I think it has multiple meanings. And I do not really know if there is a bottom line. If you are looking for it, I would say: be open to growth in your program. And take this model, collaborate and just try and influence others. I think you can try to take advantage of what you have seen. I think if you want to break it down to more importantly from the Oprah video: walk out of this room and understand how lucky you are to be in the position that you are and that you have an impact to make on someone's life. I think that I can get lost.

This speech was really about maybe a call-to-arms, on how to care for your athlete and how to take an interest in that athlete and how to make a difference and really about doing what is right. I guess the ultimate take is really, it is about being available and just being yourself. Because I think probably every one of you all out there could have delivered this and put this out there.

I want to thank you for taking, again, the hour to be here. Really this was a great honor, this was a great opportunity to speak to you. ■

Todd Larkin is the head swimming and diving coach at Saint Xavier High School, located in Louisville, Kentucky.



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PLAYING FAVORITES

by John Leonard

One day a few years ago, a club board member accused me of “having favorites” on our club team. Several other parent board members nodded their heads in agreement. The implication was that this was a terrible sin. When I was a younger coach, I thought it was terrible also. And he was right. I did have favorites. My favorites were those athletes who most fervently did what I asked of them. Those that did, I gave more attention to. I talked to them more. I spent more time teaching them. I also expected more of them.

The implication that he was making was that my favorites got better than the others because they were my favorites, and that was somehow unfair. He mistook cause for effect.

The fact is, that the athletes who came to me ready to learn, ready to listen, ready to act on what they learned and try it my way, even if it was more challenging, more difficult than they imagined, were ready to get more out of our program. And they were my favorites.

As a coach, I have only one thing to offer to an athlete. That is, my attention. Which means that I attend to their needs. The reward for good behavior should be attention; attending to their needs. The consequence of inattention, lack of effort, unwillingness or preparation to learn, or just plain offensive or disruptive behavior is my inattention to that athlete.

How could it be other than this? If you have three children, and you spend all of your time and energy working with the one that is badly behaved, what does that tell your other two children? It tells them that to capture your attention, they should behave badly. What we reward, is what we get.

As a coach, I want athletes who are eager to learn eager to experiment to improve, eager to work hard. I want athletes who come to me to help develop their skills both mental and physical, and are willing to accept what I have to offer. Otherwise, why have they come to me. And I am going to reward that athlete with my

attention. In so doing, I encourage others to become like the athlete above. If I spent my time with the unwilling, the slothful, the disruptive, I would only be encouraging that behavior.

The link I want to forge is between attention and excellence. Excellence in the sense of achieving all that is possible, and desired. My way of forging that, is to provide my attention to those who “attend” to me. This does of course result in increased performance for those that do so. I am a professional coach, and when I pay attention to a person, that person is going to improve. Over time, this makes it appear that my “favorites” are the better swimmers. Not so at all. The better swimmers are those that pay attention, and thus become my favorites.

What Dad didn’t realize is that you must have favorites if anyone is to develop in a positive fashion. The coach’s job is to reward those who exhibit positive developmental behaviors. Those are my “favorites,” and they should be. ■



