

Newsletter

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ASCTA Annual Coaches Awards

Coach of the Year
Stephan Widmer

Open Water Coach of the Year
Ken Wood

Age Group Coach of the Year
Denis Cotterell

**Telstra Swimmer with a Disability
Coach of the Year**
Peter Bishop

ASCA Coach of the Year

Bob Bowman

Good Coaches? Good Teachers? Good Clubs?

Thoughts by Peter Ruddock – Australian Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association – Gold Licence

Good discipline is one of the characteristics of a good teacher. Discipline is not a matter of keeping things under control, it is a matter of helping swimmers learn to make good choices and be responsible for those choices, and helping with their development. Without good discipline the best planned lessons may fail to have the desired impact and to promote effective learning.

When there is someone in the squad who does not behave, a number of teachers/coaches in the past have used aggressive discipline techniques such as yelling in anger, sarcasm, sending swimmers out of the water, labeling the student, giving the individual swimmer extra work to complete or even making the whole squad do extra work. It has been found through research that these methods do not bring about good discipline.

It has also been found that excellent teaching is the most powerful influence on achievement and that expert teachers are more adept at monitoring problems and assessing progress and providing feedback to the learner.

Auditory testing has proved that students aged from 4-6 years could not accurately process sentences longer than nine words and for children age 9-10 only 13 words. Research has found that children are often bombarded by rapid-fire lengthy instructions from teachers.

What good teachers do?

- They have good eye contact.
- They speak slowly.
- They use short sentences with no more than thirteen words.
- They plan lessons.
- They give positive feedback. (Written appraisal is a great way to reinforce the positive.)
- Expert teachers also set challenging goals.

Now as head coach/managers do you give regular feedback and regular formal appraisal to your teachers and assistant coaches?

Is the club that does not produce a champion a failure???

Is the best coach the one who coaches the "TOP" club?

We've all been influenced by the notion that quality can be measured by results, thus we have rankings of clubs and swimmers in order of their results. We have seen state records in events down to 8 year old and National rankings to 13 year old and we see many other lists of "top clubs and top swimmers."

Perhaps expectations are placed upon children long before they are ready. Should we be looking at results, local, state, national and international for the young children? Results encourage coaches to "coach for results." Children progress at different rates, so if we compare them and clubs against each other, are we doing the wrong thing in child and club development??

Comparing results moves a whole community away from remembering what we're really about, which is nurturing swimmers so that they develop a set of skills to help them in their aquatic development. ■

Editors Note:

"We're always looking for good articles for the WSCA news. Please submit them in English to JLeonard@swimmingcoach.org."

Swimming Records from Beijing Olympics

World Records, Olympic Records and Continental Records were smashed at the recent Olympic Games. Provided below are a summary of all these records.

There were only 2 Olympic records not broken at the meet.

The Netherland's Inge De Bruijn's 100 fly World Record of 56.61 from the 2000 Olympics was the ONLY Womens Olympic Record not bettered in Beijing.

Australian Ian Thorpe's 400 free World record of 3:40.59 from the 2000 Olympics was the ONLY Mens Olympic Record not bettered.

World Records – Womens (10)

Women's 200 free:

1:54.82, Federica Pellegrini, Italy (old = 1:55.52, Laure Manaudou, France, March 2007)

[Note: Pellegrini broke the WR twice: prelims (1:55.45) and finals]

Women's 800 free:

8:14.10, Rebecca Adlington, Great Britain (old = 8:16.22, Janet Evans, USA, August 1989)

Women's 100 back:

58.77, Kirsty Coventry, Zimbabwe (old = 58.97, Natalie Coughlin, USA, July 2008)

Women's 200 back:

2:05.24, Kirsty Coventry, Zimbabwe (old = 2:06.09, Margaret Hoelzer, USA, July 2008)

Women's 200 breaststroke:

2:20.22, Rebecca Soni, USA (old = 2:20.54, Jessicah Schipper, Australia, August 2006)

Women's 200 fly:

2:04.18, Zige Liu, China (old = 2:05.40, Jessicah Schipper, Australia, August 2006)

