

ASCA NEWSLETTER

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Suggestions for **SUCCESS**

by Coach Teri McKeever

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Introduction by Tim Welsh:

Good morning, good morning, good morning. So here we are following a wonderful awards banquet last night. One of my favorite expressions that comes out of the Eastern religions says, "What does a person do before enlightenment? Chop wood, carry water. What does a person do after enlightenment? Chop wood, carry water." So Coach Teri McKeever last night was inducted into the ASCA Hall of Fame; and here she is, 8:30 Saturday morning—chop wood, carry water—she is back, right. Swimmers swim, coaches coach, and Coach Teri McKeever is back here this morning to coach us.

The title of her talk: Suggestions for Success. Now imagine that: it is a modest

title. Not to dwell on having just come back from the Pan Pac Championships, not to worry about her three NCAA Championships, not to worry about her three times on the World Championship staff, not to worry about being head women's team USA coach for the 2012 Olympics. Make no mistake about it: this is a modest woman who is here this morning and one heck of a coach. I think if Coach Teri McKeever has suggestions for our success, I recommend that we listen very carefully. Coach Teri, we have a gift from ASCA, and thank you for being here this morning—chop wood, carry water.

McKeever: Good morning. Okay, I had four people ask me: did I have any video options. I do not: we are going paper-

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Continued from Cover:
**SUGGESTIONS
FOR SUCCESS**

and-pencil and your visual is, unfortunately for you, just going to be me. But I appreciate that introduction. I really wanted purposefully to the idea of suggestions, I think is the most important thing this morning. I love what Greg said yesterday, and I am a firm believer of this: by no means do I have all the answers. If I did have a cookbook or a recipe for this, I would have marketed it a long time ago and probably be doing something... well, actually, I would not have to do anything, right?

But what I would like to just share this morning are some things that have personally made a difference in my career. I did a similar talk like this... it was 11 years ago at ASCA. I went back and looked at my notes, and a lot of the things still rung true for me. I just feel that... I know for me, some of the things that I have learned, I think you just have to learn. Just like your athletes, you know? You can tell them, you can tell them, but they have got to actually go through that experience for it to kind of have that aha moment for them. I think some of the things I am intending to share are similar, but hopefully there will be something there that most importantly can be a takeaway for you.

The first thing I wanted to say is: I think it is

really important that you come up with your definition of success. I think too often I have gotten into looking at what other people's definition of what success was, instead of my own. In my mind, I am very clear about why I get up every morning, what is important to me, what I want to do at a practice, what I want to create in my team environment. You know, ironically, I do not really have that written down anywhere; but I think that if you ask anyone on my team, they would have a pretty good idea and could articulate it in their own words.

I equate it to... I have the opportunity/chore—whichever way you want to look at it—to recruit every year. It is always interesting to me when you ask a young woman, or her family: what are you looking for in this stage? or what's going to be the determining factor?" Many times, they cannot... they do not know. You know, they have not thought about that. They are getting ready to look at a college for not only their swimming, but for their academics and the next stages of their life. You ask them what they are looking for, and they do not know.

I think if you do not know, you have a pretty hard time finding it. If you do not know what your definition of success is, or you do not what

you are going to look for, to me it is like finding a needle in a haystack—so to speak. I think the more clear you can get on your purpose; whether it be a mission statement or personal coaching philosophy or whatever resonates for you. But really having a clear idea, and the ability to articulate that to anyone that might ask.

I have ten suggestions and just kind of themes, and hopefully there will be time for questions. I think that we will just kind of go from there.

**#1: Be yourself, and
be the best version of yourself.**

When I first started coaching, my whole coaching career has been, except for one year as a JV high school coach, but it has all been in college. I started out as an assistant with Don LaMont at USC [University of Southern California] in 1985, got the head job at 25 years-old at Fresno State University in 1987, and then took the job at Cal in 1992 and I am getting ready to start my 23rd year. So I have a different version of... you know, a different journey.

But I know when I first had the opportunity to be a head coach—at Fresno State University. In Central California, there was 14 women on the team. I got there and I remember we broke the 400 Medley Relay record. It was something like

4:09, and I was like ooh—you know, I have got people, individually that can go faster than 4:09 right now. It was on the TV and everything. I was... it was a different experience. But it was also like I really felt confident to just trust my gut; and to do things that, intuitively, I felt were the right way to go, responding to the environment, gaining a lot of confidence.

When I got to Cal I was like, Okay, now I'm the Cal coach. I'm supposed to do things like when you go to a clinic, you know—and the people that stood up here and gave presentations. Most of those models were male models. So, I feel like I spent the first 5-6 years really trying to imitate Nort Thornton on the other side of the deck—or a Mark Schubert or a Richard Quick—and I really, really struggled. So much to the point where I really, very, very seriously thought about getting out of coaching: I just was not enjoying it; I was second-guessing myself, losing a lot of confidence.

I don't even know exactly how it happened, but you know the little voice in me, and voices I heard, were saying I was going to get fired. The inner voice of me said, Okay, well I'm going to get fired; I might as well go out and get fired and appreciate the woman I see in the mirror. Because I really did not know who she was anymore: she did not have a value, she did not know what was important to her; I was just trying to do what I thought other people wanted me to do, including athletes or administrators. You know, I would come to a clinic and I would hear about energy systems or this, and I was like Man, I don't do that, like what's wrong with me?

I need to look at me, I need to look at what my strengths are; I need to look at what my weaknesses are. I need to figure out how to be better at my strengths. I need to look at what I do not do as well, and figure out how to do them better—that is down the road here. But I really needed to look at me.

I like what Gregg [Troy] said yesterday about when he asked his athletes who are the three most important people in your Swimming career, and they struggle for a while until they say themselves. You know, I had to do that with my coaching career: who was the most important person for me to advance as a coach? It was me. It was taking a better look at me, and really getting comfortable and confident in that. What my values were, and addressing those.

I think this is a huge issue—well, at least for me—this is a huge issue with my athletes. I think that a lot of times they come in and are really not sure of what their strengths are, what their weaknesses are, and how to just be okay with being the best version of themselves. Trying not... can you imagine being on a team with a Missy Franklin and thinking you are supposed to be Missy Franklin? That is a recipe for disaster. It is a recipe for disaster for me to recruit and try to make Missy Franklin, Natalie Coughlin—or whatever the scenario should be or could be.

I really feel like one of the things that I can teach most effectively is this right here. I did not learn that it was important to be myself until I was probably 35-37 years-old. The way I look at it: if I can help them do that at 30, they are in a lot better stage down the road than maybe I was. I think it can really help them—get up on the block, go to an interview, take an exam—if they really are in-touch with it's okay to have some shortcomings and really aware of what they do well. So that is my number one suggestion.

#2: Be willing to ask for help.

I am the oldest of ten. When you grow up the oldest of ten, you are the help. You do not ask for a help, you are the help, right. Because of some other family situations, I was even more the help, with my biological father passing away when I was 6 years old. So my family circumstances taught me that I was the help; and so, I really, really had to learn this lesson.

I know when I first got to Cal, here I had Nort Thornton on the other side of the deck; I bet I did not ask Nort a question—a real question—for probably 2-4 years. Because I was more concerned that if I asked Nort a dumb question, what would he think of me instead of... I thought he would think less of me. One of my other overriding, teaching themes with my athletes is that: asking for help is a sign of strength, not a sign of weakness. I really felt I personally got that message /learned that message/believed that message that if I asked for help, I was signifying that I did not know something, which was a sign of weakness instead of really the ability to ask for help and support as a sign of strength.

Another way to ask for help, or another kind of theme in that area, is just finding good mentors and people that you trust. You know, I have been

very fortunate to be a part of a group of women that are coaches or were coaches. We meet once a year and have the opportunity to get together and just talk about our lives. Talk about us, talk about what is going on for us. Not what set we are doing, or what are you doing in dryland, how are you electing captains; but really looking at, you know, what are we as coaches, what are we as women, struggling with and how can we support each other in that regard.

I am really fortunate that I get to work at a university with 30 intercollegiate sports; I have some amazing other coaches that I have access to. I really think that tapping in to coaches of different sports is an invaluable experience. You know, I get the great fortune of taking a very individual sport and creating a team. I believe a lot of athletes that grow-up swimming really do not have the idea of what it truly means to be a part of a team. It is very interesting to talk to a soccer coach or a basketball coach or a rugby coach; their challenges are very different than our challenges are and it is often very enlightening.

I think asking for help also means seeking out other experts. As a head coach, assistant coach, whatever, I think you are doing a disservice to your athletes to think that you could have all the answers. You know, whether they be nutritional, weightlifting, emotional—whatever it is. There are a lot of things that are at least presented to my table, day-in and day-out, that I just do not have the skill-set to take care of. I think part of my biggest responsibility is to understand which of those crises, or situations, I can handle; and which is really, really doing my due-diligence to go out and get an expert to help me with that. You know that can be as much as a yoga instructor or a pilates instructor.

I think when you do that, you need to be really careful. You need to vet that expert, too. Just because they have the credentials, it does not mean that their philosophies are in-line with yours as a coach. I have had that situation, where I have not done my due-diligence on bringing someone into our program. It has been a number of years ago, now; but just when pilates, the first initial stage of pilates, we had someone around campus that had a studio close. I was like oh this is great, I'll send my six top women to go work with this gentleman, twice a week and they'll get bonus work and everything. Ended up that within about six weeks, four of

them had hurt their back so much that they could not swim. Because they were not really getting good instruction in pilates; he did not really understand, sort of, the mindset of the competitive athlete that they will do anything to achieve the task right. If he said do x, they would do x; but he was not really coaching...

So what was happening is they were going every week, and he was so excited about how they were progressing that the quality of the movement was not really being coached, the task was being coached. So they were achieving the task, but at some point they ended-up hurting themselves. I think that was really an aha moment for me, to really make sure that the people that I do bring into the program really have a good understanding of the type of athlete that we are working with and as a coach what my goal was to have that brought into the program.

I also think books are huge. I wish I could read faster and I wish I had more time. Where I am getting a lot of good reading done, actually, is on National Team trips—on airplanes and on buses. I think reading, in particularly the business section; I am fascinated by business books on leadership, and team dynamics and building. I have read a lot of Phil Jackson's books; last summer, I read his *Eleven Rings*—just, you know, bringing a lot of different superstars together and working as a team.

I feel like there are some things that I... struggle is not the right word; some of the things that I am working on right now. I have a team of amazing women with diverse and various abilities; really getting them to look at what their roles are and how they can celebrate them and appreciate them. Not watch one or two people, and expect one or two people to kind of carry the load. So that has been really exceptional as well.

I think when you go to hire help and you look at your staff, you want to make sure that you hire somebody that complements you. The worse thing in the world is to have a Teri and a mini-Teri next to her doing exactly the same thing. I have been very mindful in hiring my assistants in the last... probably at least the last three assistants and getting help in doing that. Some of you know Kathie Wickstrand, who is a former Swimming coach and now life coach. She does an amazing job and helps me in a variety of

ways—personally and with the team.

One of the things that we have used with the team and I have used in hiring staff is a DISC behavior analysis. The DISC is on what you value. (You can look it up: D.I.S.C.) What it does is it tells you what is important to you as an individual, and what your strengths are, and how you will show-up under stress and what your value to the team is. I use it with the team—every year the team does it; during our retreat, we work through that and carry that through the season, So that when we are looking at each other, or we are getting on each other's nerves, we talk about it being behavior and not personality, and how to adapt. For them to understand: sometimes as a coach, my job is to adapt to them; but their job is also to adapt to the coaching staff.

But it has been very important to me when I have hired someone to really make sure that person brings different strengths to the table. The other thing I would say with looking for help is: I think all of us need what I call a truth-teller. I think we need someone in our life that is willing to tell us what we need to hear, not what we want to hear, you know. I think that there are things that I need to be told at times, or ways that I can be better, that I do not maybe always want to hear but that I need to hear so that I continue to improve. If you can find someone, or maybe a couple of those, that is an invaluable resource for not only you as a coach, but I think as a human being. So I encourage everyone to find a truth-teller in their life.

#3: Look at your communication styles. Are they effective?

Communication. Buzz word, right? What does that mean? I have got eight things I would like you to think about as far as communication. One is to really look the reality that your athletes... there are visual learners, there are auditory learners, and there are kinesthetic learners. Maybe five years ago, I got this amazing assessment from Chris Martin gave me. It was like 24 questions, that I give to the team, that they answer. It really identifies, if they do not already know—and sometimes they know, but sometimes they might not realize it as much—but, you know: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic.

I said to someone earlier: this lecture is like when the coach is giving the set and they do not write it up on the board and it is really hard to

pay attention, sometimes. Right? My experience has been that more and more athletes are very, very powerful kinesthetic learners. I think it is a little challenging sometimes—for a variety of reasons: they are in the water and we are up on deck—and to be able to teach and show things, and really have that ability to touch or have them do it with a partner and cue certain things, has been really, really valuable. That has been something that I have used.

I think the other thing in your communication styles that is with you and your team or staff, or your staff or athletes back with you, is that the idea of nonverbal. I am finding more and more students coming-in that really are not in-touch with what their nonverbal communication is saying.

Last year, beginning of the year, we were in a team meeting, and I had a freshman. Like the first meeting, she is kind of sitting there, and you know I am thinking okay that's not really the type of... that's not visually what I would expect from a freshman at the first or second meeting of the year. Finally, I could not take it anymore, and I was like, "Can you sit up and stop rolling your eyes every time I say something?" She goes, "What, I'm not rolling my eyes." I go "Yes, you are." Then I asked the rest of the girls, "Did anyone noticed her body language sitting in the meeting?" You know half of them raised their hand. I go, "Is that the body language of somebody that looks like they're engaged or wants to be here?" She had no idea. That was the furthest from what she thought she was sending. But the reality is that is the message she was sending me and her teammates. So I think that is something to really check-in with.

I heard Pete Morgan say last night about eye contact. You know, I do not think, because a lot of them are like this: how many of you have asked somebody... Oh, I talked to her yesterday and Well, I texted her. My thing is like: in the real world, texting is not talking to somebody. They believe that if you text someone, that you actually talk to them; in their world, texting and talking are the same thing. Maybe I am wrong—and I have never had a real job—but I am pretty sure in the real world that you have to learn how to talk to people and you have to be able to look them in eye.

Those subtle things are very, very—well they are not so subtle—are very, very important, and

skills that I feel is part of my responsibility to teach. We do a lot of partner-sharing; where you have to sit face-to-face with your partner and look them in the eye and talk to them. Some of them cannot do that. But again, I think that is something that you can all learn; they can learn and they can get more effective at.

I have been accused more than a few times that my nonverbal communication also sends things out. You know whether it be the way you walk into the pool. I have had my supervisor at my school say that sometimes I need to check-in with that when we are at a staff meeting; that I might shrug my shoulders or something, and, you know, I am not sending-out the best thing. So I think that is something that we all can check-in with.

I use a book called *QBQ! The Question Behind the Question*; it is by John Miller. Nort turned me onto it about 10 years ago. I used the book last year again with the team; I had everybody read the book. It is this really quick-read, and it is really the ability to ask for what you want. That has been a great way to have the student-athletes, have myself, check-in with are we really asking questions that are addressing what we want or are we, kind of, trying to circumvent that. So that might be something some of you might want to check out with your staff or you personally.

The other thing I have done more with, in the last five years in particular, is journaling and writing. A couple of times last year, in particular when there might have been things on the team that I wanted to work through, and I just, you know... before we got in the water, brought my little pencil case out, gave everybody two or three pages of blank paper. I said, "I'm going to ask you some questions. I just want you to write whatever comes to mind. You're not going to give it to me; you can throw it away, you can keep it, whatever it is." We just went. You know, one of the questions was like Am I being a good team member? And, if not, why not, and if I am, what am I doing? you know. Just getting them to kind of think about things.

