History of Swimming: DOC COUNSILMAN

THE “X” FACTOR
Applied to US Swimming

COACHING CREATIVITY

On Harry Potter & THE HUFFLEPUFFS

PROGRAM Development

DYNAMICS OF TEAM CULTURE CHANGE
SwimErg
The ultimate swim bench for developing swim-specific power and stamina
- Improve Stroke Efficiency
- Measure Power & Performance
- Build Specific Power & Endurance

Swim Trainer
The ultimate training tool for developing swim-specific strength
- Build Swim-Specific Strength
- Develop A Perfect Pull
- Gain Powerful Starts & Turns

1 Allen Martin Drive | Essex Junction | Vermont 05452 | 800-488-VASA | info@vasatrainer.com
Legendary Coach Bill Sweetenham of Australia will be one of the headliners at the ASCA World Clinic in Cleveland, September 8th through the 13th. He’s also doing a special limited entry Seminar during his visit.

Bill is a many time World Clinic presenter and always a huge hit with immediate “take home” information.

Importantly, in this season of our discontent…

“FINA… We All Deserve Better,” Bill has written the best idea of all…an independent, outside review of FINA Finance, Governance and Operations to determine how the organization can be improved, or, if the culture is deemed irreparable, how it can best be supplanted. So far, nothing but stonewalling on the idea of an independent review…showing how totally and completely out of touch with modern governance reality they are….FINA stuck in a 19th century mode of “royalty governing the commoners.”

Thanks Bill for all you have done for decades for swimming, coaching and the sport.

All the Best,

John Leonard
ASCA Executive Director
American Swimming Magazine
Published for the American Swimming Coaches Association by the
American Swimming Coaches Council for Sport Development.

Board of Directors
PRESIDENT: Gregg Troy
VICE-PRESIDENTS: Jim Tierney, Steve Morsilli
MEMBERS: Don Heidary, Ira Klein, Matthew Kredich, Michael
Lawrence, David Marsh, Amy Montgomery, Tim Murphy, Kathleen
Klein Prindle, Bill Wadley, Chuck Warner
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Jennifer Gibson, Tim Welsh

ASCA Staff
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & EDITOR John Leonard
CLINICS & JOB SERVICES Guy Edson
INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR Duffy Dillon
SWIMAMERICA & ALTST Julie Nitti
TECHNICAL SERVICES & WSCA Matt Hooper
WEB & PUBLISHING DIRECTOR Mary Malka
CERTIFICATION Kim Witherington
MEMBERSHIP SERVICES Melanie Wigren
FINANCE Kimberly Cavo
BOOKKEEPING & SALES Lenora Hayes
GENERAL COUNSEL Richard J. Foster

The Magazine for Professional Swimming Coaches

A Publication of the American Swimming Coaches Council for Sport Development, American Swimming Magazine (ISSN: 0747-6000) is published by the American Swimming Coaches Association. Membership/subscription price is $70.00 per year (US), International $120.00. Disseminating swimming knowledge to swimming coaches since 1958. Postmaster: Send address changes to:
American Swimming Coaches Association
5101 NW 21st Avenue, Suite 530
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309
(954) 563-4930 | Toll Free: 1 (800) 356-2722 | Fax: (954) 563-9813
swimmingcoach.org | asca@swimmingcoach.org

© 2015 American Swimming Coaches Association.

FEATURES

5 COACHING CREATIVITY
By Wayne Goldsmith
2015 World Clinic Feature Speaker

6 DYNAMICS OF TEAM CULTURE CHANGE
By Paul Yetter

20 PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
By David Durden

32 ON HARRY POTTER & THE HUFFLEPUFFS
By Amanda Ellery

34 HISTORY OF SWIMMING THOUGHT: THE X FACTOR APPLIED TO US SWIMMING
By Doc Counsilman

38 THE IMPORTANCE OF TECHNIQUE FOR SWIMMERS
By John Leonard
CREATIVE COACHING:
Teaching Coaches to be Creative & Innovative

By Wayne Goldsmith

Quick. Write down your own list of the top ten skills of quality coaching. What does it look like? Something like this?
1. Communication skills;
2. Passion;
3. Empathy with athletes;
4. The ability to engage with athletes and inspire athletes to fully engage with the program;
5. Enthusiasm;
6. Technical knowledge;
7. An understanding of the relevant principles of sports science and sports medicine;
8. Energy;
9. Curiosity (which inspires a passion for learning);
10. A commitment to continuous improvement and accelerated learning.

You could add hundreds of skills to this list: experience, drive, initiative, the will to win, attention to detail, commitment, vision, determination, a strong work ethic...there are as many desirable coaching skills as there are coaches. But, in this century, there is one coaching skill to rule them all - creativity: creative coaching. The question is...can you teach coaches to be creative? The simple answer is - to quote the US President - Yes we can! We can teach coaches to be creative. It is not easy: it is much easier to teach what’s known, what’s been published, what’s been researched, or what’s been done before than it is to teach coaches how to create something new.

But, now, more than ever, creativity is a critical coaching skill and the ability to accelerate learning faster than your opposition has never been more important. In the pre-Internet days, coaches came up with new ideas, created new plays, created new training techniques and gained a winning advantage over their opposition.

Now, any winning advantage lasts about two minutes!!! You come up with a new idea, you nurture it, you grow it, you kick it around with your coaching colleagues seeking feedback and after a lot of thinking you decide to take a risk by introducing it to your athletes at training and, two minutes later, the dad of one of the athletes has taken a video of your revolutionary new idea on his Blackberry, uploaded it to YouTube and players all over the world have free and immediate access to your best and most brilliant thinking.

That’s the world we live in and the half-life of ideas is only going to get shorter as mobile technologies and social media tools become more efficient, more powerful, more accessible and cheaper.

So, the challenge for coaches seeking to gain a winning advantage is to become more creative: to create new ideas, new directions and new paths to help athletes to enhance their performance.

Winning coaching in this century means learning faster, creating faster and applying ideas faster: faster than your opposition and faster than at any time in the history of sport.

5 Golden Rules of Creative Coaching:
1. The idea must be new to your sport - it can’t just be a copy of something someone else is doing or has done. But it can be an idea you have from another sport or another field of endeavour;
2. It must work - it must improve performance;
3. It must be able to be communicated and understood by athletes who can then use the idea to accelerate their rate of their performance enhancement;
4. It must itself be flexible and also subject to change, adaptation and evolution: there is no place for static thinking in sport;
5. It must not be limited by the restrictions or boundaries of past thinking, i.e. to be truly creative the idea must not have limits imposed on it based on what has worked or not worked in the past.

The opportunity for the creative coach to be successful has never been greater. In the past, the opportunity to be a successful coach may have been limited to the coach’s access to quality information, the latest coaching resources or coach education programs.

Now, all you need is access to a laptop and an Internet connection and all that has limited you in the past is readily available.

» Want to learn drills for football? There are hundreds of free videos on YouTube on football drills.
» Want to read and listen to the views of world class coaches on success and winning? Google the name of the world’s leading coaches and see what comes up; tens of thousands of pages of information.

» Want to find out how to test aerobic capacity of athletes? Then search for “aerobic tests for athletes” on Yahoo and look at the hundreds of options you get.

Knowledge is not the limiting factor in coaching: it’s creativity. It’s being more creative than your opposition and it’s your capacity to take what’s known and, by being creative, going into the unknown.

SUMMARY:
With the plethora of information available through the Internet and the capacity for coaches (and athletes and parents of athletes) to get any information they need anywhere, anytime, knowledge is no longer the “power” of coaching:

Whereas ten years ago, the core skills of coaching were knowledge based - e.g. technical knowledge, sports science knowledge, planning and periodization knowledge, now with powerful portable computers, Smart-phones and other electronic devices so widely available, you can pretty much assume that everyone knows what you know. There are no “secret sets”, no “magic gym sessions” - everyone knows what you know;

So given that everyone has access to the same knowledge base - as a coach how can you win?

» By learning faster and accelerating your rate of learning;
» By creating new, effective, innovative ways of doing what you do;
» By creating an effective learning environment where your athletes can learn faster than their opposition;
» By not limiting your sources of creativity, inspiration and ideas to sources within your own sport;
» By rejecting TTWWDIH (that’s the way we do it here) thinking and anything that limits open thinking, creativity and innovation - accept no limits to your learning and no cage for your creativity;

Creativity as a core coaching skill has never been more important: take a risk, be innovative and change your sport with creative coaching.
DYNAMICS of Culture Change

By Paul Yetter, T2 Aquatics

Introduction, by Jennifer Gibson:
Good afternoon. If we could take our seats, we will get started. My name is Jennifer Gibson and I am on the ASCA Board. I am very, very fortunate to get to introduce our next speaker. This is Coach Paul Yetter. I am sure for many of you, he is a familiar face; others, if not, he is a good one to get to know. He is a very, very dynamic coach. I have been fortunate to have been on a few trips with him. Many of us would remember, if you hear that name, where he was for 8 or 9 years: he was at North Baltimore Aquatic Club where he coached the quite-accomplished swimmer Katie Hoff. We all followed him there, as far as how she progressed. From North Baltimore, he was an assistant at Auburn for two years. And during those times, he has been a 7-time USA National Team coach. Then in 2011, Paul took another big move: he moved to Naples, Florida—kind of traditionally known as a retirement area. Well, he started a new team, and can personally say I have been there. It is T2 Aquatics; I really believe it is a program that we are going to hear a lot about. A pretty phenomenal location and set-up that he has, and that he is growing there and developing. So, Coach Paul Yetter.

Yetter: Thanks everybody. Great to be here; great to see everybody here. We are going to talk about culture; we are going to talk about progressing and changing culture. Trying to get it to the point we want to get it to, so we can get our athletes to swim fast and to get our programs to be the type of programs that have some longevity and some consistent success.

I thought we would first just define culture, so we know what we are dealing with. There is a ton of definitions for culture, so I just picked this one: the behaviors and beliefs characteristic to a particular group. So that is the definition we are going to go with today. Culture really though is the personality of your organization. So if I had to give my definition, I would just say it is your organization’s personality.

So this picture shows some of our athletes leading into the 2012 Olympic Trials. We had all women at that particular trials, and they were just kind of... they kind of rolled like the picture you see. You know, they were tough and tough-minded, and that was our personality. That was kind of the start of T2 Aquatics’ culture-building process.

So I kind of ask myself the question before taking some time to figure out what to talk about today, and I wanted to figure out what you guys wanted to hear. I figure there is probably 10% of the people in this room that are interested in starting a new culture; maybe you have got a new job or you are starting a new team. I think 20% of the people are trying to kind of change their culture a little bit. But pretty much everybody is trying to take the culture that they have and progress that culture. Even if you are just starting a culture, you start the culture and then the next day you are progressing the culture, anyways. So it is all about culture progression. It is... we are going to talk more about that,
than starting a culture.

So we have given the definition of culture—and that is kind of my little preview. We are going to talk a little bit about my background, and why that matters for this talk. We are going to talk about just, kind of, some nitty-gritty about culture, kind of as a term and as a word. We are going to talk about your organization’s culture and mission and vision, and what we are all about, what your organization’s all about. Then... (and I have highlighted this on the screen, here, because this is really what I hope you guys can take home with you today) we are going to talk about practical tips to convey your team’s culture to your staff and to your parents. Because that is a huge key. We are also going to have some specific tips that are going to help you do some things on the deck every day that helps you solidify your culture and progress your culture.

So my background, as an athlete. 1982, I started swimming; I was 6. And it goes all the way through my time with North Baltimore Aquatic Club. So, I have had a lot of great coaches and I have been part of a lot of programs; but my cultural background starts with a program that has produced Olympians. And not only Olympians, but 15-year-old Olympians. So, when I was growing up and I was a 15-year-old swimming, my good friend who was a 15-year-old, Anita Nall, made the Olympic team and won some medals. So, my background as an athlete has really helped me as a coach, in terms of knowing what a good culture looks like, what a culture that values hard work and values high performance looks like. I was able to kind of, even as a younger person—I guess, sort of—just know what it is to be part of that sort of culture.

Then I coached at a high school called Verona Aquatic Club. And many of you have never heard of this; it is in Wisconsin. Neil Walker swam for this team. And for those that do not know Neil Walker, he is a US Olympian and a former University of Texas athlete. So when I came into this particular situation, they already had some culture. They had some things that they had going for them that were habitual for their team. I was a new coach, coming into something now which was a different culture than I was used to.

My next step was Bel Air Aquatic Club, which is in Maryland. It was not a brand-new team, but for a lack of a better way to explain it, it was more of a country-club feel. It was in an athletic club and I pretty much was starting a culture with that particular club. After I coached there, I spent a year with Bob Bowman at the North Baltimore Aquatic Club, and I watched Michael Phelps train every day. That was my most... that was my best experience as a coach to kind of figure out what culture is all about, and how to build culture and how to get people to basically do things that they did not want to do—or they did not think that they wanted to do.

I went from there to a satellite team at North Baltimore, which was a team that was pretty new. It was a satellite that was about nine months old, when I took it over. So there was a sense of... it was a North Baltimore Aquatic Club satellite, so it had a name, but it was a brand-new team. And, in fact, a lot of the Bel Air Aquatic Club kids eventually were at that particular site.

Then I became the lead coach for the high performance team at North Baltimore. So I really got to be the person on the pool deck at the main side at NBAC, which was probably my second best experience up-till now, in terms of just seeing the pictures on the wall of the athletes that have made the Olympic team and that sort of thing. That was a big thing for me.