Women's 200 IM:

2:08.45, Stephanie Rice, Australia (old = 2:08.92 March 2008)

Women's 400 IM:

4:29.45, Stephanie Rice, Australia (old = 4:31.12, Katie Hoff, USA June 2008)

Women's 800 free relay:

7:44.31, Australia (Rice, Barratt, Palmer, MacKenzie) (old = 7:50.09, USA, March 2007)

Women's 400 Medley Relay:

3:52.69, Australia (Seebohm, Jones, Schipper, Trickett) (old = 3:55.74, Australia, March 2007)

Olympic Records – Womens (15)

Women's 50 free: 24.06, Britta Steffen, Germany

Women's 100 free: 53.12, Britta Steffen, Germany

Women's 200 free (see WR)

Women's 400 free: 4:02.19, Federica Pellegrini, Italy

Women's 800 free (see WR)

Women's 100 back (see WR)

Women's 200 back (see WR)

Women's 100 breaststroke: 1:05.17, Leisel Jones, Australia

Women's 200 breaststroke (see WR)

Women's 100 fly *

Women's 200 fly (see WR)

Women's 200 IM (see WR)

Women's 400 IM (see WR)

Women's 400 free relay: 3:33.76, Netherlands (Dekker, Kromowidjojo, Heemskerk, Veldhuis)

Women's 800 free relay (see WR)

Women's 400 medley relay (see WR)

Continental Records – Womens (44)

Africa (9)

Africa – women's 100 free: 55.17, Lize-Mari Retief, South Africa

Africa – women's 400 free: 4:08.38, Wendy Trott, South Africa

Africa – women's 800 free: 8:26.21, Wendy Trott, South Africa

Africa – women's 100 back (see WR)

Africa – women's 200 back (see WR)

Africa – women's 100 fly: 58.20, Lize-Mari Retief, South Africa

Africa – women's 200 fly: 2:09.41, Katheryn Meaklim, South Africa

Africa – women's 200 IM: 2:08.59, Kirsty Coventry, Zimbabwe

Africa – women's 400 IM: 4:29.89, Kirsty Coventry, Zimbabwe

Americas (9)

Americas – women's 50 free: 24.07, Dara Torres, USA
Americas – women's 100 free (equaled): 53.39, Natalie Coughlin, USA
Americas – women's 200 free: 1:55.78, Katie Hoff, USA
Americas – women's 100 back: 58.94, Natalie Coughlin, USA (relay lead-off)
Americas – women's 200 breaststroke (see WR)
Americas – women's 100 fly: 57.08, Christine Magnuson, USA
Americas – women's 400 free relay: 3:34.33, USA
Americas – women's 800 free relay: 7:46.33, USA
Americas – women's 400 medley relay: 3:53.30, USA

Asia (8)

Asia – women's 100 free: 53.34, Yingwen Zhu, China
Asia – women's 200 free: 1:55.05, Jiaying Pang, China
Asia – women's 200 back: 2:07.13, Reiko Nakamura, Japan
Asia – women's 100 fly: 57.54, Li Tao, Singapore
Asia – women's 200 fly (see WR)
Asia – women's 400 free relay: 3:35.64, China
Asia – women's 800 free relay: 7:45.93, China
Asia – women's 400 medley relay: 3:56.11, China

Europe (7)

Europe – women's 50 free (see Olympic Record)
Europe – women's 200 free (see WR)
Europe – women's 800 free (see WR)
Europe – women's 100 back: 59.05, Gemma Spofforth, Great Britain (relay lead-off)
Europe – women's 100 breaststroke: 1:06.08, Yuliya Efimova, Russia
Europe – women's 200 breaststroke: 2:23.02, Sara Nordenstam, Norway
Europe – women's 800 free relay: 7:49.76, Italy
Europe – women's 400 medley relay: 3:57.50, Great Britain

Oceania (11)