This summer on Pan Pacs, I put together this journal for the women's team and some of the staff. One of the reasons I did it for—it is one of the first times that I have used the National Team to try something before I actually done it with my own team—but I have been able to go

on so many great teams and been in so many amazing places in the world, and they all kind of blended together. I thought: how cool would it be to kind of have this book that every day I could journal in and just kind of save that memory. I gave them little cues. One of the cues was like: What team member am I most anxious to meet and why? Another one we talked about: How do I show up on social media versus my real self? What's it like to have a USA flag on your cap? What does that mean to you?

So I think journaling has been a really valuable way, personally, for me to get clear on my thoughts. I also use it to write... I will get the girls a blank piece of paper that will ask them questions, and then they give that back to me. It might be like, you know: what are the three things I'm working on and how am I going to work on that. We had that last year, and I used it through the summer, where I had one blank sheet, they turned it in every week and it said this week my challenges are _____; my racing skills I'm working on are _____ and how am I going do them. You know, it can have whatever it is.

Last year, during the academic year, the first thing was: list ten accomplishments. You have no idea how hard it was for these women to list ten accomplishments. They can give you ten things that they have not done, but, really... ten accomplishments. Then really defining what an accomplishment was. You know, like Okay, I did my laundry. Well, that is not really an accomplishment; it is like well if it had to get done and it's important to you, then it's an accomplishment, you know. Just kind of looking at those things. So that really gave us a lot of good information to talk through.

I mentioned earlier, with the eye contact, the partner sharing. I like to do a lot of things, even during... you know, after a set say Okay, you have two minutes to talk to the people in your lane and tell them what was the most effective thing you got out of that set and how's it going to relate to your race at the end of the season and give them two minutes to do that.

Another great book and person—he writes a blog—is a gentleman named Tim Elmore. He writes a blog on what he calls Generation IY: people that are born after 1992, with the invention of the internet. Just some staggering statistics: you know that the average college

freshman contacts their parent via text at minimum 11 times a day. So they are in college and at least 11 times a day, they are texting their parent. He talks a lot about how the idea of adolescence really getting larger.

If you ask this age group, the age group that I am working with, when do they consider themselves being adult? Now most of them will answer: when they have their first child. Not when they graduate from college, not when they get a job, not when they get married; but when they have their first child—which I think is 28, average on 28. But if they want to know anything, what do they do? Get the phone and they have got the answer. So they have knowledge, but they do not have the experience that goes along with that knowledge, which is really creating some challenges, I think.

The other thing about this generation is that they are more tolerant than ever, and they very much like to interact and support each other. It used to drive me crazy when they would talk to each other or whatever. Now, I encourage that. Like if I am going to teach something, I might give the skill and then I might put them in little groups and then.... At school, we have what we call family pods; so every freshman has a group of upperclassmen that are her big sister—or that is her family pod. So we do a lot of things "in your family pod."

This year at the beginning of the year, instead of going over sort of some basic team rules or expectations and doing it in front of a group of 25, I met for 35-40 minutes with every family pod and we basically went over the same thing. But what I did instead, I had every upperclassman in that family pod say, Okay, can you give what your one tip for academic success is. So every returner gave her tip for what she would need to do to be academically successful. Okay, now give her one tip to be athletically successful on this team, and so then they went through. It was fascinating for me too to hear what they felt was the most important piece of knowledge to go through.

I guarantee you, I could have done that in a team setting of 25. But the fact that we did it in a smaller group and that group will meet through the year—and we did some other things out at the pool in that group—that group then becomes the responsibility of like lifting each other up and supporting each other

as we move through the year. So that has been something that has been really valuable.

The other thing is this whole idea of the internet. We have had, and just went on, a retreat. As luck would have it, when we go on the retreat, where we go, there is no cell phone service. Kind of by design, but kind of really cool too. Because then for 48 hours, they do not have the distraction of their phone and they just get the opportunity to just interact with each other. It has really, really been a great thing.

We have gone on training trips—during the Summer, I have done this more—and I have asked the girls to give me two hours a day that they will use their electronic devices and then for the other 22 hours we are not. They get to decide what two hours those are; and that goes for the coaching staff too. So we do not tap-into any electronic stuff except for those two hours, when you can check your email, text, Twitter/tweet, whatever you want, to your heart's content; but then for the other 22 hours, we are just amongst themselves. That has been really interesting.

I also have used... last year I had a team meeting and I told them that they had to bring their laptop. I wanted to talk about the idea of time management. There is a story that I used to use about big rocks in the jar. Most of you have probably heard this. You know, the jar, you have got to put the big rocks in first, and then the little ones, then the gravel, then the sand. If you put the sand in, the big ones do not fit. Well, instead of me kind of doing that or having them read it, if you Google big rocks, all these little things come up. I sent them a link to watch that video on their individual laptop.

Most of the time, what are we doing? We are telling them: put that thing away. I actually said Hey, bring it out and used it. It was really... they are much more visual in their learning—than I am, anyway. That whole idea of watching. I think if you can use some of that to your advantage, it engages them as well.

Then the last thing I have for communication is just to really check-in with how you are communicating to them. You know the reality is most of the time, we are standing on the deck and they are down in the water. Right? That is a whole dynamic right there; just insinuates a lot of things. Whenever we have a team meeting...

even this dynamic here: okay, I'm standing here, you are this way, you are looking at me. It is probably not realistic, but if we were in a circle that would be a completely different physical situation; that would set-up a whole different environment. Whenever we have a team meeting, we always sit in a circle. I really check-in with... like instead of me standing or if I am going to talk or an athlete is going to talk, then everyone stands who talks, not just the coaches. Or we all sit down, and do things. So I think that is something to kind of really check-in with.

Then one other thing for communication that I found has been very helpful. Has anyone besides me ever met with an athlete or even met with your team—but primarily it is like an individual that you meet with—and you think you have this great meeting and you have communicated what you want, and then you hear them say to somebody else what you talked about and they have missed completely what you wanted to say. You are like were we in the same room? One of the things that I try to do is I will ask them to repeat what I said. Because if you ask them to repeat what you said, they really have to get the essence and hear what you are saying. That has really, really helped me make sure that I am communicating and that they are hearing the right thing. They might hear sometimes what you have to say, but they are not really getting the message. If they have to communicate that back, I think that really forces them to articulate it.

This year I am going to do something different, too. When I have a disciplinary issue, I am going to... We have a leadership council and then we have two individuals that are kind of the... I do not know what we are going to call them. But anytime I have a disciplinary issue, one of those two people are going to need to be in the room when I talk to that young lady. I think it is going to help that young lady, hopefully, feel that she is not being ganged-up on and that she has support. But it is also going to be a neutral person that when she maybe is saying that I said x and I really said y, this person can kind of be the voice of reason. Luckily I have not had to use it yet, but I think that is something I am anxious to check out.

#4: Have hard conversations and taking advantage of teaching moments.

As a young coach, I was so worried about saying the right thing, that I do not think I did justice

to myself and, more importantly, I did not do justice to the student-athlete. That I waited to have the right moment; I waited to have the right words. And, yes, I think we all need to wait until we are in a time when we can be calm and be the teacher and the coach that we want to be. But now, what I try to do if there is something that I see that is not in line with collective behavior that I am looking for, individual behavior, I will just say okay, we have a teaching moment.

One of the ones that comes to mind is two or three years ago we were vying for a national title. In the 200 fly, the last day, I had one of my athletes goggles fill-up; and she decided that instead of just swimming with water in her goggles, she needed to take her goggles off. Which, just nicely, put her out of the top-16 to score any points. Personally, for someone who swam competitively for 12 years and never raced in goggles—I guess I wore glasses—but I am pretty sure that we all, or there are other people in this room, that have lived by getting water in your eyes, right? I just did not... I was like, Oh, my gosh; like, if I say something... is this the right time? You know, what's going to happen? But if I wait until we get back home, like that is not.... It was not so much about the goggles, to me, as it was about her sending a message to the rest of the team that she was not willing to be uncomfortable for a greater cause than her comfort. It was really, you know the last session before the meet, that was something that I brought-up in the team meeting.

Like Gregg said yesterday, one of the things I think I have gotten better at, is having those hard conversations at the meet. I think sometimes when we are at the meet, we do not want to do it because they might have more events or whatever it maybe. But I do believe, like he said, that is the time when they are most... it is the most important to them, and you can have the most impact. It can be explosive, and I think, sometimes, that is okay. You know, it is okay to have them be upset or whatever.

As a young coach, I spent a lot of time wanting my athletes to like me. I would much rather have them respect me than like me. I still do not like it when they go home and they might be upset with me. But I think if I have had that hard conversation and I have said it in a place that lets them know that I have their best interest at heart, I hope that they can hear it and move forward.

#5: Coach the total person.

I love this saying that I do not think your athlete cares what you know until they know that you care. So I really believe that your athletes, probably particularly women, because young and older women are more relationship-driven; men—these are stereotypical—men tend to be more task-oriented and motivated by task, women tend to be more motivated by the relationship and working together.

Another awesome books: there is a book called *The Female Brain* and [one called] *The Male Brain*. It talks about why. Again, anyone besides me, it just makes you... it is nails-on-a-chalkboard. Sometimes when the girls are getting ready to get in the pool, and they are braiding each other's hair and hugging each other; I am like, Oh, my god we're like... But this book talks about why they do that; they cannot help themselves, their brains and their hormones are telling them that they have got to work together. I think kind of understanding that and again checking-in with that.

Coaching the total person to me, too, is just asking them a question as simple as How did you do on your exam today? you know. Or How's your roommate? How's your mom? How's your dog? I just had one girl that her cat died that she has had since she was 3. I mean, it may be silly to some people, but not acknowledging that would have been just really, really bad in my relationship of working with this young lady. The fact that I acknowledged it, talked about it, asked her about it, and she was able to articulate why that was so upsetting; I really think, not only does... like to me, I look at it as I want to coach human beings. If I just wanted to run a workout, I could coach horses or dogs or something like that. I like the messy part of working with another human being and that relationship. So, again, female, right?

Coaching the total person means challenging your athletes to be their best. Personal accountability, personal excellence is a huge value/cornerstone in my idea of success and of my value system. That is something that is really important to me.

I have another favorite saying, that I am sure the girls do not always like. I think some of you might have some athletes that are always telling you what they are going to do. Does anyone have athletes where they say: I'm

going to do this and I'm going to do that. After a while, my response back to them is, "I can't hear you anymore because your actions are speaking so loudly." You know, they are saying one thing and their actions are doing something different. In my book, whatever your actions are saying is really what you are doing. It does not matter what is coming out of your mouth; it is what your actions, day-in and day-out, what they are saying, that I am going to believe and listen and respond to. So that is kind of in my coaching the total person.

#6: Be mindful of the impact of your role as a coach.

To me, this is the scariest thing in the world. When you coach somebody, you know it might have been 15-20 years ago, and they come up and they tell you the story remember x y z and you said x y z and you have no idea. They are still hanging-on to something that you said twenty years ago, you know. It is a humbling experience to me, and I think God or whoever does that to me every now and then just to keep me in check. To keep me in check with that as a coach, I have an unbelievably powerful influence and that my responsibility is to use that in a very meaningful, impactful, positive way. That if I do or say something that inadvertently does not have that impact, then it is my job and my responsibility to clean that up.

I also think as coaches that, whether we like it or not, they are watching us all the time, and our job is to just model that behavior. You know, model self-care, model that there are things more important than to swimming meet, there are things more important than a best time, there are things more important than a workout. I used to think I had to be at every workout, and I could not take time to go see my family or my mom or whatever it would be. I think it is important that I model that behavior; and I talked to them about why I need time-off, what I do to refill my well, what I do to take care of myself, what my challenges are in balance. Because they are having those exact same challenges. If we can help coach and mentor and talk about that at an earlier age, I think we would get less people that when they get real jobs and in....

You know, these kids are stressed-out—I said this last night. My experience has been that they will apologize if they are not as stressed as their teammate right now. You know, people

my age when you say Hey, how are you doing?, whether or not it is true, people say fine. If their age, How are you doing?, Oh, I'm stressed. You know, they are stressed. I have a hangnail, I am stressed; my mom has cancer, I am stressed: it is the same level of stress.

They do not have the ability—not all of them—but they do not have, I think, the ability to sort of manage that and keep perspective. Everything is a crisis—everything is a crisis. If everything is a crisis at 16, 17, 18, what is it going to be like when you are 28, 38, 48 and you have real crisis. You know, getting a B instead of an A on your exam is not a crisis, guys. Not making an Olympic team, that is not a crisis. One of my pet peeves is Oh my gosh, so and so didn't make the Olympic team, like how devastating. If that is the worse thing that happens to them in their life, that is a pretty-damn-good life; you know, that is not the end of the world. I feel like it is my responsibility to help with that perspective. So that was number six.

#7: Teaching the fundamentals.

For me, when... I think sometimes, like the word coach implies fixing the things that are wrong. I think coaching also is about exploiting the things that they do right. Sometimes, I feel like I spend too much time trying to coach-up their weaknesses, instead of just really looking at what do they do well and just exploiting that. You know, if you are good at underwater, then how do we just make that so great that it becomes this weapon. Do not just assume that it is going be good, and now we are going to work on something else; but I think really doing that.

I loved... Gregg said this yesterday—and this is one of my other pet peeves—is like you know the idea that you do technique work and fundamental work at the beginning of the season and then you start training. No: technique, fundamentals are all the time.

I also believe: they are all the time that you are not training. As a college coach, I have impact and control over 4 hours a day; they, as an athlete, they have control over the other 20. I am pretty sure those 20 can impact the performance probably more than those 4 can. I think really looking at the fundamentals of that. Fundamentals also is about good nutrition, sleeping.

Sleep is a huge thing right now. For some reason, the outside world thinks Swimming coaches like to get up at 4:30 in the morning. Does anyone like getting... is there anyone here that likes getting up at 4:30 in the morning? There is probably a couple; okay, that is great. But for the most part, I do not think people would choose to get-up at 4:30 in the morning and go to workout. Or like get-up before school, or whatever it is.

One thing I am looking at with my college team is really looking at their sleep. When I talked about those journals, I have them write and keep track of their sleep. You know, now you can get one of those... I am kind of scared to get one of those fitbit things—or whatever they are called—because I am pretty sure I am in sleep-deprivation for two or three years. You know, I do not think you can make it up on a weekend. But I think that that's just something that I...

One of the sayings that Kathie has, and I love, is: Don't do or make any decisions when you're tired, lonely and hungry. I do not know, but as a swim coach, I am tired way-more than I am not tired; and I think that if I feel that way. Also I am 52, and they are 20; so I realize that is factoring into it. But I think that really looking at their sleep, is a really important component. Then obviously fundamentals, and just the basics of how to be a great swimmer.

#8: Spend time addressing your environment and your culture.

This is the part that is the most challenging and the most rewarding. I don't think because I require everyone to train in a Cal cap, that all of a sudden oh, now we're a team. You know, what you are wearing, that does not make them a team. Or if you are looking for a positive... I think a lot of people say Well, we expect you to have a positive attitude. If you do not define what a positive attitude is, and you have 25 people on your team, you have 25 different definitions of what a positive attitude is.

So it takes time, but I think that that is time well-spent addressing what is expected in that training environment. What is expected when you go on a meet? I mean, we talk about if you are upset on a swim, what is your responsibility to your other teammates.

