

U.S. Olympic Team Trials - Swimming

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Lucas Oil Stadium

Anthony Nesty Todd DeSorbo Lindsay Mintenko Media Conference



U.S. OLYMPIC TEAM TRIALS



away we go.

Q. A dreaded two-parter for you. One, you've talked about what the barriers you've broken down over the course of your career and as a swimmer. What do you think it means to be the first black coach to lead a team at the swimming? What can that do to help diversify the sport even further than all the stuff and barriers you've already broken down?

Q. What does it mean for you to be building this culture in your college teams and be building the you can says in your college teams and how do you build on that success leading into long course season and international meets?

ANTHONY NESTY: I think Todd and I have the same philosophy where we were asked to lead the team in '22, I believe, in Budapest. We spoke numerous times on how the culture is a big part of our success in college, and we wanted to transform that in the U.S. Team, national team, and obviously with Lindsay's leadership, and Todd and I leading the men and women, I think it was a good combo, good mix of he, does things his way, I do things mine.

But the combination of all three of us leading that team, we have probably the most successful World Championship meet ever. And you know, I'm a competitor, and I want to do the same this summer.

So you know, it's going to be fun. We've spoken many times on the phone and through Zoom, and we are pretty excited of what's going to happen, what we're going to do as a team, and then the culture, it's a big part of how you get there, how you get the great performances and how you get everybody going in the same direction.

TODD DeSORBO: I think we build off the momentum of the college season and the successes that both of our teams have had, and Anthony and I complement each other very well. We are great friends and talk a lot. We had a great experience two years ago.

So I think we are both excited about this summer. But just building off the college season and heading into the Olympic trials. And then really quickly, I say this a lot, Nesty will do this, too, and he already has the U.S. hat on. But I'll take the UVA hat off and put the USA hat on, and

ANTHONY NESTY: Good question. Very honored to be the first person of color to lead the U.S. Swim Team. But never forget as an athlete and as a coach, it takes hard work. Don't ever forget that. Obviously the athletes you coach make you look a lot better than you as a coach, but that's kind of, you know, the world we live in.

It's a great honor, and it's my job to coach the U.S. Team the best way we can and to go to Paris and be the best team coming out of Paris. That's kind of the No. 1 goal.

Q. And could you just tell us where Caeleb is coming into this? Obviously we know what his journey has been since Tokyo and where is he as a swimmer coming into this meet?

ANTHONY NESTY: We started a journey to this meet in September. You can do the research, how he's improved from the fall.

Obviously we do all our work in the fall, and the spring was more of a championship segment of the year. He's improved dramatically from the fall and the spring. And the last meet in San Antonio, he was fantastic, and also great in Atlanta.

You know, he's in a good spot. This is a tough meet. You know, I told our team, I had a team meeting -- which I'm going to have at 6:00 p.m., we are pretty fortunate because we compete in the best conference. The NCAA is the fastest meet in the world, and the meet that starts tomorrow is also the fastest meet in the world.

So our athletes are prepared, whether you're a college or high school or a pro, they know what to expect, and Caeleb is no different.

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The first, important thing you have to do is make Finals, and after that, it takes care of itself. I tell him to lean on his experience and the body of work since September, and just let it go.

Q. Given what happened last summer with Australia winning more Gold Medals than the United States, given the fast times we've seen around the world, especially from Australia this week, what is the attitude trying to top that Gold Medal count again?

LINDSAY MINTENKO: Sure. I think obviously the Australians are swimming well. They have for many, many years. We are going to, too. We have the advantage of having the last trials of all the countries.

Like Anthony said, this is a pretty typical meet. You have to be on your game to even make the Olympic team, the U.S. Olympic Team. So I fully anticipate our athletes will be on their game starting tomorrow and that momentum will lead into our camps and into Paris, and we are really looking forward to what's to come in the next few weeks.

TODD DeSORBO: I think every swimmer in the United States has been working towards this for an entire year. Regardless of who is swimming fast outside of the U.S. doesn't really matter, right. I think everybody right now is focused on themselves and doing the best they can and getting through the gauntlet of the U.S. Trials, and that's what's going to set us up to be really successful in Paris.

I don't think -- at least I'm not and imagine Anthony is not too worried about what's going on in the rest of the world right now. We are just focused on what's happening here. And again, these athletes have been preparing for this for a long time. What will happen will happen, we will see pretty soon, how fast we will be.

I think what's happening around the world or anywhere else, you know, whether it's the college season or USA Swimming, it's just motivation for everybody. It gets them excited.

ANTHONY NESTY: I think every year is different. You know, last year is last year, and this is a new season. And obviously we have to get through the next nine days to select a fantastic team, and it's game on. We are pretty confident.

Like Todd said, everybody has been gearing up for the summer. The meet starts tomorrow, and I'm pretty confident we're going to have a great team, great staff and headed into the Paris to do the best we can and win as many medals as we can.

Q. So this is for Todd and Tony. If you wouldn't mind keeping your college hats on a little bit for this. Now that we've gone through a full Olympic, I guess, tri, or quad cycle with NIL being a thing for college athletes, I feel like it's been prominent on the women's side of swimming where you have athletes that are able to stay in college, where maybe in the past they would have gone through like Katie or Missy. Curious how you think that dynamic has affected how athletes train and race, and whether that changes who ends up being on the Olympic team?

TODD DeSORBO: I'm not sure it changes who is going to be on the Olympic Team. I think it just provides another opportunity, another option for the athletes, whether they want to stay in college and continue to train in the collegiate team and focus on NCAAs or if they just wanting to pro.

I mean, at UVA we have had athletes do both. And with the COVID year, they had the fifth year, as well, and that's kind of played into this as well to get the extra year of college swimming.

We have had some who decided to go pro and not do a fifth year, and some who decided to do the fifth year. It's a matter of preference, and I think it just gives people more opportunities, more options, and will it impact who makes the Olympic team, I'm not sure.

But I think it will certainly impact how well people will swim at the trials and further at the Olympics.

ANTHONY NESTY: I agree with Todd. I can also say it provides the athletes to stay in college. Because training with a college team, racing with a college team, that's an awesome experience that you can have as a pro, and you can prolong that with the NIL, and it's good for the sport.

Bottom line, our athletes get a lot of chances to race in college, and that helps prepare them for the summer.

Q. Can you talk just a sentence or two about whether this doping scandal is affecting your athletes' morale, and if there's anything that you're needing to do as coaches to help them move past what they are hearing and what they may be up against?

TODD DeSORBO: I don't know that it's impacted our athletes at all. I think they are thinking about today, tomorrow, this meet, this competition, what's happening here, and focusing on themselves and getting ready to swim fast this week.

ANTHONY NESTY: I agree with Todd. Our job is to

prepare our athletes for the fastest meet that starts tomorrow, and our focus, our energy was on getting them ready for the meet that starts tomorrow.

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