Oceania – women's 200 free (equaled): 1:56.60, Stephanie Rice, Australia (relay lead-off)
Oceania – women's 400 free: 4:04.16, Bronte Barratt, Australia
Oceania – women's 800 free: 8:22.81, Kylie Palmer, Australia
Oceania – women's 100 back: 59.33, Emily Seebohm, Australia (relay lead-off)
Oceania – women's 200 back: 2:08.09, Meagen Nay, Australia
Oceania – women's 100 fly: 56.73, Libby Trickett, Australia
Oceania – women's 200 IM (see WR)
Oceania – women's 400 IM (see WR)
Oceania – women's 400 free relay: 3:35.05, Australia
Oceania – women's 800 free relay (see WR)
Oceania – women's 400 medley relay (see WR)

World Records – Mens (11)

Men's 100 free: 47.05, Eamon Sullivan, Australia (semi 2) 47.20, Alain Bernard, France (semi 1) 47.24, Eamon Sullivan, Australia (relay lead off) (old = 47.50, Alain Bernard, France, March 2008)
Men's 200 free: 1:42.96, Michael Phelps, USA (old = 1:43.86, Phelps, March 2007)
Men's 100 back: 52.54, Aaron Peirsol, USA (old = 52.89, Peirsol, July 2008)
Men's 200 back: 1:53.94, Ryan Lochte, USA (old = 1:54.32, Lochte-March 2007 & Aaron Peirsol, USA-July 2008)
Men's 100 breaststroke: 58.91, Kosuke Kitajima, Japan (old = 59.13, Brendan Hansen, USA, August 2006)
Men's 200 fly: 1:52.03, Michael Phelps, USA (old = 1:52.09, Phelps, March 2007)
Men's 200 IM: 1:54.23, Michael Phelps, USA (old = 1:54.80, Phelps, July 2008)
Men's 400 IM: 4:03.84, Michael Phelps, USA (old = 4:05.25, Phelps, June 2008)
Men's 400 free relay: 3:08.24, USA (Phelps, Weber-Gale, Jones, Lezak)-finals 3:12.23, USA (Adrian, Jones, Wildman-Tobriner, Grevers)-prelims (old = 3:12.46, USA, August 2006)
Men's 800 free relay: 6:58.56, USA (Phelps, Lochte, Berens, Vanderkaay) (old = 7:03.24, USA, March 2007)
Men's 400 medley relay: 3:29.34, USA (Peirsol, Hansen, Phelps, Lezak) (old = 3:30.68, USA, August 2004)

Olympic Records – Mens (15)

Men's 50 free: 21.30, Cesar Cielo, Brazil
Men's 100 free (see WR)
Men's 200 free (see WR)
Men's 400 free *
Men's 1500 free: 14:38.92, Grant Hackett, Australia (prelims)
Men's 100 back (see WR)
Men's 200 back (see WR)
Men's 100 breaststroke (see WR)
Men's 200 breaststroke: 2:07.64, Kosuke Kitajima, Japan
Men's 100 fly: 50.58, Michael Phelps, USA
Men's 200 fly (see WR)
Men's 200 IM (see WR)
Men's 400 IM (see WR)
Men's 400 free relay (see WR)

Men's 800 free relay (see WR)
Men's 400 medley relay (see WR)

Continental Records – Mens (59)

Africa (13)

Africa – men's 50 free: 21.67, Roland Schoeman, South Africa
Africa – men's 100 free: 48.00, Lyndon Ferns, South Africa
Africa – men's 400 free: 3:43.45, Oussama Mellouli, Tunisia
Africa – men's 1500 free: 14:40.84, Oussama Mellouli, Tunisia
Africa – men's 100 back: 53.75, Gerhard Zandberg, South Africa
Africa – men's 200 back: 1:58.61, George du Rand, South Africa
Africa – men's 100 breaststroke: 59.96, Cameron van der Burgh, South Africa
Africa – men's 200 breaststroke: 2:10.06, Neil Versfeld, South Africa
Africa – men's 100 fly: 51.14, Jason Dunford, Kenya
Africa – men's 200 IM: 1:59.22, Darian Townsend, South Africa
Africa – men's 400 free relay: 3:12.66, South Africa
Africa – men's 800 free relay: 7:10.91, South Africa
Africa – men's 400 medley relay: 3:33.70, South Africa

