

## Coach Koehr's Swimming Awards Banquet Talk – March 6, 2011

### Training Your Will

1. Who said this?:
  - a. Sports is not merely the exercise of muscles, but it is the school of moral values and of training in courage, in perseverance, and in overcoming laziness and carelessness. There is no doubt that these values are of greatest interest for the formation of a personality which considering sports not an end in itself but as a means to total physical, social and moral development.
    - i. Pope John Paul II
  - b. "If we all did the things we are capable of, we would astound ourselves."
    - i. Thomas Edison
2. Life lessons in swimming
  - a. Trains your will
  - b. Swimming, to a greater degree than many sports, is a sport of the will
    - i. Very often, the winner is the one with the strongest will
      1. Just watch Bridget Wunderly swim the 500 Free if you want to see a good example
3. Definitions of success lie on a spectrum from completely secular to completely spiritual.
  - a. All definitions have one thing in common
  - b. A strong Will
4. Want to be a successful \_\_\_\_\_ – you need Will
  - a. Successful Athlete?
    - i. Do pushups and sit-ups late at night in your room (Sean)
      1. Or do one more push-up in each set during dry-land, even when no one is looking
    - ii. Swim every day in a practice lane with people who are faster than you
    - iii. Get up at 3:45 for swimming practice (David, Catfish, Bridget, Alex, Cat, Mikey and so many others)
    - iv. Actually kick on the hard sections of a 500 Locomotive (like Leslie Zapiain)
    - v. Don't skip out of a hard set by asking to get a drink of water
    - vi. Only breath when you a supposed to on hypoxic sets, even though no one will catch you

- vii. You win the close races
    - 1. I've seen Lauren get beat, but I've never seen her lose a close race
  - viii. Exercise in the morning because you know it will never happen otherwise
  - b. Successful Student?
    - i. Do your math homework!
    - ii. Seek help from friends at lunch when it would be easier to goof off outside
    - iii. Start your paper a little early so you have time to mull it around in your head
    - iv. Use the 30 minutes you are waiting to be picked up to get something done
    - v. Participate in class when it might be easier to slack off in the back row
  - c. Successful Parent?
    - i. Get up to bring your kids to swimming practice
      - 1. Easy to say, my kid can't play that sport because I just can't drive them
    - ii. Stay up with a baby (so your husband doesn't have to ;-)
    - iii. Don't give in to child when it would be easier just to say "OK"
    - iv. Taking a 2<sup>nd</sup> job so your wife can stay home with the kids
  - d. Successful Business Person?
    - i. Don't quit after you lose that big account
    - ii. Make one more sales call after a long day of "no's"
    - iii. Show up for work on a snow day when a customer is counting on you
  - e. Successful Spiritually?
    - i. Create time to seek grace thru prayer and the sacraments
    - ii. ACT
      - 1. Think of someone else before you think of yourself
      - 2. Make a meal for the a family in need when you have 10,000 other things to get done that day
      - 3. You volunteer for something at Seton that no one else will do
        - a. Head of the Ad Campaign is going straight to heaven!
5. Why is it so important to have a finely trained Will?
- a. Because doing God's will is not always easy

- i. Your Will is the most powerful when it is aligned with God's
  - b. The rewards of a trained Will are a great source of happiness
    - i. Did you ever notice that the most satisfying things in life are the ones that we worked the hardest to get?
      - 1. Does it bring you more happiness to watch a good movie with friends or break a State record in the 200 Medley Relay?
      - 2. That's a no-brainer, right?
      - 3. How about spending time facebooking with your friends of finishing the 500 for the first time in your life?
    - ii. The 500 Free is such a good example of this:
      - 1. Two reactions
        - a. Big smile and feeling of accomplishment – highlight of season
        - b. Can I do that again, I think I can go faster
      - 2. One reaction is never: "I couldn't do it"
    - iii. Ex. Cat swam 100 BR poorly at Catholic Nationals
      - 1. If it didn't hurt so bad, it wouldn't feel so good
6. Here's another reason: We all want to be a person of integrity, but you can't be without a strong Will. Here's why:
  - a. Definition – align Word, Intent and Deed
  - b. Word and Intent – say what you mean – or don't lie
  - c. Word and Deed – do what you say you will do
  - d. Word and Intent – hardest one – do what you intend to do
7. Seek opportunities to train your will
  - a. Very difficult concept for the average 16 year-old
    - i. Or adult for that matter
  - b. Just the act of coming to practice is good training for your will
    - i. Hear kids all the time say, "I just can't get up"
    - ii. Well good luck being a mother one day!
  - c. Train your will by:
    - i. Always doing your best
      - 1. Even when you think no one is watching you put a knee down doing push-ups during dryland
    - ii. Never quitting something you've begun
      - 1. Sport – just don't play again next season
      - 2. Going to run a triathlon, run it
      - 3. Start a job, finish it
      - 4. Start a home project, finish it