Then I went to Auburn, and spent a year there. Auburn has a terrific culture. For those that were in the talk previous to mine, you can kind of tell Auburn has a great history of success. They have had a bunch of Olympians, and I think it was 14-straight SEC championships on the men’s side. Then, my next step was to start a team, essentially—not totally but essentially—from scratch.

So the reason that this slide is up here and the reason that all of the stuff is important is because I have gone from, you know, coaching a dozen athletes at the national championships to having nobody at Juniors. I did snap that very quickly. I realized the types of things that I needed to do to really start that culture. And at that time, I realized how easy it was to be part of a team with tradition and with culture.

I remember being in Baltimore and having coaches call me on the phone, or I would talk to coaches at meets, and they would say things like, you know, I just can’t get my athletes to do x, y, z things. And my thought process was like, I don’t really have that problem. I kind of knew that I did not have that problem because my team, that I was coaching for, had been in existence since 1968 and had put many people on Olympic teams—and that sort of thing. These kids just wanted to go through-the-wall for anybody; it did not matter if it was me or anyone that was on our staff.

So, for me, I kind of liken-it to flying a kite, and it is a lot easier when the kite is already in the air. For those of you that have flown a kite, you have got to get that thing together, you have got to wait for the wind to be right, you have got to make sure nobody else is around that you are not going to hit in the head; and then you can fly it. It is a lot different than if somebody is just standing there with kite in the air, and you go and you grab it. So I have kind of found that I have got to fly the kite with my new team.

So why does culture matter? What is it that makes culture something that is a subject of discussion? Culture defines right and wrong. It gives us, as a staff and as a team, a sense of what is the right thing, what is the wrong thing. So if you are in a position where you are like what do I do, your culture and the things that you hold dearly to your team, that determines what it is that you are going to do and how you are going to act.

It determines how people approach work. You know, early on I had an athlete here at T2 Aquatics who was a really-talented athlete. This athlete was basically at the swim meets going-over to her mother and crying and kind of hiding with her mom, while she got worse and worse throughout this particular meet. And, I think it was my buddy Dave Gibson who was sitting right there, I said, “Dave, she is driving...
Culture determines how well an organization adapts to change. Your team’s culture defines how you are actually going to deal.

Culture determines how well an organization adapts to change; your team’s culture defines how you are actually going to deal. Culture determines how well an organization adapts to change. So if your pool shuts down, or something like that, and you have got to deal with it, your team’s culture defines how you are actually going to deal with that. And culture encourages or discourages outsiders from claiming a stake in your organization. So if you are trying to raise some money and build a new pool, then your culture better be defined as something that the public can sort of grasp onto and understanding and get on board with.

So why might my culture change be necessary? There is a lot of reasons why it might be necessary; I am going to pick two. One is for the long-term and the short-term stability and success of your organization. This is our pool that we use at T2 Aquatics. (This picture was actually taken a few years ago.) You can see that there is a lot of space there and a lot of land there. There is a lot of money going down the drain, if that pool sits there. So we have got to figure-out a way to make it work.

If you have got a pool like this, and all you have got is a swim team that has got a 120 kids and a lesson program that goes for an hour-and-a-half every day, good luck; you are not going to do it. So you have got to figure-out a way to make your facility work for you. Sure it is great to have a 9-lane, 50-meter pool—I would much rather have that than the other way around. But there are some challenges that go-along with having a huge facility; you need to make some money. In order to make some money, you have got to have a lot of things going on and then you have got to have a lot of staff. To have a lot of staff, you have got to do the leg-work on that and make sure you are hiring the right people.

I do not know if you guys have heard about CVS; CVS has stopped selling cigarettes. Their culture has decided, as an organization, they need to make an organizational change; they need to take a different stance. So that is another reason why you might want to have an organizational cultural change: if you are going to make some sort of a big change with the direction that you are going and with your company, your organization or your swimming team.

So what is needed to succeed? What is needed to succeed is a staff that is going to do stuff that is outside of their job description. I know at NBAC, everybody at NBAC did manual labor—everybody. The types of things that I did just for our pools and for our facility, tipping over, so he redid them and he made them thicker. We did not hire anybody to do that. You know, we needed things paved in our pool, we got the Boy Scouts to do it. Boy Scouts made our benches for our locker room.

So we have sort of gotten our staff and people that are maybe not our staff but people that are kind of on the outskirts of our team to really make things happen. So a lot of things that I wrote there, but the I can do that attitude is the real key for your staff. Saves you money; it also gives people a sense of belonging and a sense of this is my team. If you can get a staff that is thinking I’m part of this team, I’m not just a person that comes in there for an hour-and-a-half every day, that is pretty powerful stuff.

So what are the challenges that we face when we are talking about building a culture? Leaders not being aligned; so coaches not having the same goals. Leaders and the membership—for the coaches and parents, coaches and swimmers—not having the same goals.

Some of the roadblocks that we run into. I think that we have to consult with organizations that are doing really well. I think one of the roadblocks is we just do not consult: we do not pick-up the phone or talk to people about what they need to do better. I have got the Spurs up there—I know there are probably some Spurs fans in here. But if you are a basketball team and you are not looking at what the San Antonio Spurs are doing, you are looking at the wrong thing. You can think about every sport, and think about teams that are really doing it right: you have got to copy. Steal; it is okay to copy and steal. In fact, if you are not doing it, you are way behind.

Everything that I have learned from coaching is about copying other people and stealing stuff. Then once you copy and steal, then you can sort of have your own ideas pop-up within that thing that you have stolen. So you might steal a set from somebody else, and then you might say, Well, actually, I could probably do it a little bit differently; I’ll do it this way. So you have stolen some...
things, but then you have enhanced it.

Okay, let us get into the nitty-gritty; we are going to get further and further into things that you guys are going to be able to take home with you today. They are really going to help you.

So you have got to assess your organization’s culture. I would like to assert that if you are not taking a snapshot of where your culture is today, you are missing out on being real with yourself and being honest with yourself. A lot of times I think we think about what is going to happen next year or what our culture was last year; that is wrong. You are not being honest with yourself; it is not right. You culture is today; what it is right now, today. While you are sitting here in this room and you have got assisting coaches that are running the workouts: that is your culture.

Both your parents and your staff are dealing with their own stuff. They are dealing with anxiety.

Another thing that I think you have got to be really concerned with is setting your culture up for further success. You have to ask yourself in terms of performance—this is not in terms of business, this is just in terms of performance—are you ready, as an organization and as a team, to have the next, future world-record holder walk-in your door tomorrow? On your team. What would happened if somebody that was really-good walked into your door? Would you know what to do? Would you have the resources to figure out what to do if you did not know what to do? Would have the eye to figure out that: yeah, we do have that person?

I went through that in my coaching career. When I was at the North Baltimore satellite team I had a couple of pretty good athletes, but I did not have...well, I had one athlete that had a National cut. The year of 2003 we went to Nationals and she was DFL dead last and that was my best swimmer. I knew that at that time, right during that summer, I knew that I was going to get an athlete, Katie Hoff, that was going to move to Maryland. I am going to tell you a little bit about that four-month process that I went through internally and mentally to get ready for her.

I knew that... just after meeting her one time, I knew that the type of environment that I had at my satellite team in my little 6-lane pool that we rented four lanes of; I knew that we were going to have to change some things. We had months, weeks, to take care of that change, so when this athlete came to our team, she was ready to continue to progress.

So in May of 2003, I got a phone call from the Hoff family; they said: We are moving to the Baltimore area and we’re looking around. Maybe we want to come to your team and come to your site. That was May. In June, they came and visited the team, and did a workout. I got to really see, at that point, what I was dealing with. Then in July, Katie got 4th, I think, in the 200 IM at Nationals, and I am watching while my kid gets DFL. I am like, man, you know; like this is easily my best kid that gets DFL.

Then I have got some other kids, they try hard, all this stuff; they are not bad kids. But they are not people who are going to go to Nationals and be really thinking about going fast there. So in August, we had to be ready.

So there was a number of things that we did. I knew Katie’s weakness was kicking, so we kicked more. I got them really ready to kick, because I knew that when she was going to come into the team, we were going to kick a lot because it equalized everybody. I did not have this one kid that was swimming way out front of everybody else; so the kicking equalized everybody. That was kind of a strategic plan for me; a major strategic plan for me was to get this kid kicking better. Not only that, but to get her with the group, so that she did not stick-out so much. She was already going to stick out a lot; I was already going to have a deal with that. So I tried to figure out ways to kind of get everybody to be a little bit more the same.

I was a little harder on the kids, a little tougher; I was a little bit more of a jerk. Because I knew that I did not want to just start being a jerk when Katie got there, and start really like making people do stuff a little bit better. So four months in advance, I changed a little bit; I probably changed a little bit each month. By the time she got there, you know, I probably changed more-so then than any other time. But we were a little bit more ready, and the kids were a little bit more ready, to deal with me as a coach.

This is the great picture that was taken in 2004 (and I guess we cannot really see it that well). Do you see that person right there? That person right there is Katie. This was about 9:05. You can see Coach Jon Urbanchek over there—hey Jon. (Where are you Jon? Can see him over there in the corner.) And it was really interesting because nobody was in at nine o’clock—except for the guys; Jon had his guys in. (Good job, Jon.) But the girls were not in. It was 9:05; they were going to do kind of a loosey-goosey warm-up, you know. She was in that pool, ready to go. They were people who were kind of putting on their caps, and that kind of thing. Those people actually swam pretty well at the Olympics; Katie did not.

But when you are 15, if you are not like that, what are you going to be like? You know, are going to be late to practice? So I think it is better to be over-prepared, rather than under-prepared, in terms of your cultural readiness to be part of a great team and great organization like the USA Swimming team.

Alright, let us get into some practical tips. The first part of this practical-tip section of this talk is going to be: how to deal with your parents and your staff. Both your parents and your staff are dealing with their own stuff. They are dealing with anxiety. The parents are dealing with a lot of anxiety; I know you guys see that. They do not know if what they are doing is right, and they pretty much think that what they are doing might be right or might be wrong—they are not sure. They have a lot of anxiety. And as a coach, it is your job to help them shift through that and just take the weight a little bit. A lot of the
Your Meet has Met its Match

It’s time to relax and enjoy those summer swim meets in Less Time, with Less Paper and Fewer Volunteers!

RECOMMENDED BY: Brendan Hansen - 6 Time Olympic Medalist

Call us toll-free (855)-210-2736 Today!
Protect Your Swimmers

Insist that Your Facility Tests with taylor

Better chemistries
Better product selection
Better technical support
Better customer service

Proud Sponsor of ASCA and SwimAmerica

800-TEST KIT (837-8548)  www.taylorttechnologies.com
contact us for the names of distributors near you
times our squeakiest wheels, from the parents side of things, are the people that internally are the most anxious and less-sure about their kids and their family and what they are all about. So, to me, there is two ways you can do it: you can be defensive about it and come at things from a defensive standpoint, or you can sort of recognize what they are dealing with and work with them on it.

So I would like to assert that when it comes time to really establishing a culture and progressing a culture forward, it is not things that you are adding that makes the culture work. It is not things that you are adding that makes your culture better than it was yesterday. It is the things that you are taking away. It is the thing that you are pulling away, from the normal, anxious way that we all tend to live.

So what are some of those things? You have got to take away the negative stuff; you have got to take away the negative body language and the negative talk that is happening in your pool, on your pool deck, among your parents. Some of the ways that you take away the negative stuff is by talking to people individually, instead of talking to them as a group.

(I was going to touch on this a little bit later on, but I will touch on it now.) If you are coaching athletes, and you give them a bunch of static on the deck about how they are performing in the pool or what their attitudes like, and you are talking to twenty kids. What do you think is going to happen after you give them a bunch of stuff, when they go in a locker room? All they are going to do is talk about you. And about how they are going in a locker room? All they are going to give them a bunch of stuff, when they think a great way to build culture is to talk to people individually and to get them to understand what they need to do individually. I do not care if you have got to take a person aside every day; you know, pull him out of the warm-up or talk to him before practice or whatever. But if you talk to him individually, they are not going to go into locker room and talk badly about what you said. In fact, they will probably talk positively about what you said, if someone were to ask them about what you were talking about—especially if you do it in the right way. But you have all been there; we have all been there. You send everybody home with, you know, yelling at them, and then that is all they do is talk about it. Then you have got to deal with it the next day and you have got to deal with their parents.

Sticking to the fundamentals tends to simplify things. It is a great way to defend your position as a coach, particularly to the parents in your organization. You know, if you are working on stroke technique, or even if you are not but you say you are and you convince the kids you are kind of working on something that is stroke-technique based—particularly if you are new to a team—the kids are going to talk about it and the parents are going to hear it. I do not care if it is ten minutes out of every day that you are working on streamlining and putting your fingertips in first. If it is just ten minutes every day, you have got something that you can kind of defend to people when people start to question you.

This is important with building culture, because it really helps you as a coach not go on the defensive. So you have got to kind of preempt: you have to have a preemptive attitude. You have to understand what the parents are eventually going to complain about, and make sure that you are covering your basis with that.

I picked this slide for a reason. I think a lot of people think—and this is just sort of an aside—but, you know, a lot of people think Michael Phelps is pretty talented. He has done some great things. I am here to tell you, after watching Coach Bob Bowman with him for a full-year, every day, that this picture that you see, those eyes that you see, on Michael right there, that is the eyes of learning. And Bob's eyes are the eyes of a teacher, and Michael is taking that teaching from him. It is a very intense picture, isn't it? It has got to be... well it says "Duel in the Pool" on Bob shirt, I am going to say it is probably 2001 Duel in the Pool.