Americas (12)

Americas – men's 50 free (see Olympic Record)
Americas – men's 100 free: 47.51, Michael Phelps, USA (relay lead-off)
Americas – men's 200 free (see WR)
Americas – men's 400 free: 3:42.78, Larsen Jensen, USA
Americas – men's 1500 free: 14:40.84, Ryan Cochrane, Canada
Americas – men's 100 back (see WR)
Americas – men's 200 back (see WR)
Americas – men's 200 fly (see WR)
Americas – men's 200 IM (see WR)
Americas – men's 400 IM (see WR)
Americas – men's 400 free relay (see WR)
Americas – men's 800 free relay (see WR)

Asia (12)

Asia – men's 200 free: 1:44.85, Tae-Hwan Park, Korea
Asia – men's 400 free: 3:41.86, Tae-Hwan Park, Korea
Asia – men's 800 free: 7:48.22, Lin Zhang, China (split)
Asia – men's 1500 free: 14:45.84, Lin Zhang, China
Asia – men's 100 back: 53.69, Junichi Miyashita, Japan
Asia – men's 100 breaststroke (see WR)
Asia – men's 100 fly: 51.50, Takuro Fujii, Japan
Asia – men's 200 fly: 1:52.97, Takeshi Matsuda, Japan
Asia – men's 200 IM: 1:58.22, Ken Takakuwa, Japan
Asia – men's 400 free relay: 3:16.16, China
Asia – men's 800 free relay: 7:09.12, Japan
Asia – men's 400 medley relay: 3:31.18, Japan

Europe (13)

Europe – men's 100 free: 47.20, Alain Bernard, France
Europe – men's 1500 free: 14:41.13, Yuriy Prilukov, Russia
Europe – men's 100 back: 53.06, Arkady Vatchanin, Russia
Europe – men's 200 back: 1:54.93, Arkady Vatchanin, Russia
Europe – men's 100 breaststroke: 59.16, Alexander Dale Oen, Norway
Europe – men's 200 breaststroke: 2:08.68, Daniel Gyurta, Hungary
Europe – men's 100 fly: 50.59, Milorad Cavic, Serbia
Europe – men's 200 fly: 1:52.70, Laszlo Cseh, Hungary
Europe – men's 200 IM: 1:56.52, Laszlo Cseh, Hungary
Europe – men's 400 IM: 4:06.16, Laszlo Cseh, Hungary
Europe – men's 400 free relay: 3:08.32, France
Europe – men's 800 free relay: 7:03.70, Russia
Europe – men's 400 medley relay: 3:31.92, Russia

Oceania (9)

Oceania – men's 100 free (see WR)
Oceania – men's 100 back: 52.97, Hayden Stoeckel, Australia
Oceania – men's 200 back: 1:56.39, Hayden Stoeckel, Australia
Oceania – men's 100 breaststroke: 59.65, Brenton Rickard, Australia
Oceania – men's 200 breaststroke: 2:08.88, Brenton Rickard, Australia
Oceania – men's 100 fly: 51.12, Andrew Lauterstein, Australia
Oceania – men's 200 fly: 1:54.35, Moss Burmester, New Zealand
Oceania – men's 400 free relay: 3:09.91, Australia
Oceania – men's 400 medley relay: 3:30.04, Australia ■

Report on the ASCA World Clinic

Las Vegas, September 2-7th 2008

Terry Denison, Chairman of BSCTA

The 40th ASCA World Clinic, was held this year in Las Vegas. There were over 1600 delegates of whom 250 came from overseas, representing 30 different nations, which gave the Clinic a truly "World" flavour. As always the Clinic was well organized with Certification Schools running on Tuesday and Wednesday and the main part of the World Clinic operating in a number of different tracks to cover Senior Swimming, Age Group Swimming, Masters, High School Swimming and Sports Science programmes. In addition, there were 120 exhibitors and all gathered together in the Riviera Hotel on the Las Vegas "strip."

Congratulations to John Leonard and the ASCA staff on their excellent organization. Below are my notes and thoughts of the presentations which I attended at the Clinic.