You know, how many time have you been in your team area, and one athlete has a great

swim and another one has a poor swim; and the one that has a great swim is afraid to acknowledge that and feel good about it because Joe Schmo over here is crying and woah is me. You know we talk about the idea... God, the girls have this word for warming down and crying at the same time—I forget what it is. But they have got a word, and I love that. You know that is an appropriate time, put your goggles on, keep swimming back and forth, yell, cry, scream, whatever you need to do; and then when you get-out, let us make sure we are checking-in with that behavior and how it is affecting you teammates, your team environment, and how it is affecting your next swim. That whole idea of environment and culture, and spending time on that, is time well spent.

#9: Stay a learner yourself.

Obviously, everyone in this room believes that is important or you would not come to something like the ASCA [World Clinic]. I am a firm believer that once you think you have all the answers, you are not getting any better. I think we are all... I believe, I am in process: I am a coach today, hopefully I am a better coach tomorrow, and I will be even a better coach in a year. That is about staying engaged in that learning process. Being open to new ideas and sifting through them; and putting myself in uncomfortable situations and challenging myself. I just think that that goes back to that modeling: if we are expecting our athletes to do that, I think it is important that we do that ourselves.

#10: This better be fun.

I do not mean fun like every morning—you know, the morning thing—every morning you



get up and yeah! But like: where is the joy in this. I really think this age group is like Well, I'm just not having fun anymore. Well, fun can be like the journey of a hard work; the journey of a season. I think fun is just getting... like I tell the girls, I'm not the cruise director, okay. That is not my job: I am not the cruise director—yeah here we go, we're having fun. But my job is to create an environment where there is joy and there is... that is where you want to be. At 1:15 in the afternoon, that is where you want to be. When you could be anywhere, like is that where they want to be.

More importantly, is that where you want to be as a coach. You know, I feel amazingly blessed that I get to do something that I absolutely love every day. I think, I hope, a lot of you in the room feel that way about what you get to do and being a coach. We all know people that are living their life and hating what they do every day, or just not feeling joy from it. I just challenge you to just show your athletes that joy and communicate that joy. What is important to you and what gets you up every morning. We are asking them that, and I think it is important that we communicate to them what brings us joy and what makes us have a good time as well.

I hope there is something there that you guys can take, and good luck. Thank you. ■

Coaching GEMS

From the ASCA World Clinic

An Assortment of Quotes from Various Fine World Clinic Presentations

Abraham Lincoln:

“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you to test a man’s character, give him power.”



Gary F. Patton – ASCA Coaching Wisdom, Thursday, February 4th:

“The mediocre leader tells. The good leader explains. The superior leader demonstrates. The great leader inspires.”



From a talk by **James “Doc” Counsilman** at the ASCA 1975 World Clinic, titled “The Search for a Philosophy of Coaching”:

“Let me offer the following quote from Freud concerning the importance of authority: ‘A great majority of people have a strong need for authority which they can admire, to which they can submit, which dominates and even sometimes ill-treats them. We have learned from the psychology of the individual whence comes this need of masses. It is the longing for the father that lives in each of us from his childhood days.’”



From an article in the January 15, 2016 issue of the **New York Times**, titled “His Strength Sapped, Top Marathoner Ryan Hall Decides to Stop.”

“I’ve failed over and over and over again throughout my career. I know what it’s like to fail at the biggest stage, like the Olympics. It’s a bummer; I don’t want to go through it, but I’m not afraid of it. If you’re not afraid to fail, you’re not afraid to run against the best guys, and you’re not afraid to lose. I have so many failures throughout my career. But I needed them to have the success.”



From the James “Doc” Counsilman Memorial Lecture by **Doug Ingram** (Senior Director of International Games for the USOC) at the ASA 2014 World Clinic.

“The Best Always Change.”



From a talk by **Dale Porter** at the ASCA 2014 World Clinic, titled “Teaching Fast Finishing.”

“Self talk: steady stream of thoughts and internal dialogue. At any moment in a race, an athlete is deciding, ‘Am I in this race or am I out?’ Am I going to fight, or run? As soon as that negative thought train begins, it’s going to be very hard to bounce back and ignore it. The negative thought is detrimental, but normal. We teach our athletes to replace those negative thoughts. Stones replacing water in the bucket of the mind; it cannot hold both.”



From a talk by **Mark Onstott** at the ASCA 2014 World Clinic, titled “Team Building.”

“It’s all about the six C’s of a team: Culture, Cooperative Energy, Collective Power, Common Purpose, Commitment to a Collective Win, and Cultivation of Individual Greatness. You want to make sure that you drive and direct that culture; where it’s going, what it’s about, who the team is.”



From a talk by **Dave Salo** at the ASCA 2014 World Clinic, titled “Swim Like the Cheetah Runs.”

“The body is amazing. It has amazing capacity. We intervene and go, ‘Oh, you need this, and you need that.’ We do not what the hell the body needs. The body will do amazing things if we stop getting in its way. When I started coaching, I had the t-shirt made up for the team that said: The Goal: Temporary Discomfort. That’s what we’re after: temporary discomfort. When we attain that, the body will after itself. I think we alter things too much sometimes.”



From a talk by **Gregg Troy** at the ASCA 2014 World Clinic, titled “Garbage Yards & Other Things that Work.”

“Here are the factors in getting better. They are simple:

- 1. Swim more. Key factor in getting better.*
- 2. Swim better. Improve mechanics. Improve everything.*
- 3. Conflicts in concentrating on technique or training.*
- 4. Get stronger.*

You can measure all of the above. Another key that is harder to measure is mental toughness. Just can’t measure it.”





SHOW ME THE

MONNEY

BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL COACH

By Wayne Goldsmith

Coaching can be enjoyable, challenging, rewarding and fulfilling. The opportunity to work with swimmers who are committed and determined and who are passionate about realizing their potential is a very positive life experience. Some coaches may choose to pursue this positive experience full time by becoming a professional swimming coach. Whilst following this coaching dream can be highly rewarding – both personally and professionally –there are some problems and pitfalls to overcome in your pursuit of full time coaching.

In addition, the “fitness” coaching market is more competitive than ever before.

The “fitness-coach” industry is growing rapidly with numerous institutions offering short courses in fitness development – including the concepts, principles and practices of endurance training, speed and sprint development and swimming technique for the general fitness market.

Whilst these “fitness-gurus” may lack the

specialist coaching expertise of a well-trained, experienced swimming coach, most fitness industry courses also include learning modules on business development, client management and marketing. You may be able to “out-coach” them but they may have superior skills and training in marketing, social media management and client servicing. Regardless of your level of swimming expertise, your clients (i.e. swimmers) , particularly those searching for coaching services via the Internet, may choose the services of a fitness professional over an accredited swimming coach based on perceptions of expertise from professional image, program marketing and on-line presence. The aim therefore is to help professional swimming coaches to grow their market by incorporating some basic good business practices in their coaching. This article aims to raise some of the problems and pitfalls of professional swimming coaching and provide coaches with some practical solutions and simple processes to ensure that their transition into the world of professional coaching is successful.

1. More than the money. Being a professional coach is not just about receiving money for your coaching services. It’s about the overall standards of your coaching and the quality of the coaching services that you can provide for your swimmers (i.e. your clients). Simply doing what you do now and charging money for it may not be enough to establish and grow a financially viable professional coaching business. Increasingly, sporting clients are becoming more discerning about the professional coaching marketplace and are demanding higher standards from the people they pay for coaching advice, programs and guidance. It is not enough to merely offer training programs – as these are freely available on the Internet for little or no cost. As a professional coach clearly understand what it is you are offering as professional coaching services and package and promote these services to be attractive and of tangible value to paying clients. Do some research! Ask your current clients what it is they are looking for from your coaching. Develop a questionnaire

about coaching services and invite people to talk about their coaching needs. By listening to the market and paying attention to your clients and potential clients, you can potentially build a very successful professional coaching business.

2. Value yourself and your time appropriately. Pick up a piece of paper and a pen. Write down in large numbers how much you feel your coaching is worth per session, per week and per month. Now look at the numbers you've written down and...**DOUBLE THEM.** The majority of coaches in swimming under-charge their clients considerably, while at the same time other professionals working with the swimmers charge their full professional rates. Decide what your time, experience and skills are worth and charge your clients accordingly.

3. Show me the money. Coaches love to talk. They can talk about speed. They can talk about technique. They can talk about skills. But many coaches find it difficult to talk about money. Before a swimmer starts training in your program, tell them up front what your costs will be, when their coaching payments are due and how you prefer to be paid.

4. Be clear about your fees and charges. Once you've decided on your fees and charges, be up front and clear about them. Advertise your coaching fees on your web site, blog and social media sites. Have them printed up on a sheet and hand them to every swimmer who wants to join your program.

5. It's business. It's fun. It's sport. It's all about the swimmers. But it's a business. Ask yourself this question: Why do I coach? Every coach gets into coaching for the right reasons – and mostly those reasons revolve around helping swimmers to realise their potential, achieve a performance goal or reach a seemingly impossible Olympic dream. However, as a professional coach, these ostensibly ethereal and philosophical reasons for coaching have to be balanced with an understanding that coaching is also a business. In many of the Olympic sports, “traditionalist” coaches still feel their sport should be committed to the ideals of amateurism. However, across the world, professional swimmers, sports administrators, sports scientists, sports medicine professionals, strength and conditioning specialists and equipment manufacturers all receive payment for their professional services. Why shouldn't you be paid for your coaching knowledge, expertise, experience and skills?



6. Understand your real costs and expenses. One area to think about is your costs and expenses. Some coaches might charge a small fee for an actual face to face training session but fail to factor in all the time, energy, expertise and effort that's been committed to:

- a. Planning training sessions;
- b. Reviewing training data;
- c. Purchasing training equipment, software and related technologies;
- d. Travel to and from training sessions;
- e. Phone calls with clients;
- f. Emails and texts with clients;
- g. Time spent researching the sport, the latest results, seeking information about upcoming events and evaluating the latest thinking on sports science and technique;
- h. Swimming industry related costs – memberships, affiliations, insurances etc.
- i. Travel costs to and from competitions;
- j. Food and drink at competitions;
- k. Doing accounts, checking bank statements and completing tax requirements;
- l. Paying tax.

And a thousand other things. Charging a small squad of swimmers a few dollars per session might seem like a good business decision but when you take into consideration the real costs

of being a coach in the sport and the actual time, energy and commitment it takes to coach effectively as a professional you may reconsider your fee structures.

7. You're in a competitive coaching market. What's your P.O.D.? There are a lot of “key-board” coaches on the Internet all promising great performance results. There are programs to improve speed. There are programs to improve endurance. There are technique analysis programs available on the Internet where swimmers can upload a short video of themselves swimming and the “keyboard coach” comes back with a list of drills and skills work to do to improve swimming technique. In this competitive coaching market, what's your point of difference? What are you offering in your professional coaching business that distinguishes you from the rest? Why would a swimmer come to you for coaching when there are so many affordable and easy to access training programs and tips available in the palm of their hand on their smart-phone?

8. What's your market? One of the keys to establishing and growing a successful business is understanding what your market is. For example, you may like working one on one with high performance distance swimmers but there's little or no financial reward for coaches coaching in this environment. However, your skills as a coach may allow you to coach a large group

of triathletes twice a week as part of your “Swimming for Beginner Triathletes” program.

Or you could use your knowledge and expertise in swimming to help a local school students to prepare for their school swimming carnival. Or you could approach a local Health Club or Fitness Centre and take “Swimming for Health and Fitness” classes. If your aim is to become a professional and develop a financially sustainable business model, then look wider than just within the sport for business opportunities. Schools need quality coaching in their swimming, water polo and physical education programs. Triathletes are always on the lookout for good coaches who can improve their swimming speed, technique and endurance. Define your market, then build your business around delivering quality coaching services for your market.

9. Getting known – growing your coaching business. Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, LinkedIn, Instagram and other social media and connection tools will not go away. Use them to tell people where you are, what you do and all about your program, your coaching skills, your experience and your

coaching expertise. Keep it simple – start with a Facebook account and start posting a weekly coaching tip. Maybe add a Twitter account and write a weekly comments about improving technique. Take some images of your swimmers training and post them to Instagram to demonstrate your technical expertise. Ask your swimmers to comment, to “like” and to share your ideas, posts, images and “tweets” and within a short time you’ll have a thriving on-line community of people all learning about you and following your coaching program.

10. Thinking differently. Coaching in many parts of the world is a respected profession where athletes and the general sporting community value the role and expertise of hard working, committed coaches. How you and your coaching are perceived is your decision. Think differently. There is no reason why your program can not only produce great results but also be a successful, thriving and profitable business. The key is learning to balance your passion for swimming performance and your commitment to the sport with your desire to build a sustainable, successful coaching business.

Summary:

1. Becoming a professional coach is for many coaches a dream: something they think about while working 9-5 in an office or a factory or in another workplace. But it can be a dream that comes true for coaches who are prepared to think differently about swimming coaching.
2. Try to think like a client. Why would someone come to you for coaching advice? The internet is full of “keyboard coaches” and cheap training programs for swimmers of all ages and levels of ability. What is it about you – and your coaching that represents good value and high quality in the swimming coaching market?
3. You can’t expect clients to value your coaching if you don’t value yourself. Develop a schedule of professional fees which represents your true coaching value and feel comfortable with charging your clients appropriately for your time and expertise. ■

- Wayne Goldsmith

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Block has Taught Thousands to Succeed on Land and in Water

1st in a 3-part series on the SA Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2016

by Roy Bragg, San Antonio Express-News

Since retiring from Northside ISD, George Block has championed an initiative to teach Hispanics and African-Americans to swim. [Source: San Antonio Sports](#)

George Block is a man of ulterior motives, and I mean that in the best way. Block, being inducted into the San Antonio Sports Hall of Fame on Saturday, was ostensibly the guy in charge of pools and swimming lessons for the Northside Independent School District from 1977-2009.

Instead, he created an internationally recognized swim program that produced 52 UIL gold medalists; 285 high school All-Americans; USA Olympic Trials qualifiers in 1984, 1988, 1992, 1996 and 2000; and six Olympians.

Hired to coach swimming, Block, for all intents and purposes, actually taught thousands of kids the will to succeed outside of the pool. Block retired in 2009, but he really didn't.

He's now championing an initiative to teach swimming to Hispanics and African-Americans, who drown at rates much higher than whites. As it turns out, he's also teaching kids in those neighborhoods how to meet life's challenges with confidence.

We think of sports heroes as those who score points and win games. When they win often, they're famous. When they transcend sport, they become legendary.

In 39 years, George Block hasn't suited up or raced in a pool. While he's well-known in education and swimming circles, he's

not famous. Despite that, George Block has become legend. Known internationally for his coaching success, competitive swimming was both a lure and a byproduct of Block's real purpose, said Scott Zolinski, NISD's assistant athletic director for aquatics.

Block hired Zolinski in 1979 as a middle school teacher and coach of Clark's swim team.

"His whole focus has always been about water safety," Zolinski said. "How can we get them around the water and get them to a swim lesson? It was his passion. The icing on the cake is that kids that come in to do year-round swimming and then you push them to get to their goals."

That's what he did to Dr. Mandie Svatek, a champion swimmer at Marshall, where she graduated in 1993. Then swimming as Mandie Tibball, she was having a tough time at practice. Block pulled her out of the water for a chat. He told her that work ethic was more important than swimming for medals.

"He said, 'You're a hard worker. You're tenacious. You're building yourself into someone successful. I can see you being a successful doctor and coming back here with your kids,'" Svatek said. "That's exactly what happened. He put that vision in my head."

