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24 June 2009

Volume 2, Issue 1

The June edition of the EU Swim Newsletter highlights the recent successes of two teams from Italy and the Netherlands. INSUBRIKA ASD recently organized a spectacular high-level swimming competition at their base in Northern Italy and achieved success at the recent Italian national championships. Zwemlust Utrecht, a participating team representing the Netherlands at the EU Swimming Invitational in Slupsk this October, saw some excellent results at their national championships. We present both teams' success in this edition of the newsletter.

Next month's newsletter will be published on 20 July. Please do not hesitate to send in your articles by this date. I look forward to hearing from you and hope you enjoy this edition.

Julia Galan
Director, EU Swimming Invitational

INSUBRIKA Success in Organizing the Trofeo Citta di Gallarate

Barbara Allaria
INSUBRIKA ASD, Gallarate (Italy)

Recently, Italian swimming club IN-SUBRIKA organized the XXXI Trofeo Città di Gallarate. The competition was a great success, attracting



over 850 athletes from 36 Italian clubs. Notable swimmers included Massimiliano Rosolino and Emiliano Brembilla from the Italian National Team, who swam two particularly significant races. Rosolino won the gold medal for the 100 freestyle with a time of 51.63. Paolo Villa from Busto Nuoto grabbed the silver medal with a time of 51.83 and Emiliano Brembilla took home the bronze with a time of 51.83. In the 200 freestyle, Brembilla swam a gold medal performance in 1.49.78, while Rosolino earned a silver medal in 1.50.56 and Jarno Limido from INSUBRIKA took home the bronze medal with a time of 1.55.13.

At the end of the weekend, INSUBRIKA won the competition as well as the prizes for the best performances. Nicolò Ossolo won the high point award for his performance in the 100 breaststroke, swimming the event in 1.01.51. On the women's side, Carla Venice won the high point award for her 100 breaststroke, with a time of 1.09.69.

A final highlight of the competition was the participation of a selection of 11 athletes from the Paralympic Committee who competed in the 50 freestyle and earned cheers and applause from the crowd for their performances.

In addition to the competition, INSUBRIKA reports success at the Italian Championships for Nicolò Ossola (born 1990), who achieved 5th place overall in the 50 breaststroke.

Congratulations to INSUBRIKA for their success ! «

Van Hoorn, Utrecht Women's Relay, Strike Bronze at Dutch Nationals

Marianne Heemskerk
Head Coach
Zwemlust Utrecht (Netherlands)

At the recent Dutch National Championships, Ilse van Hoorn, swimming for Utrecht, won the bronze medal in the 200 meter butterfly. Also bringing home the bronze for Utrecht was the women's 4x100 meter freestyle relay. Two members of the relay, Ilse Van Hoorn and Malissa van der Horst, represented Utrecht and the Netherlands in the 2008 EU Swimming Invitational in Slupsk, Poland this past October.

Congratulations to the team for their achievements! «



EVERYDAY MENTAL TRAINING: THINKING LIKE A CHAMPION

A few recommended self-guided actions – no coach required.

Michael Brooks

Head Coach, York YMCA, Pennsylvania (USA)

Make training fun. Most swimmers see training as drudgery, a necessary evil, something they have to attend so they can swim in the meets. This attitude is wrong-headed. If you are a serious swimmer, you will be training much more than you will be racing, and if you have decided to be miserable every moment of training, you have decided to be miserable most of your swimming existence. How smart is that?

Remember why you're here: it's all about getting better! You may "get your best time" at a meet when you race, but that new best time was created in daily training: that is where you improved your speed and endurance, improved your technique, developed more competitiveness or mental toughness, improved your starts and turns, etc. Everything happened in practice; you just had an opportunity to show the world at the meet.

Make practice a game: become a goal-setting machine. Goals are not just for the end of the season; they are for every practice, every set, every repeat. In fact, these "baby step" goals are in the long run much more important than the big goals far in the future, because the goal for the next repeat 200 free is concrete and immediate, not six months in the future, and because the only action you have control of is the one you are doing right now. Continually setting goals and trying to reach them gives interest, excitement, and MEANING to every minute of practice. Practice, and every part of practice, become important.

Continually raise your self-expectations. CHALLENGE YOURSELF!!! Once you have reached a goal, take pleasure in your having achieved your intention, then quickly re-set your goals even faster/higher. There are always a myriad of ways to improve: kicking harder, longer or faster strokes, better tactics/pacing, quicker turns, better underwater dolphins, etc., etc. Until you reach zero, it's always possible to swim faster.

Race all the time, and practice relishing the agony. If you only race once or twice a month, and only a few races each meet, then you do not get much practice at racing, and it is much more likely that you will develop mental hang-ups about the pressures of racing. But if you practice racing a hundred times a day in training, if you see every single repeat as a race against your teammates, the clock, and yourself, then you become a veteran racer who is much better able to put racing into perspective.

Your teammates can be the single most important means to your getting really fast. If you and your training group can see every repeat of every set as a race, then everyone is motivated to swim faster and faster every day. And even if they don't want to race, that doesn't mean you can't race them. They don't have to know that you are using them to raise your level of expectation and performance. And if they are the least bit competitive, they will take off after you when you pass them, and the game's afoot!

Earn confidence, by getting better every day (and NOTICING IT!). If you don't do something as simple as paying attention to the clock and getting your times correctly, you have no idea how you just did, whether you swam fast or slow, how it compared with your last repeat or your last race, whether you are on track to meet your goals for the next race, etc. You are an archer shooting in the dark, not knowing if your arrow hit the target. Knowing your time on that last 50 backstroke gives you an automatic goal for the next swim: faster!

And when you are in the habit of getting your times and setting your goals on every repeat, your practice performance standards inch higher and higher. As you finish a set much faster than you started it, you have a built in goal for the next time you swim that distance and stroke: one practice builds on the improvements you made previously.

Confidence – and self-esteem, and improved self-image – derives from performance. When you see yourself getting better and better, you become confident in your abilities. You have earned those improved abilities and performances by hard work.

Don't limit yourself or let yourself be limited by others (coach, teammates, parents, etc.). Though there probably are physiological (genetic) limits on a swimmer's performance, it is just as probable that few people have reached those limits; most athletes stop well below their physical limits because their psychological horizons are so limited. If you confine yourself to your comfort zone, what you know you can do and be safe doing, then you will be comfortable and safe, but you will not be very good, and when you retire from swimming you will have gotten nowhere near your potential. Think of yourself as an explorer: thrilled to discover what is out there, not knowing exactly what you will find, but hopeful. You must have the courage to take risks if you are going to achieve anything great.

Also, often people will try to shield you from disappointment, so they will try to keep you thinking small, aiming only at targets they know you can reach. But just as a future high achiever needs courage to take risks, he needs as well the resilience to rebound from failures and disappointments. You only do big things if you are willing to dream big dreams and set big goals. «

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