



# Off The Blocks



We are now several weeks into the 2014-15 swimming season. Hopefully everyone has settled in and the process of setting new goals has been completed. It is a long season and there will be many ups and downs. Stay focused and positive and Embrace The Grind!

This weekend starts the competitive portion of the season with several meets on the schedule. Good luck to all the swimmers and have fun.

Bill Marlin

PVS General Chair

## Wanna Start Swimming Faster? Release your Inner GRIT...by Olivier Poirier-Leroy

Grit sounds decidedly like an old school term. I suppose that sentiment is accurate, as somewhere along the way someone told us that it would be easy. That it *should* be easy. That we wouldn't have to work hard. That if it was meant to be, it would just happen. Elite swimmers have a sort of stubbornness, a manner of dreaming that is measurably delusional, a way of thinking

that tells them they are not only capable of doing what they set out to achieve, but that nothing—*nothing*—will stop them or get in their way. It's a dogged determination that no matter what happens, regardless of circumstance they will charge headlong towards their goal without delay. What's realistic, what's possible, what's achievable. Those swimmers at the top don't think in those terms. They

make a goal, no matter how outlandish, and stubbornly stomp it down. Sure, they waver. There are crises in confidence and motivation along the way, but by and large, they refuse to acknowledge the possibility that what they have chosen to achieve cannot be done. In other words, they show some world class grit. What is grit, you ask? Well, let me tell ya. [Read More...](#)

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## PVS Officials Upcoming Clinic Schedule

Saturday Oct 11	Herndon Community Center	Starter, Chief Judge Stroke & Turn	8-10 a.m. 10-12:30 p.m. 1-3 p.m.
Sunday Oct 12	Herndon Community Center	Colorado Operator Hy-Tek Operator	9-11 a.m. Noon-2 p.m.
Monday Oct 20	Fairland	Stroke & Turn	6:30-9:00 p.m.
Wednesday Oct 22	Oak Marr	Stroke & Turn Starter	TBA TBA
Saturday Oct 25	Takoma	Stroke & Turn	10-12:30 p.m.



## 5 Reasons To Stop Comparing Yourself To Other Swimmers ...by Olivier Poirier-Leroy

Yes, competitive swimming is exactly that... competitive. But how many times have you caught yourself thinking or saying things like—  
*“If only I had the same talent that she has.”*  
*“I really wish I had his genetics, cause then I could truly be a great swimmer.”*

*“Why can’t I swim like her?”*

It’s natural in a sense to measure ourselves up against the swimmers that are faster than us, while also feeling a measure of gratitude for not being like the next swimmer. But getting lost in the efforts and results of the competition takes

your attention away from the one swimmer who deserves the most attention. Whose performance is ultimately the only one which matters. Yours. Here are 5 reasons that you should stop holding yourself up to the performance and standards of your fellow swimmers:

[Read More...](#)



## Can Nutrition Prevent Muscle Cramps?

By CHRIS ROSENBLOOM, PHD, RDN, CSSD

A young swimmer asked if there were any nutritional strategies that prevented muscle cramps. If you have experienced the pain of an exercise-induced muscle cramp, you might just try anything to avoid another cramp. Sucking on mustard packets from the local fast food joint to swallowing pickle juice have all been reported to be miracle cures for cramping. One report found that 25% of athletic trainers suggest pickle juice for immediate relief. Muscle cramps have plagued not only athletes, but those who do hard, physical work in hot and humid conditions, like coal miners. But, while cramps are not uncommon in active folks, the reason for cramp-

ing remains in question. There are generally two theories on cramping and neither theory has been proven beyond a doubt to be the cause.

The first theory is that cramps are related to dehydration and loss of the electrolyte, sodium, especially in hot and humid environments. That is where mustard and pickle juice come in...both are concentrated sources of sodium. One study compared pickle juice to sports drinks, but did not show that pickle juice elevated blood sodium levels quickly enough to relieve cramps, yet some athletes do report relief. Another problem with this theory is that cramps occur in cool weather conditions or

while swimming in cooler water, so there is more to cramping than just hot weather conditions. Lastly, not every athlete who cramps is dehydrated.

The second theory is that cramps are caused by an imbalance in nerve signals to muscles, sometimes called the neuromuscular theory. Cramps tend to occur more frequently at the end of competition or hard physical work when the muscle is tired. Rest and stretching the cramping muscle are the treatment options based on this theory.

So, where does that leave the cramping swimmer?

