

## IU SWIMMING STORY



By Jared Rigdon  
IUHoosiers.com

If there's one thing that this year has taught the IU Swimming and Diving program, is that things can change quickly on the fly.

In a normal swimming meet, events are nonstop, relays are continuous and fans pack the stands. But as the calendar turned to the middle of March, everything in the world shut down. Alongside that, the IU Swimming program did as well.

During the early months, some IU athletes reverted to swimming in lakes and ponds throughout Bloomington. Others lifted and worked out in their hometowns.

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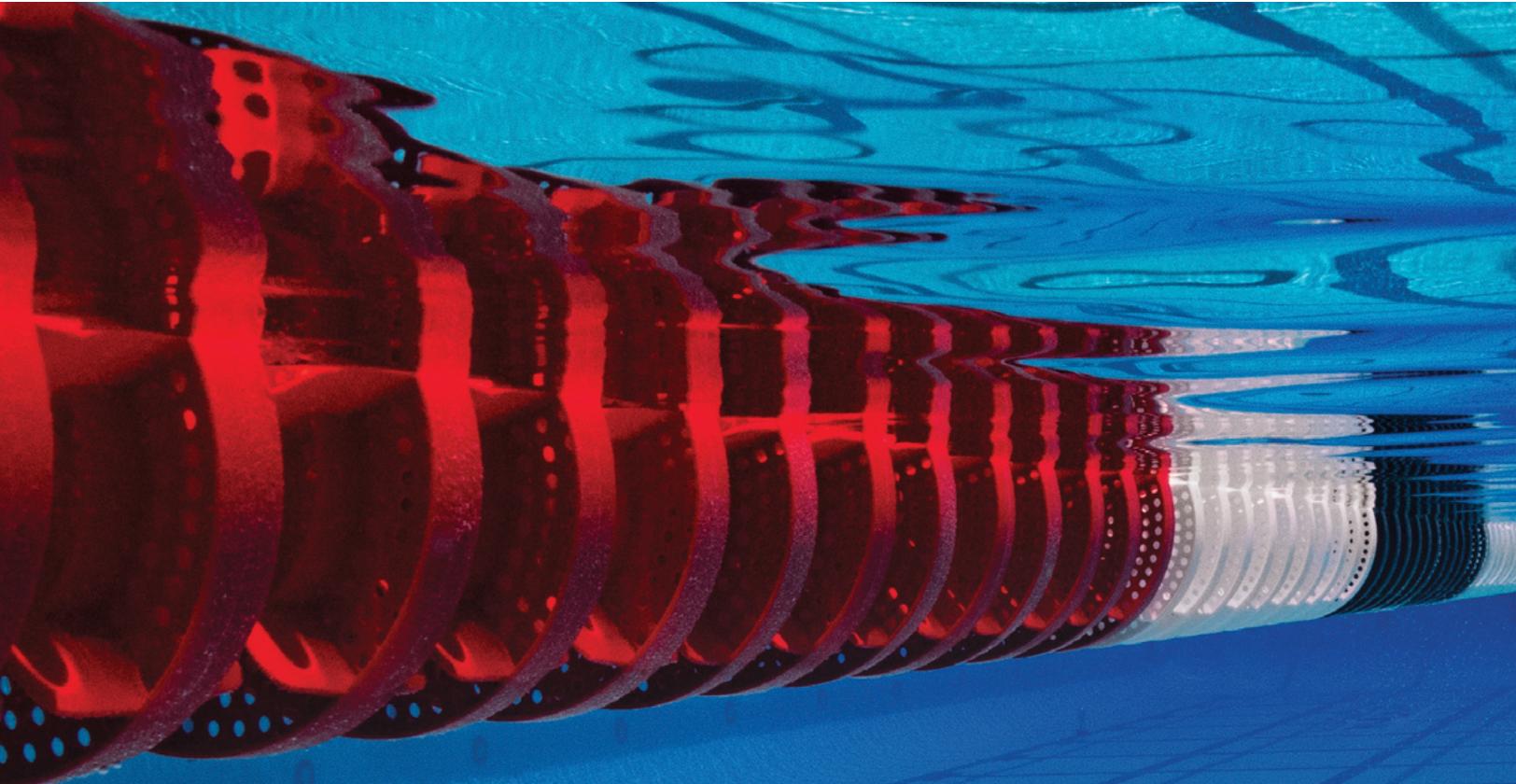
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# IU SWIMMING STORY

cont. from cover



Swimming in the lakes gave them a chance to help build strength and endurance. For the potential Olympic swimmers, they were able to get five or more long course practices which is very beneficial in the long run.

