

How They Train: The Work of Former William & Mary Standout Anna Kenna





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How They Train: The Work of Former William & Mary Standout Anna Kenna

Anna Kenna graduated from William & Mary in 2022. As a four-year varsity swimmer, she compiled quite a résumé. In 2019, she was named freshman swimmer of the year, and in 2021, team MVP. She was a seven-time Coastal Athletic Association (CAA) conference champion: twice in the 100 yard back, twice in the 200 free relay and three times in the 200 medley relay.

Her best times place her on the Tribe's record board seven times: second in the 200 back (1:57.51), third in the 100 back (54.36), fourth in the 50 free (23.36) and 200-400 medley relays plus fifth and sixth in the 200-400 free relays. As a senior, she received the college's Wally Riley Award, which best personifies the ideals of toughness, leadership, work ethic and "Tribe Pride."





From an athletic family, her career at Seton School (Manassas, Va.) started as a seventh-grader. A multi-sport athlete blessed with a talent for swimming, basketball, volleyball and club lacrosse, she pursued each vigorously before selecting aquatics over lacrosse as her college sport. Kenna was blessed with swim coaches who collaborated on her training. As a high school junior, she joined USA Swimming's Occoquan Swim team.



Thereafter, during the high school swim season, Occoquan coach **Owen Reid** and Seton coach **Jim Koehr** worked together to make championship



dreams a reality. Kenna left Seton as a two-time team captain and two-time Virginia Independent Schools Athletic Association (VISSA) 100 back all-stater and NISCA All-American. She also finished as a three-time national Catholic high school champion in the dorsal stroke.

This partnership proved perfect for Kenna, who continued to swim three days a week for Seton, working specifically on stroke technique—particularly her underwaters—and often acting as an assistant coach.

“Very often, the winner of the 100 backstroke is the one with the biggest wall off the third turn,” says Koehr. “It takes guts to endure the pain required to try to hit the ring underwater at that point in the race. Anna had that kind of fortitude to work on those third-wall turns and her underwaters tirelessly. Her excellence there won her many races.”

“Anna Kenna is a great example of how a high school and USA



Swimming program can complement each other for the good of a high school swimmer. Coach Reid and I coordinated her training and meet schedules so that Anna could remain consistent with the rigorous training cycle at Occoquan and still take advantage of the many opportunities offered by her high school program.

"Anna was always a winner for us. The answer to my question of 'Who do you want on the back end of your freestyle relay if it is close?' was always Anna Kenna!"

SAMPLE PRACTICE AT OCCOQUAN SWIMMING

500 skips

12 x 25s fins kick 1/2 UW @ :40

16x split 25 fast @ :40

8 x 50s DPS, stroke @ :50

6 x 100s free @ 1:15/1:20

Whole set 3x

- 50 pace @ 1:00
- 50 ez @ 1:00
- 2 x 50s pace – 10 secs rest
- 100 ez @ 2:00
- 3 x 50s pace – 10 secs rest
- 150 ez @ 3:00
- 4 x 50s pace – 10 secs rest
- 200 ez @ 4:00



8 x 50s @ 1:00 (4x tempo on kick-outs)

SAMPLE PRACTICE AT SETON SCHOOL

(WHILE SWIMMING AT OCCOQUAN)

Warm-up with stroke drills

Anna would either swim or coach for these sets, depending on her USA training cycle:

2 x (3 x 150) easy, hard, easy @ 2:45 (2, 2, 1 off walls)

2 x 100 backstroke (or the stroke on which the team was working that week)

Stroke progressions for 20 minutes

(Every year, Seton builds every stroke and every wall from scratch between the first practice and Christmas, even for swimmers like Anna Kenna)

Anna would either swim or coach for these sets, depending on her USA training cycle:

JPL's Fave (named after Jeremy P. Linn's favorite set):

5 x 100, mix in the stroke of the week

- 1 – 25 hard/75 smooth
- 2 – 50 hard/50 smooth
- 3 – 75 hard/25 smooth
- 4 – 100 smooth
- 5 – 100 hard



1 x 50 easy, slow

The Jam

- 4 x 200 alt FR/BK (or stroke of the week)
- 1st 50 @ < :30
- Last 150 @ 75%

PROGRESSION OF TIMES

SCY	7th grade	8th grade	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
100 Back	1:03.47	59.79	50.32	58.53	57.00	55.62
50 Free	27.55	26.46	25.57	25.00	24.51	24.06
100 Free	1:03.78	54.77	54.38	53.82	53.30	52.05

Anna Kenna – How They Train

Michael J. Stott is an ASCA Level 5 coach, golf and swimming writer. His critically acclaimed coming-of-age golf novel, "Too Much Loft," is in its third printing, and is available from store.Bookbaby.com, Amazon, B&N and distributors worldwide.

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