Block's reach extends beyond the edge of the pool. "You get to the point where you realized where you're making a powerful impact on kids lives," Block said. "But it's a really small number. To create overall change, you've got to change systems. I had to get involved in things that were bigger than what I was doing."

Giving swim lessons to kids in under-served communities fits that description. Studies show 70 percent of African-Americans and 60 percent of Hispanics can't swim.

"If you think about it, a swim lesson is the first time a kid faces something they think they can't do," Block said. "Self-confidence comes when you do something you're absolutely sure you can't do. For 3- or 4-year-olds, success in swimming is the biggest self-confidence booster you can have."

"It starts to change their life and shows them the self-confidence they'll need to succeed in life."

We are told that sports can transform lives and communities. Block — through swim lessons, gold medals and education — has shown us exactly how that works. ■

Roy Bragg is a columnist for the San Antonio Express-News. He has been a Texas journalist for 33 years.

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Coach Dwight E. Davis, Swim Coach
Nicolet High School, Glendale, Wisconsin

One of the greatest challenges of coaching swimming is keeping it fun. This does not only apply to age group swimmers, but to all levels. I remember a presentation Sam Freas gave at a clinic on getting college kids to act like summer league swimmers at college-level meets. He used the 200 yard freestyle relay before it was an event at the high school and college level. So with this thought in mind, I put together a completely sprint invitational at the age group level. Well, the kids had a great time.

Several years had passed after I left age group coaching for the high school level. It occurred to me that all of the invitationals we were attending the format was high school events, some basic type of relay meet, or a meet with college distance events. After going to several of these during the season I noticed that the swimmers were getting tired for the whole invitational thing. Then I remembered the age group meet that I ran, and decided to run something similar at the high school level.

So I put together a sprint invitational (Nicolet Knights Sprint Invitational). This meet was designed to get a large number of team members to compete, so each team was allowed to enter 3 individual entries (including diving). The relays were set up with a minimum of eight swimmers, because if a team has the ability to enter an "A" and "B" relay in an event, the coach will normally load one of the relays with the team's four best swimmers. This leaves the "B" level swimmers no chance of medaling or placing high in the event, and not feeling as if their relay (their swim) made a significant contribution to the team effort. Now I will admit that I did have

a difficult time selling the idea (of 7 to 9 relay exchanges) to the officials, however it worked out really well. Getting the teams to and from the blocks is a bit challenging, but with the teams in lanes 1-4 and 5-8 entering and exiting the area behind the blocks on their respective side of the pool after the previous heat had finished, things worked out. This is done so you don't have 160 kids standing behind the blocks to swim (not to mention the 26 timers).

The following is an in-order list of events:

- 400 yard medley team relay (8 swimmers, each swimming a 50. Order of the relay 2x50 backstroke, 2x50 breaststroke, 2x50 butterfly, and 2x50 freestyle).
- 200 yard freestyle.
- 100 yard individual medley.
- 50 yard freestyle.
- 20 minute break (15 in water for warm-up).
- 50 yard butterfly.
- 100 yard freestyle.
- 200 yard individual medley.
- 200 yard freestyle team relay (8 swimmers, each swimming a 25 freestyle. Note swimmers number 2, 4, 6, and 8 start from within the water due to pool depth. Used a water polo start for the water starts with some part of the body still in contact with the wall; if you have water deep enough to allow stars from both ends, go for it.)
- 50 yard backstroke.
- 50 yard breaststroke.
- 500 yard freestyle team relay (10 swimmers each swimming a 50).

- 1 meter diving (11 dive format).

Now when I first started this meet, several of Wisconsin's swim coaching purest kind of poo-pooed the meet as a joke and a waste of time. However, this meet is always scheduled early in the season because a lot of kids are not in shape to swim fast in the regular events, and they can still do a quick 50. It helps the coaches of the participating teams get a true competitive time trial of 50s in the various strokes for future meet line ups.

Now diving is always an 11 dive event, however, there are some changes here. During the girls season (fall) we run the diving as the last event of the meet. That way, the 200 plus swimmers get a chance to go home on an invitational day and enjoy the afternoon. In the winter (the boy's season) the diving is held in the morning as in other meets, so that team traveling a great distance can leave later and give more time for bad weather. Both the meets (girls and boys seasons) have 13-16 teams competing. The swimming portion of the meet normally takes between 2.5 and 2.75 hours to run in an 8-lane pool. (We keep the maximum number of participating team to 16, due to limited deck space.)

However, the true excitement of this meet is in the relays. The "A" and "B" relay team kids to swim with each other and have a chance to place. The biggest thrill of the meet is the 10-swimmer 500 yard team freestyle relay. In all of these relays, you will see lead changes of more than 4 times, relays have been decided by .01s of seconds, and they are 500 yards



of screaming mayhem from the swimmers, coaches, and the spectators in the stands. I can only imagine the craziness of these relays (especially the 500 yard freestyle relay) at a state senior level meet, junior nationals, nationals, or the Olympics (why not think big). Imagine the 500 yard team freestyle relay with teams like the Texas Men's team taking on Arizona, Cal, Stanford, and Florida. It would be insane. I wonder who the first Men's team would be to break 3:10.00/3:00.00 barrier or for the women how about 3:40.00/3:30.00 barrier.

I have been running these meets for well over 26 years. There are actually teams when given a choice between going to a prestigious invitational with regular events and the sprint invitational, the kids will vote for the sprint meet. When I asked Nicolet Swimming alumni Garrett Weber-Gale what he thought of the meet, he said, "Are you kidding? That meet is a blast! When do you get to compete in an event that you have nothing to compare it to? When do you get to swim a 100 IM? It's pure racing for the fun of it." I can't tell you how many times I have been out on the town or at a dinner with my family, and a former swimmer or swim parent from another team will approach me and that the Sprint Meet was their favorite meet of the year, and they thank me for hosting it. Sometimes it is good to try something a little bit off, and have fun competition.

Note: We also host an 11 dive invitational where

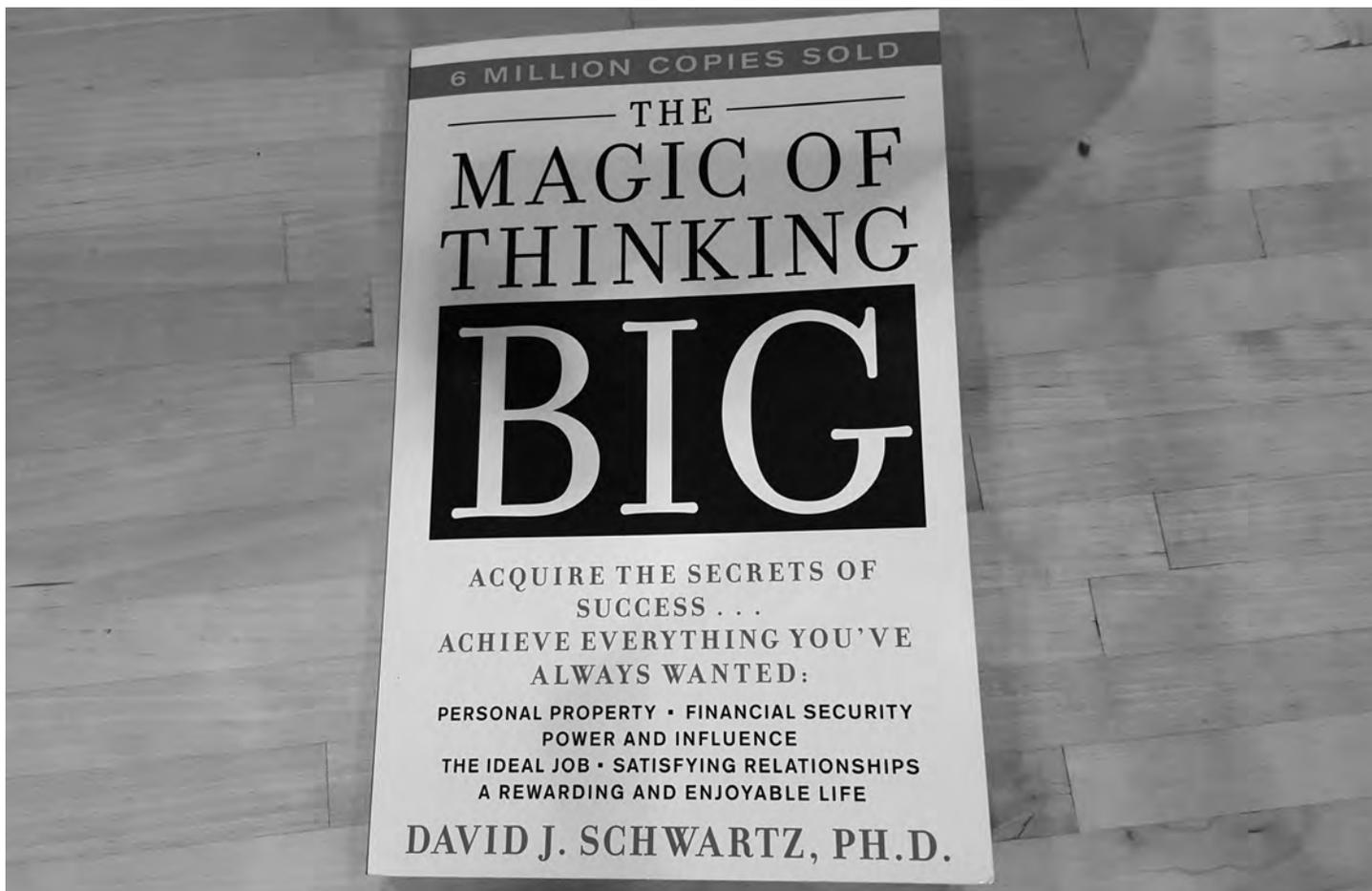
there is a team trophy awarded, however the scoring is the same as that used in cross country wherein first gets one point, second gets two points, third gets three points; etc. Only a team's top three divers in the final results can score. So a diver who placed 30th can still feel as though they contributed to the team. The team scoring the lowest amount of points wins, second lowest gets second place, and the places continue. Divers are given medals for their team's place, individual finish, and along with the team trophy. We have between 16-36 divers in the boy's meet, and have upwards of 68 divers in the girl's meet.

About Coach Dwight Davis:

- Glendale, WI: M. Ed. Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio in Sports Science and School Administration
- ASCA & NISCA member for 40 years
- ASCA Level 4 High School Certification in 2009, 42 years of swim coaching experience from beginner age group through Olympic Trials Finalist
- The last 29.5 years coached at Nicolet High School, both girls and boys high school teams
- Has had 21 high school All-Americans, one national public high school record holder, over 90 swimmers go on to compete at the college level, and 2 swimmers who went on to become members of the US Olympic teams.

During his high school coaching career, he has been the meet manager of 75 invitationals, 42 sectional state qualifying meets for the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, served on the State Meet Coaches Committee, and hosted over 40 Northshore Conference Relay/Championship Meets. He has served as the President Elect and President of the Wisconsin Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association for 9 years, and has over 10 years of experience serving as an expert witness in aquatic injury lawsuits.

Also while at Nicolet High School, Coach Davis taught Physical Education, specializing in teaching American Red Cross Lifeguard Training, Water Safety Training, Basic Water Safety, and Strength/Fitness Training. Has been nominated for recognition to the Aquatics International Magazine's "Best of Aquatics," the American Red Cross National Water Safety Board, and the Positive Coaching Alliance-Triple Impact Coach Award. Has published articles for both the ASCA and NISCA journals, Aquatics International Magazine, Men's Health, and has spoken on television and radio about competitive swimming and water safety. Coach Davis was an 11-time All-American swimmer at Ashland University, was inducted into the University's Athletic Hall of Fame, and was a 2-time high school All-American at Berea High School in Berea, Ohio. A total of 48 years of competitive swimming experience. ■



The **MAGIC** of Thinking **BIG** by David J. Schwartz, PH.D.

Book Review by John Leonard

This book by Dr. Schwartz was the most important book I ever read in my life. I read it in 1972. It was published in 1965. My father had taught me that “everything that will happen in your life, has to happen in your head first. What you think about is what you become.”

Dr. Schwartz’s book told me WHY.

If you are someone at all interested in high achievement for yourself or your children, or the children you coach, I don’t know that you can do “without” this book as a starting point.

The following is a list of some chapter titles that I found compelling:

“Cure Yourself of Excusitis, the Failure Disease.”

“Build Confidence and Destroy Fear.”

“How to Think and Dream Creatively.”

“Manage Your Environment: Go First Class.”

“Make Your Attitudes Your Allies.”

“Get the Action Habit.”

“How to Turn Defeat into Victory.”

“How to Think Like a Leader.”

Every one of those ideas is one that you will use in coaching every day. I urge every coach, young and new, or old and experienced, to read this book.

If you are young, it will put the “right stuff” in your mind. If you are old, it will take out some trash you have accumulated and replace it with first rate thoughts. I re-read it about every five years. It is available at the ASCA Online Bookstore at SwimmingCoach.org. ■

All the Best, JL

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Editor's NOTE:

Those following the world of Olympic Sports know that the latter half of 2015 was a very hard period for Olympic Sports Governance (or a very good one, depending on your perspective). Of note, FINA was under attack from every part of swimming, except the very few people in each country (including the USA) who benefit from the largesse of an institution that doles out outrageous funds to “volunteers” attending a meeting, where they dutifully nod their heads to the President and Executive Director before receiving injections into their bank accounts back home. More seriously, large numbers (including the President) of FIFA, the international soccer organization, were hauled off to jail for their roles in the corruption of that sport and organization.

Many of us realize that FIFA and FINA are just one small letter apart (and a couple of zeroes on the dollar amounts.) But the methodology of the corruption, and the terrible fake democratic leadership is the same in all Olympic Sports.

In this brilliant 3-part series, swimming writer and owner of SwimVortex, Craig Lord, explores the disturbing issues of Rio in 2016, then moves onward to more specifically how FINA corrupts all it touches, then finishes with a chilling recitation of US Senate Hearing into FIFA (whom the USA government indicted) and its American affiliate. It takes no imagination to place USA-S officials (both elected and staff) on the imaginary stand in place of the soccer officials of the USA. It is indeed as Craig calls it, “the ugly side of the beautiful game.”

For those wishing to understand the environment in which we all operate, this is the important read. For those wishing to stick their head in the sand and “just coach,” realize that a polluted operational environment in our sport eventually ruins the sport for all of us. (Think \$500 swimsuits on 10 year olds to bring bad decisions at FINA hope if you need to.) It is not happy reading. But for the realist, its vital. -JL

Olympic Sport GOVERNANCE

Editorial by Craig Lord, SwimVortex

PART 1: Rio 2016 Won't Be the Best Olympic Games Ever Keep Calm and Know None Ever Were.

Some long-established mythologies (if you're under 10, please read no further), like the bloke sporting the big red suit and a white beard as he slides down the chimney to deliver delight generation come and go, have the kind of universal appeal that guarantees their survival.

Then there are those that have no appeal whatsoever beyond the most transparent aspect of world sports politics: propaganda. You'll have heard the silliness of it all with every passing Olympic Games, World Championships and right through the chain of events at global, continental, regional and national levels: "...the best ever..."

By what measure, would be the first question; who is measuring, would be the next one; and shouldn't we be striving for a more mature interpretation of amazing events that follow a history of amazing events? And so on.

Real progress can be seen in the field of play with each passing Olympic Games, be that a time on a clock, a weight on a bar, a twist beyond a tally ever seen off a board before and on to greater accuracy and efficiency of technological props from timing to poles for vaulters and much more.