But for IU, it was important to get athletes back to Bloomington to train as a team.

The pandemic forced IU Head Coach Ray Looze to re-evaluate the way his program practiced, worked out and interacted. When practice began back up, everything looked a little different.

One of the biggest things they've had to change was the number of people that were allowed in the water at the same time.

The men's and women's programs split their practice schedule. When the men are in the pool, the women lift in the weightroom and vice versa.

Even the way they practice has had to change, but Looze feels as if it has benefited them.

"We've done a bit more of a specific type of practice called active rest," Looze said. "That's occurred during the pandemic. It's a form of race based training, instead of resting on the wall, you're resting actively in the water while moving."

Contact Tracing has been one of the true realities of the pandemic that the world is living with. Football teams have had games canceled due to not having an available amount of scholarship players. Now, programs are having to find ways to keep athletes apart for periods of time to avoid the high risk of losing them to contact tracing.

"We're trying to avoid having everyone up on the wall together," Looze said. "When your rest is more active, you have less time on the wall with everyone. It's a safer environment, less ability to contract traces with that."

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced athletes, coaches and programs to change the perspective they have on the world. Looze believes that it has made IU more grateful for their ability to meet as a program and have the chance to prepare for a potential season.

"In today's college athletics, athletes get showered with gear, food and all these benefits," Looze said. "They had none of those during the pandemic so I think they appreciated what they had greater. I certainly would love to keep that feeling of appreciation in the forefront of their minds. They're very thankful for what we do have."

In the current environment we live, everything changes rapidly. But regardless of what a spring schedule looks like, IU will be prepared for whatever life and swimming throws at them.

They hope to have some dual meets before entering a potential Championship season with the Big Ten Championship and NCAA Championships.

But for now they continue to train in the conditions they've been given. They've adapted so far and they will continue to do so.

"One of the controllables we have is the controllable and that's our preparation," Assistant Coach Emily Eaton said. "All of these changes that we've made, now our swimmers are learning those skills of adaptability."

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# Getting Back in the Pool.

**How to develop a plan so facility operators are comfortable allowing access during a pandemic.**

**by Scott Bay**

## **Have a plan that addresses health requirements.**

This is tricky as it varies from place to place but the key elements are ensuring minimum surface contact and sanitation, social distancing, staffing and schedule. These elements help facility operators see how your plan addresses safety concerns and allows for you to start the dialogue on restarting your program.

## **The Ins and Outs.**

Movement of athletes and staff when entering and exiting the facility as well as their proximity to each other and spaces where they interact are all details that need to be addressed. Below is a list of procedures that has served as a template for many facilities that have reopened.

- **Entering-** Best practice is to have scheduled times for swimmers to make 'reservations' for a lane. Reservations are at the top of the hour every hour and last 45 minutes. Entrance to the facility can be done with social distancing and mask wearing practiced while outside the facility and facility staff checking each swimmer in. They proceed directly to the assigned lane while maintaining social distance and mask on until ready to enter the water.
- **Deck and Locker Rooms-** The deck should be clear of furniture to reduce the amount of down time and swimmers congregation before or after the scheduled time. Locker room use can also be curtailed for the same reason and only used for the restroom if necessary. Swimmers need to show up ready to swim. And be ready to leave right after the workout.

- **The Workout-** 45 minutes is a short period of time but gives staff a chance to sanitize and prepare for the next group. 1 per lane has been popular along with 2 per lane at opposite ends of the pool has also been effective. As a coach, it is imperative to start right away and end on time. That extra set you don't get to is not worth jeopardizing your ability to be able to operate the program because you 'bend' the rules.
- **Exit-** Best practice here is to have a separate exit than entrance to maintain social distance with the next group and minimize common contact with surfaces prior to them being sanitized.

