

"So many people along the way, whatever it is you aspire to do, will tell you it can't be done. But all it takes is imagination. You dream. You plan. You reach."- Michael Phelps



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Newsletter

USA Swimming is committed to a culture of inclusion and opportunity for people of diverse backgrounds including, but not limited to, race, age, income, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender expression and sexual orientation.

[Visit our Website](#)

Welcome to the U.S. Olympic Team Trials

The very best swimmers in our country have gathered in Omaha for a sporting event that has no match in the world of Olympic Sport. The sights and sounds of world class swimmers racing to become members of Team USA are breathtaking.

Although this thrilling spectacle happens only every four years, USA Swimming and the USA Swimming Foundation are at work every day honoring a commitment to diversity and inclusion. It is an ongoing process that mandates better access to training, as well as, improved opportunities for competition. Our Executive Director Chuck Wielgus is leading the effort to create conditions that make this vision a reality.

I join all of you in looking forward to America's Olympic Swimming Trials and to the thrill of watching astonishing hard work and talent produce our team for Rio. In just a few weeks Team USA will participate in the most diverse and inclusive athletic competition on earth: The Olympic Games.

Frank Busch, USA Swimming National Team Director



The Last Swim Before My Big Moment

by Maritza Correia McClendon
2004 Olympic Silver Medalist, Swimming

No I'm not talking about finding my prince charming, but rather earning my Olympic birth. When I first learned to swim it was a medical remedy to improve my scoliosis. Fifteen years later not only was my scoliosis corrected, but I became an Olympian for life. It was a journey literally years in the making.

I remember watching, in complete awe, Amy Van Dyken win four Olympic gold medals at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, GA. I knew at that moment, I wanted to become an Olympic star just like her. Four years later in Indianapolis, Indiana, I was behind the block ready to swim the 200 free. This was my chance to make the Olympic team. Instead of focusing on my lane, I was busy looking around for my coach, my teammates, and my parents. Then I started fidgeting with my cap, making sure my goggles were sucking my eyes out, and constantly moving behind the block. Totally not my usual way of approaching races. Needless to say I left my first Olympic Trials experience without a spot on the team.

I always say Olympic trials is more nerve racking than the Olympics. You head into the meet in the zone and ready to go, but at the same time this is a moment that only comes around once every four years. For some this is their only shot at becoming an Olympian.

I was determined to never give up, no matter what. I wanted to be an Olympian. I started another four year journey, except this time I had to prepare myself for the challenge ahead of me. The pool deck at Olympic Trials, that year in Long Beach, CA, was "sterile" meaning no one on deck except the swimmers of that heat and the officials. There was no need to look for my parents, my coaches, or my teammates. I knew they were there somewhere. There was also no need to fiddle with my cap, check my goggles, or even check out my competition. I had one lane to focus on and that's all that mattered. I will never forget getting through prelims, semi-finals, and then finals touching the wall....4th place. I made it! This overwhelming feeling of accomplishment, the feeling of perseverance, the feeling of becoming an Olympian are ones I will never forget. Just thinking about it, I get butterflies in my stomach and goosebumps on my arms and an instant smile comes across my face.

The icing on the cake moment for me was when I realized I made history by becoming the first woman of color to make the US Olympic Swim team. After my race I said, "I'm proud to be the first but I don't want to be the last." Each year I have witnessed our sport become more and more diverse. But in the last four years, I have seen a drastic spike in the number of athletes of color at major top meets. I remember standing with Simone Manuel, Lia Neal, and Natalie Hinds at the Atlanta Classic, when Lia said, "Look how many of us are here." Not only did we see athletes like Tristen Ulett and Reece Whitely on deck, but we were able to use multiple hands to count how many of us were represented. Mark my words, what we witnessed that day will be witnessed by all not just this week at Olympic trials in Omaha, Nebraska, but at all future swimming events.

[Learn More](#)



Five More To Watch in Omaha

by Mike Watkins



Every year, there are several U.S. swimmers who have the meets of their lives to make their first Olympic team.

Here are five more of the United States best swimming hopefuls to have their breakthrough meet at U.S. Olympic Team Trials.

Andrew Wilson

Coming out of high school, Andrew Wilson wasn't fast enough to swim at the Division I level.

