

Coaching Youth Athletes
to Olympic Success



Stephan Widmer
Singapore Swimming National Head Coach
NYSI Youth Coaching Conference, February 2018

Coach Widmer



Education & Experience:
Swiss heritage
Studies – Bachelor in PE & Masters of Science
5 years Lecturer at Swiss Federal Institute of Technology
15 years at Queensland Academy of Sport
3 years Head Coach Queensland Swimming



Coach Widmer



My Swimmers achieved:
5 Olympic Gold Medals
20 individual World Records
16 World Championships Gold Medals



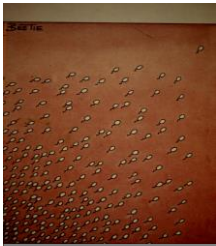
Coach Widmer



My personal coaching Achievement:
Medal of the Order of Australia – service to swimming
4X Swimming Australia Coach of the Year
2004, 2008 and 2012 Australian Olympic Team Coach
5X Australian World Championships Team Coach



What gets Talent to succeed?



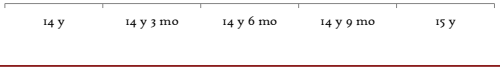
The Young Joseph Schooling



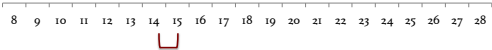
- The Culture YOU establish as a Coach
- The daily Training Environment YOU create
- The Standards YOU set for your athletes



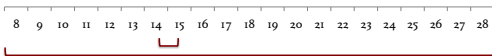
One Season



Career



Career



Average age of Elite Swimmers
London 2012 - Freestyle

Event	Average Age Finalist	Average Age Medalist
Men 50 Freestyle	27.8	25.8
Men 100 Freestyle	24.3	25.1
Men 200 Freestyle	23.3	21.7
Men 400 Freestyle	24.3	24.5
Men 1500 Freestyle	23.6	24.8
Overall Men Freestyle	24.7	24.4
Women 50 Freestyle	26.1	26.9
Women 100 Freestyle	22.8	22.7
Women 200 Freestyle	22.4	22.6
Women 400 Freestyle	23.0	22.8
Women 800 Freestyle	21.9	20.5
Overall Women Freestyle	23.2	23.1



Average age of Elite Swimmers
London 2012 – All Events

Event	Average Age Finalist	Average Age Medalist
All Events Men	25.2	25.3
All Events Women	22.7	22.2

At Major International Meets – Winners and Finalists are getting Older



Career



How do you plan for this?



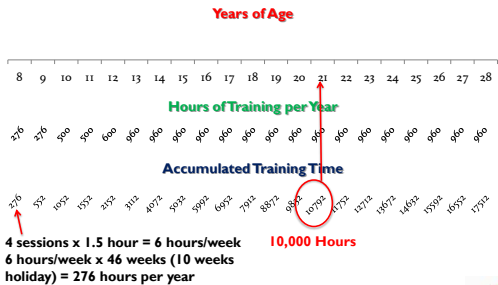
Traditional Loading



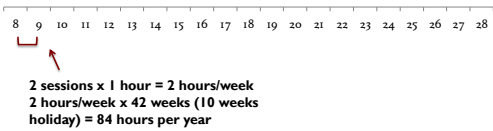
4 sessions x 1.5 hour = 6 hours/week
6 hours/week x 46 weeks (10 weeks holiday) = 276 hours per year



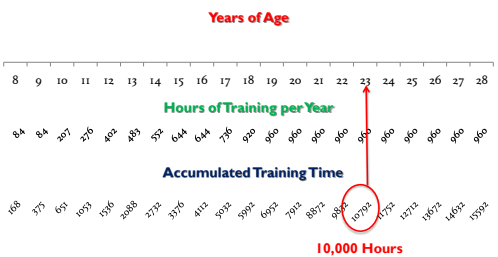
Traditional Loading



Time in Development



Alternative Loading



3 Stages of Development

Distinct skills and physical characteristics to develop in each stage

- 1. Pre-Puberty
- 2. Puberty
- 3. Post-Puberty



Simplified philosophy

Maria Montessori:
"Help me to do by myself,
Don't do it in my place
But remain with me".