Bob Bowman opened the World Clinic as the keynote speaker on the Wednesday evening with an excellent presentation on the "Ways to success" as he had seen them in the International Business Daily.

1. Thinks positively. Think success, not failure. "Worrying is negative goal setting." Never give up on an athlete. You should always see the best in your swimmers.
2. Decide upon your true dreams and goals and write them down. This makes them real for you. He told the story of Michael Phelps, who broke his wrist in the Autumn of 2007 but who was back in training the next day and did 2 x 1.5 hour sessions on the stationary bike, as an illustration of someone with a dream in which he believed and who was always going to find a way to achieve it.
3. "WIN" = What is Important Now. Focus on the detail of what you are doing and do it now. After getting your plan in place, take action and get on with it.
4. Never stop learning. Go to other coaches, attend clinics and ask questions. Be willing to share your ideas. What a great philosophy this is from the World's leading Swim Coach. It is exactly the message that was given at our Conference last year by Eddie Reese and earlier by Mark Schubert.
5. Be persistent and work hard. "Success is a marathon." There are no short cuts. Inspiration does not come without perspiration. Do not allow other to distract you from your main goals.
6. Analyse the details. You need to know the facts to arrive at a decision. An expert is someone who has made every mistake that there is to make. "Good judgment

comes from experience but experience comes from the results of bad judgments."

7. Deal with people effectively. Have many tools in your toolbox. Identify what makes people tick and then try to sell them your ideas. Everyone needs a pat on the back now and again. Remember that world record holders are very special people who do not fit into set patterns. You have to find the way to motivate and support them continuously. Do not expect everything to progress smoothly but work for long term success.
8. Be honest and dependable and take responsibility yourself. We all make the decisions which determine our own future. It is no-one else's fault. The grass is not greener on the other side of the fence. Work with what you have got and hold on to your dreams and goals.

Bob is a very "polished" speaker and this was a great start to the Clinic setting the theme of hard work and persistence as the route to success.

Ray Benecki gave two very honest talks about the development of Kate Ziegler. The first talk outlined her progress up to breaking the world record for 1500FS in 2007 and the second talk was a very honest appraisal of her preparation for Beijing and of the many pressures that she and Ray had to deal with following the World Record in 2007. It would seem that Kate was badly affected by the additional demands for appearances and photo shoots after breaking the world record, and it is a lesson to everyone of how we need to "protect our stars from the many demands that are made upon their time when it is the continuance of good training that is the key to future success. Ray felt that Kate did not have sufficient rest in the summer of 2007 and was not able to deal with the extra demands of Olympic Year. "By February she was exhausted."

Mark Schubert gave his "Olympic Team Report" outlining some of his thoughts on Beijing.

- He highlighted great techniques as a major cause of improvements at the Games
- The LZR also had a big effect
- Speaking about the success of Michael Phelps, Mark said that the outstanding thing about him is the way he can compartmentalize what he has to do and focus on each one in turn
- The US Relays were very special. This was all about "doing it for the USA"

- The Men's 100 Fly emphasized the importance of finishing well. "It takes 6.5lbs of pressure to stop the clock"
- Rebecca Soni was exceptional. Totally self-reliant
- Natalie Coughlin swam 11 events and won 11 medals
- Eric Shanteau was diagnosed with cancer 2 weeks before the Olympic Trials. He has now had surgery and is doing fine.
- Mark challenged US Coaches "to bring back pride into US distance swimming"
- Mark gave examples of some of the great training sets accomplished at the pre-Olympic Camp and the great team spirit which they inspired
- He then outlined the strengths and weaknesses of US Swimming and set goals for London 2012 amongst which were:
 1. The goal must be improved. USA has 50% of the swimmers in the world and should be aiming for at least 50% of the medals in London.
 2. The US needs more depth and stronger relays
 3. The challenge to coaches is to develop a winning culture
 4. Too many US coaches are preparing swimmers for college and expecting the college coaches to move them to the next level. Other nations are producing 16 year old girls and 19 year old boys who can challenge the world and the US needs to do the same.

