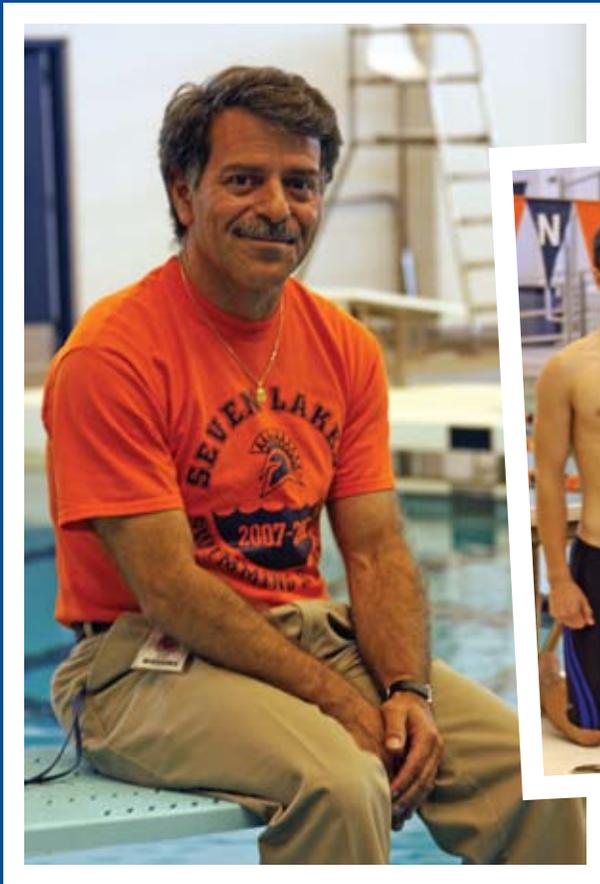
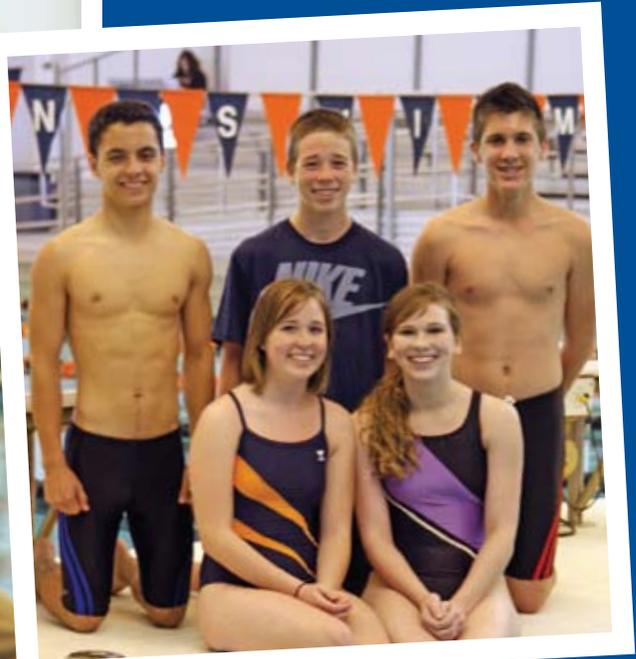


DIVING



Seven Lakes High School Dive Coach William Cody



Some of the champion dive team of Seven Lakes High School

INTO SUCCESS AT SEVEN LAKES

Coach William Cody Turns Rookies into Champs

Written by Heather Lowrie

Have you ever wondered how an athletic program becomes a legacy from the ground up? For the Seven Lakes High School diving team, the answer is simple: Coach William Cody. In just two years he has taken beginning divers and turned them into regional champions. Cody's passion for diving is evident to anyone spending time poolside while he's coaching. "If a diver progresses it's all because of him, not me. That's what I tell my team. You're the ones who go through it, I just guide you," says Cody.

Coach Cody's Inspiration

At nine years old, Cody made his annual trip to a local summer resort where professional divers were employed to coach the kids. Rex Richards, coach and top-ten ranked diver in the USA, inspired Cody and has continued to serve as an inspiration throughout his entire coaching career. Cody recalls how Richards would scoop him up, climb up the platform, and dive into the pool with Cody in his arms. He remembers very

well the impression Richards made on him. "This guy just exuberated confidence. That was my big inspiration. I wouldn't be diving or coaching if I hadn't run across him that summer." Now Cody carries his own legacy with him. He's coached six divers who competed in the Olympics and fourteen World Champion divers.

Becoming a Coach

Cody was a member of a Michigan dive team when his first coaching opportunity was set before him. The current team's coach decided to leave for another position, so the nine young divers turned to someone who would get the job done. They asked Cody, who was only 14 years old at the time, if he would coach them. He took the challenge and never looked back. His career was born out of necessity, but continued because of a life-long love affair with diving. After forty years of coaching, it now has grown into an amazing self-taught success story.

Dedicated to the Individual

To call Cody dedicated to his work would be an understatement. His day begins at 4:30 a.m. as he strategically writes notes about what he wants to accomplish daily with each athlete. He methodically determines what works, what doesn't, and what still needs to be changed for each of his divers. "Each member of the team has to be thought of as an individual," explains Cody. When a diver makes that conscious decision to jump, the body goes through almost 50 different motions in a little over one second, and Cody doesn't seem to miss a single one. Jeff Anderson, a senior at Seven Lakes, is a great example of how Cody works with his team. Anderson had only nine months of diving experience under Cody's guidance when he qualified and placed seventh in the recent State Championship. Cody's diving team has also won two district championships and one regional championship in just two years.



Diver Jill Slaughter takes direction from Coach Cody



Another beautiful dive

It's Not All Work

The only requirement to try out for Cody's team is a suit and a sense of humor. Cody is definitely not all work. Having fun is part of his approach as well. He wants the kids and the folks watching to feel the excitement and see all the fun his team is having, and as a result, fall in love with the sport. Seven Lakes junior Jill Murphy says of her coach, "He loves to make jokes and he has a lot of funny catch phrases." One of his favorites is "No swingie, smackie on backie." The translation - if you don't swing your arms you aren't going make it!

Making a Difference

Cody isn't a diving coach for fame or fortune. He simply wants to make a difference in the life of each student who dons a suit and plunges into his pool. And, with the help of supportive parents and Seven Lakes Principal Ms. Whitbeck, that is exactly what he does each day.

HEATHER LOWRIE is a former fourth grade teacher and mother of two. She is married to her high school sweetheart, James. She is a freelance writer and author of "The Inspired Wife."

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