## **Adaptations and Recommendations.**

Obviously the physical layout of the facility will dictate many of the adaptations that will need to be made to the process. The above is just a framework for starting a dialogue. A clearly thought out plan. Facility operators are often reluctant to risk any reopening let alone allowing a program to restart so the default answer is often no. The changing dynamics of the situation in your area may require you to engage in the dialogue many times but if you take control of managing the dialogue rather than waiting for a reopening announcement. This process was used effectively in a number of facilities as early as April 1, 2020. The initial trial facility has had no cases of COVID-19 connected to it as of November 1, 2020.

November late,  
To New Year's date.  
A time to rejoice,  
For some find one's voice,  
And maybe hear God's call to exercise kind and thoughtful choice.  
A time for thanks, a season for giving,  
May old wounds heal and may we open our hearts to belief, trust and forgiving.  
Seek first to understand rather than press to be understood.  
With our neighbor, may we be all that we could.  
Break bread, listen well,  
Simple gestures can create wonder at which to marvel.  
Our look, our talk or how we roll,  
Said differences noted only reveal a glimpse of one's true soul.  
Look beyond, gaze within,  
See the common hopes and values that we share akin.  
Whatever your wish, whatever your dream,  
Together we make a fantastic team.  
Quests that matter, aims that count,  
Are rarely easy so stick together and hold each other to account.  
The path may seem dark but the light is there,  
Rise above fear, for each other choose to care.  
Tikkun Olam, repair the world,  
A message to preach, through action and word Mister Rogers did teach.  
Bridge each divide, put differences aside.  
Like Pee Wee and Jackie, stand shoulder to shoulder, strong side by side.  
Open your heart, let belief fill your shopping cart.  
Forgive, even if not forget, ever grateful for the day we first met.  
Celebrate the season,  
Cherish family and friend,  
With empathy and faith shall your prism ascend.