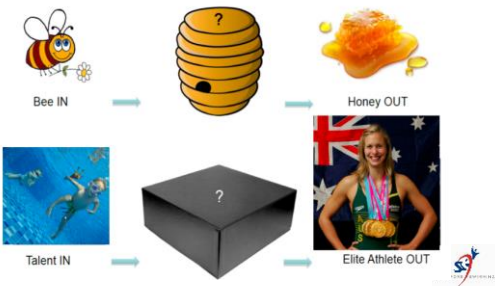
"Before elaborating any system of education, we must therefore create a favorable environment that will encourage the flowering of a child's natural gifts. The first thing to be done, therefore, is to discover the true nature of a child and then assist him in his normal development."





3 different teacher/coach levels

Is there a difference between the job of a teacher/coach at each specific level?



Coaching methods vs. development stages

What's your role?

Beginner level

Intermediate level

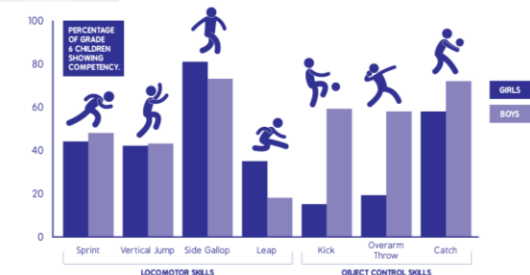
Performance level

Coaching qualities most responsible for athlete progression

Qualities of coaching	Jr I Basic	Jr II Advanced	Jr III Pre-elite	Sr I Basic	Sr II Advanced	Sr III Pre-elite	Sr IV Elite
Detailed knowledge of the sport	9	15	21	14	21	26	26
Strong insistence on perfection	4	11	17	10	15	16	22
Ability to motivate/encourage	32	21	16	22	17	15	11
Teaching ability	18	20	13	13	15	10	10
Confident and relaxed style	14	12	11	17	10	11	7
Took personal interest in me	10	10	9	10	6	7	7
Understanding of competition demands	1	5	5	4	7	8	6
Stressing balance between life and sport skills	1	2	4	2	3	5	4
Other	3	1	1	1	1	1	4
Coach did not contribute	8	3	3	7	5	1	3

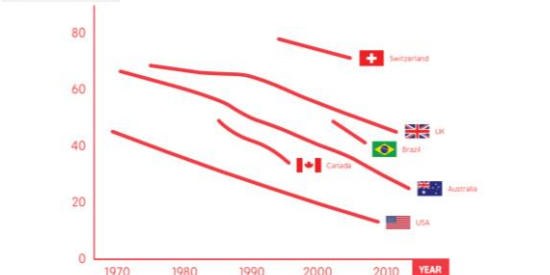
Note: data presented is a % of completed questions. All results are expressed as a %. Oldenzel et al 2003
n (Jr I) = 457, n (Jr II) = 498, n (Jr III) = 392, n (Sr I) = 273, n (Sr II) = 303, n (Sr III) = 324, n (Sr IV) = 231

The modern child & movement



Active healthy kids Australia: 2014 Report Card
Time trend in % of children who use active transport to and from school

The modern child & movement



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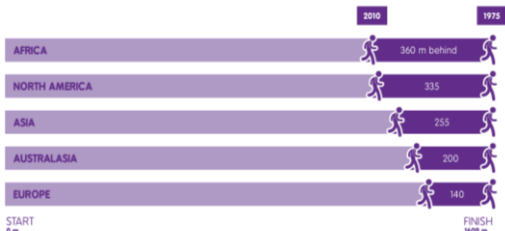


Figure 10. Geographical differences in the distance (in metres) the average young person from 2010 would finish behind the average young person from 1975 in a long distance run (1609 metres or 1-mile).



What is the goal in Career Training?