Gregg Troy spoke on the development of Ryan Lochte. He said that when Ryan was recruited to college he had no "national senior cuts" and no National Age Group records. He was recruited as a distance freestyler and was never afraid to do the work. His progression in LC metres was:

	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08
400 IM	4.22	4.16	4.12	4.11	4.09	4.06
200 Back	2.09			1.54.3		

Ryan was well coached by his father and mother as a young swimmer. Training was low key and volume was not high but there was a strong focus on technique and racing skills. Ryan did very little strength training. His father was "tough" with him in terms of never accepting excuses for not being able to do things so that he developed a great "can do" attitude. Ryan has a very relaxed but intense approach. He can shake off a poor performance and move on. He has high aspirations and goals but does not publicise them. He loves to race and is passionate about the sport. He does not like to lose at anything, even in training and will sometimes leave 5-7 seconds (instead of 5) behind the swimmer in front and try to catch them.

Gregg outlined Ryan's training programme in great detail from his arrival at college in 2002 right up to the Olympic Plan of 06/08. He started his Olympic Plan from the summer of 2006 because Ryan had then graduated from college and was able to follow a modified programme aimed specifically at the Olympics. He trained quality 4x per week and used racing opportunities such as the World SC as part of the Olympic preparation.

From 2006, Ryan was not racing in the college programme so sets were devised in training to simulate racing.

e.g.:

- hard kick for 30 secs on wall followed by 50 breast fast;
- broken 400's but they must be relevant and have no more than 10 secs rest at breaks;
- quality 200's – Greg believes that to swim a good 400IM you should be able to swim each 200 stroke within 5 secs of the national record for that event;
- quality days back to back or quality swims in same session to replicate the 200BK/200IM clash in Olympic Programme;
- Meet WU was well rehearsed and was followed by a quality set every 2 or 3 weeks to simulate the Meet

Gregg begins his taper 6 weeks out when he drops metres by 10-15%; at 4 weeks out this drops by 20-30%; and 2 weeks out drops to 40% of normal metres. There is less stress on quality kick to ensure that legs are well rested. Weight programme also eases back from 6 weeks out.

Bob Bowman gave a second presentation focusing on the development of Michael Phelps.

Michael held National Age Group records from age 10/11 years (1996) and swam with a group of 13 to 15 year olds at that time. At 11/12, he won every race he entered and Bob was continually trying to motivate him by finding things that he could do better. At age 13/14, he swam all events in Meets plus relays and often swam 21 races over 3 days. These Meets were State Meets taking place 3 or 4 times per year. Michael also swam on senior relays at these Meets. At these young ages, he was a fast reviving freestyler who did not like to kick and Bob had to work hard to make him do a 6 beat kick, even to the point of sending him out of sessions if he broke down on 6 beat. Michael's mum was entirely supportive of this once the reasoning was explained to her.

At age 13, he was swimming 7 sessions per week as 1 per day and doing lots of kick.

e.g.:

K5x100yds on 1.40; 5x100 on 1.35; 1min rest and then K5x100yds on 1.30. These intervals were gradually reduced so that eventually Michael was going off 1.30; 1.20; 1.10 turn rounds.

Through this period of age group swimming, Michael swam 1 session per day 4.30pm to 6.30pm with dryland work 6.30 to 7.00pm. On Saturday and Sunday he did morning sessions. All strokes, along with distance FS, were covered during the week and Fly was done in small sets throughout the week so as to maintain good technique.

Example sets were:

1. 200FC on 2.30; 4x200IM on 2.40; 400FC on 5; 3x200IM on 2.35; 600FC on 7.30; 2x200IM on 2.30 (target to add up to 400IM best); 800FC on 10; 1x200IM best possible time
2. Backstroke set: 4x200 on 2.40; 8x50 Drill; 3x200 on 2.30; 8x50 Drill; 2x200 on 2.25; 8x50 Drill; 1x200 timed
3. Breast sets worked on part strokes – Kick, Pull, Drill – as (5x50 Drill + 1x50 Fast)x8
4. Distance FS 10x500 or 10x400IM
5. Friday was a low key session to set up Saturday which would be more quality eg (4x50 stroke + 100Kick same stroke full out + 200 easy) x “X” Sunday would be a drill session