But where a generalized 'best ever' might have passed muster in the leap from 1912 to 1920, 1936 to 1948 and so forth, it no longer does – and today's headlines remind us why, Brazil's Government announcing cutbacks for Rio 2016 to ensure no budget overspill.

Rio 2016 is stacking up as a Games at which “the best ever” will no longer be a line that the wider audience (the folk beyond the

blazers living in their own realm and patting each other on the back more often than is healthy for any of them and the sports they govern) simply ignores; if we hear it – and you can almost guarantee that we will from one quarter or another – then the line will be one to shout down in words that stretch from 'nonsense' to 'lie'.

Don't get me wrong: Brazil will stage the Games; there will be a great deal to celebrate; there will be competitive moments fit to be immortalized in the pantheon of achievements and others fit to tip credulity to disbelief; there will be friendliness and friendships formed that speak to the very best that the Olympic Movement has to offer; and there may be reason to applaud the establishment of a new anti-doping authority fit for purpose in Brazil, and so on.

The point of setting fire to the notion that Rio 2016 could be the best Games ever is not to knock Brazil and efforts that stretch from success through challenge and test and on to failure across a vast range of elements that go into staging the Olympics; rather it is to note that all Games in history have held the gaze for different reasons, have had their own swings and roundabouts – and all since 1992 in my experience have had both. Some were indeed the best at 'X' but not the best at 'Y' – and all had merits and amazing moments to savor.

London 2012 was last off the blocks. There were issues that knocked it back behind the experience of other Games; there were aspects of the event that could well be described as the 'best ever', be that in the competitive field, a

venue, the volunteers, and the armed forces doing much more than manning the gates.

It is time for the “best ever” cliché to be dropped from the lexicon of blazers and hosts: not only does it speak to no-one but those speaking but it encourages the bad culture of ‘keeping up with the Joneses’ in the pettiest and most costly meaning of that term. Further, it dulls the potential for learning from one event to the next and carrying the best forward with you where possible.

The organisers of the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games are in the headlines the world over today because they have held crisis talks in the past few days and are now embarking on cutbacks of up to 30% to avoid going over their US\$3.6bn budget.

Rio 2016 communications director Mario Andrada said the Brazilian public would not tolerate an overspend, adding:

“The days of lavish spending are over. We need to be creative in the way we find these savings.”

He was keen to emphasize that the sports events themselves will not be affected.

The organizing committee’s budget is privately financed. There are separate budgets for venues that will host sport, including stadiums and related infrastructure.

Any overspend would come from the Brazilian Government. And that’s where the buck stops, the host nation of the 2016 Games has stated.

The regime has picked up the mood of its people at a time of challenge and struggle – and the mood of an economic climate well beyond Brazil that will keep many from making the trip next year: ticket sales have been slow, with only two million of the five million available sold so far. Andrada noted:

“People get upset about luxury and excess, we have to tighten our belts.”

The mood is darker as a direct consequence of the FIFA scandal. The model of governance at the international soccer federation – not to mention the network of connections that run deep and link folk in football to others in swimming and much more at one level or another – is one that can be recognized far and wide in the feudal world of sports governance.

Different scale, perhaps, but many of the same immature, self-serving, self-perpetuating themes well and truly entrenched from board through

the ranks to other well-paid ‘volunteers’, be those expert or political placement with no skill or aptitude for the job at hand.

At the Confederations Cup held in Brazil in 2013, fans protested angrily at \$4bn spent on staging the 2014 World Cup. Brazil is keen to avoid the same for Rio 2016.

On the list of cutbacks:

- Opening ceremony – cut back to about 10% of the spend for London 2012.
- All promotional videos to be in-house
- Online lottery for tickets scrapped and all tickets to go on open sale
- More tents and fewer permanent structures for Games-related events
- Infrastructure at test events is to be scaled back
- Volunteer numbers to be cut from 70,000 to 60,000

Staff have, apparently, been told to write nothing down in emails nor sending anything out in print when it comes to matters dealing with the cuts and strategic planning of the Games.

Though there is a commitment not to alter the provision for actual sports, reality will dawn over the coming months as FINA enters talks with organisers to press for improvements on a range of issues related to aquatics competitions in Rio next year. Improvements suggested for the pool swimming venue may now be left on the shelf. The show will go on, regardless – as it always has done in a range of ways that spill to a culture of acceptance where NBC can dictate night swimming and get away with it because the budget says they can.

Most pressing of the FINA issues is the state of the environment in which open water events will unfold. The issues are well-documented and reported on, among misunderstandings the crossover of some very serious issues related to stretches of water that will host boating events but not open water swimming, which will take place off Copacabana, where swimming is a regular activity that does not result in a high incidence of illness.

Lew Blaustein, writing at the Green Sports Blog offered an alternative view after AP’s Big Story on the issue when he wrote:

“The Guardian reported that Copacabana contains virus levels equivalent to those of raw sewage. That may be true, but I have gone

swimming there, have been tossed by waves while body surfing and have yet to fall ill. Nor have my fellow foreign exchange students who swim there at least as often as I. Copacabana plays host to throngs of foreign tourists each day. If Copacabana indeed causes so much illness and smelled badly, wouldn’t tourism suffer? That seems not to be the case. And when one considers that most of the Olympic triathlon swim will take place in the less polluted waters offshore, Copacabana beach should handle the event without incident.”

That is not to say there is no issue. Olympic champions and contenders are not tourists there by pure choice and family budget. Brazil has a great many challenges ahead. How should we regard Brazil’s latest stance to throw no more money at it than is required to put on world-class competition? There are many answers, among them:

Good for them, time for the Olympics and those who govern world sport to live in the real world with the fans and folk who pay their taxes and fund sport from root to branch to make it all possible (stretching well down the food system to the very foundations that underpin sport in many parts of the world).

Brazil will not host the best Games ever because such a thing is a myth that speaks only to the propaganda of those wishing to live only in their own time and communicate in marketing clichés like those on the washing powder box that claim you can get your clothes whiter than white; ‘best ever’.

The stance being taken in Rio, the stance taken by Guadalajara (budget turned out to be too big, plug pulled on a whole world championships): important messages for FINA as it faces a challenge to its future as the governing body for world swimming. The answer is not to take swimming to the desert of the dollar.

Swimming needs to be staged in places where people love swimming, where the thrill spills to the next wave and makes a new waterline higher up the beach in the landscape of a competitive world sports market. The kind of charged atmosphere of Sydney 2000 is the kind of showcase swimming needs; it does not need a world titles unfolding in a place where school kids bussed in for the session represent the bulk of a small audience.

Swimming will not be staged in such places as Sydney nearly as often as it should be if the budget is too big for its own boots. And

the first thing that should go? The per diems, the limousines, universality of gravy-train lifestyles that is not matched by universality of excellence and development many decades after FINA made such things a central plank in its Constitution ... the list goes on.

The best Games or World Championships ever might well be those at which swimming is seen as a sport of 100 nations and more not a realm of 30 or so governed by 100 other nations the bulk of which have proven themselves incapable of doing what all that development work was supposed to be about: moving up the conveyor belt of progress at a pace that at least narrows the gap between superstars and stragglers.

No-one expects to see a Michael Phelps emerge from a small nation each season (hard enough for one to emerge from the USA) but we should expect to see every nation at the world championships field a 1500m free swimmer inside 17 minutes among men (pacing 1:08s per 100) and an 800m swimmer inside 9.30, say. Reality is far from that right now.

In 2016, the gap between the USA, Australia

and the others vying for podium places in Rio, and the vast bulk of nations that will have far more swimming delegates in town than swimmers is just as wide as it was 50 years ago.

Those tempted to argue that point need to consider the national records of 'swimming nations', those 200-plus FINA members, most of whom have standards that still aspire not only to the pace of Mark Spitz and Shane Gould, 1972 but to the pace of some of those who raced to Olympic gold in 1960, 1964 and 1968. The reason is not lack of talent but lack of leadership and a plan; lack of genuine development of knowledge and skills and mindset required to get the job done.

The economic circumstance of countries is relevant only up to a point and even then only in some cases. Culture plays a part: you're not going to get many women Olympic swimming champions coming from places that don't allow women to swim, no matter how much money you have, no matter how hungry for power in world sport the men from those places may be.

No; it turns out that 'progress' – as measured on

that conveyor belt – has been largely confined to the realm of the blazer not the suit of the racing kind in the realm of elite swimming.

The head of the heap from Uruguay may well travel first-class, have a limo await him wherever he lands and ready to whisk him off to the next luxury hotel and subsidised dinner and a glass or two to sup from; he may well receive golden recompense for eternal meetings and "VIP" moments devoted to having his image caught on camera with the real achievers and real-world politicians with power of a different kind in tow...and all the while back home, his nation's swimming program is a catastrophe of mediocrity. So what was his purpose in swimming governance for three decades and more? His position or the state of swimming in his country? If the former, he's made a roaring success of it; if the latter, he's an abject failure.

What is the purpose of USA Swimming when it supports such nonsense even as it makes great strides in the right direction on the back of the good things coaches are fighting for? ■

Some answers in part 2 of this feature.

PART 2 Editorial: Clock Ticks on Shylock, Strategy & Status Quo TIME TO DO THE RIGHT THING, USA AND REST

"The Americans will always do the right thing... after they've exhausted all the alternatives."

Whether Winston Churchill actually spoke those precise words is a matter of debate and doubt among those who research such things; more certain is the fact that they have often been attributed to the British leader of yore and in war.

In the context of swimming, let's hope the words ring true, and not only from the USA.

October rolled in with the heartening news that USA Swimming leaders, at the USAS Convention in Kansas, loaded the anti-doping gun with a few new bullets, coaches barred from aiding swimmers in the sin bin and told that dollars delivered by doping performances must be returned to sender if the analysis comes back 'positive'.

Sadly, courage was in relatively short supply, it turned out, by the time delegates stuck in the mud of muddle and mediocrity (when it comes to international governance) climbed out of their convention wellies and headed for home.

Don't get me wrong: there were several resolutions and confirmations that spoke to the status of USA Swimming as a body of folk capable of fine leadership and doing the right thing. Take a resolution put up by some unwise soul at the USAS Board meeting that the body repudiate the World Swimming Association. Rejected. Instead, a motion was passed to discuss events in the wider world of swimming governance and the challenge to FINA that won't go away.

The body left to discuss things was the International Relations Committee. The title is telling. It means: how we interact with the world

of officialdom running the global show so that we get the decisions that best suit the United States. Not best suit the world of swimming but that's not such a problem, what's best for the world's No 1 swim nation having quite often turned out to be what's good for all on a variety of issues. Having to navigate the "FINA Family" is a problem, as we have documented in several features in our FINA Future series.

Being a member of the FINA family in its current state of evolution means smiling, patting backs and doing business with people who don't share your values and views but are important enough to have onside and voting in the way you want them to vote.

So, how and on what issues does USA Swimming want 200 nations to vote in its favour. Keep in mind when pondering that question that Louis De Breda Handley (1874 to 1956) – guide and

coach to the likes of Ethelda Bleibtry, Martha Norelius, Aileen Riggan, Eleanor Holm and Gertrude Ederle and the man who penned the swimming section of the Encyclopaedia Britannica in his day – would still be someone who could teach an awful lot to most of the officials who represent the bulk of nations that form the membership of FINA (don't even think about stretching to Bill Bachrach and Bob Kiphuth and please pray silence if your mind strays to Doc C, may he rest in peace).

Every single one of those national leaders at the FINA Congress of more than 200 countries have the same voting power as their peers from the United States, Australia et al at FINA Congress, the ultimate power of the international federation. That is not their fault, of course: it is what has been allowed by those representing coaches with cutting edge knowledge through the decades and developments of the sport and the world-class teams that have dominated big podiums.

The USA has walked the middle line with many of those nations: on occasion it has seen them vote for the thing the Bureau wants even when the Bureau is way out of line and acting beyond both the letter and the spirit of the FINA Constitution and Rules; it has also seen those nations step up to the plate when a few of the power-brokers, wheelers and dealers at the helm of the global body have got it so wrong that no amount of cajoling will persuade folk to step in line with Family harmony at a price (shiny suits, for example).

One of the gains that USA Swimming thinks it gets from compromise and maintaining a status quo long past its sell-by date is the ability to hold Olympic trials when it wishes to and have those count as the sole selection moment every four years. Looking from afar, the very notion that such a thing is somehow negotiable or at risk of being lost is hysterically wide of the mark. Imagine the conversation:

Herr Bach: What is that you say Mr. Marculescu, I don't think I quite caught your drift?

Cornel Marculescu, FINA director: No trouble at all, Herr Bach. I said 'No Phelps, no Ledecky this time round.' We've had to leave the USA out. Sorry, it's just that USA Swimming isn't playing ball and have held their Olympic trials, which we no longer give qualification status to, a few days beyond our deadline.

Herr Bach: I expect to see Mr Phelps and Miss Ledecky on the blocks in Rio, Mr. Marculescu, stars, stripes and speed in tow – and so does NBC. Auf Wiedersehen!

Phone goes dead.

It is that simple. And, FINA and USA Swimming must surely know, it would be that simple whether FINA, the WSA or a visiting platoon of Martians – now that NASA has confirmed they've got water back home on the next planet – happened to be running international or galactic swimming.

FINA was handed an olive branch. It refused it, review of the kind that USA Swimming and others must and do embrace beyond the pale of its power. If FINA is worth keeping (and there are grounds for saying it is), USA Swimming, then it's leaders will not hesitate to submit to standard, independent review at your request. The good – that's you – should not sink to a lower level; they should be aspiring to rise up and match best practice (and press you to improve in the bargain) – and you, world No 1, should be encouraging them to do so with every bit of leverage you have (which is a lot more than we've seen since schism became the order of the day).

Of course, no-one is holding their breath, while plenty are well past the point of perceiving FINA as salvageable.

The Challenge

The alternative is already on the breeze: a world in which swimmers and coaches realise that they could actually be better off, better funded, more recognised and in control in a world without the current apparatchiks and the gravy train of established governance models that have come to dominate Olympic sport. Nothing lasts forever. But if blazers keep on creating voids, something will fill them. One event model I've seen (no details until those folk are ready and happy to go for it – and that makes sense) suggests \$10m in prizes for the winning squad in the opening season of a new professional era.

The response to such things from some quarters matches one that I saw from a good man in response to the fledgling WSA Constitution and an invitation for the worldwide swim community to let its voice and views be heard before models and pathways link the bridges of vision, intent and action: "What a joke!"

Actually, it isn't – and jokes are not static in nature. They can, for instance, backfire, they can be on you and you can be the butt of them. The level of dissatisfaction out on the water may well have been there for a while but some of those who once swam and put up with it for far too long now work in the worlds of finance, serve as athlete agents, represent broadcasters, coach, wish to serve and so on and so forth – and they're among those keen to find a better way.

Which is what USA Swimming should be doing – and should be doing with the courage of conviction it has shown on Safe Sport issues of late, pressure or no pressure, the courage of conviction of anyone who believes there is a better way. The question, though, is not so much whether USA Swimming believes there is a better way (I have personally heard leaders galore in the USA – including those who tow the line – complain bitterly in private about the way things are done at FINA; about how far removed the international federation is from 'the way we'd want it' to tell any who suggest otherwise to behave and start telling the truth).

The question is more along the lines of whether USA Swimming, with a domestic OC on one side, FINA on the other and representatives in the middle of those worlds making money from private work directly related to the world they 'volunteer' in as FINA folk, genuinely wants to find a better model.

I know enough about the USA's Strategic Plan to know it is full of good thoughts, aims and ambitions but enough, too, to groan at the weight of all those clay feet walking all over the words folk have shared, if only out of pure frustration.