So another way to reduce your parents' anxiety levels is to take care of meet entries. I know there are probably a lot of teams that do this already. But if you are doing it, and you have got your parents signing-up for their kids events, that is going to create anxiety for them, eventually. It might not at first—they are going to love it at first—but it is eventually going to create anxiety for them. So things like meet entries, automatic payment for their bills; little things like that you can create, that takes the stress off the parents.

The parents that we have at T2, they love it. They did not like it at first; they did not like it at first because they did not have any control. But once they realized that they did not want the control, then they loved it.

You have got to smooth-out some misconceptions about Swimming in general, as a leader of your team. You have to do that as a leader of any organization: smooth out the misconceptions. I do it by blogging. I have not been really doing it that much recently, but, you know, when I first started with T2 Aquatics, I started to blog. I just put everything I thought on this blog, because I figured I did not want to have a parent meeting every week or every month. I just email it out to them, communicate with them that way. I think that if you do that, you can really put yourself out there, concretely: this is what we believe as an organization, as a team. And either they like it and they stay, or they do not like it and they go; but you have kind of got it out there.

Some of the myth-bursting that you can do; for me this is through blogging, for you it might be having a parent meeting. You might talk about like, you know, there are some teams that are known as a spirit team, or a distance team; you have got to bust those myths. What do you want? You want to coach a team that is really good at like four different events or two different events? Who wants to do that?

One of the things that... before I started coaching with North Baltimore, that I learned from the head coach there, Murray Stephens, was that a lot of people, when they do not have long
course training time, they go to the pool that is 30 or 40 minutes away that has long course on Sunday or Saturday afternoon to get the long course in. Who needs it? All you are doing is teaching the parents that they can drive 30 or 40 minutes down-the-road to the next team, because they have to have long course. There are little things like that, that I think, you know, when you think in these terms, you tend to have a more solid organization and a culture.

So the parent involvement. Here is just basically a list of things that you can do. You guys all know the stuff, I am sure. But you have got to wait a little while, if you are starting a new team. You know, you will pick the wrong parents if you, you know, get there for a week and you say I want you in the office and you are doing the car-pooling. You will pick the wrong parents; so give it a little bit of time. Figure out who is really on your side, and who is just trying to endear themselves to you for the benefit of their kids and for the benefit of how they look to all the other parents.

Dryland work for athletes is highlighted because we have got one guy, one of our parents, who does dryland with some of our kids. He is a PE (physical education) teacher; he is somebody who has been around forever and we know him. So we put him in charge, and he does basically the basic-PE dryland with our kids that are 9-12 years-old. We give him a little tuition help. So we make it work for him; he makes it work for us.

We have got parents in the office. Not a lot of parents: we have actually got one main parent in the office, and then a couple after meets that help with ribbons and that kind of thing. So we have used our parents, but you have got to be careful who you use.

Convince people to create their own culture. Sort of like, you are creating your own culture. You know, like the culture of the ASCA conference is created by all of us together, right now. So what you are doing in the pool is... you are creating your culture. So how you think plus how you behave equals your culture.

I think it is really helpful to have a mission statement and a vision statement. (I am not going to read this; you guys can read this.) But our vision statement is really key: excellence is a habit of champions, therefore we will rehearse excellence every day. So the mission and the vision lets us harken back to things that we know really matters when we are dealing with a challenge situation with parents or kids. You know, kids are not working hard or they want to take a day off or whatever, because of whatever reason that you do not think is a good reason, well, that is not part of our vision, so you are not allowed to do that. Or you are at least going to be told that you are not supposed to do that. It just gives you something to kind of go back on.

So along with the mission and the vision, we like to, or I like to, come up with stories or things that I like to say, that are kind of like things that I say as their coach, that they can really hold on to. One of the things that we say is: you want to shoot for the stars that you cannot see. To me... and I will explain to you what I mean by this. To me this particular way of thinking is a way of thinking that is hard to do, yet easy to understand. I think that if people think this way, it is going to guide them, it is pointing to, the culture that we are trying to create. This is going to guide them into being part of the culture we want to have at T2 Aquatics.

So shoot for the stars you can’t see that is based on the fact that when you look outside at night and you see the stars, you can see a lot of stars. But you cannot see... you see less than 1% of the stars that are actually out there. Those are not all the stars. So when it comes time to figure out goals, when it comes time to figuring out what you want to do as an athlete or as an organization, our philosophy is: we want to shoot for the stars that you can’t see. We know that they are up there; we know that there are things that are out there that are just beyond our grasp, and possibly just beyond our emotional and mental ability to grasp. But if we just stay on the same path, eventually we might be able to start to grasp this stuff.

I will go back to another story about Katie Hoff. In 2003, right after those months that I put up on slide a couple of minutes ago, she confided in me that she had made the National Junior Team—confided in me because I had no idea. This was before you could just get online; I mean you could get online, but it was like it took you five minutes to get the thing to do the little sound. (You guys remember that, like the little phone sound?) So finding out who was on the National Junior Team was a little bit tougher at that point in time.

She said, “I’m on the Junior Team.” I said, great, because she had made the Junior team with Typhoon Aquatics, not with our team. So, great, have fun. She said, “I don’t want to go.” Okay... you do not want to go. She said, “In October, I’ve got to this camp; I’m going to miss a week of training.” She understands that a week of training at the camp is not the same as a week of training in our pool. Then, “I’ve got to go to the meet in January, and I’m going to miss training.” She is 14 at that point in time; just turned 14, 14 and five months. I said, Okay, if you really want to do that, that’s cool.

She said, “You know what? I’m going to choose what’s behind door number two.” Door number two... you guys have seen Let’s Make a Deal, I am sure. She wanted to choose what was behind door number two. For those who have not seen that game show, you have got like a nice kitchen set behind door number one, with a nice dish washer and that kind of thing. You can take that as your prize, or you can choose what is behind door number two, which might be a brand new car or there might be a bunch of sheep. You get to choose which one it is. She said, “I want to choose what’s behind door number two.” I said, “Okay, that’s cool. Let’s choose what’s behind door number two.”

She recognized that she had to shot to make the Olympic team. She just thought, she kind of added it up in her head; you know, I’m going to miss the training, I don’t really want to hang out with the Junior team, I’m ready to make the Olympic team. I want to be part of the Olympic team. So she saw the stars. She saw that which I could not... well, I mean, I kind of thought that she could make the Olympic team too, but I was not really... we were not really talking about. But she saw the things that not
many people could see, and that a lot of people in her position would never look for it. So maybe the real key there is to actually look.

Alright. So I am going to go through a couple of practical tips that you can use every day, and this is going to conclude this discussion for the day—the next couple of slides. These are the things that I think you are going to be able to leave this pool, or leave this facility, and go to your other facility, where you all really live, and really make something happen in terms of solidifying your culture, progressing your culture.

Culture is defined by your actions. As a culture, you have got a value hard work; you have got to value grinding. I think that if you are going to start a culture, or try to really do a crazy vast big change, even if you are going to do a lot of sprint work, you better not say that we’re a sprint team and we’re going to do sprinting only. You cannot build a culture off of that, in my opinion. I think that you can swim really-fast off of sprint training. (I know that I am throwing-out some words that mean a lot of things, but I think everybody knows what I mean.) But if you are going to have a culture that is going to last longer than you, it has got to be based off of hard work.

This slide was taken probably in 2012. (I know you cannot see it that well). If you look at these athletes here, they are ready to puke in the gutter; I mean, they are all just absolutely fatigued. I took the picture because they were like that for like the last ten minutes of this set that we were doing; and I said: “I’ve got to take the picture of this. This is awesome.” Just watching people sweating; just watching it happen. The little kids come in; little kids are to the left of this picture, watching it happen.

At NBAC, we had the Senior training group trained from 3:45 to 6:00, and the Introduction group trained at 6:00. And every day Michael Phelps would get out of that pool, and 6-year-old kids would get in it. They knew that becoming somebody great was... they were going to be able to do that. All they had to do is just stay in that lane, keep coming back to practice.

At NBAC, we had pictures of Olympians—I say we: it is still... it is kind of habit for me. There are pictures of Olympians on the wall, of the main facility there. There was one particular moment that was amazing. My brother Tom was coaching these kids. There was kind of bulkhead in the middle of the pool and the picture were like right there. These kids were staring at these pictures. The pictures were all about as big as these screens—maybe a little bit bigger. It was probably right after 2004, when we added a picture... we actually added two pictures—because if you are making Olympic team twice, you get another picture.

This particular kid looked at my brother and she said, “Tom, why are the pictures going in that direction? We’re clearly going to run out of room.” She was 11, and she knew it was possible. She not only knew it was possible, it was expected—absolutely expected. How powerful was that for your kids? How powerful is that? I would say it is everything; or pretty-darn close to everything. If you had a little pie chart, it would be a lot of that and a little bit of all the other stuff.

I think you have got to praise and value attitude over statistics. I think this is a huge point—this is a big point. When your athletes swim well in practice, let’s say they go 30x100 and they hold under a minute. The first time they have ever done that and you are really excited about that performance that they did in practice. After practice, what do you say? You might say nothing, which is fine. But you might say something like: Great job on those thirty 100s! I’m really proud of you; you held under a minute for the first time ever. You might say that. But you might say: I really like how you got yourself to practice 30 minutes early, you did the dryland that you’re supposed to do to warm-up, you focused-on your warm-up and you had pretty-good set. It is two totally different things to say to the athlete.

In the first thing, the athlete cannot really repeat. I mean, they can try to repeat 30x100 under a minute, but they cannot really access that directly. But what they can access directly is the second option. As a coach, you are talking about how great they did on the dryland, how they prepared, about how their attitude was good. Those are things that they can sort of reproduce. They might not exactly reproduce it, but they are going to reproduce it someway. Then the result perhaps is reproduced, or you will get a better result.

I think too often we as coaches get so excited about the result, and, frankly, I think we tend to think more about ourselves than the athletes. We think about how: okay, we have been training well-enough where now they are ready to do this great thing. So you give yourself a pat on the back. And because you are so busy giving yourself a pat on the back, you just spit something out at the athlete to bring the athlete into that nice energy that you are creating within yourself. But it is not effective: it not effective long-term and it is not effective even short-term—the next day it is gone.

Effect change on an individual basis. This is what I talked about earlier; I am not going to delve too much, too far into it. But you have got to talk to athletes individually; particular when you are being critical. When you are being positive or you are giving them some kind of a motivation, you just have to understand that it is much more of a direct effect for you as a coach talk to them individually. That is a direct communication. It is not direct communication to talk to a group. I cannot communicate directly with this particular group, unless I am communicating with the group. I cannot talk to Steve, directly, right now. So there is a big difference between the communication style. I think it is really important.

You have to understand that there are learning differences. This goes into building and progressing culture, because if you as a coach are not an educator and you are not understanding educational principles, you are going to have to be on the defensive all the time with parents and with swimmers. So you have to understand basic educational principles, like how people learn. You have to actually make things happen that help people learn kinesthetically or through audio or visual means. I know my college roommate, who was a
swimmer, he told me that he could not do breaststroke pull-out until his coach brought him out of the pool and moved his hands into a certain direction. Then he could do it; he said it was like that.

Find ways to coach everybody well. I think this helps you with your culture. How often do we just sort of like go through a whole week and we recognize and we realize: man that kid that’s going forth in the lane, I haven’t even talked to that kid for two days. You know? They all go to the meets. So you go to the meet, and your five kids that lead the lanes are doing awesome and you have got this great communication with them. Because, let’s face it, you do 30x100 on 1:30 and they are going 59, you get 31 seconds, and then you have got 15 seconds with the kid going 1:15; do the math on thirty rounds of that.

You cannot do it any other way than to get with those kids, that are the weaker kids, during the warm-ups, get with those kids during the warm-downs, or during the transitions that are between the main sets. It might be just a minute of talking about what you think they should hold on the next set. You know, you are doing 30x100 and... (Everybody is going to go home and do 30x100 tomorrow, I’m sure.) You do 30x100 and I want you to hold 1:12. Last time you did 1:15s. That is all you got to do. Then through the rest of that set, when you have only got that 18 seconds, you have kind of effected some change before the thing has started.

What do you say really matters. I have two post-graduates in this picture for a reason. You know, I have been in a lot of conversations fairly recently with post-graduates who were in their 20s or 30s—or in their 40s, actually—who have told me stories about a conversation that they had with their coach, or their parent or a teacher, when they were 11-years-old or when they were 15, that they still remember. They still break-down emotionally when they think about it.

So some of the things that I have noticed that come-along with that description of the conversation are the words never and the words always. You’ll never be a good breaststroker. You always stop too short on the wall; you’ve got to finish to the wall. These are generalizations; are they really true? No, they are not really true. They are generalizations: there is no generalization that is ever really true. So you have got to stay away from being general.

You have got to watch out for limiting language. So like, if you have... I mean, I have seen athletes who are in their 20s, 30s and 40s, and I have thought to myself: there is no way that they are going to be able to do what they say that they are trying to do. I just do not say anything; I just shut up. Because you are going to think all these things. So you just have to back-off and understand that, much like with culture day and you just... you do some stuff that is kind of dumb—for me. You say something to an athlete that you regret, or maybe fly-off the handle verbally to your group. We have all done that; like, you know, go crazy, throw stuff and you leave. Then you go home and you are like blowing out air. Right? How many people have done that? I mean, a lot of people have that, right?

So you go home and you are like: Well, what the heck did I do? Like I shouldn’t have done that. I should have just... can I just re-visit time and go back. No, you cannot. So what ends up happening is, I think that we approach the pool deck the next day with the little bit of trepidation. I think that if you have any kind of conscience, you are going to walk on the pool that can be like: Man, I feel like normal, like good; maybe I shouldn’t kind of like let that out, I still kind of be a little pissed off. You know, I still got to be little mad at this group, because they cannot see me go from being totally nuts to Alright, we’re ready to go here, nice and calm. You know, you kind of think like oh, man, I kind of feel like I am doing this too much.