[Read More...](#)



## ARE YOU CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR SUCCESS IN THE POOL? *By...Olivier Poirier-Leroy*

It was May of 1971 and the Vietnam war was celebrating it's Sweet Sixteen. Two American congressmen were sent over on a fact finding mission to learn more about the widespread heroin use that was taking place among servicemen. The news that they came back with was bleak and disturbing: some 35% of soldiers had tried the drug, while 15% were actively addicted. A month later, US President Richard "I am not a crook" Nixon launched the Special Action Office of Drug Abuse Prevention, which was equal parts rehabilitation and prevention. More importantly, for the pur-

poses of this article at least, Nixon wanted to find out what happened to the addicted soldiers once they came stateside. As a result, once his tour was complete every soldier was screened and tested before they came back to the US. Those results were even more horrifying. As it turned out, the number of servicemen actively addicted was actually closer to 20%. You can imagine the panic that was surging through the American public. Not only were they locked in a costly and unpopular war, but the men who had gone to fight it were coming home addicted to what was at the time considered an

inescapable addiction. But then something curious happened. When these addicts were back in the states, within a year only about 5% of them had relapsed. (To understand how extraordinary this is, consider that at the time the relapse rate for someone treated for heroin addiction in the US and released to their homes was 90%.) So what had happened? Put simply – the environment had changed. But what does this have to do with swimming? Heaps, my friend. [Read More...](#)



**REMEMBER THAT  
GUY THAT GAVE UP?**

**NEITHER DOES  
ANYBODY ELSE.**

## 3 Healthy Ways to Boost Your ENERGY

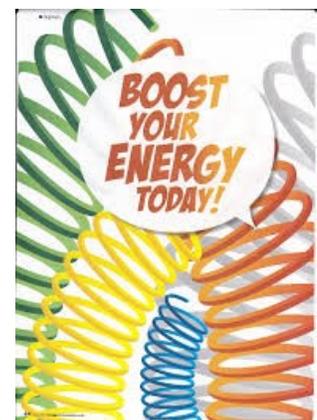
*By BridgeAthletic*

In today's sports world, it seems like there are endless options for energy-boosting products and few ways to distinguish which ones may actually help. Athletes need to pay special attention to the source of these products to ensure they

are not tainted with harmful ingredients or packaged in factories that may also produce banned substances. Navigating the world of supplements can be daunting. It's important to remember that you can maintain higher energy levels

with a few simple changes to your daily habits. Let's take a moment to discuss what you can do right now to boost your energy throughout the day.

[Read More...](#)



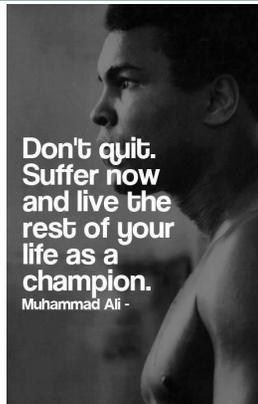
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Potomac Valley Swimming

Coaches Competition Meeting

will be on September 27th @ UMD

10:00 a.m.

## Go For Your Big, Scary Dreams

By Dr. Alan Goldberg

### **BIG DREAMS ALWAYS HAVE VERY HUMBLE BEGINNINGS**

What does that really mean?

When a BIG dream first shows up on your doorstep, knocking and begging to be “let in,” your rational, thinking brain says, “Don’t be so silly and unrealistic! There’s no way that **you** could ever accomplish that! You’re not big, talented, strong or fast enough to ever do that! It’s way out of your league!”

This kind of big, far off, scary goal, stretches your belief system to the breaking point! It makes you entertain the words, “**IMPOSSIBLE!**” and “**NEVER!**” The hugeness of this type of dream leaves you feeling embarrassed by its boldness, and you think, “There’s no way I could **EVER** do **that!**” Oftentimes you’re so embarrassed by the dream that you don’t even want to say it out loud, let alone share it with another human being for fear of being laughed out of the room!



### **NEWSFLASH:**

**Your initial self-doubts, fears and negative thoughts about reaching your big goal are normal and let you know that you’re actually headed in the right direction.**

Whenever you move out of our comfort zone in any way, you will always be greeted by “can’ts,” “nevers” and “impossibles.” The very first time that you take the risk to go into a faster lane, decide to move up to lead your lane, try an intimidating event that you’ve never swam before or have to race against much faster swimmers, you will get flooded with self-doubts and feelings of inadequacy. This is what happens to almost every swimmer when they first age up! They are left feeling intimidated by all the bigger, faster swimmers surrounding them.

***It is critically important that you understand that these doubts and feelings of “I can’t do this,” will always be there whenever you start pushing your limits. They are absolutely NORMAL.***

When you decide to really go for that BIG, SCARY dream, the self-doubts, negative thinking and feelings of inadequacy that arise will be your constant traveling companion. Please know that these so-called negative feelings, with their accompanying doubts, are not your enemy. They don’t mean that there is anything wrong with you or that you should abandon your quest. Instead, they mean that you’re on the right track and that you need to keep on keeping on! Hear the doubts, feel the feelings of inadequacy and then **KEEP MOVING FORWARD ANYWAY!**

This is especially true when you run into setbacks and failures during your journey. No one reaches their BIG dream without first “collecting” a lot of these disappointments. Failures will tend to fuel your negative thinking and doubts, and try to trick you into quitting. **DON’T EVER BE MISLED!** Instead, remember that the negative thoughts and feelings that regularly come up as you chase your dreams should always be viewed as the lamp posts that will light your way during your journey to those BIG goals.