Achieve best Performance when Swimmers are:

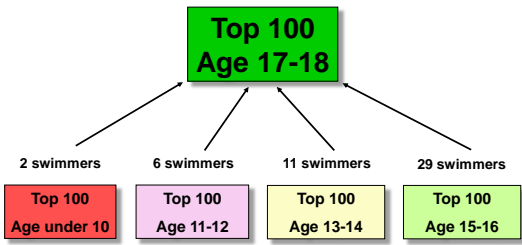
- 10 & Under?
- Age 11-12?
- Age 13-14?
- Age 15-16?
- Age 17-18?



- Best Results at the Age of Peak Performance!

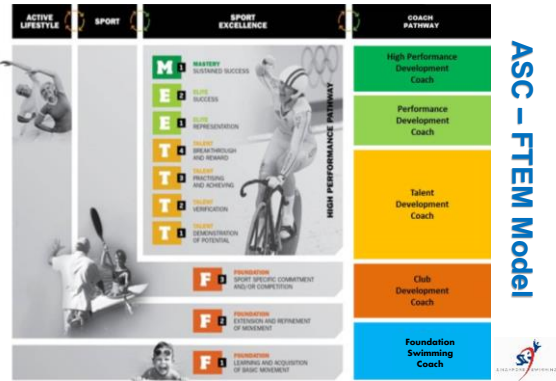
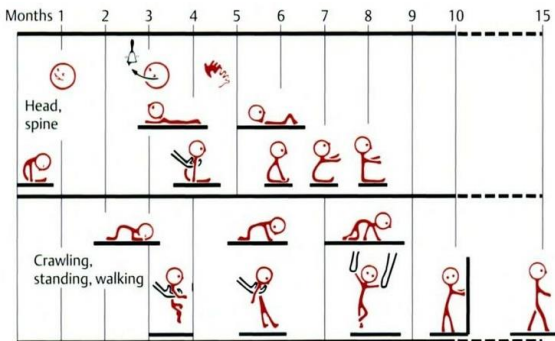


Participation at All-Time Top 100 In 100 Freestyle, Age 17-18 (Boys)



Source: USA Swimming TOP 100 statistics

Developmental stages of a baby



SQ LTAD Model - 1

LTAD	Age +/- 1-2 years	Emphasis	Key Concept	Goal	Driver	Water	Land - Athleticism
Basic Instruction	5 - 8	FUNDAMENTAL	Swimming is FUN	Enjoyment / Basic Movement Literacy	LTS / Club / Region	Water Play / Water Skill	Games / Gymnastics Coordination
	6 - 9						
Basic Training	9 - 11	Swim Skills	FUN / Water Feel	Improve Movement Literacy / Build Technique	Club / Region	IM - Free (200-400) Skill Development Coordination	Games / Gymnastics Coordination
	10 - 12						

SQ LTAD Model - 2

LTAD	Age 4-12 years	Emphasis	Key Concept	Goal	Driver	Water	Land - Athleticism
Progressive Training	12 - 14	Training to Train	Motivation / Ambition	Improve Technique / Build the Engine	Club / Region / State	IM - No1 Skill Development / Develop Physiology	Games / Coordination / Introduce Core Development
	13 - 15						
Elite Training	15 - 17	Training to Compete	Goal Setting	Optimise Technique / Optimise the Engine	Club / Region / State / National	Technical Efficiency / Enhance the Physiology	Strength Development / Core Enhancement
	16 - 18						
	Open	Training to Peak / HP	Reach MIP	Maximise Technique / Maximise the Engine	Club / Region / State / National	Technical Excellence / Specific Training	Maximise Strength / Power / Core

