

Summer McIntosh had herself a busy 2023.

Breaking the world record in the 400m freestyle.

And then the 400m individual medley.

Winning multiple individual gold medals at World Championships.

Countless world junior and national records.

In 2024, the achievements keep stacking up.

She became the first swimmer to best Katie Ledecky in the 800m freestyle since 2010.

And has her eye on an epic performance at the Paris Olympics later this summer.

Her goal-setting process for swimming like a dynamo?

Focusing on improvement, small goals, and yes, focusing on the process.

“The small goals I had led up to my big goals,” said McIntosh when looking back at her swims. “It was just as important to me to tick off those boxes to be able to reach my full potential in the overall season. It’s all about the process.”

While most swimmers get lost in the outcome goals (a gold medal, world record, and so on), elite swimmers understand the importance of continual improvement.

Of focusing on the process.

For McIntosh, this mindset has helped her stay focused on the things she controls each time she dives into the water.

“I’ll just try to keep improving and trust the process,” she says. “Focus more on the process goals and step-by-step goals like working on my technique or working on my turns, stuff like that rather than big goals.”

By Olivier Poirier-Leroy

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