One plan that has been in place for a long time (and I've seen it playing out, too) is for USA Swimming to meet the FINA Executive from time to time to press the matters that matter most to it.

The strategy may well make sense as a way of charting a course through a system that would be in an even worse place than it is were it not for the network of people who try to curb the worst of FINA, sometimes with success, sometimes not.

Among problems with that model and strategy are these:

1. It props up the status quo that isn't working.

2. It means world swimming is not, after all, run by all that universality so praised and derided: it is run by USA Swimming (or others who go for the same model) by the back door, with no notes, no votes, no record, no transparency and no democracy a part of the official record of whatever it is that comes of such private arrangements (let's be clear with this additional thought: those private meetings are held with various parties and nations, Cornel Marculescu the broker, policy and decisions decided before those charges with the task of deciding get a chance to debate and vote in transparent fashion).
3. It means USA Swimming (among others) is not sharing and being transparent with its peers at the helm of the elite nations that make the show world-class – at least not officially.
4. The deals that are made through such arrangements come at a price as the director and others ask for their pound of flesh, so to speak.
5. The strategy has not prevented the worst of FINA getting worse still of late, with Constitution, Rules, by-laws and guidelines all tested and in some cases even broken when it comes to awards, facilities, world records, doping and much else.

Which Leads Us to Australia

The Ballot opened today and closes next Monday 5 days shy of Swimming Australian Ltd AGM on Oct. 17: the candidates for places at the top table of domestic governance will be voted in or out according to 9 hands: 1 per state, 1 for ASCTA, and 1 for the ASA.

The Candidates:

- **Lawrie Cox:** Past director, Oceania Secretary, FINA referee. Current Director at Swimming Victoria (past President). Critical of FINA its processes and supports creation of WSA as alternate.
- **Robert Gregg:** Past Technical manager; involved at grassroots level
- **Bruce Havilah:** Lawyer, previously at Swimming Western Australia.
- **Jeremy Turner:** Current SAL Director 2009-, Acting CEO in 2012; Financial officer.
- **Annabelle Williams:** Lawyer, past swimmer, current legal officer for Australian

Olympic Committee; Director of Swimmers Association.

An interesting aspect of the process is the probable presence, when the vote takes place, of a FINA Bureau member and the reasonable question that raises: is there a conflict of interest at play?

Matt Dunn, former world s/c medley champion and a Dolphin in World I/c and Olympic waters in his racing days, is the man at the top table of FINA. He is there to represent athletes. He may have some questions for and on the candidates, while one would hope he brings with him no word nor advice nor influence from Lausanne: that would be none of their business and no business of Dunn's to get involved in, with private or public word, as he will doubtless have realised.

I have no idea if the candidates have been asked for their views on FINA (they should be) nor whether candidates have any chance to discuss with Swimming Australia what its stance and policy and strategy is – and why. If they were ever to get the chance of a chat with Matt Dunn (who I would describe as a lovely chap, genuinely so), they might ask him what I would ask him if he represented me:

- In what way, Matt, have you represented athletes this year?
- Did you speak up for the reinforcement of rules designed to preserve the health and safety of athletes?
- Did you make it clear at the top table that FINA rules were broken by a domestic federation and FINA when a world record set in a pool where minimum facilities rules (not standards or guidelines but rules) were broken?
- Did you speak up for the athletes who emerged from the men's 1500m free at world titles to complain that their pre-race concentration was somewhat thrown by the Sun Yang fiasco?
- Did you speak up for the swimmer Pal Joensen, the Faroes hero who watched the 1500m free final go with an empty lane that meant more to him than FINA and its 'top athlete' Sun Yang, doping positive in tow and a man who has caused a change in Australian rules, will ever care about:

namely, had he swum in that empty lane, his Olympic selection for Denmark (the IOC has yet to recognise the Faroes even though the paralympic movement does) would have been a touch more secure a year out?

- What was your role when a Brazilian woman complained that she'd been hit and verbally abused by Sun Yang in the warm-down pool at world titles – were you given a say, did you get to speak directly with the athletes as their representative at board level?
- Did you, on behalf of athletes, have a say in the award to Vladimir Putin, the head of a country steeped in the controversy of a jet downed with tragic loss of Australian lives?

If Matt Dunn has time to answer those questions and a few others, we'd be most willing to listen and report. A response seems unlikely, for that is not the way Family members behave if they want to stay Family members in FINA World, regardless of how much such transparency and culture would surely help to transform the international federation into a body fit for the purpose of serving athletes and its other members.

Meantime, whether he gets an official chance to talk through such issues with the voters Down Under, one candidate has made his views very clear. Lawrie Cox should gain umpteen points for this alone:

"My position has always been in any role – if you are not prepared to put your hand up to do the job do not complain."

In the context of the above, Cox would be a must for me at the SAL table. Australia is a land that prides itself on calling a spade a spade and building on that basis. Does that image hold firm today?

Not if you talk to the likes of Bill Sweetenham, among several key figures, it doesn't. Honest voices at the heart of the decision-making process are required. Any who feel unable to look Cornel Marculescu and the rest in the eye and say "our position is X and we disagree with what's happened and what is proposed..." and "in the interests of our athletes and swimming insist ..." should be nowhere near the first and business-class ticket and five-star hotel there to cushion their fall into mediocrity.

Cox tells SwimVortex in response to WSA's invitation:

"I would encourage as many as possible to take up the offer of input into the replacement of FINA. This outcome was not the desired outcome but the result of those currently sitting in the blazerati ignoring what was happening around them.

"The current structure is not working successfully; that is not to say that WSA will be perfect especially in its infancy. This proposal is going to be fraught with many opinions but it will at least be a refresh as to how the sport works. The coaches association and in particular the Board members looking to the new structure will come under scrutiny and both overt/covert pressure not to participate. As an example in Aus, the coaches association (and swimmers) have their own organisation with recognition as stakeholders to Swimming Australia Limited. How will that be actioned going forward will be interesting as the pressure is applied by FINA to discredit WSA."

"It will happen as the Australian Bureau member attends and participates in the SAL Board. So who will pull the strings? As an ex swimmer support for his former team members as part of the Swimmers Association or the instructions as the Bureau member?"

The coaches association is an active participant in the formation of WSA but what happens when a past president of ASCTA is also an employee of SAL. The pressure will be obvious. I trust it gets full exposure when the inevitable happens.

"In the end this can only improve swimming it was just a pity that those in FINA couldn't address the problem to secure the future."

Calling Other Nations

All of this strife and stress could, of course, have been avoided if leading domestic federations had truly stood up to the worst excesses of the FINA leadership; had insisted on rules being observed; had resisted doing deals that require a Shylock-style demand to be paid in full.

Of course, this is not simply down to the USA and Australia, both of which have fine work to point to in their defence. Which nations

and federations and coaches and athletes from around the world are prepared to nail their colours to the mast of the USA decisions on doping and the rules that American coaches and any based in the USA must now observe?

There is a collective responsibility that has spent too long lounging around in the leisure pool being served cocktails by Politics on a stick to scratch a back and honour a promise.

On that note, I leave you with two thoughts on the work of those intending to bypass a FINA deaf and blind to the concerns of many of its leading members. They take us back to Churchill, so in reading I recommend rolling back from the language of war while understanding, nonetheless, that swimming is

engaged in a battle for its future:

"Never give in – never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy."

"It is no use saying, 'We are doing our best'. You have got to succeed in doing what is necessary."

In our concluding article of this three-partner, we consider a Congressional hearing, Andrew Jennings and why swimming can look at soccer/football and, sadly, not feel too out of place. ■

Just Let 'Em **PLAY**

by Dr. Andrew Jacobs, Jeff Montgomery & Peter Malone

Book Review by John Leonard

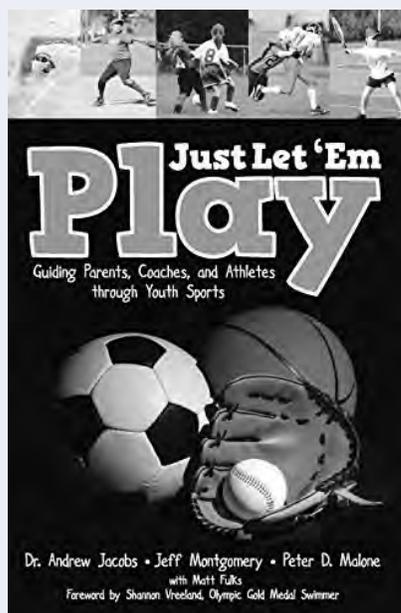
Hall of Fame Coach Peter Malone has joined with two long-term colleagues near his Kansas City base, to write a fine work detailing the process of youth sports "as it ought to be."

This book is both full of information and just as important in the age of the Internet, complete with context. Dr. Jacobs is a renowned sports psychologist, Jeff Montgomery is an MLB pitcher, and of course, Dr. Malone is one of the best known swimming coaches of the past 40 years, producing a string of Olympic swimmers from a community-based swim team in Kansas. He has seen youth sports from every direction and angle, and is an authoritative source on "how to do it correctly."

It is equally fulfilling for coaches and parents. I highly recommend this as a read for all those in youth sports.

Sources for obtaining the book (price point \$16.95 on Amazon):

1. AscendBooks.com (Publisher)
2. Amazon.com
3. BN.com (Barnes & Noble) ■



PART 3 EDITORIAL:

Why Sports Governance Needs A New Start:

POOLING LESSONS FROM A USA SENATE HEARING

In the previous segment on the poor governance afflicting swimming, we looked first at the financial reality being embraced by Rio 2016 Olympic organisers and how that serves as a red flag to FINA and the choices it has been making of late; we then turned to the coping strategies employed by federations when navigating through FINA waters and why those simply reinforce the status quo; and today we turn to the beautiful game, ethics and a USA Senate Congress Committee hearing on Capitol Hill that provided excellent explanations as to why FINA and its members must reach for radical reform if they wish to avoid replacement. The level of transparency and the keen discussion and blunt honesty that ensues at the heart of American democracy is precisely where organisations such as USA Swimming should be going.

The Ugly Side Of the Beautiful Game

The day brought news that FIFA president of 17 years, Sepp Blatter, being handed a 90-day provisional suspension. Members of Fifa's ethics committee recommended the sanction after the Swiss attorney general opened criminal proceedings against the 79-year-old.

Blatter is accused of signing a contract "unfavourable" to football's governing body and making a "disloyal payment" to Uefa president Michel Platini. Blatter denies any wrongdoing and his lawyers said he had "not been notified of any action."

European football chief Michel Platini was also hit with a provisional 90-day ban over the £1.3 million suspected illegal payment he received from Blatter from work he says he carried out nine years ago. If the payment is proven to be illegal, gone are Platini's hopes of succeeding

his former mentor as president of the scandal-plagued governing body.

The investigatory chamber of FIFA's ethics committee met today and the decision was issued by Hans Joachim Eckert, the head of FIFA's ethics adjudicatory chamber.

The 79-year-old Blatter was interrogated over the Platini payment and another suspected illegal deal with disgraced former vice-president of FIFA Jack Warner.

What has this to do with swimming? A great deal when it comes to the structures, mindset and model of governance for many sports beyond football/soccer.

At a Senate Congress Committee, Capitol Hill – Russell Senate Office Building, Senator Jerry Moran, right, chaired a hearing on the state of International Soccer Governance (FIFA).

Integrity, ethics and the entire model of international sports governance, including a lack of independent checks and balances, were highlighted.

We hear why some say FIFA is worse than the Mafia. Chief among those saying that is Andrew Jennings, the British journalist who worked with the FBI on work that led to the indictment of a club of high-flyers in an investigation still ongoing. Jennings' contribution, alone, is worth the two hours it takes to watch the video below but all four witnesses and the two men in the chair make this democratic process essential viewing for any who care about the poor state of governance in swimming (and the wider world of federations across many sport beyond).

In stretching to the role of the U.S. in

international soccer, concerns over human rights abuses and foreign workers in Qatar – including a woeful death count in the country scheduled to host of the 2022 World Cup – and the pay disparity between men and women in soccer, the hearing can be watched and listened to at two levels:

1. For what it is and what it means in soccer.
2. For what it means and how it translates and relates to the world of wider international sports governance, swimming our primary focus, of course.

First up the link to the two-hour tape of the hearing. If you can find the time to watch it through, all the better, whether you are someone for whom this is confirmation; whether you are someone trying to understand what transparent democracy means; or whether you are right down at the deep end of the spectrum of understanding on FINA and haven't yet connected the dots of a network of governance in need of replacement because nothing else will get the job done.

There is a video of the Hearing on Capitol Hill, from which we relate some of the discussion to why this is about much more than soccer and why coaches and others gathered in Cleveland at ASCA Clinic this month overwhelmingly supported a move for change, revolution and even replacement of FINA as the folk running swimming at global level.

The following is a trawl of that tape, interspersed with a few STOP THE TAPE notes where an issue talks to the schism in swimming. Note that there is no suggestion of financial corruption at FINA. That it not the point of this exercise. The following is



here for the record and marks the last in our FINA Future series.

Senator Jerry Moran starts by saying that he does not believe Government should get involved in every scandal in the world of sport nor could he give any assurance that any outcome of the hearing on soccer governance would translate to the statue books in any way. But as chairman of a sub-committee overseeing the governance of professional sports, he believed that the issues deserved to have “public attention.”

“Corruption, bribery and other criminal activity” had become a part of international soccer. By shining light on that, he hoped that the public, current and future sponsors of sports events, the “media companies that supports the games today” will “better understand the consequences of allowing those governing soccer to continue without reform, including the tragic loss of life.”

According to some reports from organisations like Amnesty as many as 4,000 migrants workers will die before world cup starts. “That is appalling.”

Soccer gained profile in the United States when its women won the World Cup this year. Billions make up the budget of world soccer. Corruption and loss of life are part off that realm.

Serious...

“On May 27, 2015, the U.S. Department of

Justice unsealed a 47-count indictment against 9 FIFA officials and 5 corporate executives, charging them with racketeering, bribery, wire fraud and money laundering.” Four other individuals and two corporate defendants have also pled guilty to various charges and Swiss investigators are looking at 81 suspicious financial transactions in relation to the World Cup bids of 2018 (Qatar) and 2022 (Russia).”

Stop the Tape: If you take the names of those indicted and trawl the history of gatherings among sporting blazers, the dots connect friendships and partnerships, shared committees, government posts and more between those now facing legal action and many in places of high office across a range of sports, including swimming.

Senator Moran adds: “The culture of corruption must be addressed... now is the time for the USA and the USA soccer federation to engage in meaningful reforms as well as elect a leader at FIFA who will spearhead long overdue changes in the organisation.”

He talks of the human lives lost and the consequences of “lapses in integrity.” He emphasises the need for the USA to take responsibility for “restoring integrity.”

“We cannot must not should not turn a blind eye to this issue any longer”

Senator Richard Blumenthal of the commerce sub-committee on Consumer Protection, takes

the microphone. He refers to soccer as a growing sport in the USA and congratulates the USA women’s bream on its victory at the World Cup this year With a nod to that, he addresses the champions directly when he states:

“The corruption in world soccer is a disservice to the game, it is a disrespect to them, it betrays the trust of countless men and women, many of them young people just beginning in this sport who have a right to expect better from the leaders of this sport.”

On the FIFA inquiries, he notes:

“What has been revealed so far is a Mafia-style crime syndicate in charge of this sport. My only hesitation in using that term is

that it is almost insulting to the Mafia because the Mafia would never have been so blatant, overt and arrogant in its corruption.”