Bob then gave examples of the type of sets he does today with some of his pre-Olympic sets. He emphasized that Michael has always worked on being strong off the last wall and this is done constantly in training with a good last turn and kick from the wall. As regards Dryland Training, Michael has done mainly body weight exercises plus Med Ball. He began weights when he first went to college and used weights 2x per week. His training cycle now includes 3 morning sessions per week devoted to power work with paddles and pulleys. The afternoon sessions cover all the energy systems in rotation. Michael’s race warm up has changed little since his early age group days and consists of 800 mixer; K600; P400; 200IM drill; 6 – 8x25 fast/easy; 100 easy. Swim down protocol is based on lactate recovery and usually takes about 20 minutes.

The Doc Counsilman Memorial Lecture was given by Greg McMillan, a middle/long distance athletics coach. Greg began by quoting Russ Pate who said “Physiology will never teach us how to train. We have already learned the best methods of training from previous coaches. Science will simply help us to refine training.” For max training adaptation for middle distance running, Greg believes that 60-90 miles per week is needed. The general fundamentals are:

1. Design training to develop each system of the body: the metabolic system; the neuromuscular system; the musculoskeletal system; the mental system.
2. Optimal stress + optimal rest = optimal progress
3. Smart training design has 75% as general training and 25% as race specific training. The body likes variety

across all the energy systems but training should become more specific as the race nears.

4. The main job of the coach is to maintain motivation and self-confidence of the athlete. Set up training sessions to yield positive results. He quoted Arthur Lydiard “Champions are everywhere. All you need to do is to train them properly.”
5. Greg spoke at length about the value of altitude training in developing endurance athletes.

Sid Cassidy gave an overview of Open Water Swimming. He went through the history of the sport from Matthew Webb in 1875 to the present day and gave particular credit to Alan Clarkson (GB) as Chair of FINA Open Water for being instrumental in having OW included in the 1991 FINA World Champs. Sid spoke of the complex Olympic selection policy which had resulted in only Russia having 2 swimmers in the Mens 10k and Brazil, GB and Germany having 2 women in the Womens 10k. He then showed videos of the Men’s Ready Room and the 10k race. He congratulated GB on its National Plan begun in 1997 of encouraging junior distance swimmers to take up OW swimming and said that this had laid the foundation for GB to win 3 out of the 6 OW medals in Beijing.

Gregg Troy gave a second presentation and stressed that at this moment with the “Michael Phelps Factor” post Beijing, US Swimming has a great opportunity to develop and expand. There is a growing demand in society for more discipline amongst young people and a growing concern with poor health amongst the young. We should make the most of these opportunities and offer challenging programmes that will encourage the “talented young” to be even better. He spoke of his own personal swimming history and emphasized that there are 3 ways to improve:

1. Swim more – brings greater strength, speed and technique
2. Swim better – learn all that you can
3. Swim faster – more work at race pace

Greg outlined the programme which he runs at the University of Florida. Again there is a strong emphasis on kick. He spoke of a 26 week cycle with one month of general fitness and then monthly cycles thereafter. Once every month, he does a 200IM test set of 9 – 12x200IM timed. 30% of his work is done LC and the rest SC.

Dr. Paul Stricker, a pediatrician and US National Team Doctor, gave 2 presentations on the science of child development and on nutrition. Much of it was in line with our LTAD principles but it was interesting to hear it presented slightly differently. Dr. Stricker said that “sport readiness” combines a number of different factors. Swimmers need neuromotor readiness, aerobic maturation and cognitive skills for regular training. Sports skill acquisition is sequential, in that, as young people develop so they become

ready for the training developments that we offer through LTAD. These skills will be acquired in the same sequence but at different rates for each individual. Hence, biological age is more important than chronological age in designing training prescriptions. Dr. Stricker progressed through each of the different stages of child development from age 2-5 years up to adulthood. He emphasized skill development at ages 6-9yrs with no emphasis on winning but much use of constructive correction and praise.