*Coach Allan Kopel*  
December 2020

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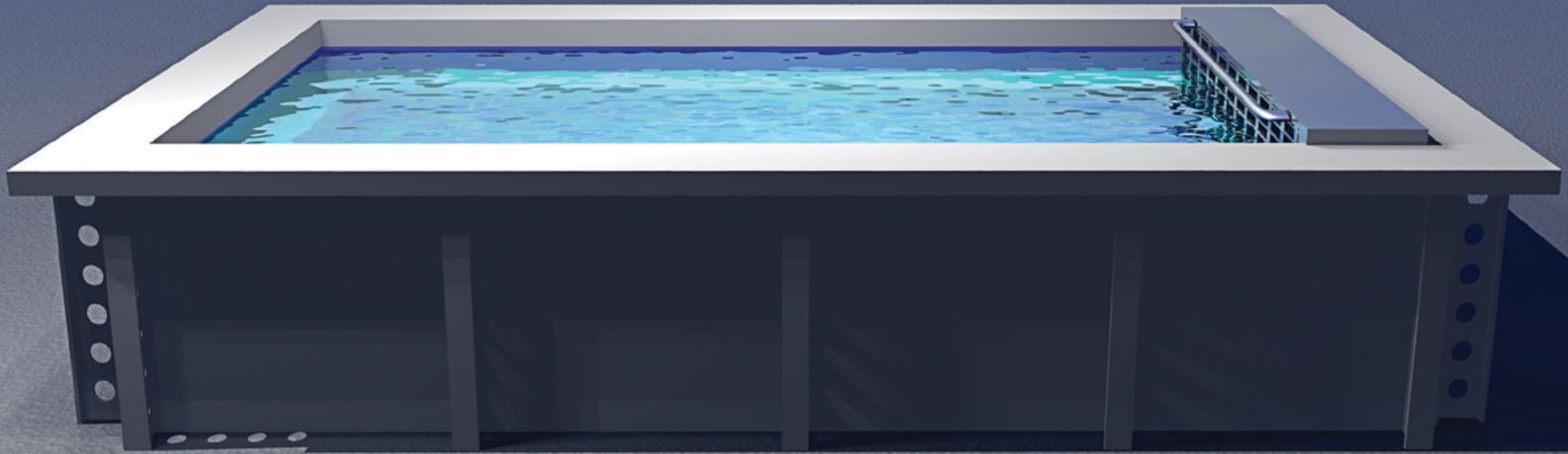
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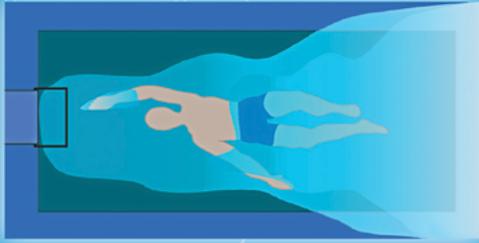
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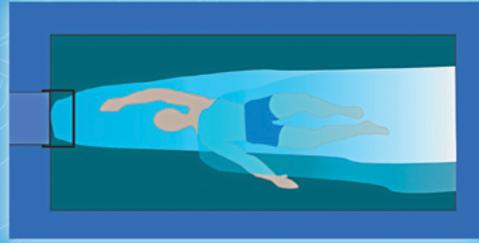
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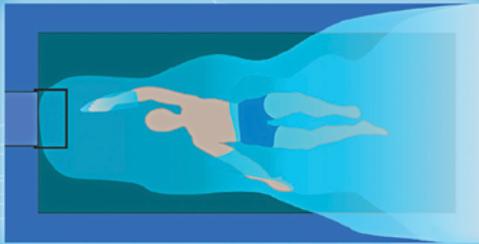
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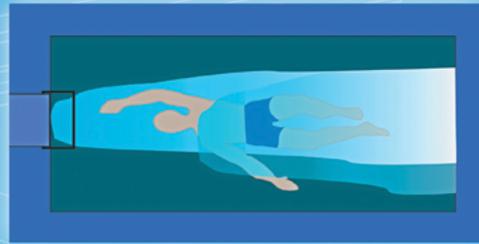
24" Walkway all around pool is standard



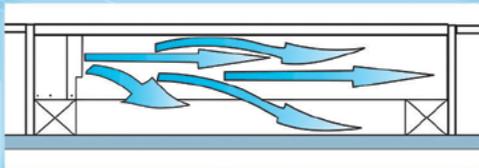
Construction does not allow for walkway unless a deck is attached off of the structure



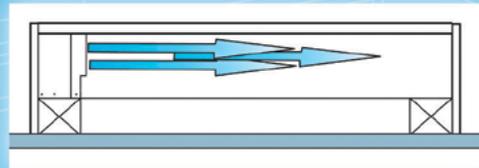
Wider current



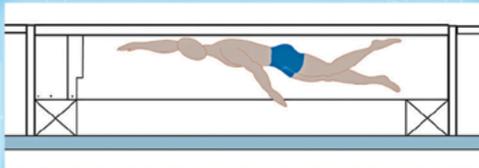
Narrow current



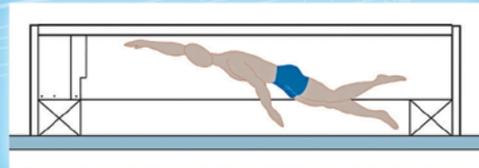
Deep Current from waterline to the bottom of the pool



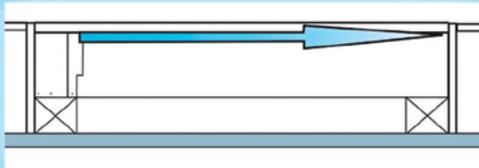
Current depth 12" from the waterline



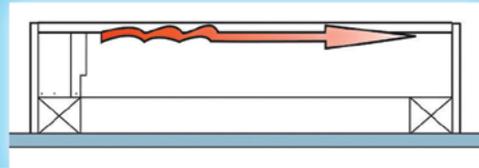
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POOL HEATER

POOL HEATER

SIDE VIEW

EXHAUST

ROOF

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# THEN AND NOW

## Over Fifty Years Coaching Swimming

by Annette Thies, NISCA Membership Chair

Three NISCA coaches with a combined 177 years of coaching experience talked with me about the many changes they've seen in gear, workouts, pools, technique, meet management and parent involvement. They have coached NCAA qualifiers, All Americans, Olympic Trials qualifiers and an Olympian. Each coach has won numerous local, district and state championships and garnered many service awards. This article highlights many of the changes they've seen.



