



# Off The Blocks



Happy New Year  
Everyone!

For some of you, it's time to reaffirm your commitment to the sport and for others a time to reset goals and get back to work in the pool.

A special congratulations to Cassidy Bayer who broke Mary T. Meagher's 1979 13-14 girls National Age Group Record in the 200 yd. butterfly. Cassidy swam a 1:56.01 at the Tom Dolan meet last month breaking Mary T's 39 yr old record of 1:56.58. Great job Cassidy!

Bill Marlin

## Staying Loose and Calm Pre-Race

By Dr. Alan Goldberg//Competitivedge.com 10/1/13

### Why are races won and lost before the start?

As I've said many times throughout this series, the BIGGEST secret to swimming your best when it counts the most is having the ability to stay loose and calm behind the blocks, right before your race. Far too many swimmers waste precious energy the minutes leading up to their event by thinking about and focusing on all of the wrong things. Because of

this, they unknowingly undermine their confidence, get themselves overly nervous and set themselves up for failure.

### The Devastating Effects Of Out Of Control Pre-Race Jitters

Ever wonder how you can run out of gas at the 150 mark of your 200, the very first race of your big meet? You've worked hard all season, you've got a solid training base, yet your arms and legs feel like lead and you're totally exhausted! What gives?

You go 7 – 8,000 yards easily in practice and after a mere 150 you're wasted?!

[Read more](#)

**The next PVS Board of Directors Meeting is January 13 at 7:00 pm at Overlee.**

**All interested are welcome to attend.**

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## Empowering Swimmers and Ending Abuse

Dec 31, 2013 - Nikki Dryden

In the wake of a series of sex and abuse stories, what really matters to swimmers and to our swimming community? Sure swimming fast and winning medals is fun and exciting. It makes

us feel good about ourselves...for a moment. But the real long term benefits of swimming, sustained good feelings, come only from a career that is filled with goals that are striven for in

failure and success, positive relationships we make along the way, and appreciating the journey of swimming, not just a fleeting moment atop the podium.

[Please keep reading](#)

## Parking at the Univ. of Maryland



As some of you may have heard that there is an issue with Lot 2G (lot located outside the lower level entrance of the pool) near the Eppley Recreation Center. This lot up until this past Thursday was free after 4pm and on weekends. The Department of Transportation Services changed the restrictions on the lot to

make it a 24 hour, 7 days a week student parking. **This means that unless you are paying a meter, you must park in Terrapin Trail Garage or risk being ticketed.**

Terrapin Trail Garage is free after 4pm on weekdays and all day Saturday and Sunday, unless a special event is occur-

ring. More information can be found at [www.transportation.umd.edu](http://www.transportation.umd.edu).

Meters by the Eppley Recreation Center are in effect Monday- Friday 7am-10pm. The meter spaces are free on the weekends unless reserved for an event.

*To uncover your true potential you must first find your own limits and then you have to have the courage to blow past them.*

- Picabo Street

## Castaic Lake chosen as new host for Open Water Nationals

Castaic Lake in southern California will be the new host for Open Water Nationals, USA Swimming announced today after making the decision last week to move the event away from Wrightsville Beach, the original host.

Wrightsville was nixed after tidal changes caused a safety concern. It would have been one of the first saltwater venues for nationals in several years. Castaic Lake will provide another freshwater event, which will take place June 13 and 15, 2014. The lake is near the town of Castaic, north of Los Angeles.

Castaic Lake hosted this meet last year as well, and faced a splash of drama when a buoy anchor came loose mid-race, prompting a protest of the official results.

Open Water Nationals will serve as a selection meet for a multitude of international competitions and national teams including the following:

- USA Swimming Open Water National Team
- USA Swimming Open Water National Junior Team

The official selection criteria for these events and 2014 Open Water Nationals meet information will be posted on the USA Swimming website in early 2014.

- Open Water Pan Pacific Championships Team
- Open Water Junior Pan Pacific Championships Team
- FINA World Junior Open Water Championships Team



PHOTO COURTESY OF SURFCAST PHOTOGRAPHY

## 7 Ways to Swim Fearlessly in 2014

By Olivier Poirier-Leroy

### Why Do We Get Scared With Our Swimming?

Fear hits us from a bunch of different angles. Some obvious, some of them so hidden and sneaky that we don't really realize their existence or impact until we sit down with them.

- Fear of racing our heart out and coming up short.
- Fear of looking "slow" or inferior in front of other swimmers, coaches and your parents.
- Fear of not being in control.
- Fear of disappointing ourselves, as well as our loved ones and teammates.
- Fear of going beyond our comfort zone and challenging ourselves to heights we only sort of consider ourselves capable of.

