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This newsletter presents something a little different from the standard – besides being VERY late and VERY long! We have a closing message from our outgoing president; an honest and inspiring account of the rewards and sacrifices of competitive swimming as experienced by one of our graduating swimmers; a thought-provoking article from the American Swim Club Association; and, of course, our final “Swimmers of the Month” for the 2008-2009 season. Print it off and read it by the pool, by the lake, or wherever your down time is this summer.

You'll be glad you did...

President's Message

- Robert Brown

This is the end of swimming year and I wondered how successful it was. It is very easy to measure performance with personal bests; how many seconds were taken off, but watching the swimmers at practices and swim meets, I know there is much more.

Skills, maturity, attitudes, personal development through failures and successes; it is much more than just a 'time'. It is the 10 month journey that is important; the race is just a part of that journey.

I would like to thank our board and the many people you helped with organizing activities, double thanks for those that took on multiple positions. It has been a lot of work at times, but for me personally a great experience where I also learned from failure and hopefully turned in a few successes along the way.

I also wanted to share a bit of our family experience with you, this being my last year as president and with Alex headed off to university (Ian is still around for another year). Swimming has been a big part of our lives for the last 10 years or so since Alex

first joined the club, shortly followed by Ian. We try to take a holistic view of it all, go with the positive and balance out the negative. The commitment for all of us has sometimes been overwhelming and focusing on a single sport limits what other experiences you can have. It also provides the environment to learn what it means and takes to become an 'expert' in something. The question often comes up, is it worth it?

The other week, Alex and I were driving home from the Canada/Quebec Cup and Alex was excited about swimming with Phelps, being accepted to UBC and qualifying for Nationals. It was a 90-degree contrast to a conversation we had in a similar situation about 4-5 years ago when Alex seriously considered quitting. I thought it would be an interesting perspective, (maybe self-indulgent,) for other swimmers and families to hear.

Sometimes things come easy, but more often good things come with hard work and even then there is no guarantee. If you are only interested in the final outcome (time), then much is missed. Alex provides some interesting thoughts about what she missed because of her swimming journey. Having seen several years of graduating swimmers, I don't think it is limited to her.

Be a member-at-large!

To Swim or Not to Swim...

- Alex Brown

The question of whether to continue to swim is something almost every swimmer will ask at least once. It's a huge commitment. Swimming has opened doors of opportunities for me. There have been tough times and sure a few doors have closed but I strongly feel that swimming was the best choice for me.

The hardest decision time for me about "continuing to swim" was at the beginning of high school. I still

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remember a six hour car ride with my dad coming home from the island. I didn't think swimming was worth all the sacrifices and I knew it meant missing out on countless nights with my school friends. I'll never forget what my Dad told me, "All those parties, sure they're fun, but they're all the same. Looking back I don't feel as if I missed out on much not going to them" (in high school he was involved in time consuming sports as well). My argument at the time was that I wanted to have fun and that I didn't care if those parties didn't stand out when I was forty, I wanted a chance to have fun through high-school...you know, 'live in the moment'. It was a tough decision, but decided to give it some time.

High-school groups really started to change at the beginning of grade 11 and the difference was significant in grade 12. You began seeing people in the successful group; those who had set themselves up for the years ahead (most of them going onto post secondary education, but all with a solid background and opportunities) and the unsuccessful group; people who maybe hadn't focused enough energy into a future and were quickly regretting it. The life of the 'partiers', no longer seemed so appealing. I'm not saying that the only way to be in the successful group is to swim, I just feel as if swimming forced me and helped me to stay focused and in (what I would consider) the successful group. There are many skills that can be learned in the sport, for example, goal-setting, which teaches us how to plan ahead in order to achieve difficult dreams (....Sean does this with us at the beginning of every year).

I think it's important as a graduating senior swimmer to tell you my perspective. Maybe it'll be more believable than your parents or your coach telling you the same thing because I am similar in age and have just gone through it.

So here it is: swimming is work. In and out of the pool it's mentally and physically draining and sometimes it all doesn't seem worth it, particularly when you're not racing well. Sometimes it feels as if

you're putting more in than you're getting out. I agree with my Dad now. I am one hundred percent sure that swimming was the right choice for me and I don't feel as if I missed out on much. I would contribute much of my success in the pool (of course) and out of the pool to the sport.

The things you learn and the opportunities you receive are sometime subtle, but as I look onto a new road the lessons and opportunities appear to be more important than I initially thought.

What about my friends? The friends I have gained through the sport can never be replaced. We grew up together and experienced a closeness that I would never experienced with people at school. You can depend on your teammates to be there. The Trent Swim Club is a family.