The indictments pressed by the USA Justice Department, he added, showed that the organisation had a ‘chart that showed how it [the network of corruption] was run.’”

He asks: “Who knew about this criminal wrongdoing, when did they know it and... why did the not act more quickly?...These are classic questions involved in any racketeering conspiracy investigation.”

“The facts show that there had to be wilful ignorance or blatant incompetence on the part of many of the members of this organisation – and that’s true of U.S. soccer ... they either knew about it or should have known about it and I’m not sure which is worse.”

The hearing, he hoped, would lay the groundwork for the kind of “far-reaching, fundamental reforms” of the kind that had been necessary in world sports in the past when scandal reared its head.

“I wanna know what reforms the US Soccer federation is planning to introduce to instil greater transparency and accountability in the governance of soccer in America. Not whether but what and when because clearly there is an urgent and immediate need for such reforms.”

Having soccer run by a billion-dollar enterprise

BRAD SNYDER
Vapor, Indigo

AMANDA KENDALL
Vapor, Black

ANTHONY ERVIN
Onyx, Black

ARIANNA VANDERPOOL-WALLACE
Onyx, Dark Mint

ROY BURCH
Fuse, Caribbean

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run behind closed doors was “a recipe for disaster and a moral catastrophe”, he added.

One idea is to reorganise FIFA as a public corporation or at least some part of it as a public corporation, the Senator noted.

He urged private corporations that sponsor sports events to take responsibility, too. McDonald’s, Nike, Coca-Cola and Visa are all cited as having the chance to serve as “guardians of good governance” rather than acting as “silent beneficiaries who benefit from opaque governance.” He notes, without naming, that one of those corporations is mentioned in a FIFA-official indictment.

The Witnesses

Dan Flynn, USA Soccer federation CEO and Secretary General

The first to talk. He explains how his federation works and how it fits into FIFA and other international bodies such as CONCACAF (Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football), among organisations cited in the corruption investigation.

Flynn notes that USA Soccer advocated full release of the reports into the bids for the 2018 and 2022 World Cups. In another defence of his position he notes that true federation he leads backed Prince Ali for FIFA president against Blatter despite “the risks” of damage to any USA bid to host a future World Cup, in 2026.

He noted recent moves to press for “sweeping reforms” at CONCACAF but says almost nothing about the fact that it has taken scandal on a monumental scale to get to a place where the dialogue for reform was even possible or deemed necessary.

Michael Hershman, former member of the FIFA Independent Governance Committee (served for two years), founder of Transparency International and president and CEO of Fairfax Group, a risk management firm

Stop the Tape: Hershman and his outfit did indeed bring some reform to FIFA but as the man notes much on the issues of transparency and more was rejected. If USA Swimming was serious about reform within FINA it could and should have backed the Sweetenham call for a review – and Hershman would have been the

perfect man to lead the way. USA Swimming chose to stick with the status quo, with Dale Neuburger, Bureau member, and Carol Zaleski, Technical Committee, leading the call to stick with what has served them well and at certain key levels served swimming well (important to note that much good has come from having the right people take decisions at critical moments down the years). The stance is that what the USA gets out of the status quo is worth putting up with a deal of stuff that really ought not to be tolerated. For example, at the tip and side of the iceberg; no word from the USA on awarding Putin, no word from the USA on FINA’s work with a British PR unit offering four months of ‘toil’ for \$150,000 to discredit those raising red flags and selling Michael Phelps as a poster boy for the blazers and bureaucrats at the top table of FINA when they’d never asked him and when clearly he had no intention of being any such thing. Good relations and even friendships stretched and broken all the while. That need not have been.

Hershman widens the discussion beyond football when he says that the FIFA inquiries delivering “a tremendous opportunity to discuss the inherent autonomy in sporting organisations. Sports organisations have long maintained that autonomy is central to the preservation of the values embedded in sport. This is a difficult concept to argue with” he notes but only until the core values of sport and trust are undermined as they have been by the revelations on FIFA.

The growing commercial nature of sport, the protection of governments that soccer has enjoyed and the rapidly expanding gambling industry (legal and illegal) are “all converging to create a situation where self-regulation is increasingly challenging.

“The sports industry must put in place governance and compliance standards which demonstrate the best practices of transparency and accountability.”

FIFA business: worth about \$5.6 billion every four-year World Cup cycle. FIFA had a chance to lead reform in sports organisations when the scandals started to emerge about 10 years ago on the back of the work of the likes of Andrew Jennings.

Transparency International presented plans for reform to FIFA, Hershman noted, but FIFA held on to the “irresponsible notion that it was autonomous and did not have to adhere to outside oversight or ‘interference.’”

The US sporting public cannot, he emphasised assume that “FIFA is the only sport with endemic structural problems,” he adds.

“Every single governing body in the sports world, from the International Olympic Committee to the ICC to the NFL needs to agree to modern standards of transparency and accountability.”

Sport is big business and needs regulating as such, he states.

Recent events were “bigger than FIFA” and require “coordinated action across all sporting bodies and I believe there is a way we can achieve this reform; with the cooperation and support of governments and sports industry leaders around the world.”

The International Centre for Sports Security (Hershman sits on the board, he notes) has come up with the Sports Industry Transparency Initiative, a set of standards that would be voluntarily adopted. The group would work with sports organisations to promote higher ethics and values in governance. A benchmark would be created, including:

- Professionalising Boards of Directors in Sport.
- Managing Conflicts of Interest.
- Building a Democratic Foundation.
- Embracing Transparency and Accountability.
- Levelling the Playing Field for Athletes, Men and Women.
- Motivating Ethical Behaviour for Staff and volunteers.
- Engaging with key stakeholders.
- Showcasing sports-event integrity.
- Considering the positive role of sport in society.
- Establishing effective risk controls.
- Comprehensive and far-reaching is how Hershman describes such moves.
- The purpose was to leave sports organisations

knowing precisely “what is expected of them in terms of integrity and transparency”

Sunjeev Bery, Amnesty International, Middle East & North Africa Advocacy Director

Here, for the most part, I will leave you to watch from 26 minutes in, for the issue is the most important raised in terms of consequences of corruption, bad management and the turning of blind eyes and going along to get along mentality of federations around the world who not only tolerated FIFA's leaders but propped them up and played a part in maintaining the system and status quo. All to one degree or another have blood on the their hands.

Bery notes the outcomes starkly in the realm of a nation such as Qatar (2022 World Cup host so far), where 90% of folk are foreign workers brought in to do the drudge and dangerous stuff in wholly unacceptable conditions: slavery, entrapment, suicide, hunger, dependence on charities for basic foods, eviction, lack of labour-law enforcement, exclusion from rights, sexual violence ... and death.

On construction sites related to but not exclusive to the World Cup bid:

“FIFA assumed responsibility for the above” the moment it awarded the 2022 World Cup to Qatar, a bid “based on labour exploitation.”

If reform is not forced through with urgency then the 2020 World Cup will carry the “permanent stain of forced labour and human suffering.”

Andrew Jennings: Investigative journalist and filmmaker and the leading force in exposing corruption in the IOC and FIFA down the years, some of that work leading to cooperation with the FBI on enquiries that led to the indictments making the headlines.

He congratulates the USA women's team, who's success “contrasts sadly with the massive, massive deficiencies of the US Soccer Federation; frightened to upset Blatter's corrupt FIFA while enjoying the elite lifestyle that he provides.”

He notes the absence of the US Soccer representative at FIFA, Sunil Gulati (Gulati was one of several executive committee members at FIFA to call for the publication

of the full Garcia Report into allegations of corruption surrounding Russia and Qatar's bids for the 2018 and 2022 World Cups).

“Where's Sunil?” asks Jennings taking a peek under the table just in case. “He's the man who takes American values to FIFA and CONCACAF and he's not here to talk about it. It rather undermines the whole process.”

From there I recommend wholeheartedly that you listen to every single word uttered by Jennings.

He concludes his presentation with two fundamental calls for action:

Scrap FIFA and start again because the organisation is too rotten to cure itself of being “an organised crime family”

Repeat the exercise that followed the Salt Lake City scandal at the IOC: “external, respected, non-partisan” investigation was essential, at US Soccer.

Gulati was treating the hearing “with contempt” by not appearing. Jennings urges Gulati to get to Lausanne for a due meeting in the week that followed the hearing on Capitol Hill and tell Blatter to pout all his play slips and earnings on the table, perks, bonuses, per diems, the lot. And if that's not forthcoming, get home and held the USA kick-start reform.

“That's what you've got to do as a country” to regain credibility internationally.

The questions following the presentations:

What did US Soccer know?

Flynn: “I knew nothing about any corruption...”

Senator Moran interrupts to ask him to clarify who he's talking for; Flynn answers by saying that neither he nor anyone who was there to report such things ever brought back “cold, hard facts about corruption” at FIFA or CONCACAF.

His defence then stretched to describing the alleged corruption as a series of private transactions that U.S. Soccer knew nothing about, transactions that took four years of FBI work to get to.

Senator Moran: so the indictments came as a surprise?

Flynn pauses and cannot answer the question

directly, saying ‘I just wasn't involved’.

Bery, of Amnesty is asked how the corruption feeds into the topics that concern him: human rights.

The moment FIFA accepted the bid from Qatar and awarded its event it took on responsibilities for human rights under United Nations principles, replies Bery. It had a duty not to turn a blind eye to human rights abuses related to its activities.

“Why was it that FIFA did not go more deeply into such things” before awarding its event at a time when the human rights abuses there were well documented?” asks Bery. He notes that for 2026, FIFA will incorporate human rights concerns in bidding processes. Tough for the folk losing their lives in large numbers up to 2022, of course...

Stop the Tape: This is an important principle and one that FINA leaders, a group of people increasingly wedded to staging their events in the Middle East, need to take note of. Qatar has been a FINA host and will be again. Thus, FINA bears just as much responsibility of the kind Amnesty talks of as FIFA does. The question is clear: did FINA check whether there were any human rights abuses associated with the construction projects and related hosting of events related to swimming championships?

Jennings is asked for context.

Everyone knows in soccer bids that you have to “pay to play”, so silly of England to even have put in a bid given that they, like the USA, says Jennings, tend not to be into paying bribes.

“A Dirty Decision” is how he described the moment FIFA allowed its game to be placed on a strip of sand that is “boiling” and “broiling ... people would die if there was a summer tournament there.”

He notes that Blatter and “stakeholders” then move the dates to November to take account of the weather. Beyond noting that “stakeholders” were not fans and such folk but “Blatter's mates”, Jennings makes a point that ripples out to many sports:

“If you want to die young, come to England and stand outside Arsenal, Manchester City, Manchester United, Liverpool, Everton, all

the big clubs and say 'we're going to stop you having football for seven weeks' because Jack Warner took the money'. I hope it's a painless death. You can't just walk into someone else's sports culture and take it away but that's what Blatter's done.

Who, asks Jennings is questioning him, who is calling him to account, holding him in check?

"I don't see any of the U.S. Soccer officials at FIFA saying 'no, no, no – we're friends with the English and the Germans and the Dutch and the other western European nations who are going to have to stop their game because of the dirty slime-bags at FIFA."

Stop the Tape: Taking away a sports culture is precisely what has happened in swimming. In some parts of the world they have stuck to their guns: plaudits to the USA, where the college kids race at NCAA's and other college events and never go on world cup tour (most of the 'pro' swimmer don't either for they have

other traditions and long-established pathways to follow).

But consider the tit-for-tat escalation in events between LEN and FNA since 1999 and there you will find a wrecking ball.

Take Britain (whose experience can be found elsewhere): the notion of a national champion is not quite dead but it is diluted, distorted and well on the way to being destroyed in terms of what that title ought to mean. Not only the fault of international federations, of course, but these days, national champions are folk who got left off the major team for the year, the domestic event unfolding as the national team leaves for world titles. Calendar chaos, like human rights and all other issues, is the responsibility of the international federations and their domestic members. The discussion has gone on for decades and has become all the more pressing in the past 15 years as FINA and LEN have doubled their impact on the calendar with complete disregard for

traditions and events that were established long ago but now have scant connection to any sense of swimming history.

The model in swimming has not been reform and careful readjustment but of sporting colonialism and bullying from top downwards in the name of "promoting swimming", when all the while the lore and glue of the sport has had a flame-thrower aimed at it.

Jennings then suggests that too many soccer officials must have headed a wet football too many times in their youth, only that, he indicates, a possible explanation for how often they seem not to notice things happening and can't remember events at all clearly.

He takes a side swipe at Flynn's suggestion that he knew nothing when he notes that accusations of corruption are there in the media and well documented in 2002, again in 2006, again in 2010.

"Richly documented; that racketeering was a

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way of life for CONCACAF. But apparently that news never reached the Chicago offices of the U.S. Soccer federation.”

Swift intervention from Senator Moran, who hands over to Senator Blumenthal. Flynn had had no knowledge of any corruption until the news broke in May this year, he confirms.

Senator Blumenthal: “Did you have suspicions?”

“There were moments...when if I had a level of discomfort I would just get myself out of any situation that offered any level of discomfort to me.”

Stop the Tape: Beyond the sinking feeling you get when you hear a top official utter such words of what might well be described as an abdication of duty and responsibility, Flynn points to a fundamental flaw in the model of sports governance, swimming included. Time and time and time again down the years I have watched and heard witness from delegates who arrive at FINA full of enthusiasm for changing things for the better only to find they meet resistance, a pat on the back, an attempt to persuade – and measures all the way to threats and actual exclusion if they are perceived to be folk who don’t tow the party line. Bad culture is a place where bad things are bound to happen.

Senator Blumenthal, looking slightly irritated, presses Flynn: it was evidence that caused him to remove himself from discussions and meetings?

Flynn lays “evidence” aside and says “it was a comfort level.”

When did that “comfort level” begin? Flynn could not pinpoint a time.

“Years before the indictment”? Flynn wouldn’t say years but couldn’t pinpoint the time.

“Months?”

“Greater than months but it would be hard to pinpoint ...”

“Did you make any effort to investigate?”

“If there were cold facts I would have brought that to the attention of the appropriate people.” Flynn says there were no facts he could take to anyone to press a case.

Outside counsel was consulted and Flynn simply “passed along my level of discomfort.”

Senator Blumenthal:

“Would you agree that U.S. Soccer acted inadequately to investigate or prevent or stop any blatant criminal wrongdoing at FIFA?”

“I wouldn’t say we would do it differently,” says Flynn. “We have two choices. here are 200 nations ... we have to find a way to participate in a manner consistent with our mission and our core values and we think that one of the ways to do that, starting in 2013, was that we finally had someone on the FIFA exco [executive committee] ... that we had someone at the table...”

Senator Blumenthal interrupts what is “fairly well-known history.” Instead he throws it forward to this:

How much did officials come to learn and “very bluntly, why those officials did so little until the Department of justice indicted Chuck Blazer and others who had long-standing ties with U.S. Soccer, particularly in light of the lack of comfort level you had? In retrospect, what’s the explanation?”

Flynn starts to answer ... “I didn’t” ... he then cuts his microphone and consults legal counsel.

“I was away of a level of discomfort but it was ... a general feeling, so I had no hard evidence and we wanted to continue to participate and influence the organisation of 209 members. The second choice we have is to opt out ... with that comes a series of ramifications. We no longer have a seat at the table, we are no longer involved in any competitions, Olympics...”

Stop the Tape: Perhaps it is possible to envisage world soccer going on without the USA but I wouldn’t know. Translating the scenario to swimming: any such thing would destroy the show – and everyone knows it. Regardless of how things would play out in soccer, swimming or any other sport, does the reported deaths of many people and Amnesty reports galore on human rights abuses not tip the conscience to a better place than ‘no real option but to go along to get along’?