So what you say matters means: hold your tongue. Do not put yourself in the position where the next day you have got to apologize to people. That takes a lot of work, and it probably takes a couple of apologies. But if you are going to coach for even one more year, that is going to make things a lot better for you.

Culture comes down to you, and how you are. And how you are on the deck, and what you are thinking, and what you are all about. So you have got to take care of your parents, you have got to take care of your kids, but you can take care of yourself as a coach. I really believe that watching what you say, making sure that if you have got something to say to somebody that is kind of a real-critical thing, that you handle it in a way that you do not have to come back the next day and be apologetic about it.

If you get in that situation where you
have to, then you have only one choice. That is to coach your butt off that next day and forget it happened—that is the only choice that you have. I do not think that coaches make that choice, generally speaking, anyways—I am sure people do. But, generally speaking, I think that coaches need a day or two to get back to that spot. You should not need a day or two; you should just go immediately back to that spot: this is who you are and this is what you are about.

I have got Aristotle up there. He says: happiness depends upon ourselves. That is one of his many quotes. So I am going to leave you with that; thank you for your time.

I will take any questions. Yes?

Audience: You talked a lot about teams that have a history of culture and were able to keep that culture integrity even with new swimmers. Our swim team is unique: we coach on a military post where they are only there for ten months. So we have new swimmers every ten months, and about 10% of our swimmers stay the same. So how do we hold that integrity, that culture, and get our new swimmers incorporated to buy into our culture when we only have...?

Yetter: Right. Did you guys hear the question? You have got basically a group of people that are standards on the team, and people coming in and coming out.

I think you have got to talk to those 10% of the people individually; I think that is the real key. You get with their parents and you get with them, and you teach them about the team and the process that your team is going through. Why they have to maybe behave a little bit differently than the other people; why they are a little bit further-along than any other people. But the individual communication, I think, is the real key for that.

Audience: You talked earlier about releasing responsibility from the parents so that their anxiety goes down. We current have a system where we do meet entries for the parents, but we still have parents emailing, fighting, right to like to the day of the meet. No, we don’t want to do this event, my child wants to do this... We have been doing this for years now, and there is no going back.

Yetter: It is such a huge challenge, and you say you have been doing it for two years. I will assert that, you know, culture, we talk about... you guys have heard that it takes... people say it takes a certain amount of time to start a culture. It takes a year to start a culture, or it takes two years to start a culture. I think it takes a certain amount of time to really begin to start a culture. So the first year or two, I think, is really like the preview of what the culture is going to be. So you are still dealing with people, who, they are not going to be on your team... a lot of them might not be on you team in a year or two—maybe if they are older kids—and they are going to be gone anyways.

So what I would do is I would have meetings with the parents as groups of parents, not as the whole... if you have a parent meeting, do not have a whole team together. Have the introduction group and the younger kids separate from the seniors. And do not worry too much about the seniors, and give-and-take a little bit: you want to swim the 100 fly every meet, fine swim 100 fly; it’s your best event, go ahead. But with the younger kids you can kind of explain to the parents what you are trying to do. You cannot talk about why oh, we’re going to just let them go, but at the same time you can effect change by going not individually, but individually in the sense of their group is different than the whole, big group.

Audience: At NBAC, you talked about the culture, when Michael would get out and the young kids would get in. As far as starting yours at T2, how did you manage the day-to-day culture of attitude at practice, like for the young kids obviously making it a little more fun and having to stick around, to the older kids, where they have to be a little more serious? How did you turn that dial depending on what group it is or...?

Yetter: We were fortunate in the sense that there was an existing satellite team that was there. But in terms of our numbers that we have right now and the numbers that were there then, they are night and day. So we had a huge influx of swimmers my first year at T2 Aquatics, and they were all... like we were seriously pulling people off the street to just fill our pool. So we did not really encounter so much resistance with that, because we were teaching everybody straight from the ground up. And much like my last comment to the last question, we sort of dealt with it individually in small groups, more so than anything else.

One of the things we did is we took our seniors and we split them. I just said these 15 seniors will be part of a top group, and then these 30 seniors and then these 20 seniors are going to be our next two groups. So we took the seniors and we just divided them up. We did not divide it perfectly. We got a couple of those people that are really hard-core in the one group, and then the next year we sort of pulled some other people in who could really be part of it. But we purposefully made that group pretty small, so we could then pull people in to it and really fill it. (I do not know if that answers your question.)

It was a tougher situation for us than it was at NBAC, because at NBAC everybody got into the same pool—for the most part. Here it is the same pool, but it is a 9-lane, long course pool, 23 short lanes. It is really difficult to get the little guys to be like right there. One thing we do is we have the older kids, the kids who are swimming the fastest and tend to be the more dedicated kids, swimming right at the front of the entrance. Like, right, when everybody is walking-in for the swim school and for the younger kids practice, they see people just grinding. So that is one of the things that we have done kind of on purpose.

Another reason we do that is we take the heat off the Age Group coaches. They go all the way to the other end of the pool. We have signs; parents cannot go past the signs. So we take the heat off the Age Group coaches: they are not to deal with parents sitting there, watching the practice the whole time. So that helps too.

Anybody else? Great, thanks very much.
Dive Stand

- CPSC Certified
- Custom-Built to Any Size or Shape
- Resilient
- Impact Absorbing
- Watertight
- Textured Slip-Resistance
- UV Stabilized

“Deal with Swim Suits, Not with Lawsuits.”

Poolside PVC Storage Benches

- Padded Bench Opens for Easy Storage of Pool Supplies or Equipment
- Racing Lane Line Storage
- UV Stabilized
- Low Maintenance
- Durable
- Made to Fit

PVC Pool Gutters

DuraTech PVC gutters by RenoSys are the perfect solution for indoor pools in need of a cost effective alternative to stainless steel. A seamless DuraTech PVC Gutter can be installed independently or it may be combined with a RenoSys PVC Pool Shell interior and RecDeck PVC Decking to give the entire project the low maintenance durability of pool formulated PVC.

Our PVC Gutters come in a wide range of styles designed to fit your project requirements.

- No Grounding Required
- Seamless Construction
- Lower Installation Costs
- Resilient At Impact
- 10 Year Warranty

©2015 ARS, Inc.
Pools Built Right From The Start.

WITH THE SUPERIOR STAINLESS/PVC TECHNOLOGY OF FUTURAPOOL™

Made in the USA

- Wave Capturing Gutter Technology
- 12 Ga. 304-L Stainless Steel Walls
- Engineered as a Freestanding Arena Event Pool Original
- Patented SS Uni- Brace Support System
- Longest Lasting PVC Interior
- Integrated Proven Technology
- Short Course or Long Course Available
- Engineered to Support a Moving Bulkhead
- Designed to Accommodate all Timing Pad Systems
- FINA and All Code Compliant
- Available in a Variety of Perimeter Finish Options
- Choice of Textured or Smooth Walls
- Integral Pool Timing and Media Chase
- Monolithic Racing Starting Block Frame Assembly
- Comprehensive Design Assistance to Your Community, Your Architect or Your Engineer
- EnduroPool Grade PVC- The Most Chlorine and UV-Resistant Interior Possible
- All Compression Fittings Flush-Mounted
- No Unsightly Bolted Seams, No Caulked Seam Gaps
- Cove Base and Synthetic Under Pad System
- Integral Gutter or Upflow System
- Weir System Option Eliminating Surge Tanks
- 25 Yr. Structural and 25 Yr. Interior Surface Warranty

FUTURAPOOL by RenoSys®

2825 E. 55th Place | Indianapolis, IN 46220 | 800.783.7005 | www.futurapool.com | futura@renosys.com

©2015 RenoSys Corp. FuturaPool is manufactured in Indiana, USA from virtually all American materials. RenoSys is proud to be a privately held family owned business. We Built It. Est 1988.
**PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

By David Durden, ASCA 2014 World Clinic Yearbook

**Introduction by Joel Shinofield:**
I have the distinct pleasure of introducing our next speaker, Dave Durden from the University of California. Dave has had a really tremendous career. Starting off in the college ranks, at least, at Auburn as an assistant, moving on to Maryland as the head coach; and now the men’s head coach at Cal, where his teams have won three of the last five NCAA titles, including this year’s championship where he was also named the CSCAA NCAA Division I Men’s Coach of the Year. Following up that tremendous success, could take a break, I suppose, after NCAA’s or you could just keep it rolling. This Summer I would say he kept it rolling quite well with Ryan Murphy, Nathan Adrian, Anthony Ervin, Jacob Pebley and Tom Shields all making the U.S. Pan Pac team. And Josh Prenot, excuse me—see, a lot of success, sometimes you forget some names. Led those athletes to tremendous success at both Summer Nationals, Pan Pac, and those athletes have also earned spots on the U.S. Worlds team for next Summer.

I did a little bit longer introduction, but I think you all have a pretty good idea of what Dave is capable of and what he has done. What he has done with his program at Cal to put them in a position to be this successful. We are going to hear a little bit more about that now, so Dave...

**Durden:** Thank you, Joel. It is a pleasure to be talking about my program; I am fortunate to be standing up here talking about my program. There are a lot of people that have gone into the success of this particular program, of our program, where it is at right now, and that list would be way to long just to name.

I thought Dave’s Krotiak talk on Kevin Cordes was awesome. It was great just to get a little insight into one of our best breaststrokes; so, Dave, thank you for sharing that knowledge.

The great thing about the CSCAA track is that you can get a little-more specific into my program from a collegiate sense. In previous talks that I have given, I have always tried to relate it back maybe to a club environment or relate it back to an individual athlete, or relate it back to a stroke. This, now, I can just kind of delve into something that I have been working on for fourteen years in my career, in kind of the college environment, so this is really cool.

To give a little bit of a background, and kind of what I am going to work through with this talk, is really: what I learned through my first five years in college coaching at Auburn under David Marsh, a lot of the mistakes that I made in my next two years as a head coach, and then finally just the implementation of that over the last seven years at Cal. So this is kind of fourteen years that I am trying to condense into one hour. There are a lot of things that I am going miss, and there is a lot that goes into this. But I do want to acknowledge that I have made way more mistakes than I have had successes, and through those mistakes, I have learned a lot.

I have also benefited... and actually I will save that—just for a second here. One
of the things that I learned from David, and guys that have had the opportunity to work for David Marsh either at a university level or at a club level, he is always surrounding himself with a great staff; and I learned that very early on. Even now at SwimMAC—I know Bob Groseth was in here earlier. But, you know, bringing back just a fantastic coach, a great mind, into his program is really kind of one of the many positive factors that David brings to the table in a collegiate environment. And I took that with me from my five years of being at Auburn. I worked with not only David, but Ralph Crotzer, Kim Brackin, Bill Pilczuk; just to name a few that were there during my five years. Those coaches were just phenomenal in their craft.

The attention to detail, the planning...I really made an investment in meeting as many professors as I could around campus, because I wanted to learn a lot more about Cal versus just trying to fix, or trying to make, Cal Swimming better. That took place, that was kind of right up my alley. My background educationally was in electrical engineering, so I am very much of a... I like to plan things out, I like to see things in its totality. David did a really, really good job, and the staff at Auburn did a really, really good job when I was there at just how to work through that.

Recruiting; just an emphasis on that. I started out club coaching, and so I really did not know the recruiting aspect of things. So to come in and learn that particular craft was very, very helpful. And then finally, the idea of creating fans of the program. It is not a very swimming-rich environment in Auburn, Alabama, in the sense that you are not not surrounded by, you know, a ton of club programs, kids growing up in the sport, access to water, et cetera—much of the benefits that I have now at Cal. Just his ability to create a fan base in that environment was something that I took away in my five years there.

Finally, I took a lot of those things with me to Maryland, for two years as a head a coach. And just a handful of my mistakes—you know, I cannot talk about them all, it would be too long of a talk. Trying to go into a different environment and making them Auburn swimmers; not learning the tradition of the program, the history of the program. Trying to delve-in and just get immediately immersed into the swimming aspect of things. And trying to fix... what I had in my mind, trying to fix the program and not getting around the campus. That that also created isolation away from the athletic department. Where my office was in Maryland was at the pool, which was away from the athletic program, and so I did not have a lot of interaction with coaches. It is something that I benefit from now. I certainly benefited from that going through that experience at Maryland—just said hey I was not going to do that again.

So as I transitioned from Maryland to Cal, I really had fresh on my mind a lot of the mistakes that I made. And it was through those mistakes that I was able very, very quickly to say okay these are the things that I am not going to do in my first six months, first year, while I’m at Cal. So I listened to our seniors. I wanted to just fully understand what their program looked like, what they wanted to do, what they wanted to accomplish; I was just very patient in listening to them. Rather than talking to them about what I wanted in a particular program or what I wanted for this program or what I wanted for our program, I stepped back and I just listened to where they wanted to go. I listened to Nort Thornton, and I do that every day. I even listen to his jokes, which I cannot repeat here. And those that know Nort, that may be on his email list, that may be on his joke list, you would not want me to repeat those jokes. But, you know, here is a coach that has built this program over the last 38 years, and so every day I listen to Nort. I think that is one of the things that I have really grown to appreciate more and more; I think it is when you are around a great individual, when you are around a great coach, when you around a great person, you start to appreciate them that much more. And there is not a day that goes by where Nort is not in the office; that I at least walk-away with a tidbit on what we should be doing with our program.

