

# **REFLECTION: WHAT NEXT?**

**Bill Furniss OBE**  
GB head coach

# Our sport is changing

- Professionalism
- Demands
- Travel
- Expectation
- Stress
- Arena – biggest change



# Our young people are changing

- **Generation X**
- **Different communication, different interaction**
- **Mental health considerations**



**We have to prepare swimmers not just to swim  
but to perform optimally in this new environment**

**Martini advert - “any time, any place, anywhere...”**

**Most swimmers - two chances, two Olympics, eight years**

**Golfers - 40 chances, 10 years of Majors**

**Tennis - 40 chances, 10 years of Grand Slams**



# How do we prepare our athletes for these new demands?

The obvious ones:

- **Physical – STRONG**
- **Technical – WEAK**
- **“The limiting factor in performance is technique”**
- **Mental – WEAK**
- **Race craft - WEAK**



**BUT how do we prepare the person who walks out in the NEW ARENA, embraces it and delivers the best swim of their life?**



# **Your challenge is not just to prepare the swimmer BUT to prepare the CHARACTER of the person**

## **Attributes**

- **Self- regulating**
- **Am energy-giver not taker**
- **Focused on and educated about being world class every day**
- **JDWI mentality**
- **Process not outcome mentality**
- **Mental resilience – someone who can ‘flatten the waves’ and LEARN from disappointment**

# Your challenge is not just to prepare the swimmer BUT to prepare the CHARACTER of the person

- Enjoy the journey
- They must believe totally they can succeed on the world stage
- High skill level, “it’s a starting, swimming, turning and finishing race”
- Someone who wants it and is willing to pay the price





# What framework is required to produce this type of athlete?

- Theme of this conference – OADF
- Planning and periodisation is KEY
- BUT it MUST include all the demands the athlete will face and be progressive