



# Off The Blocks



## Welcome back Everyone!

Over the next few weeks, all of our swimmers, coaches and parents will be starting back into their practice schedules. This is a busy & exciting time of year. School has starting, kids are transitioned into new training groups and Coaches and Officials are getting ready for the new season. Here are some things to help keep it positive!

Good Luck to all!

Bill Marlin

PVS General Chair

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## What to do when you are ready to Achieve Your Swimming Goals...by Olivier Poirier-Leroy

A couple weeks ago I got an email from a swimmer who was having a hard time figuring out where to start with her goals. With a new season coming up, and the fresh memories of a not-so-successful season last year burning in her mind, she was ready to move onwards and upwards. With a clean slate, a new season, this young swimmer was ready to throw down. But there was one problem.

*I have big plans for the season, she wrote. There are things that I really want to do with my swimming but I don't know where to start...*

This sensation of having goals, but not seeing the path that it will

take to get there is common. It's a strange feeling when you are excited and amped for a new season, but also confused and a little lost with how best to proceed.

Here is what to do when you are ready to throw down on your swimming goals:

**Plan backwards from where you want to be, to where you are now.**

How many times have you caught yourself feeling overwhelmed from the magnitude of the work that is laid out in front of you? It can be humbling and discouraging to compare where you are today with where you dream to be.

Setting big goals is easy, it's fun, and it's relatively painless. It's

what comes next that stops most swimmers. Take your goal and plot backwards along the competitions between now and then and set yourself some benchmarks so that you will know if you are on track or not. From there you can almost forget about the overarching goal and focus only on the next step, which will make the overall process feel much more approachable.

**Don't put any thought into what others will think about your goals.**

Sometimes we hold ourselves back on account of not wanting to step on someone else's toes. Or we become antsy that our fellow swimmers will look down on our goals. Or that our peers will judge or even ridicule us for dreaming big.

[Read More...](#)



## 6 Hard Truths of Swimming Success

By Olivier Poirier-Leroy

**“A Coaches success is measured not in the number of wins produced, but in the number of winners produced.”**

Another new season is upon us, and with it comes a fresh opportunity to achieve some awesome stuff. No matter how things went down this past season, September provides us a new chance to chase down swimming awesomeness. Here are 6 less than glitzy facets of achieving success in the pool that you can take into next season:

### 1. Your timeline for success is off. Sometimes by a country mile.

We like to think that we know precisely what we are capable of. Or that we think we know exactly what it will take, and how long it will take, for us to achieve a certain

objective. With smaller goals this is possible, because the time-frame is much smaller, and the variables are a lot easier to control. But with goals that are spread out over the frame of a year, things get a little more complicated. We imagine that as long as things go absolutely perfectly that we will achieve our goals. You and I both know this isn't possible; setbacks, injuries and illness will occur, and this is something you should be aware of when you get started. An easy way to account for detours in the road is to allot for a 10% leeway in time needed to achieve your goal. This should help defray and setbacks that occur during the

course of chasing your goals.

### 2. It's going to be uncomfortable.

The process of achieving excellent stuff isn't easy or always that fun. In fact, there will be parts where it is downright miserable. Where you would quite literally be rather doing absolutely anything else. It's the discomfort that discourages most people. They feel that success should be easy, instant, and without friction or difficulty. Those who are determined to see their goals through will put their head down and plow through the moments of discomfort, knowing that those moments are exactly what is going to separate themselves from the rest. [Read More...](#)

## Calling all Volunteers

**PVS Needs you!** Did you know that it takes between 45 and 55 volunteers to put on a swim meet? That's a pretty large number of volunteers!

There are many different positions that do not take any prior experience to do. Some jobs are stand up jobs, like Timers, some are roving positions, like Marshalls and Runners and some are sit down positions, like Awards and Sales.

While many LSC's across the country are losing athletes, PVS is still growing.. This means that more meets need to be placed on the schedule to accommodate all of the athletes and their competitive needs. From Mini Meets to Sr. Champs, **We Need You!**

With more meets on the schedule than ever before, our PVS Officials are straining to keep up with the number of meets on the competition schedule and quite

frankly, many are being over worked! PVS runs clinics all fall to train new Officials. Please see the [PVS Officials Training Schedule](#) for a clinic near you and become a PVS Official!

Parents, please talk with your club coach on what volunteer opportunities are available with your club. [They need you and PVS needs you.](#)

Please help out.



## FOUR TIPS TO BE FAST AT THE END OF A FLY RACE

By Russell Mark, National Team High Performance Consultant

How can the best 200 fly swimmers finish the race so well? Are they just less tired than everyone else at the end of a race?

Good race strategy and management certainly plays a factor, but I believe that technical adjustments can also be made at the end of a fly race to help achieve the optimal finish.

For the most part, swimming fly is about having good distance per cycle. But your muscles will naturally generate far less force and hold less water on your 100th stroke versus your first stroke, so your speed will inevitably decrease as a race progresses...

...**Unless!** You make an adjustment to your stroke to allow your tempo to increase.

### Did You Know?

*For ALL of the best 200 flys in history, the fourth 50 tempo is equal to or faster than the second and third 50 tempos.* (Based on the top 12 all-time male and female performers, and the top 14 all-time male performances, excluding 2008-2009 suit years.)

When a swimmer fatigues in fly, probably the hardest part is getting the arms up and over the water. Not making an adjustment for that can drastically slow the tempo and

create unwanted up-and-down movements.

