

Coach Koehr's Swimming Awards Banquet Talk – March 9, 2008

The Extra Degree

- Kevin Koehr sent me a book that hit me.
 - I think he knew I'd like it
- 212 degrees – the extra degree
 - At 211 degrees, water is hot
 - At 212 degrees, water boils
 - And with boiling water, comes steam
 - And steam can power a locomotive
- Wow! What a great metaphor for life.
- Seemingly small things can make all the difference
 - Just one more degree of
 - Effort
 - Commitment
 - Responsibility
 - Kindness
 - Sacrifice
 - Exponential results
- Countless examples where small things made a difference:
 - Pro Golf
 - 4 major tournaments
 - US Open, British Open, PGA Champs, The Masters
 - 4 days, 72 holes,
 - Average margin over last 25 years? 3 strokes
 - Indy 500
 - 500 miles
 - Average margin of victory over past 10 years? 1.54 seconds
 - 1st place prize: \$1.2 mil.
 - 2nd place price: \$600K

- Olympics
 - 2004 Women's long jump – difference of 11 cm
- Swimming
 - Remember Brentsville – 4 point victory
 - **Bridget Wunderly** cut over 7 seconds from her 200 Free, and, rather than placing 7th with her old time, she placed 5th.
 - **Carolyn Claybrooks** cut 8 seconds from her PR in 200 IM and placed 4th rather than 8th.
 - **Lucy Bennett** lowered her PR in 500 Free by 15 seconds and jumped up to 7th place, personally giving us half of our margin of victory.
 - **Mary-Kate Kenna**, swimming backstroke instead of her normal events, lowered her PR by 5 seconds and placed 4th rather than 6th.
 - VSIS – Men's 50 Free: .06 seconds between Gold and Silver
 - VSIS – Mary-Kate Kenna 100 Breast
 - Slipped in for 16th by .59 seconds
 - Allowed her to cut another .47 to jump into a tie for 13th
 - 2.5 more points
 - VSIS – Girls 200 Free Relay
 - Cut 1.32 seconds from Prelims to Finals to take 4th from NA by .16 seconds
 - 2 more points
 - Alex 24.88 and Machine's 25.00 splits have anything to do with that?
 - They were boiling!
 - Lea Mazzocoli jumped from 16th to 12th
 - Only .21 seconds ahead of 13th
 - 4 more points
 - VSIS – Boys 200 Free Relay

- Seeded 11th, jumped to 8th
 - Dan split 24.18, Connor split 23.51 and Sean split 22.93
 - 10 more points!
 - They were boiling!
 - We beat PCHS by 11.5 points and they were seeded faster!
 - The Seton girls were boiling, especially on Saturday night!
- Takes Commitment in Preparation
 - You have to keep the heat up on yourself every day
 - Showing up isn't enough
 - Bad examples:
 - Go to the bathroom during practice?
 - Skip a set for a drink of water
 - Take a set off?
 - Don't do a flipturn
 - Don't streamline off the walls in practice?
- **212 degrees – it's a commitment to action**
- **Obstacles to that extra degree**
 - **Looking for the quick fix**
 - Listen to the radio
 - Caligill
 - Ever-cleanser
 - Trump – How to get rich
 - Laurel Langmeier – Extreme Money Makeover
 - Suddenly Slender Body Wrap
 - Buy Foreclosures
 - Lottery Tickets
 - 6 minute meals for 6 pack abs
 - 6 pack abs in 2 minutes a day without pain
 - No quick fixes
 - Lose weight – run, stop drinking, control eating

- Get wealthy – work hard, be excellent and take risks
 - 6 pack abs? – Hard work every day and no body fat
 - Lottery tickets – ever see a well dressed man buy a lottery ticket?
 - **Everyone wants to go to heaven, but no body wants to die**
- **Playing the Victim**
 - Never act like a victim, even if you are
 - Control what you can control – yourself
 - If you start making excuses now
 - Bad math teacher
 - Bad coach
 - Project partner didn't do his part
 - You'll continue later years later
 - I haven't been trained on that
 - Management is bad
 - Sales underbid the job
 - Superintendent messed up the job
 - My budget was unreasonable
 - Or worse,
 - I got fired from my sales job because I was old, fat, disabled, minority, etc
 - How about the fact that you didn't sell anything
 - **Victim – your just making an excuse for your own mediocrity**
 - In the secular sense – we live in meritocracy
 - In the Catholic sense – adversity can bring us closer to God
 - Lonestar Song – “the good Lord gave us mountains, so we can learn how to climb”
- **Selective Excellence**

- Growing up, 2 inch lift on my dress shoe
 - Already a bad athlete
 - Played football, baseball, basketball poorly
 - Probably how I got into swimming
- One question I always got from my Dad
 - “Did you do your best?”
 - Didn’t matter if that was good, as long as it was my best
- As I got older, he’d tell me to “bloom where I was planted”
- That’s why we push PRs
 - Personal best effort every time you hit the water
- Extends to your whole life
 - Math grade doesn’t matter – I’m going to Christendom
 - Are you kidding?
- Don’t know God’s plan
 - Trust me when I tell you that Math Teacher and Swimming coach were not big goals in my life when I was sitting in Algebra and going to swim practice
 - We’ve been given gifts for a reason
- **Catholicism isn’t merely compatible with excellence – it requires excellence.**
- **Lack the Confidence to try**
 - Man, I hate the words, “I can’t” – just ask my kids
 - Dad, can you make this phone call – you can do it better
 - I probably can, but that doesn’t mean I’m going to do it for you
 - 6 year old Shane accidentally put in 100 FR
 - Asked to do it again after
 - Why? “Just to see if I’m any better”

- Not premeditated answer – natural
 - That’s why I put beginners in the 500
 - Seen this play out countless times
 - “I can’t” turns into “can I try that again?”
 - Same with 100 Free
 - Meghan Morch – take out the first 50 like a sprint
 - Afraid you might die?
 - Broke 1:00
 - Confidence comes from preparation – 212 degree preparation
- Don’t ever
 - **Look for the quick fix**
 - **Play the victim**
 - **Be selectively excellent**
 - **Say “I can’t”**
- That’s a formula that will only put you in hot water
- It’s YOUR life
 - YOU are responsible for your results
 - **It’s time to turn up the heat**