



## Para Swimming:

Coaching disabled athletes and the positive impact they can have on YOU & YOUR SWIM TEAM

Presented by: Helen Garcia

Head Coach & Co-Founder  
Albany Armada Aquatics



## My Story



- \* Athlete to Coach
- \* Bellflower Aquatic Club
  - \* Coached by Don Watkins
- \* Swam at University of California, Berkeley
  - \* Coached by Teri Mckeever
- \* First experience
  - \* 1 night a week disabled athletes would swim after our workouts
  - \* Volunteered to help with group
  - \* Taught basic skills
  - \* Some swimmers trained with team and competed in our able bodied meets
  - \* Facilitated by Don Watkins
    - \* Went on to coach Roy Perkins

## Bryce Ballinger

- \* 2012
  - \* At age 24 Bryce lost her hands and feet
- \* Met Roy Perkins Jr. through Challenged Athlete Foundation Swim Clinic
- \* Relearned How to Float & Swim
  - \* Able Bodied Experience in Synchronized Swimming & Water Polo
- \* Used You Tube to Learn Strokes
  - \* Much of her Strokes were Self-Taught
- \* Searching for a Team
- \* Started to Compete



## Coaching Outside of the Box

- \* Develop Trust
- \* Trial and Error
- \* Slower Before Faster
- \* Rethinking Stroke Mechanics
- \* Coaching by Committee



## Stroke Classification

- \* Even Playing Field?
- \* Freestyle, Back & Fly
  - \* S6 Stroke Classification
- \* Breaststroke
  - \* SB4 Stroke Classification



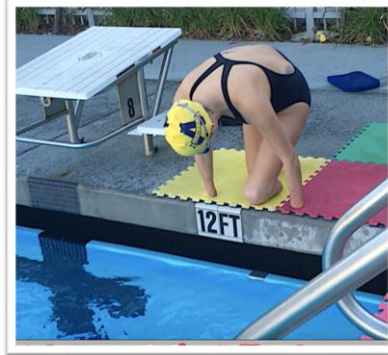
## Breaststroke

- \* Best shot at MQS  
(Minimum Qualifying Standard)
- \* Building the Stroke
- \* Finding the Kick
- \* Rate of Improvement



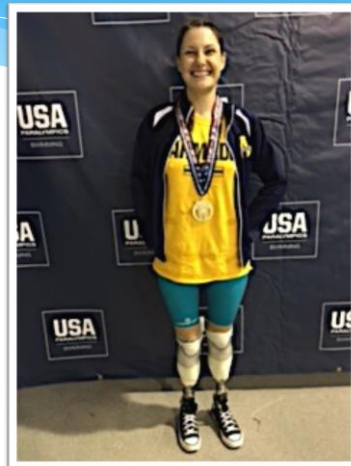
## Learning the Dive

- \* In Water with Assistance
- \* Sit dive
  - \* Video 1
  - \* Video 2
- \* Standing Dive from Edge
  - \* Video 3
- \* Standing Dive from Block
  - \* Video 4

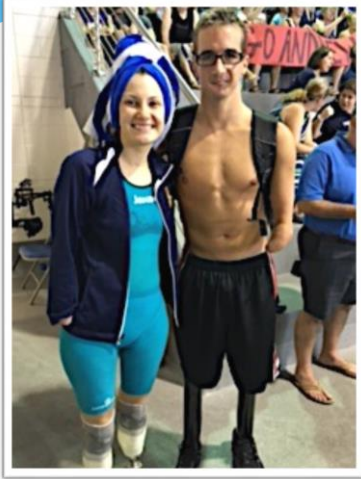


## Competing

- \* Goal Setting
- \* Able Bodied Meets
  - \* Video 5
- \* Travel Meets
  - \* Cincinnati, Ohio Para Swim Meet
- \* Para Olympic Trials
  - \* Do not assume rules are the same



## Para Olympic Trials



## Impact

- \* Introducing Bryce to the Team
- \* Part of the Armada Family
- \* Trains Alongside Team
  - \* Modified Sets
- \* Create Opportunities to Work Together
- \* Inspire



## Having Fun!!



## Advice

- \* Treat them like everyone else
- \* Disabled does not mean Helpless
  - \* Allow them to do what they CAN
  - \* Independence
- \* Competing at Able Bodied Meets
  - \* Contact the Meet Director
  - \* Warm Up?
  - \* Dives
  - \* Exit strategy
  - \* Be Prepared for Anything!
- \* Look for Equipment that Fits their Needs
  - \* Shin Fin
  - \* Volo-blade Paddles
  - \* Noodle



## What's Next?



- \* Short & Long Term Goals
  - \* Para Meet Schedule
  - \* Tokyo 2020
- \* New swimmer
  - \* Sharing the Love of Swimming
- \* Raise Awareness
  - \* Challenged Athlete Foundation
  - \* Wounded Warriors
  - \* Local Media