Next year I'll be heading out to UBC. The university seemed a perfect combination of top academics with top athletics. It's going to be tough, especially getting used to a higher volume training program, new coaching, and of course, university but I'm excited for a change and challenge.

Swimming really helped me push for what I wanted. I have always loved BC, but I would feel much more intimidated and hesitant to go to UBC if there wasn't a community already there. Swimmers always seem to be able to relate to one another. You can see that on the pool deck. Some of us only see each other a few times a year but are still able to remain close friends.

So, I guess my goal was to help the rest of you guys out. Tell you what I think about everything after going through it. We'll all have similar experiences. Hopefully you can take something from this so when the sport gets stressful, and there isn't any spare time, and you're just out of your mind exhausted with school, friends, and swimming, you'll have something... hopefully motivation... to keep going.

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If you're having trouble and need to talk to someone or ask questions don't be afraid to go to a senior swimmer. We love knowing we can be helpful. We're all apart of the Trent Swim Club and we're all here for each other.

Good luck next year!

Alex.

Swimming with Phelps... one of those opportunities...

As I'm sure many of you are aware Michael Phelps was recently in Montreal competing at the Canada Cup. Being able to see him prepare and race in the same pool was what I would consider an opportunity of a lifetime. You always knew when Phelps was on deck. You could see it in all the other swimmer's faces... particularly the girls. It was unbelievable to think that THE Michael Phelps was here on with us on our Canadian pool deck.

After getting over the initial thrill of Phelps being on deck (it never completely went away) I began to notice a few things, and see him a little differently.

Phelps carries a certain presence around him. And I'm not talking about the 'multiple gold medal winner, multiple world recorder' presence. Behind the blocks he stands right out but he's not dressed significantly different than anyone else. He's wearing a speedo suit, wearing a white cap, and has a white towel around his shoulders. It's his confidence and his calmness that separates him from the majority of swimmers.

Before his race he's not jumping, stretching or pacing like all the other swimmers. He just stands. It seemed like he was completely confident in himself and his preparation and he didn't need to do anything; he was just ready.

There was another side though... Sure he has a few more bodyguards and cameras following him

around than the rest of us, but he's at the same meet, warming up in the same pool... or lane :), and waiting behind the same blocks with the rest of us. For some reason you expect him to do everything differently, but then you realize, he's a swimmer just like everyone else here. Sure some swimmers have more talent than others, but seeing him as a swimmer instead of the athlete superstar seemed to show that all those dreams aren't as far away as you may have originally thought.

Coaches' Corner

- Sean Dwyer

The following is a newsletter article that I picked up from the American Swim Coaches Association. I thought that it made for some interesting reading and I thought that it might serve as a break from my own writing and offer a different perspective...

News For SWIM PARENTS

Published by The American Club Swimming Association
5101 NW 21 Ave., Suite 200
Fort Lauderdale FL 33309

"That's Not It"

Last week, we had a Mom come to us and "inform us" that her 13-year-old daughter would be gone for two weeks vacation in late June, maybe another week after that.

Her daughter was not much of an age group swimmer, but she has some endurance capacity and comes regularly to workout at 5:30 am and again at 5:30 pm daily. She works hard, demonstrates little talent, but lots of determination.

Her mother is not athletic and clearly does not value athletics. We expressed our dismay that she'd be missing for 2-3 weeks in the middle of the most

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important training of the summer. Her mother's response?

"Who cares, she'll never be an Olympic swimmer, so what does it matter really?"

This is a dagger in the heart to any swimming coach, and it is to me.

If we only cared about and worked hard with, those 52 people who will eventually, once every four years, go off to the Olympic Games, it would be a small, empty and meaningless sport.

My response was "That's really not it."

What is it?

It is the fact that young people need to learn to dedicate themselves to something that is difficult, something that requires perseverance, guts and the daily determination to get your butt out of bed and go out and push your body till it can't go anymore.

Why do they need to learn this?

Because their lives are too easy, too soft, too catered-for. Too many people carry them, make excuses for them, never allowing them to try to be "heroic." Is it "heroic" to get your butt out of bed and go swim at 5 am? It is if you haven't done it before. Is it heroic to "make" 10x200 fly on 4:00? It is if you haven't ever done it before. Is it heroic to finish your swim and turn around and cheer for the teammate who is even further behind than you are, and is struggling to make the set? Need I say it? It is if you've never done it before.

And that is what "It" is about. About doing what you haven't done before. And learning that sometimes you succeed. Sometimes you fail. If you fail, you go again until you learn to succeed.

It's not about being an Olympian.
It's about being Olympian. Learning to be a hero.

And what it takes to learn that.

Or, you can Be Comfortable and teach your child that its more important to be Comfortable.