**Dick Guyer**, Head coach since 1968 at York High School, York PA. When NFHS changed scoring it created opportunities for meets to be about the team rather than a few fast individuals. Years ago girls' suits had modesty panels across the front of their suits and boys wore their cut-offs for drag suits. Now there is a plethora of suit types from nylon mesh drag suits to the high-tech suits for competition. I've been at the same pool for fifty years and one of our biggest changes has been our starting blocks. At the beginning the blocks were wooden and moveable. Now we have mounted blocks with all the bells and whistles. I recall using buckets with varying hole sizes for resistance training. Today I have three power racks at the pool, which are far more efficient. I now also use snorkels and mirrors to work on technique. And we can't forget the impact of goggles on time spent in the water.

**Ron Snyder**, Head Coach since 1964 at Wilson High School in West Lawn, PA. I remember when strength training was discouraged because it would make the swimmer muscle bound. Now our team has three one-hour sessions that include strength training, body weight exercises and yoga. We used fins and kickboards for in-pool training. Now we use tempo trainers, specialized paddles, and myriad other devices. Prior to the 1970's there were more boys than girls on our team and now girls outnumber boys on our high school team. Years ago workouts were generalized, one size for all. Now our workouts are specialized, many days running three different workouts in a practice session. Years ago we didn't shave or taper before big meets, now we do. And, we've been through many rule changes, especially relating to breaststroke.

We didn't have water polo when I started and now our water polo team keeps the swimmers in the water in the off season.

**Terry Lowe**, Head Coach since 1967 at Greenwich High School, Greenwich, CT. Without goggles the quantity of practice time and distance that is common now would be impossible, to say nothing about consistent turns. The underwater dolphin, now considered the fifth stroke, revolutionized swimming to the point that it had to be regulated. With this came deeper starts. Twenty years ago our starting blocks were at 3 ½ feet. Our pool was refurbished, made one foot deeper and the starting blocks moved to deeper water. I've seen an increased focus on safety over the years with requirements for coaches to be lifeguard certified and an additional lifeguard on deck during practices. We used to run our meets manually using three stop watches on each lane and tabulating results by hand. The electronic timing systems and meet management software makes running a meet easier with less room for error. Parents are much more involved today, supporting the team with fund raising, team activities and conducting meets. Our water polo team is also popular with the swimmers.



**With all these changes over the years the coaches remark there are a few things that haven't changed: their love of the sport, their enthusiasm for coaching and their strong commitment to helping their swimmers be good athletes and citizens. Also the friendships with competing coaches have endured over many years. And, in Dick and Ron's case a friendship, begun years ago, that still brings them together for an annual trip every year!**



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# Simpson College, Indianola, IA

by Coach Tom Caccia, Head Swimming and Diving Coach

Simpson College is a small Liberal Arts College, located 11 miles south of Des Moines, in Indianola, IA. With a total enrollment of just under 2000 and roughly 1,360 on campus students, Simpson is considered a small college. It sits in the middle of Indianola (population 16,000) on 85 picturesque acres. It was founded in 1860 and boasts George Washington Carver as an alumnus. Women's swimming was introduced in the late 1990's and Men's followed about six years later. In 2013, Simpson entered into an agreement with the Des Moines YMCA and the home pool for the Storm is at the Indianola YMCA, a branch of the greater Des Moines system. The team is coached by Tom Caccia who took over in 2013 after 33 years of coaching Platteville/Lancaster high school in Wisconsin. Caccia is currently in his 46<sup>th</sup> year of interscholastic/intercollegiate coaching.

According to Caccia, the benefits of coaching at Simpson far outweigh the negatives. He cites the opportunity of working with a group of very talented coaches who genuinely care about each others programs as one of the highlights. "I don't have an assistant, so bouncing ideas off the other coaches in the department is an opportunity for me to learn from them. Everyone on the staff does the same and we all welcome the camaraderie."