- iii. Never saying “I can’t”
  - 1. How many of you “can’t” race the 500 Free?
    - a. Haven’t seen it yet.
  - 2. A variation of this is “I don’t need to do this”
  - 3. “I don’t need math”
    - a. Pretty arrogant for any of us to claim to know God’s plan for us
      - i. Do you think I grew up dreaming of becoming a Math Teacher and Swimming Coach?
    - b. What you’re really saying is a “I can’t”
    - c. Passing up an opportunity to train your will
  - d. Anyone here ever heard me call them a “slacker”?
    - i. It’s usually because you’re being one
    - ii. I don’t want you to go to college and be one of those losers who just
      - 1. goes to class
      - 2. watches TV
      - 3. parties
    - iii. I don’t want you to grow up to be one of those guys who does nothing but
      - 1. work 40 hours a week
      - 2. come home and watches TV
      - 3. always taking the easy path
- 8. You don’t always have to seek opportunities to train you will – you can simply accept them also. Treat the trials in your life as an opportunity to train your will
  - a. My mother always said “everything happens for a reason”
    - i. Maybe it is just to help you better align your will with God’s
      - 1. To remind you that there are things greater than your current problem
  - b. Anytime you quit, you’ve lost the opportunity
  - c. Anytime you say “I can’t”, you’ve lost the opportunity
  - d. It’s a lost opportunity to make yourself a better person
  - e. It’s a lost opportunity be really happy about something
- 9. Lent is a great opportunity to train your will, and offer up your suffering to God for someone important to you
- 10. There are so many great examples of this on the swim team this year, but I’d like to recognize a couple of those examples with this year’s coach’s awards:

- a. Honorable Mention on the boys side would have to be **Jonathan Rosato**, but I want to recognize a quieter example
- b. **David Lambrecht** swim's in Coach Lowell's lanes
  - i. Not the most naturally talented swimmer on the team
  - ii. I didn't put him in those lanes, never would have thought to
  - iii. David's 100 FR PR is 1:09.10
  - iv. Other kids in the lane swim 100 FR in:
    - 1. 53.98
    - 2. 59.45
    - 3. 1:00.87
  - v. And those guys are not slackers (most of the time ;-))
  - vi. I always have kids asking to move down a lane to take the easy way out
  - vii. I also have kids asking to move up a lane when they are not working hard in the lane they are in
  - viii. But not David
    - 1. He just threw himself in a faster lane
    - 2. how often is he pushing to the front of the lane?
- c. A similar example on the girl's side is an honorable mention.  
**Keziah Higginbottom**
- d. **Bridget Wunderly**
  - i. has been trying to break a minute in 100 Fly for over a year
    - 1. She swam 1:02 8 times – not counting her USA times
    - 2. Was getting frustrated
    - 3. Her response? Work harder
    - 4. Then at National Catholics: 1:01.33
    - 5. Prelims at States: 59.82
  - ii. She's also been a great example of servant leadership
    - 1. Not a lot of flash to Bridget
    - 2. But she comes after her morning practice with Coach Benner to help me coach
    - 3. And she sets a good example for everyone around her, including me
  - iii. I've grown quite fond of Bridget in the 6 years she's been on the team
  - iv. Hope she never strays too far and always comes back for our Homecoming meets

## Conclusion

- Seton Swimming has become something special
- We're all lucky to be a part of something that is bigger than any of us individually
- I'm already looking forward to next season
- In the meantime, work hard in everything you do, and never settle for "average"