So, if that's your choice, I only have one question?

What will happen to your child on the day when they are made "uncomfortable" by life?

Reply from George Block, Alamo Area Aquatics Assoc., Level 5 Senior ...

Your article really struck home as it reminded me of Robert Reyes – arguably the worst swimmer to ever go through our program – rescuing four of his buddies from choppy, night seas... a hero. Robert Reyes swam on our high school team and he was always the slowest guy in the race, but he would swim ANY race and go all out, all the way.

He was the same way in water polo. We have seven high schools sharing the same pool, so we don't have any weekday games. Every Saturday they play 3 or 4 games, 3 or 4 hours of wrestling up and down the pool. Robert Reyes was always the slowest guy, but he would never quit. Even then, the real reason he was swimming was to help him when he went in to the Navy. He had his goal way back then and was preparing back "in Taft High School" for when his moment came. I told our kids that the famous Olympians actually have it easy. They know exactly when their moment is going to come. They can prepare precisely for that moment and they have a lot of help getting them there. For the rest of us it's a lot different.

Your phrase to the mother, "being Olympian" hit it perfectly. All of us will have our "Olympics," when the very best we can bring is called from us. We don't get to know when that moment is going to be. We have to constantly prepare. We may have no one to help us. No one may ever know.

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It may come like it did for Robert, as a physical test on a dark night, in choppy seas, with the flaming wreckage of a helicopter still floating in the water. It more often than not won't be a physical test, but a

moral one -- that integrity thing. I tried to explain to my team that the reason they have to prepare every day is because they have to be prepared every day. "Being Olympian." That is it.

Man Rescues Navy Pals

By Amy Dorsett - Express-News Staff Writer

A San Antonio sailor saves four crewmembers after a helicopter crashes into the Mediterranean Sea.

A San Antonio Navy man came to the aid of four comrades in the choppy waters of the Mediterranean Sea last month, rescuing them after their helicopter crashed into the sea. Petty Officer 2nd class Robert Reyes, assigned to a helicopter combat support squadron aboard the USS Kearsarge, made the rescue June 22 when a helicopter flying a routine search-and-rescue mission crashed into the water. Reyes, 21, whose boyhood love of helicopters propelled him to enlist in the Navy three years ago, quickly suited up for what was to be his first rescue mission. Already feeling the rush of adrenaline, Reyes' emotions were running even higher because the crewmembers were like family. "Just the day before we flew together," Reyes said. "While I was dressing out, I was trying to calm myself down."

Within minutes, Reyes' helicopter was hovering in the nighttime sky above the downed chopper. Reyes, a trained rescue swimmer, jumped from his helicopter. "I started swimming up to them, seeing if they were alert," Reyes said. One by one, Reyes helped each crewmember swim to the pickup point, where they were hoisted into the waiting helicopter. Navy officials say the four who were rescued are quick to call Reyes a hero, a title he brushes off. "When they say that, I just think I'm happy they're there," Reyes said, adding some of his water skills were acquired while on Taft High School swimming team.

Newsletter Notes

Please send suggestions, comments or questions re: newsletter content to cbartoli@sympatico.ca. The mandate of this newsletter is to keep every TSC family informed of the policies, procedures and events in our club. If you have a question or concern, there's a good chance others feel the same way. I, for one, would like to know why we get so many darn emails! Any other issues? Let me know!

Turn the page to read about the awesome accomplishments of our TSC swimmers. These individuals have been selected by their coaches for going above and beyond in their commitment to the sport. Congratulations to all the "Swimmers of the Month" for the end of the 2008-2009 season.

Wear your cap with pride!

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Swimmers of the Month May – July 2009

Senior - May

Mitchell Illes – Mitchell had a very good month of training and racing in May. Backing up his 100 percent attendance, he had 40 percent best times at the Festival of Spring in Nepean. As a Senior swimmer, best times are not always easy to come by until rested. Mitchell continues to make improvements while fatigued and should do some very fast swimming by the end of the season. Go Mitch!

Senior - June

Alex Brown – Alex had a very good June. In addition to posting perfect attendance for the month (plus a bonus practice!) she had a great month of training and racing. Her big moment came at the Quebec Cup in Montreal where she qualified for Senior Nationals in the 50 breaststroke and made the consolation final where she placed 11th. Alex also had a best time in the 100 breaststroke and placed 14th in the consolation final. Awesome job Alex!

Senior - July

Cynthia Pammatt – July was a good month for Cynthia. Along with perfect attendance for the month, Cynthia had some very good swim meet along the way. At the Junior Provincial Championships she won 4 Gold medals, broke 8 club records and 2 regional records. The next week at Summer Nationals she made consolation finals in the 50 and 100 backstroke and set a regional record in the 50 free. Nice job Cynthia!