### Here are 4 tips to maintaining tempo - and speed - at the end of a fly race:

1. Shorten the back end of the stroke. Finish the stroke early.
  2. Focus on driving the arms forward into the entry
  3. Focus on pressing the body forward
  4. Focus on the catch
- By putting less emphasis on the back end of the stroke to help the more important front end, you have a great opportunity to finish a race like the best do.



**“There is no glory in practice, but without practice, there is no glory.”**

**- Unknown**



## Safety is critically important whether you're running or walking alone, or simply commuting or passing through a dark parking lot....

Many of our PVS athletes (and parents) run on their own as part of their dry land training. Because of that, I wanted to include this brief announcement about running safety. (G.C.)

An assault occurs at least once every two minutes. Recently there have been attacks on area trails as close to home as Sterling, Fairfax and Arlington. Whether you're a runner or avid athlete, enjoy a walk in the park, or park to workout at the gym or pick up groceries at the store, you are at risk.

Being prepared could save your life, so =PR= has partnered with Asics to bring the **RunSafer** presentation to the DC area in September. You'll learn valuable safety tips and ways to es-

cape dangerous situations from Two-Time United States Olympic Distance Runner and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Black Belt Todd Williams.

We invite you to bring your family, friends, and colleagues to attend any of the more than 10 FREE workshop sessions we've scheduled around the DC area between 9/11-9/14. Come dressed for activity and ready to learn self-defense techniques and safety awareness tips. Click on one of the links below if you are interested in registering for one of the free clinics.

**Thursday, September 11:**  
2:00 PM @ Marymount University, Arlington

5:00 PM @ Gold's Gym, Ashburn  
7:30 PM @ Heritage High School, Leesburg

### Friday, September 12:

9:30 AM @ Gold's Gym, Sterling  
11:30 AM @ Reston Town Center, Reston  
5:30 PM @ =PR= Arlington Store

### Saturday, September 13:

7:30 AM @ =PR= Ashburn Store  
10:30 AM @ Robinson High School, Fairfax  
1:00 PM @ Reston Town Center, Reston  
2:30 PM @ Reston Town Center, Reston  
4:00 PM @ Reston Town Center, Reston

### Sunday, September 14:

10:00 AM @ =PR= Tysons Store, Falls Church  
12:30 PM @ =PR= Fairfax Store, Fairfax Corner

Potomac Valley Swimming

P.O. Box 3729  
McLean VA 22103-3729

Administrative Matters 571-334-0871

Financial Matters 703-869-3289

PVS Registrar 202-549-5750

**“It’s not what you  
are that holds you  
back, it’s what  
you think you are  
not.”**

**– Denis Waitley**

Potomac Valley Swimming

Coaches Competition Meeting

will be on September 27th @ UMD

10:00 a.m.

## Are You Leading a Spirited Family? By David Benzel

Teams that win big championships at the end of a season have a familiar tone when it comes to the post-game interviews. Listen carefully to MLB World Series champions this fall and compare the words of the players and coaches to their counter-parts from the Super Bowl or the NBA Championships. The commonality is found in phrases like, "We really came together this season." Or, "There's a special bond between the players on this team." And perhaps even a genuine admission like, "I really love these guys."

Winning teams who emerge victorious have done so by creating a very unique and powerful environment through which everyone believes in one another and performs better. The high level of trust and camaraderie they attain is the envy of every other team that could not create that kind of team chemistry during their season.

It could be argued that this "spirit" of a team is also experienced by some families, and not by other families; by some companies, and

not by other companies. In fact, wherever two or more are gathered together, the possibility exists for this "all-for-one and one-for-all" spirit – yet it doesn't manifest itself in the majority of cases. Why not? The answer is simple enough, but the solution is not easy.

Embedded in every spirited team is a leader (coach, parent, manager) who has inspired a positive culture of acceptance, and challenges, for each individual. Through this leader's example, every team member has become aware of the benefits of working hard, mutual support, encouragement, sacrifice, and acceptance of one another. The individuals on these teams (or in these families) discipline themselves to avoid the traps of criticizing each other, blaming, complaining, judging, and overall negativity because nothing good ever comes from these behaviors. They refuse to participate in those common behaviors because they wish to be UNcommon. The goal of every team member is to add value to the whole by bringing their personal

best every day and by believing in one another.

Not everyone can qualify to be on a team like this. Some people's natural negativity or self-centeredness will keep them from the opportunity, or even get them removed. This reality creates several questions for parents who wish to grow champions for life:

1. Are you demonstrating the kind of leadership in your home that inspires a positive-spirited family?
2. Are you raising children who are more concerned about what they're becoming, instead of what they're getting, and who aspire to be the kind of people who add value to every other environment they encounter?

The world is full of opportunities for both leaders and followers who desire a spirited team, and have the self-discipline to make a meaningful contribution. Will your child be prepared to be on that kind of team, and eventually lead that kind of family?

## Reminders

- PVS Swimposium at the University of Maryland—Sept 27.—See PVS website for Registration Form
- If your swimmer(s) are transferring to another club this year, be sure to fill out the [PVS Swimmer Transfer Form](#). This form **MUST** be filled out or your athlete will still be attached to the former club until the form gets submitted.
- [PVS Scholar Athlete](#) form is posted to the PVS website and is due October 15th.
- [PVS Athlete of the Year](#) nomination form is posted to the PVS website and is due no later than September 23rd.
- Did You Know? PVS has a Facebook page. Like us [here](#).
- The 1000 Free and the 400 IM will not be swum at the Oct Open this year. The 1650 and the 500 free will not be swum at the Nov. Open. Clubs should make alternate arrangements to get distance swims in.