Planning

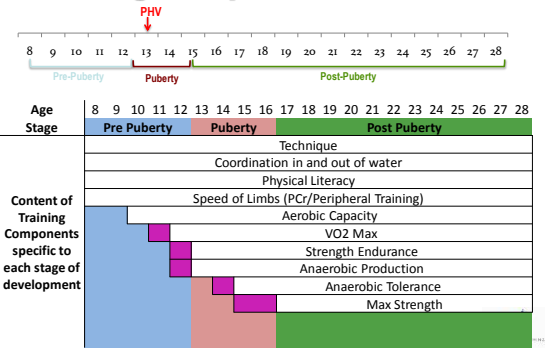
Pre-Puberty – 4 years

Puberty – 2.5 years

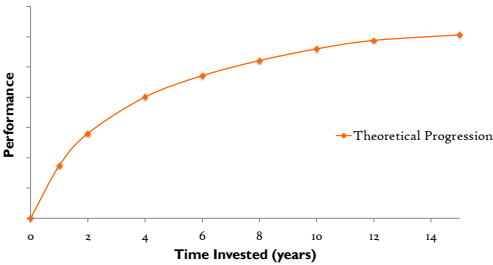
Post-Puberty – 8-10 years



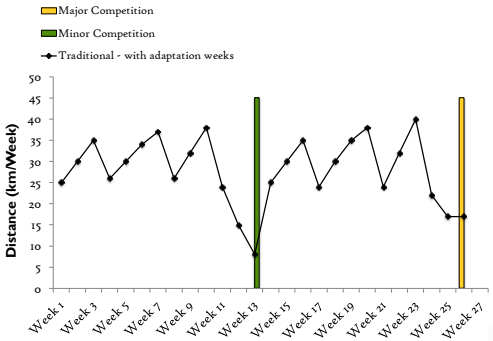
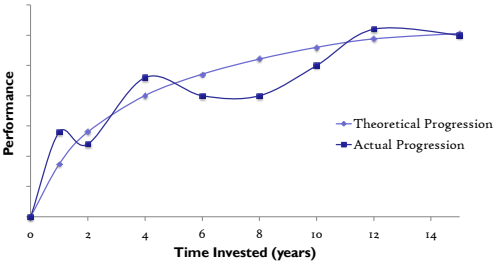
Training Components

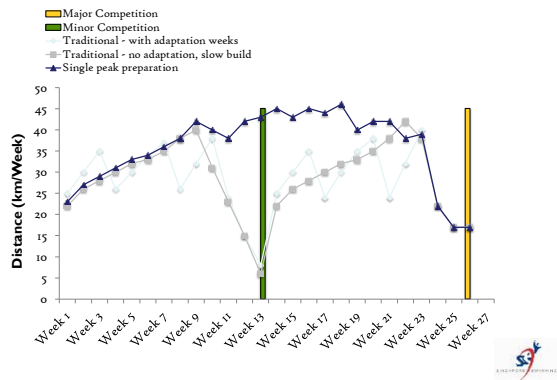
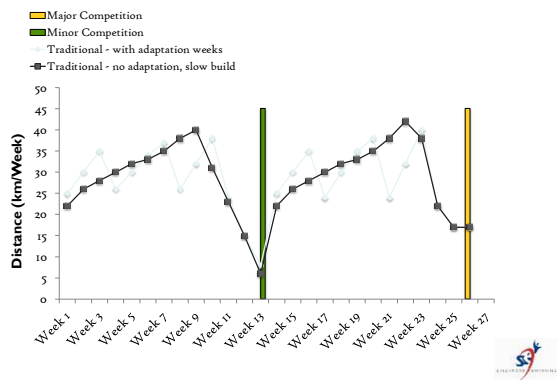


Improvement Over Time



Improvement Over Time





Load

Don't think I don't want you to work hard
Needs to be smart

- Right stimulus
- Right athlete
- Right time
- Right duration

Measure so you know!

Measure so you can go back and repeat or change!

Season Planning

- 1: Determine what stage of development athlete is in
- 2: Evaluate the previous season
- 3: Fit in season with your career plan for your athlete
- 4: Set general goals and objectives for the new season
- 5: Program the structure of the major training phases
- 6: Prescribe training variations for groups & individuals
- 7: Program dryland training and supporting activities (recovery)

Season Planning

- 1: Determine what stage of development athlete is in
- 2: Evaluate the previous season
- 3: **Fit in season with your career plan for your athlete**

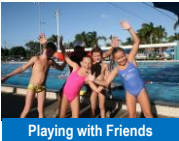
Context:

- Developmental Stage
- Previous training history
- Short/Long term goals
- Life commitments
- Individual needs

The fun & joy of swimming Junior development



LTAD
All-round Athletic
Development





**KEEP
CALM
AND
KIASU
ON**