



Dear Synchro Family and Friends,

We had our first ever Skills Competition and Clinic for 11-12 and 13-15 athletes hosted by NorCal Synchro at St. Mary's College in Moraga, Calif. last weekend. The swimmers were evaluated on land and water skills followed by a clinic. We had a fantastic attendance with 85 swimmers in attendance - and about 20 coaches. Although we need to make some adjustments in the years ahead, I feel that this process is a great step forward in developing our athletes. The focus on basic skills and training is necessary for us to continually improve.

Sandra Mahoney along with Gigi Grizanti and Kevin Warner ran the testing portion of the weekend. Kevin was assisted in the GAS/Land testing by John Ortiz of Tualatin Hills and 2004 Olympian Tammy DeClerq. Shannon Korpela, our newly elected VP of Education was also a great help in leading the testing. The water evaluators were Sandra and Gigi along with 1988 and 1992 Olympians Karen and Sarah Josephson. The skills testing will be used not only for the athletes and coaches to see where they are in relation to others, but also for us to understand where we should put our attention in terms of techniques and training.

During the clinic, myself along with Karen and Sarah instructed the water skills while Kevin and Tammy instructed on land with John Ortiz helping out as well. A big THANK YOU to National Team member Mary Killman who made the time to help out on Saturday and to demonstrate on Sunday. On Sunday, Mary and Mitou Nguyen of NorCal demonstrated the basic skills for all the swimmers and coaches. It is very clear from watching, that when the basic skills are better, we will have better elite athletes. Our elite athletes perform the same basic skills as our younger swimmers.

The second weekend of Skills Competition and Clinic will be held October 15-17 in New Canaan, Conn. If you can attend, I think you will find it to be a great experience and an educational weekend for both swimmers and coaches.

My trip to Uruguay for the 1st FINA World Aquatics Conference was terrific. FINA hosted seminars and discussions on marketing, growth, organization, sponsorship, television coverage, etc. for the whole aquatics world. I also had the opportunity to network with friends from around the world and to make many new connections. Thank you to FINA for hosting an absolutely wonderful event. You can read more about the conference on the FINA website at www.fina.org.



Our National Team I has just traveled to Colorado Springs to begin a training period at the Olympic Training Center. We wish them the best as they begin working toward Olympic qualification at the 2011 Pan Am Games next year.

All the Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Duke Zielinski'.

Duke Zielinski
President
USA Synchro