BE FIRST

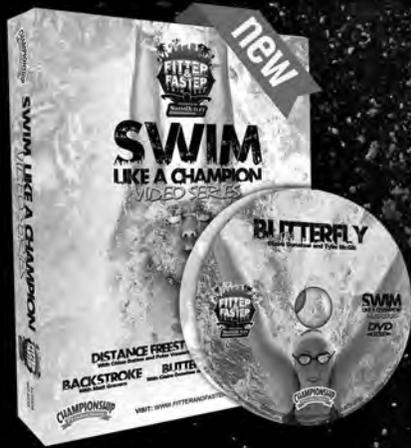
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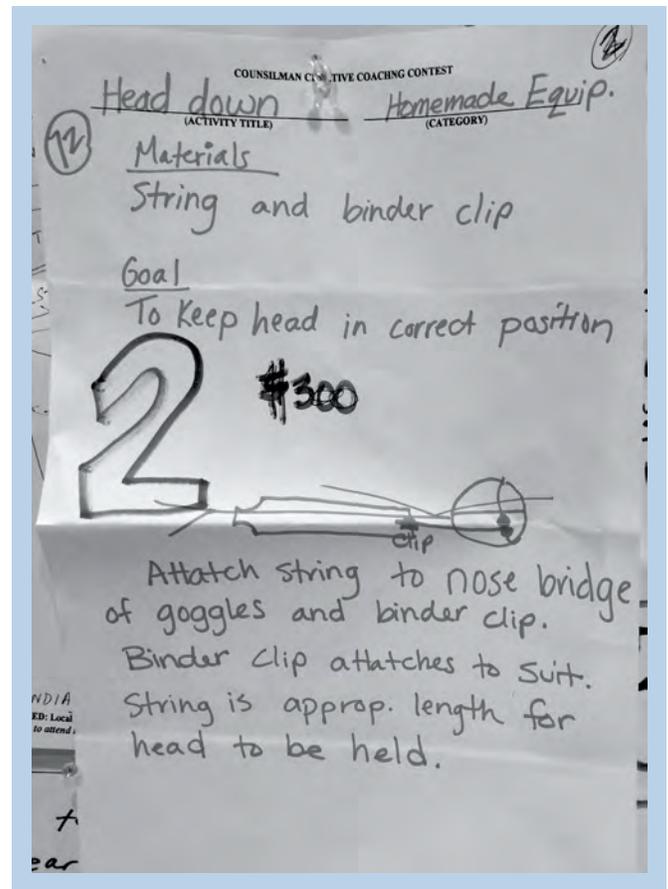
1st **Alphabet IM's** (ACTIVITY TITLE) **IM set - 11-12's** (CATEGORY)

NAME	DESCRIPTION	HOW
1. AIM	Almost Joy IM	Go Nuts in the middle
2. BIM	Balk half IM	split br + fr
3. CIM	Cruise IM	swim speed entire
4. DIM	Drill IM	coaches pick drill
5. EIM	Even IM	split fly/bk- & br/fr evenly
6. FIM	Free IM	free for fly
7. GIM	Green light IM	all out effort
8. HIM	Half IM	pick 1st or 2nd 50 for entire 100
9. IIM	Inside out IM	bk- fly- fr- br
10. JIM	Jumble IM	any order you want
11. KIM	Kick IM	Can go board or no board
12. LIM	Limb IM	12 1/2 each stroke x 2
13. MIM	Mini IM	count # strokes for entire 100
14. NIM	Number IM	favorite 2 strokes in the middle
15. OIM	Oreo IM	underwater kickout on in as far & as fast as you can
16. PIM	Peeps IM	swim strokes as quietly possible
17. QIM	Quiet IM	
18. RIM	Reverse IM	fr- br- bk- fly
19. SIM	Spl IM	lowest strokes per length
20. TIM	Tractor pull IM	swimmers partner up and choose who pulls & kicks each 25
21. UIM	Underwater IM	coaches determine duration under- water each 25
22. VIM	Victory IM	at end of 100 swimmer practices celebrating for example
23. WIM	Wacky IM	Mix pull & kick - fly pull - br k this is a 125 - you pick extra stroke
24. XIM	Xtra IM	
25. YIM	Yell IM	after 100 swimmer yells - "EM TEAM"
26. ZIM	Zero IM	zero breath on fly & fr

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FIRST PLACE

Russ Kasl - Swim MAC Carolina
"Alphabet IM's"



SECOND PLACE

Katie Dance - Foothills Swim Team
Head Down Equipment

THIRD PLACE

Mike Lyman -
KATY Aquatics
"Learn Names Relay"

FOURTH PLACE

Jason Van Galder -
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