I really made an investment in meeting as many professors as I could around campus, because I wanted to learn a lot more about Cal versus just trying to fix, or trying to make, Cal Swimming better. I wanted to have the whole experience. So I had to really get outside of my comfort zone. I am kind of a little-bit introverted by nature. It is a little bit outside of my comfort zone to kind of go around and meet with professors, but it was something that I felt was really important to our success as a program.

Then finally I just did a lot of engagement with the athletic administration, trying to get a feel for where they wanted the program to be, etc. I remember in my talks with Sandy Barbra—who is now the athletic director at Penn State—I did not necessarily lay-out the challenge, but I did ask her as I started at Cal, at 31 years of age, it was like: hey, I’m going to need some help with this. I’m going to need some help from you in guiding me as a 31-year-old head coach through this program. And we really worked on that, and how to handle that and how to make that transition very seamless. The things that I have been implementing over the last seven years...
that I learned at Auburn is, you know, that idea of having a great staff. You know, hire/retain great staff. We had a strength coach in Nick Folker, who still works with a small piece of our program. I hired Greg Meehan, who is now the women’s head coach at Stanford. Now having Yuri Suguiyama as my assistant coach. One of the things that I always try to do in going through that hiring that process is to hire someone better than me. And I was able to do that with Greg, and I was able to do that with Yuri. And I firmly believe that Yuri is one of the best coaches that I have ever been around. He has a level of humility about himself, about his accomplishments as a coach; it has challenged me as a coach to become better. You know, like Rick DeMont talking about expanding my game: I try to do that through hiring great staff, I try to do that through hiring great people. I try to expand my game in that regard.

The attention to detail and planning: daily/monthly/seasonal/quadrennial planning. I work with Yuri and our strength coach, Joel Smith, in really establishing. What we are doing for the day, how it is going to affect the week, where we are within the month, and how that is going to affect our goals for the year. Then always keeping an eye on where we are within the quadrennial.

Then finally just kind of refocus some of the recruiting efforts at Cal. And then really starting to engage the alumni and parent group of our program, start to create more fans. My first year NCAA championships at Cal, I think we may have had about 20 parents/alumni/fans in our cheering section; I think this past year at NCAA we had close to 100, 120, with about 14 of those guys wearing full-on bear suits. That has been a process, to grow that; and I am going to spend a little more time talking about that.

So just kind of taking those two stints that I had, both at Auburn and Maryland, just trying to blend it into what we have been doing for the last seven years at Cal, how we have been implementing that. I would say these are probably the six main points. We all know there is probably a lot more to it, but these were the six points that I came-up with in the last, probably, two weeks that I wanted to spend some time talking about.

1. Our program is senior driven. That is, I am guessing or assuming, that a lot of college programs are in that mode.

2. I am going to talk a little bit about how we mine our resources.

3. Our alumni support.

4. One of the things that I talk to our guys about in terms of their success—their success in the pool, their success in the classroom—is about stacking the odds in their favor. I never feel like as coach that our staff, our program, is the reason for their success; I never feel like it is what we are doing is helping them go faster. All I feel like I am doing is a facilitator in trying to put the odds in their favor to have a great performance, put the odds in their favor to have success. That is something that we talk about continually.

5. The training aspects.

6. And then kind of stepping-back: how we... what we do when we step-back each season and look at our program.

Senior Driven

So some of the examples that we have in terms of letting our seniors drive our program. We started-out, or at least when I first got to Cal, we started-out with some team rules and responsibilities as very hefty document; it was about four pages, five pages. My next year, it got condescend to about two pages; my third year, got condescend to a page. And now we are at a point in our program where just lives and breathes; we do not have to write it down. Our guys understand what their responsibilities are, what our guidelines are, what our rules are, in our program. It does not need to be something that is written down; it is lived out day-in and day-out.

I always sit down with our guides, our seniors, and just kind of have them answer the simple question of: what do you guys want to do? You know, like how do you guys want to handle this, what are your goals for the year. I let them run with that. You know, it is not about me and what I want to do. It usually... the conversation turns-back to hey what do you think or where do you think we can go with this. But I always want that to start from them. I want them to feel that they have kind of created this idea of hey this is where we want to go with the group, and then I am just supportive of that.

We have a structured study program; again, that is senior driven. They are responsible for our academic success. We usually have a couple of our guys that are in charge of that, from everything from study hall hours to professors’ office hours to our tutoring structure.

We have a senior-freshman dinner.

Travel, or university event itineraries. If we have an event that we are required to be at with our program, I put our seniors in-charge of just kind of handling that. I try not to handle some of the logistics of—some of the bigger travel, yes, but—some of the simple things. I want them to think through what they are doing each step of the way. Certainly for travel in the Fall. I want them to think about: when do we need to be on the bus, when do we need to eat, when do we need to get to the hotel, where should we eat. I want a level of investment in it, rather than just giving them a sheet of paper and this is like hey, this is what I’m going to follow, this is what I’m going to do. I want them to move through that process of thinking about what a meet... what preparation looks like; so that is a good way to help them do that.

Finally, they kind of handle our team videos.

In short, we have a responsibility for each one of our seniors. We try and find a role for each of our seniors. We do not try to fit it, like okay, we established this in 2010, so we need someone to come in and fill that role. That last piece there, team videos, that was something that we created this past year. We had a swimmer who is pretty unique. Dave Krotiak kind of talked about it, when you have some unique athletes, and Rick
DeMont talked about it. When you have some unique athletes, you have to do some unique things with them.

We had a swimmer that was just kind of an underwater swimmer. He was 19.2 in the 50, 45 in the fly, 45 in the back; and he did not like to train a heck of a whole lot. Loved racing, but did not like to train. So in the springtime, his deal, one of his things that he would always talk about: I need more rest, I need more rest, I need more rest. I was like: no problem. So on, you know, Monday, Wednesday Friday in the afternoon, he would only do about half the workout and then I would stick an underwater video camera in his hand and say “Hey, can you do me a big favor? Can you get a lot of videos of some different guys? I want to see...” this on this guy, this on this guy.

He loved it. For him, he thought he was getting out of a little bit of a workout; for me, I was having him do something that was going to help our team. And then two, he was doing a lot of breath-control work with that, and that was something that he was good at, was underwater kicking. And so it was like: we are going to need him to stay underwater for a lot, and he had to stay underwater a lot to do a lot of our videos. So we found a role for him, and said okay, hey, you’re going to do this. We do not have anybody that fits that mold this year, but for last year, it was a great thing for our program.

Mining Resources
Talking about mining some resource. Everyone has unique resources, just based-on their campus community, based on their environment. You know, we have a great partner in Arena that we utilize for all of our suits, apparel—this is my shameless plug for our sponsor. I have been an Arena coach for... now coming-up on five years. When we started with them in 2009/2010, that was where we really kind of turned the corner with our success. The thing I like about in working with Arena is that they are always thinking and that they are always engaging me in that process. You know, Joel mentioned that we have been fortunate enough to win three national titles; well, we have done that in three different pieces of Arena technology. And so that is kind of cool thing that we are with a company that is forward-thinking in that regard, in that you know over the last four years that we have had three different pieces of technology help us win a national title.

We find out get-stuff-done people and we take care of them. I think everyone has people that—my wife would use a different word on that middle-S word. But we have our get-stuff-done people and we really look to take care of them in a couple of different ways. We will do a luncheon or a happy hour with them in the Fall and the Spring, give them stuff we all get and make sure that they are outfitted and feeling good about our program. That helps those folks work that much harder for us, it helps those folks feel a part of our success, and again it gets back to that idea of creating fans for our program. We want to make sure that they are involved with what we are doing as much as we are on the pool deck. It does not... success just does not happen on the pool deck; it happens from having a community around you that is helping you get there and we want to make sure that we are taking care of the folks that are taking care of us.

We worked with a couple of different massage schools on externship program. We are in a unique area of California in Berkeley, where there is a lot of massage schools, there is a lot of acupuncture programs; there is just a lot of access to different recovery modalities. And we have taken advantage of that. We work with a couple of different massage schools in having externs: basically therapists that need to get hours in their schooling. They come-in and work with our guys twice a week; so we can have anywhere from 4-6 tables set-up for two hours, twice a week, and we can run all of our guys through having that recovery modality.

It has been very helpful for us. We have that session led by our team massage therapists, so he can watch the 4, 5, 6, 10 therapist that are in there making sure that our guys are being taken care of in the right way. But it is nice to help with the recovery aspect for our guys, and to know that hey, each week I’m going get myself worked on.

It is a great way for us to do some preventative rehab, as well; just to see if there are any issues that are coming up. If we see, you know, a tightness or if we are seeing something in a particular area that all of our guys are having, that there is some consistency to it, we can work backwards through our strength coach to see if there is any anything that we need to change and adapt. Or even from a water perspective that we need to change and adapt, to help relieve some of that before that sort of pain becomes an actual injury.

Alumni Support
And then our alumni support. I am going to spend a little bit of time talking on this, because this takes a lot of time to bring alumni back into your program and to help them feel a part of it. There is a couple of the crazy guys in the bear suits. But how it started was pretty simple. We have an alumni that graduated in the mid-90s that owns a company called Every Man Jack—it is a men’s hair-care/grooming products. Their target age is 25-39. You find it in Target stores and Whole Foods. (I told him I would give him that plug here, so if you go into Target, go and buy Every Man Jack hair gel.)

But Ritch Viola had just sent me a care-package after my first was born, and his name was Jack, his company was named Every Man Jack. Sent us some stuff. It took a simple little thank-you card, that I sent back to him, that kind of created this monster that we have now. From there, he invited about twelve key alumni to a dinner to that I went to and it kind of got rolling from there. I mentioned that we had about 20-25 fans in 2008 at NCAAs, and now, six years later, we kind of can take up a pretty-big section at that particular meet.

Talking about where we are now with our alumni and how we have them involved. We do team dinners once a month with our alumni coming back. They usually talk about... they really have the floor to talk about whatever they want. But it has been hugely effective for this demographic of 18-
22 year-old guys, just sitting there, listening to someone that is in their in their 40s, 50s or 60s that have had success in their professional lives.

And if I were to think about it from their perspective, their life is pretty goal-oriented and pretty driven. In the pool, they know... they have their goals, where they want to go, how they want to accomplish them. In the classroom, they are taking a class and a professor lays-out a syllabus, say hey these are the papers you need to write, the tests you need take and this is how I'm going to grade this particular class.

Well in life, or in their professional life, when they turn 22 for most of these guys, as they finish their Swimming career and finish their academic experience, there is no road map for that. There is no one saying hey, come to practice at 6:00 a.m and we’re going help you do some accounting works so you can go on to work and be awesome, it does not work that way. And so we have had folks that have been very successful in their professions come back and give them their road map, their unique prospective on: this is what I did to get to this position. And whether that is a CEO of a company, or a partner in a law firm, or an MD, it gives our guys great perspective on what they are doing right now and how that is going to translate to their life 10, 15, 20 years down the road.

We typically do a Fall function as well with our alumni, bringing them back. We stay away from alumni meets, because most of our guys do not want to get on their Speedo anymore—and I can understand that. But we try and bring them back in the Fall and then, of course, in the Spring we kind of create a VIP experience. We keep them engaged with our program just through an email video series that we do once a month. And not really getting things that you can find very generally through... you know, our guys are versed enough with what is going on with our meets and times and such. We are just trying to give them a little-bit of insight into what we are doing with our program. So we can really do that video specifically for them and talk about some unique aspects of our program.

Where we are headed with this is really trying to create a total alumni experience in that we have pretty much any guy that swim, if we can get their butts in the seats at NCAAs, then that is a huge success. But I think more than anything else, we just want them to continue to feel that their time spent in our program at Cal has helped the success of where our guys are now. And that is why we have guys in their late-60s coming in to NCAAs and watching our guys swim because they feel a part of it.

Stacking the Odds in Their Favor

I talked about this earlier, about stacking the odds in their favor. A couple of things that we really hit-on in terms of big components or big categories is nutrition. You can see in the picture, we did at cooking class with our guys. So thirty guys with big-old cutting knives in their hands is a little-bit scary, but as they went through that class, we had about four different chefs from local restaurants around, and good restaurants. Again, this gets back to the geography of where we are: we have access to a lot of great restaurants around us. And so we were able to work with a cooking school and four chefs from various restaurants to really help our guys understand that what they are putting in their body. We had a nutritionist guide the classes; about a four-hour class.

It was something that was hugely successful in practicality for our guys; most of our athletes will prepare at least three to four meals at home, if they are not in the dorms. And so just creating some knowledge about what they are doing has been tremendously successful. It has been successful for our guys, as well, in the dorms, because once they learn how to make some of the things that are they actually eating, they have a little better investment and knowledge in going to a cafeteria-style cafeteria and saying okay, I want this, this, and this. Just because they are more knowledged about food. And not somebody telling them; they actually dig their hands in and did a good job.

One quick, funny story about that. This is kind of typical when you put thirty guys in a cooking class. One of the chefs, they were braising some chicken, and one of the chefs took two of our guys and said, hey, can you cut-up some bacon? We are going you know kind of flavor this up a little bit. The problem with that is he did not supervise them. The thirty guys, or at least two of these guys, with three pounds of bacon, cut up the whole three pounds and threw
it right into the pan with one breast of chicken. Got some flavor out of that chicken. But by the time the chef had turned around, he was... I think that was the one time where he got really pissed at our guys.

We also have done a team cook book. Last year was our first iteration of it. We took just various recipes. We are fortunate enough to have someone like Natalie Coughlin in our environment, who is very much a foodie. She contributed about a dozen different recipes, very simple, for our guys to do. That is something that is on our guys’ kitchen shelves back in their apartments, if they live in the apartments.

