The Development of Dana

With

Ron Forrest
(Developmental Coach)
&
Teri McKeever
(College Coach)

USA Butterfly Revolution
A Webinar Series
Part II

#USAbutterfly

Dana Vollmer’s Coaches:

Ron Forrest
- Fort Worth Area Swim Team
- Coached Dana from 1999-2005
  (12 years old-18 years old)
- Dana accomplished:
  2001 Goodwill Games
  2003 Pan Am Team
  2004 Olympic Team
  2004 Short Course World Championship Team

Teri McKeever
- University of California-Berkeley
- Has coached Dana since 2006
  (18 year old-29 years old)
- Dana accomplished:
  2006 Pan Pac Team
  2009 World Championship Team
  2010 Pan Pac Team
  2011 World Championship Team
  2012 Olympic Team
  2013 World Championship Team
  2016 Olympic Team

COMMON THEMES:
THE ARC OF DANA

(1.) Technique Matters
(2.) Fly with Intent
(3.) The Use of Freestyle
A summer league swimmer walks onto a year-round pool deck.
- No one has a crystal ball.
- Empowerment of staff.
- Who is in your lane right now?

Ron Forrest: “This little girl, just swimming away at the back of the lane.”
The Development of Dana

Early Relationship
- Set appropriate goals.
- Had a good sense of how to motivate his swimmer.
- Always thought long-term Development!

Ron Forrest: “Her job was to blow my cautiousness out of the water!”
The Development of Dana

Describe the WHY
- Understand his athlete from a young age.
- Was able to help her conceptualize work in a way which directly correlated to the end result.
- Feedback and engagement is important to maintain focus on correct technique in butterfly.

Ron Forrest: “Just telling her to do something didn’t work really well. She needed to know why she needed to do something.”
The Development of Dana
The Natural.

How Ron has defined "natural and fluid":
- Dynamic kick
- Early head position down and forward
- Higher amplitude (bell-curve) chest press

Ron Forrest:
"She was very natural, very fluid, and I think that is something over the years that went away... when I watch her now, she's not as smooth, she's not as fluid. She just needs to get the stroke back to what is natural, and I think she has." 

Dana may have been a natural, but what made her so natural is teachable!

Early Training
- 12 & Under training consisted of a lot of 25s and 50s.
- Shorter distance stroke was always perfect.
- She wasn't forced into long butterfly training at a young age.
- "Training for the 200 to be good at the 100"

Ron Forrest:
"Remembering the technique more than anything"

Injury & Adaptation
- There is opportunity in injury.
- Didn't (couldn't) follow the 10 x 200 mentality.
- Activated fellow USA National Team coaches for inspiration.

Ron Forrest:
"Train her middle distance freestyle, get her aerobic and anaerobic base up, then swim the butterfly in shorter distances keeping the technique up."

During very formative years, balance was about mastery, not muscle.
Dana trains the WHY.
- Training middle distance freestyle
- Butterfly was not over trained or over raced from 14-16 years old

Ron Forrest:
"This is not over for you. You need to compose yourself"

The Development of Dana

Perfect fly, everyday.
- Working with coaching peers
- Goal-setting
- "Finish on a perfect" gives Dana an opportunity to know what perfectly is. She can then both define and feel perfect

Ron Forrest:
"Rhythm is something that is so important that you can lose during practice. Doing this will allow us to get in touch again with a perfect"

The Development of Dana

Out of necessity she learned that she wasn't going to be great at fly by muscle; but rather finesse.

DANA ARRIVES AT BERKELEY
- Fall of 2006
Teri’s first memories of Dana.
- Dana showed up to Cal injured.
- Butterfly training was limited.
- Swum different strokes, wasn’t always about butterfly.
- Still had an emphasis on feel.

Even at the age where people “specialize” Dana kept her training versatile.

Teri McKeever:
“...try to swim different strokes, initially, so it wouldn’t always be about the butterfly.

The Development of Dana

The return of the natural.
- Concept of relationship with the water/butterfly (positive view on the stroke).
- Rhythm can’t be prescribed, but can be found.
- “Feel” is another, deeper, word for technique.

Teri McKeever:
“...matching the rhythm of the water, rather than overpowering the water.”

The Development of Dana

Wired for perfection.
- Dana’s focus on mastery of the stroke continues.
- Train the stroke you want to race (100 or 200).
- Ability to maintain a prescribed pace.

Teri McKeever:
“The way she is wired, has been shorter [butterfly] pieces of exactly how she wants to feel.”

The Development of Dana

It’s about swimming efficiency.
Training fly

- Maintain good stroke. Throwing butterfly against swimming butterfly.
- Mixed freestyle/fly within repeats.
- Nothing really over 75 repeat.

Teri McKeever:
"Trained [butterfly] on the shorter end, it was about good stroke, not letting it fall apart. Using fins to help, using freestyle to help."

The Development of Dana

Teri talks technique

- Head down and forward.
- Hips up – judging angulation.
- Kick helping her move forward.

Teri McKeever:
"Not just focusing on the down kick, but making sure the up kick moved her forward."

The Development of Dana

The word is forward.

Racing the 200 fly

- Teri (like Ron) had Dana learn the 200.
- Embraced the opportunity of swimming the 200 fly.
- Dana was a sub 2:10 200 flyer!

Teri McKeever:
"Even if you fall apart at a 150, it is still going to help your 100."

The Development of Dana

100 and 200 fly might be different animals, but it is important to race both.
What was the thread through both Ron and Tara’s interviews?

1. Technique matters
2. Fly with intent
3. The use of freestyle

COMMON THEMES IN:
THE ARC OF DANA

USA BUTTERFLY REVOLUTION
Facebook Group: “USA Butterfly Revolution”