

# U.S. Olympic Team Trials - Swimming

Friday, June 18, 2021  
Omaha, Nebraska, USA  
CHI Health Center

## Ryan Lochte

200 Meter Individual Medley  
Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: We have four-time Olympian Ryan Lochte, who finished seventh this evening in the 200 Meter IM.

**Q. Ryan, can you just describe the emotion? I saw you looking up at the board, and you were the last one out of the pool. There was so much emotion going on there with your family and Phelps. Can you share that with us?**

RYAN LOCHTE: Yeah. Swimming has taken me so far. Coming out of the water just what swimming has done for me and my family is unbelievable. To me, the world's greatest sport. (I'm) Very emotional. I was taking it all in. I really wanted to be on that Olympic Team. I think this is probably my most important swim meet that I've ever had in my entire career -- the one that meant the most to me.

So falling short and feeling like I let everyone down was one of the hardest things. I had my family there, my kids, they got to watch their daddy swim, so I guess, you know what, that means everything to me.

**Q. Ryan, with that swim, I don't know if that's your last race, I don't know what your plans are after this but do you feel a sense of peace with that last race?**

RYAN LOCHTE: I can tell you I have no pressure on my back anymore. I was getting pressure from all different directions, mostly on me, because I wanted to prove so much to everyone, but this is not the last you're going to see of me. Whether it's in the swimming pool or outside of the pool, trying to make this sport bigger, you know, that's one of my biggest things that I've always wanted to do when I first started becoming an international swimmer.

I want to make swimming about bigger than what it is right now. Whether it's me swimming in the pool or me going across the world teaching kids how to swim and getting everyone involved in the sport. I want to change the sport. I want to make it bigger. You won't see the last of me. I



# U.S. OLYMPIC TEAM TRIALS



don't know if this will be my last race, I don't think so. Actually I can say it won't be. There are still things I want to do. But I will say the pressure is off, and now it's just going to be fun.

**Q. Ryan, congratulations on a great career; it's certainly been fun to cover you. You said you are not done racing, but should we presume that this is definitely your last attempt to make the Olympics? If so, assuming that is the case, can you put in perspective your Olympic career?**

RYAN LOCHTE: I told -- I think I've said this millions of times, I will quit swimming when I stop having fun. I love this sport. It's gotten me to places that I have never -- that people dream about. So I'm very grateful for that. I'm still having fun, I'm finding different ways of making swimming fun again. I still want to race, but as far as another Olympic Trials, I don't know about that. I will be 40. That's pushing it. We'll see. Anything can happen. I could take years off and come back and be stronger than ever, who knows.

Right now I'm just going to take this all in and go see my family, my entire family.

**Q. Why would you feel that you had let everyone down?**

RYAN LOCHTE: I think it's mostly because of what I put on myself. Just anyone -- for instance, the lifeguard being like, 'hey do it for the old people, you can still do it, we believe in you.' Those comments, I think, I take to heart because I care so much about everyone, and not so much about myself. I just want to make everyone happy, I guess.

I just wanted to do it for everyone and prove to everyone that I have changed; I am a different person. My life has definitely changed. Swimming is, I guess, my second job now. Once my son was born, I became a father and a husband. That's my number one thing.

Swimming is just the cherry on top, but in the midst of everything I felt like I kind of let everyone down because I care about everyone.

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**Q. Ryan, you are part of a generation of swimmers that has changed the sport in this country. Not just with what you guys have won but here at this meet it's you, (Matt) Grevers, Nathan Adrian, Anthony Ervin, the age boundary is pushing on the sport. How much does it mean to you to be a part of making this sport a longer career kind of a sport for people, and what do those guys in that group mean to you?**

RYAN LOCHTE: I think I'm just following in the footsteps of greatness. Dara Torres was the first person, I think she was 44 when she won a silver medal 2008, unheard of. Amazing!

I think we are just showing the younger generation that you can do whatever you want for as long as you want. There are certain things that you've got to sacrifice and do outside of the pool and inside the pool that are different than when you were 20 years old, but you can go as long as you want.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

RYAN LOCHTE: The group of guys? Oh, I mean, one thing about swimming that I love, you are a family. Because we are all close together. Those guys, Anthony Ervin, Michael Phelps, Cullen Jones, all those guys, they're my brothers. We keep in contact all the time, and like I said, we are a family. Being in that generation with them, in that era, means everything. You are never going to forget that. You will take that to your grave.

**Q. Ryan, we had Ryan Murphy in here and Michael Andrew in here, and they were talking about the impact that you have had on their swimming careers. What does that mean for you to hear this new generation of swimmers speak so highly of you and the contributions, recognizing the contributions that you have made on this sport?**

RYAN LOCHTE: Shit! I mean, just like that, it means a lot. Probably more than winning a gold medal. I honestly, I couldn't be here right now and have the swimming career that I had without them, so thank you. That's all I've got.

**Q. Ryan, you talked about wanting to change the sport. Could you talk about what that vision looks like over the next few years?**

RYAN LOCHTE: Of course. It's easy, every time you turn on ESPN or NBC you see NBA Games. They have games all the time, and they're always being broadcast. We have swim meets that are once a month that are really big swim meets, (TYR Pro Swim Series) meets, but they are not as televised like they are with the NBA, the NFL. But at the

Olympics, swimming is the most watched sport; but it only happens every four years. I want to change that. I want to put swimming in everyone's living room, all the time.

It's how much I love the sport of swimming. I want people to see that. To see how much love and passion that these other swimmers have. The sacrifices that they make. They don't get the recognition they should because it's just -- it's the biggest sport during the Olympics but not during the year but I want to change that.

**Q. Ryan, in your long career, what are you most proud of?**

RYAN LOCHTE: Swimming wise, or? I think the easiest one is being a father. That by far trumps everything I have ever done in the sport. In swimming? It wasn't the gold medals or the world records that I've done. It is the friendships, being a role model to younger kids. I think that is what I'm going to miss the most. Just being a part of this sport. I guess I can't say I'm not going to be part of this sport, because I still want to change the sport of swimming. I will still be around. The friendships that I have created throughout my swimming career, the places I've been, the people I've met. I owe it all to swimming. Now I'm going to take everything like that, that I've learned, and put it into my life outside the sport. See how that goes.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much.

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