Additionally, the small size of the campus attracts academically oriented students who can be and are involved in many activities on campus. While being involved in several activities sometimes creates scheduling problems, the opportunity to contribute to the campus community is invaluable. The Simpson Storm boasts a women's team that has qualified for the College Swim Coaches Association of America's Scholar All-America team for the past 15 semesters in a row. The men's team has qualified for the honor 11 of the past 15 semesters. Caccia commented, "Several of our kids graduate with a double major and have post graduate career employment before graduation."

One of the challenges faced by coaches at smaller schools is scheduling. Some academic departments in these settings are composed of only a small number of instructors. This results in fewer sections of certain courses being offered and less flexibility for athletes as well as the general student population, especially if these courses are part of the school's required curriculum or with the areas of their major or minor focus. Therefore, there are times where conflicts with practice times and academics arise. This will, at times, cause conflicts in practice vs academic schedules. Additionally, in Simpson's specific case, the college is scheduled from 2:30 – 4:30 in the YMCA's pool. The local high school follows Simpson's practice and the YMCA age group follows the high school. So, morning practices are scheduled, which sometimes conflict with the lifting and dryland practices. "In the eight years I've been here, I could count on one hand the number of times we've had the entire team at the same practice. It's frustrating, to be sure," said

Caccia. But, the team has still excelled, setting or resetting more than 130 school records in the past seven seasons.

As a private Division 3 school, recruiting can have its difficulties simply based on cost. Simpson is able to offer very good options as far as scholarships and that's one reason the team does its best to recruit 3.0 GPA's or better. In addition, Simpson offers geographical scholarships for students from Texas, Arizona, California, and the St. Louis Area. "We focus our recruiting to students with 3.2+ GPA's from those geographical areas. With those students, we can come close to what a state school would cost them to attend," said Caccia.

The COVID impact has been substantial, as it has will all NCAA schools. With all competition for the first semester cancelled or postponed, the Storm are holding onto hope for opportunities in the second semester, at least for an abbreviated season. Campus visits for potential recruits are behind when compared to previous years, but those are recovering. There have been travel restrictions in addition to the practice and competition ones, resulting in lost opportunities for late summer and fall. A few 2020-21 recruits elected to take a gap semester or year or to attend a local junior college rather than coming to Simpson. Understandably, the athletes and their families have decided this is the safest option, but it has hurt the continuity of new athletes entering the program as well as team building. While cases have been low overall on campus, there have been isolated spikes that have disrupted the already modified training schedule as well as efforts toward team building and relationships. Caccia and his team are committed to working through the challenges and coming out on the other side of the pandemic stronger for it.

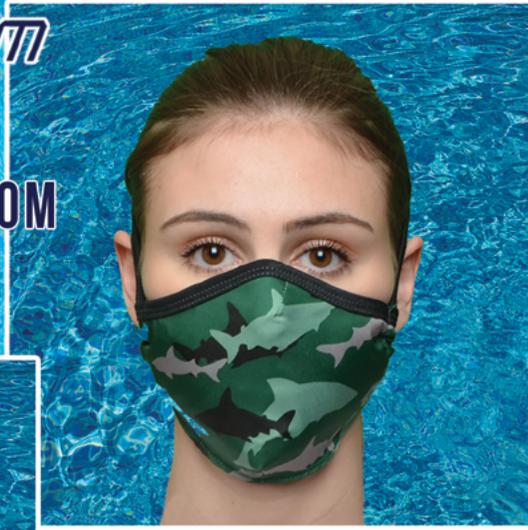
In conclusion, Caccia said, "We all want to win. We all want to coach that 'Power Team'. Unfortunately, that's not always possible. But the relationships I have with my kids are my reward. Watching them graduate and go on to productive careers is the real reward." Coaching is teaching. The small team size affords the opportunity to work individually with each of the swimmers much more than with the larger high school teams he coached. 'It's all a matter of perspective. Coaching a state champion is a lot of fun. Some of those kids achieved something they have never done before. They are elated with their accomplishment. But, coaching someone to break the minute barrier is similar in that that athlete has also accomplished something they have never done before. As a coach, you may have been able to play a part in helping that athlete reach a personal goal that they may have felt unachievable. Upon them reaching it, they are also elated. So, if I have a problem being just as happy for them as I was for the state champion, that's a problem for me, not the athlete. It's all a matter of perspective.'



