

Results still motivating, just not consuming



Zack Chetrat

Continued from page 25

bring your 'A' game once a year," he said at the time, "Zack is such a workhorse, he can take a hard workout and turn around the next day and give you a great race."

And so with the Olympic trials approaching, Chetrat decided to take a year off from his economics and political science studies and dedicate himself to making the Olympic team.

"So what?" Chetrat thought. So he hadn't achieved his goal. Did his family still love him? Did his friends still like him? Did his teammates still

respect the effort he had put into the attempt? The answers kept coming back, yes.

His immediate reaction upon realizing he had not made the Olympic team was that he had failed. Chetrat no longer sees it that way, even if in the simplest of terms he had failed to reach his goal. That's because without all the work he put in during that year, he would not be where he is today. That realization took some time, though.

"It was really only after the Olympics were over that I could really let things slide. It took (thinking about quitting the sport) to know that I wanted to keep going."

Zack Chetrat

"It took me a good five months. It was really only after the Olympics were over that I could really let things slide," he said. "It took going to that place (thinking about quitting the sport) to know that I wanted to keep going."

Things started to turn around for Chetrat in the summer. After taking a month-long break from training, he got back in the pool. Two months after trials, he found himself back in Montreal at the same pool where trials had been held.

When it came time for the 200m butterfly final, Chetrat found himself in Lane 7, the same lane he raced in at trials. Two lanes to his right was Sharpe, who was preparing for the Olympics.

Chetrat beat Sharpe and took the silver medal, finishing behind only former world championship medalist Peng Wu of China. The following month, Chetrat earned a silver medal at nationals. Rejoining the Varsity Blues this fall provided further inspiration as he knew younger swimmers would look to him for leadership.

Chetrat's new outlook hasn't completely changed from those days back in the public pools. He still likes to win. Results are still a motivating factor, he's just not consumed by them.

"I look at it that I almost cared too much (at Olympic trials). I cared so much it was an

impairment. I was too worried about the consequences," he said. "I'm still results driven, but my approach has changed. If I've put everything into it and done my best, I can't blame myself if I've done everything I can."

Chetrat and fellow swimmer Hassaan Abdel Khalik — who also missed out on an Olympic spot — have been sharing their experiences with swim clubs through an initiative called Dream Big. Their message is to enjoy the moment and appreciate the opportunity to race. And if the race doesn't produce the desired

result, how to use that to reach your future goals. It's a lesson Chetrat learned by living it.

"It's taught me, instead of being defeated forever by one race, be better because of it," he said.

Chetrat no longer struggles to find the motivation that escaped him in the months following the Olympic trials. He heads into the World Short Course Championships swimming at his best. At the University Cup in Toronto two weeks ago, he set a personal best in the 100m butterfly and also won the 400m freestyle. The following week at Canada Cup in Etobicoke, he set a personal best and established an Ontario record in the 200m butterfly.

Still, Chetrat knows he will have his work cut out for him in Istanbul.

"I'm really excited. There are going to be a lot of fast swimmers who are a lot better than me, but I'm going to race against Olympians and I'm looking forward to being back in that environment and see where I measure up."

Win or lose, Chetrat will use the results to push himself closer to his goal.

— Herb Garbutt can be followed on Twitter @Herbgarbutt

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Olympian wins three Canada Cup medals

Oakville Aquatic Club (OAK) Olympian Tera Van Beilen won a silver medal and two bronzes at the Canada Cup meet, held recently at Etobicoke Olympium.

Van Beilen's silver came in the women's senior 200-metre breaststroke, while the bronzes came in the 50m and 100m breaststroke.

Omar Arafa was OAK's other medalist at the meet, claiming silver in the men's 50m backstroke. Evan White was fourth in the men's 400m individual medley.

Gamal Assaad, Mitchell Gour, Annika Grewal, Kent Kikot and Peter Serles also represented OAK at the competition.

OAK swimmers at the recent Nothers Fall Invitational in London.

Ian Chambers, Alyssa Forbes, Collyn Gagne, Justin Kirkham and Hal Malcolm each won three golds. Two-event winners were William Anderchek, Emilie Gagne, Carly Jazbec, Jacqueline Keire, Sunny Liu and Bryanna Samuels.

Also winning races were Kiera Brough, Amr Elfarseisy, Sarah Hay, Bennett Ho, Dion Renaud, Trevor Smith, Nina Tomic and Wesley Wright.

Other medalists included Tyler Altenhof, Derek Calvert, Jessica Clark, Emily Cudny, Mohamed Elmarsafawi, Adrian Haasler, Gabrielle Harris, Chloe Haslam, Marissa Hay, Vienna Holdip, Andrew Hughes, Anthony

Nothers Fall Invitational

Bara Tlabar won eight gold medals and Carolina Zhang added seven more to lead

See Younger, page 27