There would be ramifications for the business model for soccer in the USA, Flynn continues.

Billions have been invested in past 20 years ...

Senator Blumenthal understands the options but was there not a third? “To start asking questions and begin an inquiry, begin shining a light, begin blowing the whistle .. and essentially holding accountable officials who might be guilty – and we now know they are – of wire fraud, conspiracy, money laundering, bribery, that directly impacted the quality and integrity of the sport that you are responsible for upholding?”

Stop the Tape: This question is one that cuts to the heart of the issue across many federations regardless of whether financial corruption is present or not. The point is that flag raising, blowing whistles, shining lights is all part of good governance and should be seen as such. Evidence abounds that such things are rejected, sometimes forcibly so, at FINA. Bad culture is a place where bad things can happen. Good culture is a place where poor to bad outcomes are anticipated and prevented wherever possible.

Flynn notes that U.S. Soccer did support the 2011 Ethics Committee moves and pressed for full disclosure of the full Garcia report and supported Prince Ali against Blatter “at great peril” to USA chances of hosting the 2026 World Cup.

He stuck to his view that being at the table was a proper course of action to reform FIFA.

Senator Blumenthal made it clear that his questions and comments were directed not at Flynn personally but at the whole leadership of U.S. Soccer.

On that note, why was Gulati not there?

Flynn and team had anticipated “rather broad and specific questions, potentially.” It was determined with outside counsel that Flynn would attend. He had more of “a comfort level” than Gulati when it came to the day-to-day operations of U.S Soccer.

Senator Blumenthal: “Don’t you think he has an obligation to answer the questions we’ve been directing at you?”

Flynn would do his best to have Gulati answer questions in writing.

Senator Blumenthal describes U.S. Soccer’s

silence as “deafening” in many respects. He wonders whether Flynn now believes more should have been done to expose the bad things that had unfolded.

Flynn skirts a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ and points to “the recent reform of CONCACAF”, which was “weeping” and involved independent directors and greater degree of transparency. That was a footprint that “we’d like to bring forward to FIFA, recognising that we’re one of 25 on the FIFA executive committee and one of 209 nations We pride ourselves on our leadership and recognise ... the limited capacity that we have for reform.”

Stop the Tape: Precisely. Limited capacity for reform. Precisely as things stand in swimming, with deals, compromises and much else a part of universality and a bad model of governance. Precisely one of the reasons why USA Swimming, among others at the pointy end of business, should be pressing for a new model not simply trying to reform what they’ve got while knowing that decades have gone by and will go by again with the same old, same old if no-one takes a stand.

Senator Steve Daines notes the 15 years of Flynn’s governance and asks him to describe any specific example of when he felt “a level of discomfort.”

Flynn recalls Blazer’s way of holding meetings at which, he seemed to indicate, a deal had been struck or an outcome already decided before a closed votes count was taken.

His discomfort centred on “the way Jack Warner and Chuck Blazer ran their meetings.”

Did he express those concerns to Blazer, asks senator Daines.

“I did not,” Flynn replies, his subsequent explanation a return to those two choices: participate or jump ship.

Flynn was left to feel that had he raised the issue with Blazer, he would have been made to “feel a level of discomfort in another way.”

The threat was tangible, it seems, though the nature of it was not expressed.

Did he see peers experience the same? Says Flynn:

“If we reached out to talk to other federations

... there wasn’t anyone else that had the same feeling that I did as an organisation, so we operated as best we could ...”

Stop the Tape: If I had a dollar for every time an official, coach, athlete, doctor, anti-doping expert and journalist said something very similar about meetings they had attended with the FINA Director Cornel Marculescu and others in the FINA leadership, I’d put a smile on the face of my bank manager. As in the last point, set aside any notion of financial corruption, for that is not the point. It is the mechanisms at the heart of the decision-making process that limit independence and democracy of thought. Just as Flynn is left looking like a man working in a system that does not make provision for red-flag-raising without consequence, the same is true of many navigating their way in FINA World.

There ensues an exchange with Senator Amy Klobuchar over the fact that the USA’s world-champion women get far less pay and reward than their male counterparts who finished far from the helm of their world tournament.

Stop the Tape: The discussion is interesting but in swimming we must note that women’s equality in prizes is established and there is not an issue. The one issue FINA has not faced well is, yet again, its close relationships with Middle East nations that simply do not allow women to participate in swimming, let alone sports such as water polo, in any meaningful way, the presence of a 10-year-old in Kazan this year part of a sickening parade of sugar-coated political correctness.

Senator Moran asks Hershman what would have to change structurally at U.S Soccer to avoid a repeat of what Flynn had described as the way the domestic federation finds itself operating at international level.

It is, says Hershman, necessary to “understand the nature of the beast.” FIFA is, he added “not an international federation; it is not an NOG, it is not a corporation; it doesn’t follow any guidelines or standards. What exemplifies FIFA is a small clique of very powerful individuals whose self-dealing was kept very secret at the top level of the organisation.

From an hour and 15 minutes into the tape, well worth listening to the rest of Hershman’s description of how Blatter and a few others ran

FIFA.

To Jennings, Senator Moran asks what needs to happen at FIFA.

“FIFA’s got to be dissolved. They don’t want reform. We use terms like reform, they go ‘boring,’” says Jennings raising his hand to a yawning mouth. “To them everything’s fine; a few get arrested....” He notes how the mafia operated on for years even when its leaders were picked off by the authorities.

Jennings proceeds to take a sledgehammer to Flynn’s notion of reform at CONCACAF.

U.S. Soccer had been “cowardly”, says Jennings. A delegate from St Kitts, a titchy island dwarfed by many of its neighbours, had had “the guts” to stand up and says that Warner had been stealing money, says Jennings. Warner and Blazer turned their poison upon him and he “just survived... but he had the courage to do it but where was America?”

Stop the Tape: Some in and close to USA Swimming were “disappointed” by this analysis from yesterday. Well, sorry about that but I stick to the view that the world No 1 swim team’s federation is not showing enough courage, is not exercising the power it can most certainly wield and carry the day with when it comes to setting a course that many others would be keen to follow if they could get a sense of an escape route from the current malaise at the heart of FINA.

Senator Moran returns to Flynn: did his belief that to oppose Blatter for presidency of FIFA was to risk success of a USA bid to host the 2026 World Cup stack up to confirmation that he must have known that something was not right at the heart of top-table governance?

“It reflects a management style and that was what I was trying to impart. Blatter wields a lot of influence in the organisation....,” says Flynn – and that would cause U.S. Soccer difficulties comes the 2026 vote.

Senator Blumenthal turns to Jennings. Had big sponsors “been enablers.”

“Inadequate,” replies the journalist to the term “enablers” before stating: “They’ve had terrible attacks of blindness ... when the rest of the world has been listing corruption at FIFA and CONCACAF, I mean documented, the sponsors



have said ‘well, we only sponsor the World Cup, not FIFA’; well, isn’t that brave of them.”

Stop the Tape: Swimming sponsors have privately complained for many years about the way they have to deal with FINA and of late they have complained about an adherence to the same championship models wherever swimming is held, be that eight days, five days, two days: same old, same old. There are practices at the heart of FINA that sponsors and partners are deeply unhappy with ... and yet, search the worldwide media database of newspapers, broadcasters, online portals and more and if you can find a truly harsh word of criticism of FINA in the public domain or any suggestion that money is being pulled because the sport’s leaders are getting it wrong, I’ll take on Sarah Sjöström over 50m butterfly in a red Jaked from 2009 if anyone can lay their hands on one. The reason may well be obvious: it is the swimmers that the sponsors have a relationship with and wish to support alongside their businesses, FINA an inconvenience. But as the senator asked: just how effective is silence (and even quiet whispers behind closed doors) if genuine change is what you want?

Jennings urges that sponsors withdraw their money until reforms are in place and new body with a new culture is in place.

Should the soccer nations have known about the human trafficking and rights issues related to Qatar – and should they have done something about it, asks Senator Blumenthal.

Yes, says Jennings, while Bery, of Amnesty, says:

“There’s definitely been a startling lack of attention by many parties involved ... It’s time for the sponsors of the sport and the contractors and the businesses involved with the World Cup as well as the host Government itself, Qatar, to start taking action and doing something about this labour rights crisis.”

Hershman notes that sponsors spend millions on protecting their brands through adopting best-practice standards. So what does it say about them if they sign up in partnership with the likes of FIFA.

Is FIFA salvageable, Senator Blumenthal asks Jennings. “Salvageable? No, not at all. Corruption is so heavily embedded that if you cut the head off the snake the rest of it would

still be wriggling about.” He then dispenses this advice:

“America has to, with its moral values, join with other nations with similar values and say to FIFA ‘you stay in Zurich, we’re outta here, we’re not going to be contaminated by sitting at your meetings with a bunch of organised crime experts; that’s what FIFA is. And it was very good to see your FBI, your department of Justice assess them like that. I’d thought that before; I’m very glad that they came aboard. You don’t go to John Gotti and say ‘Mr Gotti, there’s really too much heroine on the streets of New York, could you cut back on it a bit?’”

Is FIFA salvageable, Mr Flynn?

Different answer to that of Jennings, as you might expect. He points to CONCACAF reforms once more, the very thing Jennings has shot down in flames for the heap of nonsense he believes that is.

Senator Blumenthal presses on: had he seen tangible evidence of an attempt at reform.

Yes, but they’d come up short. He returns to the stuff holding him back: 209 nations, we work



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Central Ohio SwimAmerica, Westerville, OH

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within and try ... he sounds like a stuck record.

So Senator Blumenthal asks whether the U.S. Soccer fed will withdraw from FIFA if it fails to put in place meaningful reform.

Flynn returns to more of the same: "... opt out is very difficult and has severe ramifications...."

Stop the Tape: Flynn is struggling at this point; he cannot bring himself to a place where there would be a limit to being a part of FIFA; to a place where a new start would be best. In a swimming context this is interesting: it mirrors the stance of many inside the house of FINA but with one big difference – Flynn has been more critical of FIFA leaders in the public domain than any top official of a domestic federation close to or at the helm of international swimming governance has been of FINA.

As a fan, a public official, a parent, Senator Blumenthal says directly to Flynn:

"Sometimes inaction and silence signal complicity and there'll be a point where in effect U.S. Soccer is complicit in the ongoing lack of reform and action. You may have no direct control of it but I respectfully suggest that may be something you want to consider more seriously."

Flynn confirms that U.S. Soccer will cooperate with an inquiry that is brought to the table. The Senator rolled back: no, he was suggesting that U.S. Soccer launch an inquiry into goings on at FIFA and whether it could have performed better.

Flynn suggests that talks would have to be had with like-minded federations if that was going to get off the ground. His commitment was limited to working with other federations to seek reform at FIFA.

Spin on to 1hour 35-36 on the tape and you find Bery talking about 400 deaths on building sites in Qatar among Indians and others. No serious investigation is underway.

Jennings then returns to taking Flynn's arguments apart. American was not a nation that had to go and seek the permission of others to hold an enquiry. "Please," pleads Jennings. "I find this very dispiriting that this view of America as being gutless ... because

that is what is being suggested. Get on and do it: don't ask permission of some other countries." In other words: lead and show the way; don't move in numbers apt to hold you back in a system that can't afford to be held back any longer.

American didn't need its nuclear weapons to solve the problem, said Jennings. "You've got the sponsors, you've got the media, you've got the moral power of this huge country." Western Europe would follow in a flash, he believed. "They need leadership and they're not getting it."

Stop the Tape: The same could be said in swimming, no matter how disappointed anyone may feel about that conclusion. Courage has not been found in great enough supply so far in the swim schism at federations the world over, USA Swimming at the helm of them.

Senator Moran asks what Jennings hopes will come out of the hearing. American should hold its own inquiry and look at where the old way of doing things had led them, how and then resolve to change the model. Independent, he notes, was what an inquiry should be.

His second point was stark:

Walk away from Blatter and Co; take a new course. If the USA did not do so then they were "cowards, weak and have no perspective on the rest of the world ... and I don't think that's true of America, generally."

Herman's final testimony is of great relevance to FINA. He is talking about his time trying to persuade FIFA to reform and says this:

"We came in as a group of independent compliance and sports experts to look at the internal checks and balances of FIFA; to look at their governance and compliance procedures. We did so and made a number of recommendations, many of which were adopted by FIFA."

The Ethics Commission came into being, for example, with two co-chairs who were "independent outsiders." An independent chair of the audit group was established.

But when it came to other issues such as term limits for top officials and the president, when it came to transparency of compensation, including to this day no-one knows what

the president of FIFA is paid nor what the members of the executive committee are paid; when it came to setting up an independent, outright oversight mechanism to ensure the compliance and other issues were being observed: all turned down.

Hersham notes, importantly, that without a change of leadership and culture, even the best reform packages would not have resulted in much difference in terms of the way things were done.

Senator Blumenthal described the hearing as just one step in a larger very intensive and critical scrutiny that has to be given to the responsibility of United States Sports Organisations.

The exceptionalism of the United States was not simply its military might but its moral example, its values and its ethics, said the Senator.

"The fans here and around the world deserve better from the sports organisations that have a responsibility to oversee and organise ... corruption is not a game; it is deadly, serious, it is criminal and it betrays the trust of fans..."

"U.S Soccer had a responsibility to know; either it knew or it should have name .. the fans can judge which is worse."

The Hearing is almost done. Senator Moran's concluding comments include:

"We cannot tolerate the status quo."

He is talking about soccer. Take away the allegations of massive financial corruption and focus on the mechanisms that allowed bad practice to flourish, lack of review, lack of transparency, decisions and information often in the hands of the same few for long years, rewards to those who nod, banishment for those who don't, and you have something far too close to swimming for comfort. ■

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Coach Greene returns for his 34th year at Rockville, and was recently inducted into the Montgomery County Swim League Hall of Fame. Dave works predominately with the Rockville age group program and oversees all of the program's operations.

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So, You are Going on an **Interview** For a **NEW** Coaching Job?

By John Leonard

Jeff Haden, a contributing editor for Inc. Magazine, says the following are the key questions that those being interviewed should be ready to ask at the interview. I made a couple of notes on how each relates to our sport.

1. “What do you expect me to accomplish in the first 90 days?”

Great employees want to hit the ground running and be immediately a part of the WOW factor in a new regime. They want to make a difference, now.

2. “What are the top 3 traits you are looking for in a new coach?”

Great employees want to both fit in, and in fitting in, want to know how they can be the best performer on the staff. If the answers are way outside your wheelhouse, that's telling you something very important as well, isn't it?

3. “What really drives results in this job?”

Like in every job, there are written drivers and unwritten drivers. What are those unwritten drivers where and how real decisions are made? (Think about the hypocrisy of the college football coaching scene, where the ADs and Presidents all talk about academic integrity, but the reality is all about winning games!) What is the

real driver in this job?

4. “What are the company's highest priority goals this year, and how would I contribute?”

Great candidates don't want a job. They want an organization with goals where they matter.

5. “What are the biggest challenges facing this organization?”

Knowing what level the Board sees the challenges, issues, and problems to be at is a really clear indication of what their real aspirations are. No one needs a great employee to tackle ordinary issues.

6. “What will you do if...?”

Every organization has potentially huge issues or problems. What is the issue for the one you're interested in going to work for? What you really want to know is what action are they planning? If they're not oriented towards action, do you really want to work there?

7. “What are the limits to my authority and responsibility?”

The greatest answer I ever heard? “If you're successful, none!” ■

Good Luck! -JL



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