

A large, stylized letter 'N' logo. The left vertical stroke is red, the right vertical stroke is orange, and the diagonal crossbar is a gradient from red to orange.

# The Business of Swimming An Inside Look at Nitro

Mike and Tracy Koleber, Owners



Several paths, we're only one way



# Timeline

- 2001, Board Run Team
- 70 Kids
- 3' deep pool
- Green on most days
- No wall targets
- Outdoors
- Pool Owned by a Country Club
- Lease was Sept-May, Summer Water Hard to Find



# 1<sup>st</sup> Order of Business

- Team was \$30K Under Water
- Determined 1<sup>st</sup> Priority...



# Add More Swimmers



# Get Kids to Pool

- Free Clinics
- “Wow” the Parents
- Make the Kids Smile
- Make them all Better in 1 Hour
- Make sure they KNOW they got better
- They’ll want to come back
- They’ll tell their friends



# 2001-2005

- 70 to 350+ Swimmers
- Added two additional leased pools
- Still outdoors
- Continued working on building indoor facility
- Tracy continued working the dry side, all billing, admin, meet entries



# 2006

- August 13, 2006
- Buildup (website, 8-13 caps, constant updates)
- New Team Launched, Big Party
- Nervous
- T-shirts printed, new team caps and suits ready
- “It’s a Long Way to the Top if You Want to Rock & Roll.”
- 370 Kids registered that day









# TAGS Results

- 2008 SC: 33rd
- 2008 LC: 16<sup>th</sup>
- 2009 SC: 11<sup>th</sup>
- 2009 LC: 6<sup>th</sup>
- 2010 SC: 2<sup>nd</sup>
- 2010 LC: 1<sup>st</sup>
- 2011 SC: 1<sup>st</sup>
- 2011 LC: 1<sup>st</sup>
- 2012 SC: 1<sup>st</sup>
- 2012 LC: 1<sup>st</sup>



# Coaching

- Active Coaches (no hands in pockets, no statues)
- No Texting, emailing, phone calls during practices
- Engaged with the group – 100% of the time
- 3 “touches” per swimmer/practice – haircut, braces, pet died, bad grade/good grade, etc.
- No “bad” days



# Coaching (continued)

- Give kids a reason to WANT to come back every day
- Pay attention to them
- Mary Kay Ash: “Make me feel important today.”
- Individual Corrections!! (Parent reading a book in the bleachers)
- Coach to the top end of the group, but every kiddo gets the 3 touches, every day.



# Coaching (continued)

- Smile!
- Tell a joke, make fun of yourself
- We're in the business of "Kids."
- Entertain, apply real life examples
- Limit boring
- Would YOU want to swim in YOUR group in YOUR practices? What can YOU do to make it more enjoyable?



# Coaching (continued)

- YOUR standards. Drills/kick sets/walls/underwaters, etc.: Kids will do whatever you ALLOW them to do. If your kids aren't looking as good as you'd like, why do you allow that?
- Call Audibles as many times as you need
- Leave happier than when they arrived, get them thinking positively about next practice



# Parents

- Allies/Advocates, not enemies.
- No walls
- 24 hr turnaround on all emails
- Electronic communication is FOREVER – Choose your words carefully!
- Harmony vs Discord
- A parent wants the BEST for their child





# Parents (continued)

- Lots of education/info
- Weekly notes
- Stay on Message
- Remind that they are Ambassadors for Youth Sports – especially at meets
- Set the positive example
- The #1 thing your swimmer wants: That you are Proud of them.



# Parents (continued)

- We're all competing every day, but not with each other
- Other "competitors" of ours
- Other sports/activities, laziness/apathy
- Make it worth the drive/expense/energy  
EVERY PRACTICE
- What's in the parent's mind as they drive home?



# The Energy of the Pool Deck

- “This is what it’s supposed to look like.” – Eddie Reese
- We attempt to outcoach each other every day
- When it comes down to it, your program is really a “feeling.” How are you making people “feel” every day, every interaction?
- Leave them with positive feelings.
- “You’re only as good as your bad days” – Tim O’Brien, Nitro National Coach



# Tomorrow's Nitro

- Always evaluating
- CANI (Constant & Never Ending Improvement)
- Embrace mistakes
- “All you can do is all you can do.”



# Final Thoughts...

- Who are you going to allow to outcoach you today/tonight, from start to finish, warm up to warm down?
- Repeat daily
- Create the program you want – as long as you are willing to put in the work
- If everyone did that, we'd all have wait lists