We have taper/altitude guidelines that we give them. We go up to altitude at the end of December, first of January. There are some things that we do pre-fueling wise; there is some fueling that we do up there as well. Just to make sure that adjustment and that we are effective in our training period up there for 15 days. And then, of course, as we get more into a “taper phase” as we get closer to a meet, there are some guidelines that we follow with our guys and they are very, very good about that.

Recovery. We have a recovery room that we are implementing this year just off our pool deck, just to have very quick fuel sources. Whether it is food source or replenishment shakes/drinks, just making sure that that gets to our guys.

We work w... our guys utilize a product called Vitargo. I put it there three times because it has been very, very instrumental to our success and our recovery. And they just came out with a product that does have protein in it within the NCAA limits; they worked very careful to make sure they were hitting the ratios correctly on that. It has been the absolute best thing for our guys. It is a high caloric drink, with no sugars and just high carbs. It is exactly what our guys need, especially in recovery. Our guys even utilize that in terms of the pre-fueling for practice. It has been a life saver for us, because a lot of the sports drink, they do a great job of marketing but they are just not necessarily great for you just in terms of the sugar amount that is in it.

Vitargo has no sugars in it, and it is just its perfect for our guys.

We utilize, and one of those ideas about stacking the odds in our favor, we work with a sports psychologist named Ken Ravizza. Ken is out of Cal State Fullerton. And just kind of on an aside, kind of how I got into this or how I kind of started working with Ken. I was fascinated with men’s volleyball, specifically the Men’s Volleyball program at UC Irvine. I graduated from UC Irvine and so that was our one sport that was doing well; it had been doing well over the last decade. John Speraw was the head coach; just moved to UCLA a couple of years ago. But on his staff, on his allowed coaches, he hired a sports psychologist. So it is not a sports psychologist that is working with the team; he actually had a sports psychologist that was there at practice, there every day with them, that was one of the accountable coaches. And her name was Andrea Becker.

I called Andrea; I was like, “So hey, you know, what’s the deal?” I mean she is a female sports psychologist working with a men’s program. If you have ever been to a men’s volleyball game, it is a very testosterone-filled competition. So I was fascinated about that, and through our conversations kind of led me to Ken. I have known Ken’s name for a while: have read some literature that he has put out, listened to some things that he has online. But we brought Ken in this last year, and absolutely fantastic.

The problem with sport psychology is for every good one, there are three bad ones. So it is tough to find the right fit. And it is the right fit for your program, not necessarily because someone says it is a good sport psychologist, that you should utilize that person. But Ken was the absolute right fit for our program and just did a phenomenal job in helping our guys kind of stack the odds in their favor.

**Training Aspects**

I think our training environment also helps. We are fortunate that we can be pretty narrow in our focus, in that it is a group of guys in the collegiate season moving towards a singular collegiate goal. But also a group of guys, as we get to the summertime, moving towards a singular goal. That has been very, very helpful. I will spend just a little bit more time talking about this. (I threw this in from Mike; he will probably recognize that movement.)

In terms of training environment, environment is where we kind of preach success. We do not want that just to happen when they step on the pool deck; we want it to be in every aspect of things: classroom, sleep, nutrition, training, racing. Our guys take it maybe a little too far, in kind of the college mentality. You know, we preach success; we talk about wanting to win everything. What we mean by that is: if we go to a meet, if we spend time on a travel day where we are flying to a competition, we want to win that travel day. Meaning that we are doing everything right, in terms of getting to the bus on time, in terms of how we are fueling, if we are stretching in the airport; when we get to the airport how quickly are we out of there, how quickly are we to our hotel. How do we win that travel day?

So we talk about winning the day. Having college guys, they take that always a bit too far, where they try to win Saturday nights. And luckily that gets toned-down as we go through the college season. But we want to win each of these areas: classroom, sleep, nutrition, training, racing. Just everything that we do we want to win that day.

I think our rugby coach, Jack Clark, who has won 30 national titles as a rugby coach, talks about with his team in terms of winning the intervals. So winning the moments in-between when you are racing or when you are competing, for Rugby. He talks about winning the intervals, and I always like that idea.

For us, our training environment is one where we tailor the process. I talked a little bit about one of our seniors, in kind of creating an environment for him to be successful and then ultimately help our team be successful. Take a half-hour off practice, do some underwater filming; for him that was something that was very, very helpful. Helped our program, it helped him. I was not going to get much out of that thirty minutes
with him, if he did not want to do it. So I was going to do something that... you know, if he is going to hold his breath and do a lot of underwater filming, it was going to work perfect for him.

Our older athletes, we try and build them through the quad. And having guys into their 30s, now, that are in our environment, just helping them work through a four-year process. And not trying to put a lot of emphasis on the early years in the quad, but just trying to have them work through it, is something that I have learned a lot through the last couple of years.

An environment where we foster patience. When we implement a change, we stick to it, we reinforce it. I get in a bad habit of where we get to the beginning of the year and I say okay this is something that we want to do. We are really good about doing it for about 4-5 weeks and then it slowly starts to the taper off. I have been better about putting those ideas and those things that we want to work on with our guys, putting it in a place where I get it to see it time and time again.

I work-through a workout book, a daily workout log, that covers a year. And so if there is something that we want to do throughout the course of the year that we feel like oh this is going to help our guys, I write it every Monday on my daily calendar, basically taking it through the end of December. So every week, I am writing it down: this is what we need to do; this is what we need to do. So it helps me just to reinforce an idea, and I want to stick to it as we go through it.

I want to have an environment where we challenge our guys. We want to do things that are getting our guys outside of our comfort zone. And that is not just something that we say because it sounds good and it sounds really effective—yeah, hey we’re going to be tough, we’re going to get you outside of our comfort zone. But it does have some meaning to it.

I took a group, a small group, to Europe to race for three meets this past Summer, and it was primarily our group that went-on to go to Pan Pacs. It was challenging in that we wanted to kind of work-through travelling and getting-up and racing. I felt like that was what they were going to do when they got to the Pan Pac environment: going to Australia from LA and then trying to get adapted and race fast a week later. I wanted to kind of recreate that a little bit earlier in the Summer just to give them some confidence going through it. And to race some athletes that they may not see at the end of the Summer; so we will race some European athletes to learn something.

I know that I am just one person and one set of eyes. If I can have thirty guys on my team that are coaches, in a sense, that are trying to figure-out how to get better and they are going down that journey with me, it makes my job a lot easier. You know, I liked the way that Rick kind of talked about that with Kevin, and just sometimes you just need to shut and listen. I want to have that with our guys; I want to be in a spot where I can just shut-up and listen because of the situations that we have put them in and how we are challenging them through what they are doing.

Stepping Back

We spend a lot of time re-evaluating our program at the end of each year. We want to make sure that if there are things that we could be doing better, that we are looking at those things. You know, I used the general word things, but for this year we kind of came-away... and really I have a bad habit of getting to meets and starting to kind of watch what other programs are doing at meets. And sometimes I do not necessarily stay focused on what our guys are doing because I am trying to figure out if there are programs/people/coaches that are doing things a little bit better at a meet.

One of the benefits that I think we have as college coaches is that we are allowed to go out on the road to recruit: to watch a practice, to watch great coaches work with their athletes. I end-up learning... that is my coach’s education. I end-up learning so much from that and taking that back to our program. I have heard many coaches say this in talks like this, that my team when I come back from being away for a couple of days, visiting a couple different programs, our team is ready for: oh my God, this is going to be a really hard practice because he just...
saw something at another program and he's going to bring it back and just absolutely destroy us.

So there are a lot of things that happen in that regard. My education over the last 14 years has benefited from being allowed to go to so many different programs. I know USA Swimming has a program now where coaches can go and work with a mental coach—or whatever they are calling it. You know, I have been doing that for 14 years, and I still do it. You know, I am still allowed to go to decks and be mentored by great coaches that have great athletes.

Coming off this year, specifically we wanted to change what we were doing from our recovery modalities. That everything from nutrition... I listed fuelling-up—that is more kind of pre-race work. But recovery modalities is anything from: massage, acupuncture, active release, nutrition, what our guys are putting in their bodies. I spent two weeks out in Europe, watching the Japanese team work with their athletes. And it was amazing just to watch the different folks, in the different specializations that they had, work with each of their athletes. It was really impressive to watch, and that kind of spurred my interest in going down that path.

From a fueling perspective, I want to make sure... I mean, we talked about to earlier: we are already in that mode of just kind of teaching our guys a little bit more. Rather than telling them, giving them the ability to learn about what they are putting in their bodies. How to make that; how to handle that. You know, outside of the three pounds of bacon with their chicken. We want to make sure that they have some good knowledge about what they are doing. That has been a real key for us; certainly being in a college environment.

We had a USOC (United States Olympic Committee) nutritionist come out and just really walk around our campus in about a half-mile radius around our campus, where we have a lot of different restaurants that our guys eat at. She just went through, took a look at the menu, and said, “Okay, if you're going to go here, this is how you make these options healthier. This is how you do this.” So our guys have a little cheat-sheet that they can always reference when they go into Chipotle; like how to get in and out of there in the most healthiest way. She knows, and we know, that we are not going to curtail that, but if we can have then make better decisions. In that, we are really looking that to happen, as we go through a fueling process.

Then a little more specificity in dryland, in terms of what we are doing. And I am not talking about the weight room: we might feel like we are doing a good job from that. But just things that we do... on the video, either Russell or Dave or Rocket had talked about fingers-to-toes line. We talk finger-tips-to-toes connectivity and just trying to make that a little more applicable in the different strokes and in their different specializations. So we are really kind of heading into that area for this year.

That was re-evaluating what would be, you know, I guess considered, a successful year for us: we did well at the college level, we did well at Nationals. I remember when Anthony Ervin came back in the office a couple of weeks ago, and we were talking about Pan Pacs and talking Nationals. We spent probably about 45 minutes kind of downloading on what we can do better, and we kind of got to a point—I mean myself, Yuri and Anthony—where we all kind of took a collective sigh and just man, we've got to get better. And this is a young man that had a great Summer, at 30—however old he is now—52 years of age. But it was just like: there is so much to do, that we can really affect positively his performance or affect our team's performance. We kind of sat back and said okay, let's start getting to work for the coming year. And I think that is always good to do.

I think one of the areas that I have benefited from, even today, is giving presentations. If you have the opportunity to do that, do it, because it forces you to stop, think, evaluate what is important, and then be able to communicate that to a group. You can do that with your team, you can do that with your parents, you can do that with your alumni. But to stop for a second, put together a 45-minute/half-hour/hour presentation on hey, this is my program, this is how... this is what we've been doing. It really is helpful.

Even as I was going through this, there are things that I was like man, why do we get away from doing this? You know? That is my problem as a coach: there is something that we did three years ago that was really good. Just going back through my workout books, like man, why did we get away from doing this? This is something that was really successful. And presentations, when you present your program to a group, it forces you to think about that; it forces me to think about gosh, what the hell have I been doing for 14 years, you know. To be able to list that in a very short and concise way I think is extremely valuable and extremely important.

Then I always think this is huge—and Joel and I were just talking about this before I started—just literally having the time to step back and give everyone breaks. You know, sometimes we can just role from one season to the other, not only as coaches, but as coaches of athletes in that 18-22 year age frame. It is important to allow them to step back; it is important to allow them to step back even through the course of the season.

We get to a point in our season this Fall
where we take what we call a Fall Break. I learned this from Teri McKeever and we started to implement this into our program. But literally just take about four days for our guys, no training. In fact we formalize it a little bit with our guys in that they are required to take what we call four-hour vacation—at least a four-hour vacation. I know that is not a lot of time. But I do want them to get out, I want them to see things; I want them to do something other than just stay in their dorm and study and play video games and watch TV and surf the internet. You know, that can be a little bit of their lives, at times; and so I want them to break-out of that. And I want them to tell me specifically what they are going to do to rest, rejuvenate, and then come back and re-plug-in the training.

Giving them that break, they can look forward to it. They can plan for it; it does not just kind of happen. We do that a little more often with our older athletes, that we will lay-out a longer six-week or six-month plan and show them times when they have four days off or five days off of their training where they can take a little vacation. We want them to do that. We want them to experience that, so they can come back in and feel refreshed and excited to approach training versus just having four days off where they are staying in their bed.

It has been extremely beneficial to do that at a meaty-part of our training cycle, just to let them to recover physically. I already kind of talked about mental aspect of that recovery. But it gives them that physical just kind of time away, and they can come back in and really attack the second half of the training cycle that we are going through in the Fall.

I talk a lot about that in terms of athletes, but also, it is great for coaches as well to have that break, to step away. We can get going from one thing to the other in the college realm: we kind of get rolling from a Summer season, into recruiting, into the Fall season, into the championship-meet season, and back into the Summer. Just having a plan where it is saying hey, I’m taking this week and I’m off and getting that down on the calendar; rather than... you know, see what comes up is a terrible way to go about it. Our guys get that and understand that, when there are times where hey, I’m taking a family vacation at this time or Yuri is taking a vacation at this time. It is listed on our calendar, so that our guys know and understand that we are getting a break just like we are allowing them to have a break.

I think it is important to plan that out, especially for me. In my life, in my world, having a wife and two kids, they know that okay this is my time where I’m focused in on them. I am not worrying about what is going on with our team, our guys. It is really, really important to do that.

You know, it just gets back to the saying that: it takes a village. There are so many different folks that we have associated with our program, that feel their association with our program. It is a staff of myself, Yuri, and Nort, and our strength coach Joel. But we have at least 25-30 massage therapists—I talked about the extern program—that feel a part of what we are doing. We have several PTs (physical therapists) that feel a part of what we are doing. I make it a point for our guys that have gone through swimming from 8 to 18 years of age, have gone through a club program, I make it important that they reach-out and reach-back to their club coaches to have them build a community around them.