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By Dr. Timothy Baghurst, PhD & Dr. Robert Pearson EdD

# Managing **Stress** and Avoiding Burnout

Have you ever felt stressed out as a coach? Ever burned out or were/are heading that way? Well, you're not alone in that respect. Stress and burnout are common in coaching, and swim coaches are no exception. Stress occurs when the demands of a job or situation exceed your perceived capabilities and the resources you feel are necessary to be successful. Repeated stress affects your physical, psychological, and sociological well-being, and eventually leads to burnout. What happens when burnout occurs? Aside from the many health consequences, you'll likely no longer be coaching, because you either quit or got fired.

Stress is different for different people. We recently studied stress in collegiate swim coaches and found that time management was the biggest stressor, and somewhat surprisingly, winning and losing was the smallest stressor. While overall stress was about the same by what collegiate division the coach was in, what coaches found stressful differed by the division they coached. Last, females reported higher levels of stress. Coaches can and will experience stress. Therefore, the question isn't how can we avoid stress, but how can it be moderated so that burnout doesn't occur. Based on our own research and the research of others in this field, we propose a few options to consider.

1. Find a Mentor. Mentors are extremely valuable in getting advice, support, and ideas from. Some programs or organizations may have a mentorship program already in place, but often, it is on you as coach to find someone. So, attend conferences, send emails, make phone calls, and connect with others in coaching. Recognize your mentor doesn't have to be a swim coach. It might help, but anyone that can be a sounding board and offer support can serve in that role.
2. Take Time for Family and Friends. With time management being one of the most stressful components of a coach's job, it is important to actively find ways and make time to spend with family. Build this into meets or practice, or simply set policies that enforce time with family and friends.
3. Exercise, Meditation, and Sleep. It's an obvious thing, but so many coaches don't take care of their personal health. Not only does physical and mental well-being help you as a coach, but it also sets the example to your athletes how important it is. Adequate sleep is perhaps the most important factor for personal health and well-being.
4. Continue Developing. The more competent a coach feels, the less stress they experience. Therefore, enroll in an educational program like a graduate certificate in athletic coaching at Florida State University, or attend clinics and training through your organization.
5. Prioritize, Set Limits, and Say No. It is easy, especially as a new coach or as an assistant coach, to feel obligated to say yes and take on too much. Therefore, practice saying no and develop a system for determining what is important and what is not. The Eisenhower Matrix is a good way to do this.
6. Have a Hobby. It's easy to get completely immersed into the sport you're coaching, but hobbies can reduce stress. Hobbies themselves can be addictive (e.g., TV shows, movies), so enjoy something that is relaxing but you can put down when necessary.
7. Find Your Own Stress Reliever. We found some other things that might alleviate stress, such as chewing gum, forced laughter, and aquariums. The important thing is to find what works for you.

## What's the conclusion?

Stress in coaching is a real and serious concern, and without a countermeasure, it can and often does lead to burnout. Therefore, make a deliberate effort to find ways to moderate it to ensure a healthier you and more successful career.



Timothy Baghurst is the Director of FSU COACH: Interdisciplinary Center for Athletic Coaching at Florida State University. He completed his doctorate at the University of Arkansas and has had over 100 peer-reviewed articles published. Coaching for Sports Performance is his most recent book. He mentors coaches and athletes privately, and is a frequent competitor in racquetball, squash 57, and pickleball.

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Robert Pearson is an ASCA certified Level 4 coach and has served as a coach at LIU-Post, and a head coach with several club and high school teams, as well as Macalester College. Currently he is the director for the STAR of the North swim program in Minnesota. He competed his doctorate at the University of Phoenix and his works can be found in peer-reviewed journals.  
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