Dr. Stricker's second talk was on nutrition and he began by saying that "nutrition can profoundly influence the molecular and cellular processes that occur in the muscle during exercise and recovery." He spoke against supplements which he thought could be dangerous. Vitamins are very necessary but they should be from natural food sources. Dr. Stricker explained the importance of nutrition for growth and repair and for the maximum adaptation to exercise and recovery. This was a very thorough explanation of nutritional needs of young people and can be followed up on Paul's website at www.paulstricker.com.

Richard Schoulberg spoke on age group swimming through to seniors. Richard runs a High School and Club Programme at Germantown Academy. His principal rule for all swimmers is "Don't come if you don't want to work." When assessing young swimmers Richard looks for "feel" and for the "sparkle in their eyes." Every new swimmer is tested across the 15+yds width of the pool. Richard tries to teach "fitness for life" to young people rather than just preparing for Meets. The programme offers training 5 mornings per week and each evening plus a 4 hour session on Saturday morning and 2 hours on Sunday. Land work takes place M, W, Fr and consists of Med Ball, VASA, inclined bench and hop blocks along with body weight work. On Tuesday and Thursday, they do rope climbing and vertical kicking with weights.

Age Groupers (11-13yrs) train 3-4 days per week in 70, 90 or 120 min blocks depending upon training status. All age groupers are encouraged to take part in other sports. As puberty approaches they also start land work with body weight exercises. Richard believes that it is important for coaches to monitor every session. If a swimmer is struggling then he/she will be moved into a slower lane or encouraged to do drill work. "Everybody has a bad day but we must try to keep it positive." Richard's advice is "know your swimmers; watch their training; and be aware of how they are responding. Be honest and consistent with them."

Age Group Panel – this was a good session of 3 hours with 6 coaches from the top 10 age group clubs in the US answering questions put by the Chairman and submitted earlier by coaches. All the major issues were discussed – move ups, test sets, talented young ones, goal setting, progression planning, self-evaluation and the evaluation of your coaching team.

I thought that this was a very useful session. I was surprised how big some of these clubs are – they ranged in numbers

from 700 – 1500 – but all have to deal with the problems that face all coaches of age group swimmers and it was interesting to hear the responses. I wonder how many GB coaches have a regular process of evaluation of themselves and their programmes at the end of each season and how this is best carried out.

Dick Hannula – ran two excellent sessions on stroke drills and stroke corrections. This was a very comprehensive look at all the strokes with examples of corrective drills being shown on video. Once again, this sort of session is the "bread and butter" of what all coaches have to do every day and it is always helpful to share ideas on drills and on how we attempt to correct stroke deficiencies.

Teri McKeever – spoke on the programme at Cal Berkley which has been instrumental in developing Natalie Coughlin, winner of 11 medals at the Olympics. The key points were:

1. Adaptability – go with the flow. The ability to adapt to events whilst keeping your focus on the main goals is vital.
2. Communication – speak to the athletes and to other coaches. Listen and learn. Share what you feel about the sets that you do and encourage the swimmers to share their thoughts with you. Respond to individuals in ways that suit them.
3. Initiative and empowerment – teach in concepts, e.g., "are you feeling the water?" Use captains as leaders and emphasise the team concept. Everybody matters.
4. Believe in yourself and trust in the process. Sell the programme and develop belief in the success of your programme.
5. Accountability – ask the swimmers; have some time for yourself; be consistent. Be prepared to deal with difficult questions – "the elephant in the room." Be a constant learner yourself.

This was another excellent ASCA Clinic with an opportunity to hear great coaches sharing their knowledge and with the opportunity to "chat" with coaches about topics common to us all. I would encourage all coaches – young and old – to attend Coaching Clinics and Conferences whenever possible. Our "home" BSCTA Conference should be a "must." It is your chance to learn and to share your knowledge with others. The next step is to visit an overseas Conference such as ASCA where you can meet different coaches. All Conferences provide you with the ideal opportunity to learn and, just as importantly, to regenerate your own enthusiasm and energy. There will always be a benefit to you and to your programme.

Terry Denison
Chairman BSCTA