For us, we talk about that idea a lot about building a community around. Whether it is an academic community, whether it is an athletic community, we want to make sure that you are building a group of fans around you, individually, that is helping you in times that are stressful. Whether it is getting to an Olympic Games or an Olympic Trials, just having that reassuring voice of someone that has been associated with your swimming for 10, 12 years, is hugely important—it is hugely important to them. We want to make sure that our guys are doing that, because that is... you know, it just gets back to that idea that they cannot have the success that they have without having a lot of people involved in that. I want to make sure that there are appreciating that. They see that happening from us, as a coaching staff. Either myself or Yuri, they see us working through that. And I think it is important that they feel that and know that as they go through their swimming.

I ran through that pretty quickly, and I know I missed a couple of points. But I did want to get back to something that Kevin Cortes said which I thought was interesting—and that Dave kind of highlighted in the talk. Kevin talked about preparing for practice as a freshman; he just did not necessarily know how to do that, know how to work through that. I think that is always one of the challenges that we have in someone that is new to our program, is how to prepare for that. We work through a particular rhythm.

Typically our guys, you know, anywhere from sophomores, junior, seniors, or even older, have gone through it and know the rhythm. And our freshmen are coming in blind. It is not that they are not prepared; it is just they do not quite understand the rhythm of a college season. And for us, or at least for me, we just have to have a lot of patience with that. It is a huge challenge. You know, Rick DeMont talking about upping his game. When you have guys that come in at a very high level—whether it is a Josh Prenot or a Jacob Pebley or a Ryan Murphy—I really do feel like damn, I’ve got to up my game. And as these guys go-on to have success, you still have that idea of man, I’ve got to up my game. And so there is a level of patience that you have with that, but you are balancing that with the expectation that there should be results immediately as a freshman coming into a program.

I think our better successes are with some guys that are a little bit older in our program. As we get to learn a little bit of their nuisances, as we get to learn a little bit more about them, then we can kind of create a training plan specifically for them. But it is a hard thing that you have to balance that patience, I have to up my game, and we also have to make sure that we are having them experience success right off the bat.

(I think I am at 10:37, that gives me
about five minutes, six minutes, to answer any questions that you may have. In the back?)

**Audience:** So you said that when you first got to Cal that you took time to figure out the situation for the six months. What was the first big change that you decided to make?

**Durden:** Not a whole lot. Having someone like Nort there... I mean, Nort and Mike Bottom did a great job in getting that program to where it was. I think probably the biggest thing that we did in the first... and I say we because I went through that first year with... it was myself and Nort—I did not have a full-time assistant coach. Which was helpful for me; I really kind of had to learn a lot of the different characteristics and then find the right fit for the person that was going to come in.

So the first thing that we had do is get our squads size down a little bit. And, you know, that was not a fun thing to do, to come in, because I did not want to feel like hey, this is... But that was coming from our seniors, and they had said we need to cut this guy, this guy, this guy, this guy and that guy and that guy. And so it took a little while to kind of understand where they were coming from with that, but it was the right thing to kind of streamline what we were doing.

So that is not necessarily... I did not answer your question—I am sorry. That is not anything that I did; that was coming from our seniors. Something that I did... umm, yeah, not a whole lot; I mean, I just listened to them.

**Audience:** When you were talking about all the massage therapists, you said somebody in your department walked around. Was that a staff trainer? A PT?

**Durden:** That is someone that we are trying to get hired-on to be a full-time massage therapist. But that is someone that we pay out of our budget, that travels with us, has a history with our guys, and works kind of on our guys along with the therapist. But he also arranges folks coming in, and you know we just get more bang for our buck with that. You know, not paying one massage therapist to work on one guy, paying one massage therapist to work on twelve guys.

**Audience:** Earlier you mentioned that the alumni-aspect was about recognizing the importance of it, and now it is actually steamrolling into other projects, like at NCAAs all the guys that you have got there in the stands. What have you done personally just to make that more priority and make yourself more comfortable with that engagement.

**Durden:** Yeah, they just want to feel attachment. So rather than be reactive, just try and be proactive. We implemented the video series once-a-month, so they feel like they get access to me, get access to our program, without having them having to send an email—if you can imagine. I do not want to mischaracterize that as saying I don’t want our alumni emailing me; but I also realize that if I have a hundred emails coming-in that I have to respond to, I can easily be proactive and send out, you know, one little video and address all of our alum through that. And be a little more proactive than just trying to be reactive. Then, you know, just reach out and just keep doing it until it does start to snowball and start to move forward.

I think what has helped me be more comfortable is having just two alumni that I really kind of work with and say hey what do you need from me. You know, what does our group need to hear? And they are very respective of time; I mean they both have young children and get the time issue on it. So I think they are very, very respectful of that. So finding a couple of guys that are in a phase of life that are very similar to mine, that understand what is going on in my life and that are not asking too much of me in connecting with our alumni.

**Audience:** Earlier you mentioned nutrition and how it has played a bigger and bigger role in your program, through results in performance and recovery. With the new changes in the rules here and how you see what we can do, how has that changed your thinking? Is it going to change your approach to the road you are on?

**Durden:** Well that is the reason that we kind of have gone down this path a little bit more aggressively, with the loosening of the rules. You know we are not in a situation budgetary to provide all the meals for our guys. But can we provide the education for them? And I think one of the things that I appreciated about the class that we went through: it was tailored to our guys’ needs. We want it to be quick, we want it to be nutritious, and we want it to be cheap.

And I think in the first minute of our class, the chef kind of stood up and said, “Hey, listen, I am going to show you how to cut zucchini.” And it was like why am I going to show you to cut zucchini because today I bought it for 39 cents a pound. And here are 15 things you can do with zucchini. At 39 cents a pound, you know it is cheap, it is nutritious, it is quick—10 minutes in the oven. I will show you these different things, and you are off and running.

That was how we structured that particular class. (I know I am not answering your question.) But I think things like that, the loosening of the rules has helped us to explore some different options. I think that would be the next piece, right; would be to kind of work with restaurants to see how we can create a very nutritious, healthy, cheap meal for our guys considering that we can feed them any hour of the day now.

**Audience:** As club coaches, we are in the development game; you are much more involved in the end-game. Do you have room in your program to take a project on? You know, a couple of spots open. As a coach you know what you are looking for. But to see/I will take a chance.

**Durden:** Sure. Right now with how our National Team, how our Olympic Team is moving, we are kind of in a developmental stage as well. We have had guys make a National Team for the first time and they are going into their senior year in school. And so, like to me, I feel like we are a developmental piece of that as well. Our projects are a little different, in that we have probably a little more tools to work with, initially. But there is still a project for us for a young man that comes in and says hey
I want to go from here to being on the National Team—you know, be one of the six guys on the U.S. National Team. That is a hard thing to do, and you have to have a level of patience with that, in kind of nurturing that along.

But more specifically, in the recruiting process, I think it just depends on the cycle—everything is kind of cyclical. You know, if we are in a spot where we happen to have just times on a page, talent coming-in, that kind of fills-up our roster, so to speak; then no, in that particular recruiting cycle we are not going to have the space for a project. But if we are in a spot where it is like yes we feel like we have a couple spots to bring in a freshman, then yes; then we can say okay, yeah, we can bring in this particular project because there are things that we see that that we like that can translate to NCAA Swimming or translate to beyond.

It is tough, you know, to kind of look at that and look through a crystal ball, and see how this person is going to be. That is why, kind of, I always say hey we’re just trying to stack the odds in your favor; you know, to be better. It is not: because you come here, you are going to be fast. We are just going to try and stack those odds in your favor as best we can. And still, when you step-up on the blocks, it is just you in that lane, so there has to be a level of confidence that everything that we have done has put the odds that hey, there’s probability that this is going to be a pretty good swim.

**Audience:** What areas did Ken Ravizza make an impact in?

**Durden:** Just our team dynamic and confidence. Our 18-22 year-old guys, they still... even as good as they may be, still struggle with confidence. Really just kind of hammering that point home. His big thing, his big kind of idea now, is have a good shitty day—that is kind of his phrase. I think probably the most important thing that he said... and he is a good presenter, he can capture the room.

But one of the things that he said—and pardon the language, but if you have been around Ken, he is kind of free speaking. But he kind of captured their attention at one point, in the room. It was almost as if he was talking to everybody individually, but he just kind of pointed at them and said, “Are you that shitty that you have to feel good in order to swim fast?” It just kind of paused the room for a second, and then he asked them again. “Are you that shitty that you have to feel good in order to swim fast?” And all the guys were like, no, I’m not shitty, you know. That was like a very impactful thing for them to get past that idea of everything having to be perfect and I feel great, I’m going to swim fast. So we talk about that with our guys; we kind of revisit that with our guys pretty often.

Anything else? Awesome. Thank you very much, I appreciate it.
On Harry Potter & Why I Want All My Swimmers to Be Hufflepuffs

By Amanda Ellery, CANYONS AQUATIC CLUB

If you aren’t familiar with the Harry Potter series – at the beginning of the books, each young wizard is placed into a house at the school and each house is known for different qualities. Harry Potter’s house, Gryffindor, is for the most courageous and the wizards in that house are always jumping into adventure. The Ravenclaws are intelligent and clever and highly value learning, while the Slytherin House wizards are ambitious, but at the expense of everyone else. Slytherin gets a bad rap in the books, but at the expense of everyone else. Hufflepuff. The wizards in Hufflepuff just seem like nice, average kids. They aren’t particularly smart or brave. They are quietly on the sidelines helping out, often making humorous mistakes.

I am a fan of the Harry Potter books and movies, so I recently took one of those online quizzes where you answer several questions. “Which Hogwarts House Do You Belong To?” it advertised. “This could be fun,” I thought. It was quite comprehensive, with questions like “Hogwarts is on fire! Which item do you save?” and “Which animal is your favorite?” I was excited to see which house I would be placed into. (Perhaps Ravenclaw, you know, because of my intelligence, or maybe Gryffindor. Although I’m not always that brave, I do like to help others.) I got Hufflepuff.

After my waves of disappointment fade a bit (it’s just a quiz), I looked into why I was labeled a Hufflepuff. The first thing I read is that Hufflepuff values hard work over everything else. They are loyal and tenacious. JK Rowling states in an interview that Hufflepuff is in many ways her favorite house in the series, and that she makes this clear at the end of the books. In the final battle with Voldemort (the big bad guy), the houses can choose whether to show up to fight. The Slytherins are missing. Some of the Ravenclaws show up, but the odds are against winning, so many of them cannot find a logical reason to put themselves in danger and don’t come. The Gryffindors and Hufflepuffs all stay. The Gryffindors are there because they are brave, sometimes reckless, and sometimes even show offs. But the Hufflepuffs stay because it is the right thing to do, not because they are looking for glory, but because they know that they can help, and they are the ones who will work hard.

Why am I telling you this? The quiz put me in exactly the right place. I couldn’t believe it. My favorite thing about coaching swimming is that it teaches young swimmers the value of hard work. I am a coach on a large team, and coach 12-and-unders exclusively. I tell them every day to keep working hard and that they will see results. And they do. Yes, I have the Gryffindors who dive in and swim like madmen and win races often despite being sloppy. I have Ravenclaws who are technical wizards and have beautiful strokes. I definitely have Slytherins who spend the entire practice trying to pass everyone else in the lane…..even when we are learning a new drill, even on warm down. (There are a few Slytherins who have even been known to grab the ankle of the swimmer in front of them and pull them backwards and swim on top of their teammate to get ahead.) Then, I have my Hufflepuffs.

The Hufflepuff swimmers are the ones that come to practice every day, rain or shine. They are good listeners. They try to do what you say and they really want to improve their strokes. They want to please their coach. They are often not the best swimmers, especially when they first start, but they aren’t the worst and they improve quietly. Their hard work pays off and they keep getting better. They make all the goals you set for them, but the other kids don’t even really notice because they never brag about it. Suddenly, one day a little Hufflepuff jumps in and beats the Gryffindor. “Wait! What? SHE beat me?” exclaims the confused Gryffindor. The Hufflepuff just stands there and smiles and comes to practice the next day and quietly works even harder.

Hufflepuffs are good teammates. They can be counted on to show up to the meet and to stay until the end for that C relay. They are often the ones holding the lap counters for their teammates swimming the mile at the end of the meet after everyone else has gone home. Hufflepuffs keep with it. They stay on the team, because they know that they are in control of their own results. They aren’t the ones complaining that their coach is bad, or that they can’t get a good workout in their group because they should move up. Instead, they are there after every practice and every race asking what they can do to get better. I love it when they succeed, because they know that they really earned it and I know that they have learned not only to succeed in swimming, but how to succeed in school, in a job, and in anything else they decide they want to do. I hope all of my swimmers learn to be Hufflepuffs, because the Hufflepuffs are the ones who are going to finally win the battle.
REDEFINE WATER

JASON DUNFORD, OLYMPIC RECORD HOLDER

THE NEW VAPOR TECHNICAL SUIT

racing ingenuity.

#redefineh2o
I agreed to give my talk on the “X Factor for Success in Coaching” but, after examining the results of this summer’s World Championships, I decided to make the topic a little broader and apply it to the entire swimming community. I have the enviable task of trying to motivate all of us to raise America’s standard of swimming.

I can do this in the same way we try to motivate swimmers; with either positive or negative reinforcement. Psychologists say the best way to motivate people is to alternate praise and reproof. To keep the working hard, athletes need either a pat on the back or a kick in the pants. I think at this time all of us in the U.S. aquatic fraternity —coaches, administrators and researchers— need a hard kick in the pants.