Junior - May

Austin Pammatt – Austin has been doing a pretty awesome job this season. He finished out May with 100% attendance and 100% best times at the Festival of Spring. He dropped over 119 seconds over the course of the meet, broke the 100 and 200 fly records for 11-12 year old boys and qualified for Junior provincials in everything he raced, except for the 400 free. Nice job Austin!

Junior - June

Mary Coughlin – Mary has had a very good season and in June she really started to come into her own. Mary had 100% attendance for the month and in addition raced very well at the Huronia Long Course Championship with several best times. Lets keep the momentum going into next season! Way to go Mary!

Junior - July

Austin Pammatt – Austin was on fire for the month of July. He started off with all best times at the Junior Provincial Championships, where he also qualified for the Canadian Age Group Championships in the 200 butterfly. Two weeks later he was off to Montreal for his first Age Group Championships and first outdoor meet. Where he posted best time in his 200 free and 200 IM and just missed best times in his butterfly races. These are some big steps for a guy who just moved up an age group. Great work Austin!

AG – 3 - May

Hailley Guthrie – Hailley put together a very good month in May. She had 100% attendance for the month and at the Festival of Spring she had 100% best times. She dropped over 87 seconds from her events and qualified for Junior Provincials in the 100 free. Hailley's discipline and hard work have really paid off. Way to go Hailley!

AG – 3 - June

Eric Laing – Eric had a good month of training leading up to his final meet of the season – Long Course Junior Provincials. In preparing for Provincials Eric worked hard at improving his efficiency, turns, and underwater work off the walls. All of Eric's work paid off; he had a great meet in London. He swam the 200 m freestyle for the first time long course in an impressive time of 2:40.60. Eric achieved personal bests in all of his other races; taking just over a second off in the 100m backstroke, just over 2 seconds off in the 200m IM,

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and well over 8 seconds off in the 200m backstroke. Congratulations Eric on a very successful season!

AG – 2 - May

Sadie Bartoli – Sadie has been putting together a really good training and racing season. In May, she had 100% attendance and at the Barrie Development meet she improved her races by over 61 seconds and this was with only 4 races! As an older swimmer new to the sport, Sadie is on a steep improvement curve. Keep up the good work Sadie!

AG – 2 - June

Khalid Younis – Khalid maintained 100% attendance for the month of June. Khalid continues to work hard at improving his kicking, and stroke efficiency. During the last quarter of the season Khalid has also demonstrated some emerging positive leadership skills leadership skills – encouraging his team mates during challenging sets, and holding team mates accountable for swimming up to their potential at practice. Leading up to his season ending meet in Collingwood, Khalid did a nice job at focusing on improving his turns, and speed off the walls. Khalid performed well at Collingwood, achieving best times in all but one race, taking off a total of 7.78 seconds. Congratulations Khalid on a very successful season!

AG – 1- April

Brooklynn Davis – (*April swimmer of the month - Sorry Brooklynn – we missed you in the last newsletter!*) Brooklynn has worked extremely hard in all practices. Brooklyn is not afraid of a challenge and is ready to work hard on deck and during dry land. She recently competed at her first swim meet in Barrie, which was quite a positive

experience. Brooklyn has been working hard on her underwater work and extending her reach in all four strokes which paid off as she competed in her first 400 FR and 200IM. Keep up the great work!

AG – 1- May

Reece Rishor - Reece has worked extremely hard since he joined the swim club in January. Reece is always ready for a challenge. In dry land training he is the first one to ask to do more, whatever it may be (ex. Pushups, or sit-ups). All of Reece's strokes have had major improvements. His underwater work is now to the flags which is great and his turns have lots of power behind them. Reece is not afraid to ask questions or take the lead in his lane. Reece recently competed at the Barrie development meet where he took off 5 seconds in his 50 BK and competed in his first 200IM. Keep up the great work!

AG – 1- June

Charlie Murphy - Charlie has worked extremely hard all season long. He has made major improvements to all of his strokes. Particularly his freestyle this year by making it a habit to breath every three strokes during all freestyle sets. Charlie is not afraid to step up and take charge of the lane. He frequently answers questions that other swimmers have with regards to sets as well questions that are asked at meets. Recently Charlie showed leadership at the Collingwood Outdoor Invitational by organizing his team mates doing the 200m Freestyle and Medley relays. He also took off 16 seconds in his 100BR for a time of 1:52.30. Keep up the great work!

Watch for your exclusive TSC “Swimmer of the Month” cap in your mailbox in September! It’s the latest in pool fashion!