I admit, the article title was a little misleading. The goal isn't to swim or live completely without fear. That's like saying we should not get nervous before our races. If we're not nervous, we're not invested, and if we're not invested then what's the point, right?

The goal with these

tips isn't so much to eliminate fear, but rather manage them so that they don't dictate our swimming. Here goes—

**1. Identify Them.** This can be tricky. Some swimmers will instinctively pound their chest and say, "I'm never scared." (Hello, denial!) Once we acknowledge the fear, realize why we are feeling that way, we can begin to respond to it in a manner that isn't purely based in emotion. Take a few moments and write 'em out. (I'll wait here.) Putting them to paper stops the pinballing thoughts in your head from running loose. Seeing those fears in ink and shedding light on them generally renders them moot.

**2. What is the worst that could happen?** When you take a moment to actually sit down and fully consider the worst case scenario you begin to see the cracks in fear's reasoning. Got DQ'd in your best race of the meet? Your family still loves ya, you're still a swimming machine, and there will be more races in the future. In other words, life will go on.

**3. Consider the Odds.**

Here's a little something you may not fully realize about yourself. Out of all the doomsday scenarios you've concocted in your mind, how many of them have actually come true? Out of the dozens, hundreds or thousands of stinky situations your mind imagined, how many of them actually happened? A couple? Probably even less than that. It should be a comfort knowing that we are actually quite terrible at predicting terrible outcomes. The next time fear rears its ugly face remember that an over-whelming proportion of them will never come to pass.

**4. Accept unpredictability.** As much as we love to think we are in utter control, there are some limits. As much as I want to be Batman, it's just not in the cards. Do what you can with what you have, and forget the things you don't have control of. Easier said than done, but embracing the unpredictability of life will allow you to focus on the things you *do* have control over.

**5. Risk vs Reward.** The cost of not acting, of not swimming your brains out, should be higher than your dooms-day scenario.

In other words, understanding that the pain of regret outweighs giving a full effort should motivate you to follow the path that would result in less pain or disappointment.

**6. Trust yourself.** Think back to the last time something truly awful happened with your swimming. The morning your goggles filled up and you missed a AAA cut by 4/100's. Leaving early on the take over that would have won your team the meet. The time your suit fell around your knees off the start and you swam the first 50 metres bare-butt. How long did it take you to get over these things? A couple weeks? A few days? Hours or minutes, even? (Though I'm sure you still get ribbed for the 50m bare-butt.)

**7. Unshackle yo'self with action.** Setting daily, weekly challenges or benchmarks that are designed to push you past your self-imposed limitations and boundaries will help lessen the grip that fear has on you. Fear is designed to keep you in place, from not moving, from not acting.



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## Mental Toughness

An excerpt taken from USA Swimming's Swim Parents' Workshop

### What is mental toughness?

It's being in control of your emotions, being poised when challenged and under pressure. It's the ability to maintain focus and to be resilient though intimidation and being able to bounce back from adversity. Mental toughness is being self-assured and learning how to deal with the fear of failure.

### What can a parent do?

Don't demand or expect certain performance levels, condemn failure or equate love with performance. Stay away from undue or harsh criticism. DO encourage and support. Reward effort, not outcome. Realize that the consequences of failure are temporary and to learn and to help your athletes learn, enjoy the sport and have fun regardless of outcome.

Discourage statements (and never use them yourself) like: "What if I don't do well?", "I can't blow it now.", or "I don't do well under pressure." Encourage statements (and use them yourself) like: "I'm going to do the best I can.", "I don't have to feel pressure. I'll just do my job.", and "I'm giving 100 percent and trusting my training."

## Upcoming PVS Officials Clinics

- 1/4/13 **Chief Judge** 8-10 a.m. at Overlee
- 1/4/13 **Referee** 10:30 am -12:30 pm at Overlee
- 1/4/13 **Administrative Official** 1-3 pm at Overlee
- 1/8/13 **Stroke & Turn** 6:30-9pm at Georgetown Prep
- 1/19/13 **Starter** 2-4:30 pm at MLK Swim Center
- 1/26/13 **Stroke & Turn** 2-4:30 pm at MLK Swim Center

*I've missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.*

- Michael Jordan

## Swimming Links

### 6 Reasons you are not seeing success with your swimming

<http://swimswam.com/6-reasons-arent-seeing-success-swimming/>

### Swim Meet Basics:

<http://www.usaswimming.org/ViewMiscArticle.aspx?TabId=1729&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en&mid=4193&ItemId=3042>

### USA Swimming Rules Primer:

<http://www.usaswimming.org/ViewMiscArticle.aspx?TabId=1729&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en&mid=4193&ItemId=3044>

### The Importance of Supporting your Child

<http://www.usaswimming.org/ViewNewsArticle.aspx?TabId=2208&itemid=4225&mid=11881>