

Brian Jacobson - Hall of Fame Story - 2014

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Brian Jacobson learned to swim at the early age and was competing by the age of 5. Of course, - he was a southern California boy from Downey, CA. He was on one of those summer "fun teams", but over time it became more serious. Then the club hired a former Olympic swimmer as the new coach and he really got Brian moving. Every Friday the workout would consist of only 25s; 25 drills, 25 sprints, 25 loosening. Even turn drills were 25, but they started in the middle of the pool. With his early training, Brian became quite competitive early on.

High school? He did swim in high school meets. But his training was with his Club team. Why not? His Club allowed him exposure to bigger, regional meets, the Junior Nationals and international competition. Some of his favorite memories were meets in Hawaii, Iceland, the Junior Nationals in Paris. His team participated in the first athletic competition in East Berlin after the wall came down. The place had not been kept up for years. Everyone got sick from the water. He calls it one of his funniest swimming memories with everyone being sick all over the rooms there in East Berlin.

He swam for Stanford for two years from 1991 to 93. During that time frame, one of his favorite meets was the 1991 Olympic festival. The organizers brought in many of the good swimmers from around the country, divided into four groups and had a three-day meet; great competition and great camaraderie. In 1992 he qualified for and attended the Olympic Trial. Brian never quite liked the workout at Stanford and after those two years, he retired from swimming for a while.

After a five-year layoff, in 1999, a friend invited him to a Masters workout. He loved seeing everyone. Shortly, he witnessed an international competition and he was hooked. He currently works out at the University of Minnesota pool, which is convenient since he works at the U. He will work out with a Masters group and also the kid's club team. He likes lots of variety in his workouts and appreciates when fellow swimmers drive him. He loves competition; so much so that he will even compete in the senior's age group at Club Team meets. Here is what Brian says about competition: "I learn something from every race."

Brian's fame is only in the pool. He does not like open water. "Give me a line", he will tell you. One of the worst pools he swam in was one a 50-meter pool in Vancouver, Canada where the grids in the ceiling and the building walls were not parallel and perpendicular to the pool. The backstrokers were swimming diagonals and couldn't keep off the lane lines. The freestylers were also befuddled- every time they took a breath the trapezoidal walls were at a different distance away.

What kept Brian in the water? He will tell you that he must do something physical every day. His body loves it. It has become a 'force of habit' with him. But there is another reason as to why he is constantly in the water. He is exploring what is possible. How far can I take this? He makes the Olympic trials and says I wonder if I can make it again and be the oldest person there. I am going to explore going faster even though I am older. I am going to explore world records.

To understand Brian's accomplishments over the last 15 years as a Minnesota Master we have to go beyond state records, beyond US Masters Swimming Top Ten placements, which, by the way, there have been 145 so far, --- 32 being first places. To understand Brian's accomplishments, we should also move past his 11 All-American designations. We have to go to some pretty rare place. From here we see his qualifying for the 2008 and 2012 Olympic trials as a 34 and 38 year old. From here, we see his 8 national records, two currently on the books. And then to see his additional swimming accomplishments, we have to move off the national stage to the international realm of FINA. FINA is the world. They recognize only meters. In the past year and a half, Brian has broken the FINA world record in his favorite event, the 50 meter free, three times. FINA also keeps their World Top Ten list annually for both SCM and LCM. We did not send time combing all those annual lists. Instead we went to the FINA ALL-TIME Top Ten List. WORLD All Time!! This is an extremely elite place to hang out. Here we find 11 current All Time Top Ten placements. Congratulations Brian!!