American swimming can be compared to the automobile industry in general and the automobile industry in particular. The automobile is the product of American ingenuity. Henry Ford introduced the assembly line that made mass production possible. We have the necessary technology and natural resources to continue domination of the automobile industry, yet we have faltered because we failed to recognize trouble early enough. The Japanese, who had few natural resources, with a lot of hard work and ingenuity have passed us in producing a quality car.

Let me pose a question. How can the U.S.A., a country with over half of the pools in the world, over half of the professional coaches in the world, lose dominance in international swimming? East Germany, a country with 1/15th of our population, is supplanting us, the Japanese are becoming stronger, and countries formerly unlisted in world rankings are now prominent.

Let us recognize the fact that we have a problem! And that changes must be made in our system or U.S. swimming will find itself in the same position the automobile industry occupies.

This group here represents the leaders in American swimming. If any changes are made this group here must initiate them. We must show our leadership.

For years the business world has tried to find out what goes into making a good leader. They have been unable to locate any trait or combination of traits that can be used to predict success. They finally came up with a trait they termed the “X factor”, which they were unable to measure, but which was identified as the ability to perceive what was wrong in a given situation and what had to be done to make corrections. In other words, it consisted of the ability to separate the wheat from the chaff. Too many people, even very intelligent people, have trouble separating the important from the unimportant.

The progress of American swimming in the future will depend on the “X factor” of the people at this meeting. So far, American industry has not done very well identifying and solving its problems. Let’s hope we can do a better job in swimming I know of several companies that have tried to solve their problems of leadership by implementing an executive development program. Bright, good looking young men just out of college...
are brought up through the system in a two-year program. They are taught how to wear grey flannel, three-piece suits, with pinstripes also acceptable. They are molded into plastic people who all play a good game of golf, play a fair game of bridge, and wear a smile eight hours a day. They all end up looking the same, acting the same, thinking the same and going to the same psychiatrist. In fact, if the founder of one of these companies, Thomas Edison, who was a bit of a slob, were alive today and applied for a job, he would be turned away. We don’t want to go in that direction.

Successful coaches come in assorted sizes, shapes and sexes. Some are well-dressed like Phill Hansel, while others dress like I do. Some run up and down the pool deck, hollering and yelling like Jack Nelson, while others sit calmly on the side like Nort Thornton. Each has his own style and we should retain that individuality. But let us all adopt one goal— that of upgrading American swimming. Let us forget petty jealousies, rivalries and pull together.

The first problem we face is the loss of the large numbers of swimmers we had to work with in the past. Due to poor media coverage from the press and television, we have lost a certain amount of our charisma. I was totally frustrated when a tennis tournament and a boxing match preempted the entire second day of television coverage of the world Championships. Soccer, gymnastics and other sports have attracted many potential champions away from Swimming. Due to the demands made on a swimmer’s time, energy and pocket book, many of the athletes find other sports more attractive.

We must continue to try to recruit talented athletes for our sport, but, in my opinion, the golden days of swimming, in terms of the large number of participants, is a thing of the past. Don Gambril covered this topic very well this morning so I won’t repeat what he said. We must accept the fact that in the past we may have mishandled our natural resource—the talented athlete— and we must now do a better job with the fewer number that remain. We must do a better job in three areas: motivation, conditioning and stroke mechanics.

In the past the coaching of swimming has progressed mainly by two methods: Trial and error and imitation of champions. We imitate the workouts and stroke mechanics of the champions: we often imitate them to the detriment of our other swimmer’s performance. The single variable that contributes most to performance in swimming is the variable we control the least. That is, the innate ability of the athlete. People using poor technique frequently defeat people with better technique, but with less talent. We have all seen a talented out-of-shape swimmer defeat a swimmer in much better shape, but who had less innate ability. Let us face the fact that sometimes swimmers will swim fast in spite of us, not because of us.

A coach’s ego is sometimes so linked with a particular swimmer’s performance that, if he is coaching a group ofuntalented swimmers and is having little success with the same program that won the state or national championships a few years ago, he gets depressed and loses his confidence. But if, due to chance or good recruiting, he suddenly gets five swimming geniuses, his self-esteem rises and everybody starts imitating his program. If he has his kids jog six miles a day and lift heavy weights, the other teams begin doing the same thing. If his top sprinter sets a national record and recovers one arm with a straight elbow and the other with a bent elbow, other swimmers imitate this stroke defect. Some years it
is one step forward, the next year it may be two steps backward. There has to be a better way to make progress.

As I mentioned previously, we have to do a better job in the areas of motivation, conditioning and stroke mechanics. Can research show us how to do this? I believe researchers can help us to a considerable degree. In this month’s issue of “Swimming Technique,” which is the best ever, Bob Hopper states that “The new coach will need to be a former swimmer with a background in psychology and computer programming.” That criteria will, of course, exclude Skip Kenney, Sherm Chavoor, Ray Bussard and quite a few other coaches in this room because they were not competitive swimmers. Few of us will qualify as having a background in psychology and fewer yet in computer programming. If these factors were prerequisite traits to becoming coaches, I might be talking to an empty room and I wouldn’t be here.

I may not agree totally with Bob Hopper’s assessment, but I agree with him that there is a place for the computer in our training programs. At Indiana, we frequently use the computer to analyze swimming data. For example, we use the computer to determine hand speed and acceleration. However, I don’t think anyone here needs to worry about being replaced by a computer or by a “new style coach” who has a background in computer programming. We can hire these people for $5.00 or $10.00 an hour.

I don’t believe these traits are a part of the “X factor” for success in coaching. The person who is a good coach today will be a good coach ten or even twenty years from now. Research can help all of us, but I believe the purpose of research should be to help us develop concepts and principles. Most of the people in this room will never take a single physiological measurement to evaluate the anaerobic threshold of his swimmers, yet all of us can benefit by understanding the term and by applying the principles and concepts discussed by Ernie Maglischo yesterday.

Three days ago I was listening to the car radio on the way to the airport. The head of a cancer research foundation was being interviewed at a symposium for cancer research. He was asked by the interviewer if he believed we needed more cancer research. He replied that over 800 reports were being presented at that meeting and that it was becoming a problem to read all the presentations being submitted. He said, “No, we don’t need more research, we just need more significant research.”

Recently the Fourth Biomechanics of Swimming meeting was held in Amsterdam. I couldn’t go, but our trainer, Dr. Ted Becker, attended and brought back all the abstracts. My evaluation of this meeting is similar to that of Australian coach Forbes Carlile who wrote me that the meeting produced nothing new, nothing practical and nothing creative! Like the people who are looking for a cure for cancer, we don’t need more research, we need more significant research.

Several years ago, while on a lecture tour of Russia, a Russian swimming executive asked me how we coded the articles we publish in our swimming periodicals. I asked him what he meant and he said he knew we published a lot of articles that were meant to mislead and confuse the foreign coaches. He wanted to know how to distinguish between the good and the bad articles. I told him we were a free country and anyone could publish anything he wanted. He was shocked and said, “Even if it’s trash?”

I don’t think we publish trash, but coaches are exposed to so many different and conflicting ideas on training and stroke mechanics that they become confused. Some of these crackpot ideas lead us down blind alleys. They are not based on scientific principles and even violate proven principles and concepts. Two of my pet peeves are the pop breaststroke and the crawl flip turn, both of these techniques evolved from imitating champions.

So far I have been very negative in all of my statements. I have probably offended some people. I guess I’ve been around Bobby Knight too long. The thing I admire about Bobby is the fact that it is refreshing to see a person who calls it the way it is - or the way he thinks it is—without regard to political consequences. I have tried to call it the way I think it is. The problem with this approach is that the speaker appears to be playing God, passing judgment on everyone. I hope I did give us all a kick in the pants because we have no excuse for not having the best swimming program in the world.

Now to be a little more positive. There are important principles and concepts involved in swimming. The problem is that we disagree on their application. I may have exaggerated these problems because I want to emphasize that we should be selective in what we rush to adopt as soon as it is done by an outstanding swimmer or stated by a successful coach.

I have to admit that I was very proud to hear from Dr. John Hay that his
Let’s make some waves together.
If you want to own your own business, why not do something you already know and love? A SwimLabs Swim School franchise offers you a proven, turn-key business model, 24/7 back office support, location-specific marketing and the training you need to turn your love of coaching into a successful business. Plus, it’s a great way to build your club membership and make connections in your swim community.

Our unique high-tech training facilities with 360° video feedback are in high-demand for:
- Kids learn-to-swim
- Youth competitive swimmers
- Swim teams
- Master swimmers
- Triathletes
- Water Polo players

Visit swimlabsfranchise.com to find out more.

committee had selected my paper on the application of the Bernoulli Principle, which we presented at this meeting eleven years ago, as the most significant contribution to the entire area of biomechanics of swimming in the last decade. This concept has been substantiated by over thirty studies. While I was in Russia as a member of the U.S. Junior Team staff, I was told by a Russian coach that our study on hand speed and acceleration, which we presented at this meeting last year, had been translated and disseminated throughout Russia. He said they attributed much of their recent success to the fact that the concept had been adopted in their program.

I believe there have been a lot of good presentations at this meeting, as well as some that were mediocre. I was particularly impressed by those given by Ernie Maglischo and Ted Becker. I never come to this meeting without getting some new ideas. I’m also aware that my own talk contains nothing original or practical to take home and apply, but I told myself that after dinner speeches are supposed to be funny and since I’ve got you all in stitches, I’ve succeeded.

On the whole I believe that many of you have picked up a lot of good information at this clinic. Once you sort out the material and you will benefit. Let me make one recommendation, however: be very analytical and even critical of what you have heard here. Just because some supposedly big name coaches have said such and so is true, don’t blindly accept it. Many of you out there are smarter and better coaches than the lucky ones who get the talented athletes to work with.

If you are young and plan to do graduate work, do as Bob Hopper suggests, get a good background in physiology, psychology, biomechanics and computer science. Do significant research. Help us develop sound principles and concepts that can be used in a practical situation and write your reports in one syllable words so we can understand them. Let us make American swimming not only the best in the world, but the best in the universe!

One thing that has made America great in spite of the executive development programs of the big corporations is the diversity of races, personalities, styles and creative abilities we decide what you want to accept and what you want to reject, I thin possess. It would be boring if all coaches acted alike. God made only one of each of us; we are unique individuals. Retain your individuality; otherwise you may lose your ability to think independently and creatively. Above all, let’s strive to make the U.S.A. numero uno in 1984.
At SwimFast, we are completely and totally devoted to teaching correct technique in strokes, starts and turns. 

The reason is simple...our sport is a “TECHNIQUE LIMITED” sport. No amount of “motivation”, “training” or “athletic skill” can overcome the effects of poor technique in the water. I am quasi famous around the world for the following statement. “A swimmer with good technique has NO LIMITS. A swimmer with poor technique has nothing BUT limits.”

It has been said that the greatest enemy of “great” is “good”. When an athlete “wins” a race, with poor technique, it is a negative. They learn that a “reward” comes from the wrong source. Our coaches look first, last and continually, for improvement in technique. We can never be “satisfied” with less than perfect technique. The best athletes in the world are obsessed with improvements in tiny points in their technique. So should our athletes be.

The single most important thing to learn, is to get a correct breath. If we can’t breathe well, we can’t do anything else. So “bobbing” and how we get a breath in each stroke, is the single biggest key to improvement.

One more thing. When a human being learns ANYTHING, first, we learn it “mindfully.” We focus on it and concentrate. (Picture learning to drive a car, if you are an adult…) Once we can do it mindfully, we need to move to phase two, which is to do it “subconsciously”. (after you had driven for 5 years, the car “drives itself” most of the time, right? But it took “5 years.”) Finally, once we have mastered the technique subconsciously, the final phase is to be able to do it “under pressure” when we are tired, struggling, emotionally stressed, etc. In other words, in a “big race situation.” The technique is not “learned” until it is present in this last set of circumstances.

HENCE, we put athletes under pressure in practice, to see what technique aspects “hold up” and give them practice in doing so. Practice should be “harder” in some respects, than any race the athlete will encounter.

This begins as soon as a child starts in swimming and continues for the rest of their swimming life. It also, obviously, has gigantic “life lessons” as a side result. ■

All the best,

[Signature]

John Leonard
Society has gotten to the point where everybody has a right but nobody has a responsibility.
HELPING YOU FINISH FAST

- Highest quality Racing Lanes at affordable pricing
- Over 25 years of aquatic experience goes into every product
- Made in the USA
- Environmentally sustainable materials

Call ASCA at 800.356.2722 to order your Racing Lanes. A portion of each sale will benefit ASCA programming.
YOUR CLINIC
IN
YOUR POOL

SWIM CLINICS AND CAMPS
START BUILDING YOURS TODAY

Customized Curriculum
By Ability Level
By Age (Youth and Masters)
By Stroke
Speed and Power
Elite Camps (AAAA+)
Coaches Seminars
And more...

PROFESSIONAL
On-site Clinic Management
Marketing including a website,
postcards, banners, posters,
HTML Emails, social media
And more...

For information and to contact us:
VISIT: FITTERANDFASTER.COM
(786) 837-6881
OUR SOLUTIONS WILL KEEP YOUR POOL RUNNING EFFICIENTLY

Filtration Systems, Pumps, Drives, Heaters, Controllers, Sanitizers, Lighting, Lifts, Deck Equipment...you get the idea. Pentair covers you above and below the surface with energy efficient products. Look for us by name: Stark™ Filtration; Paragon™ Deck Equipment; AquaTRAM™ Pool Lifts; IntelliBrite® 5G LED Lighting and BioShield™ UV Disinfection Systems. Call us for all of your pool needs.