Seeing his promise, he was recruited to swim at Division III Emory University. Over time, he parlayed that opportunity into being named the 2015 Division III Swimmer of the Year – and last summer, winning his first USA Swimming national title.

Needless to say, he's come a long way, and he has even higher aspirations in mind next week when he competes at his first Olympic Trials.

"I would have never thought that I'd have a legitimate chance at making the U.S. Olympic team, but here I am," he said. "I was really happy with last summer, but I'm hoping this summer will be even better."

Wilson believes so strongly in the opportunity that stands before him that he took a redshirt from college competition this past season and moved to Austin, Texas, to train with Eddie Reese and his staff at Longhorn Aquatics.

He said the conversation with Reese started in winter 2015 and progressed from there. After Division III NCAAAs that year, Wilson thought he could be fast enough long course to have a good shot at making the Olympic team, so he started considering it then.

"I would say I was 99 percent sure before 2015 Nationals even started," he said. "I just wanted to do everything I could to try to make the team, which for me meant taking some time off to focus on swimming."

In a lot of ways, because he never expected to be here – among those being hailed as top contenders next week in Omaha – everything moving forward is gravy.

"These will be my first Trials, so I'm not sure what to expect but I'm trying not to build it up too much," said Wilson, who finds distractions from swimming with an interest in old cars, possibly owning one that he can "tinker with" in the future. "In the end, it's a meet so I'm preparing for it how I would for any other big meet.

"I just want to be the best swimmer I can be and never look back and have regrets about what I did or didn't do. I want to know that if I get third at Trials and miss the team, that's because the other two guys are simply better than me, not because I beat myself."

Felicia Lee

If you know Felicia Lee well, you most likely call her "Flee."

It's not a knock on her diminutive stature or spunky personality. It's simply a nickname she's had since she was a young swimmer in New Jersey before relocating to train at the North Baltimore Aquatic Club (NBAC) as a precocious 13-year-old – even though her NBAC coaches might like to take credit for it.

"It started way back when I was still swimming with the Montclair YMCA Dolphins," Lee said. "But when I moved to Maryland to swim with NBAC, I never told anyone about the nickname; Paul Yetter just kind of independently started calling me Flee. Since then it's really stuck."

What also has stuck is Lee's continued position as one of the United States' best butterfly swimmers.

It's a role she's enjoyed much of her life, starting when she was just a teenager who won the 100 fly at Phillips 66 Nationals in both 2006 and 2007.

And while she admits it was difficult to consistently live up to those early accomplishments and accolades, she learned lessons as a result.

And more often than not, the most poignant, lasting lessons came from her failures more than her successes.

"When I was younger, winning my first national title at 13, it was so unexpected and suddenly I was thrown into the spotlight - and I don't think I was necessarily ready for it," she said. "Websites and swim fans saying I should have made this team but didn't, or that I was a burn out – it's hard stuff to read when you're young and impressionable."

"But I've learned a lot of lessons throughout my swimming career. And look at me now, I'm still here, I'm still going best times. There isn't just one path to success in swimming. Mine has a lot of twists and turns, but in the end, it's heading towards the same end goal."

Based upon her performance at 2014 Pan Pacific Championships (fifth in prelims, ninth in consolations since only two Americans can make the finals) and 2015 World University Games (gold in the 400 free relay, bronze in the 400 medley relay and sixth in the 100 fly), Lee said she is ready to stake her claim to a spot on her first Olympic team next week in Omaha.

"Finally earning my spot on the (Pan Pac) roster was special," she said. "More special than I think most people think and know. It kind of validated to me that my doubts and concerns about my swimming career way back when I was 14 were a bit childish and stupid."

"In terms of confidence, it means a lot. To be going best times, with a lot of room for improvement, I'm looking forward to Omaha."

Being very goal-oriented, Lee said there are still several things she wants to accomplish through the sport – "it helps me get up early in the morning even

though I'm definitely not a morning person" – and making an Olympic team is high on her list.

"Every little kid dreams of going to the Olympics and competing for their country, and I am no different," she said. "Obviously that's a huge goal, one that I am working toward every day. But if it doesn't happen, I can and will step away from the sport knowing that the journey has been nothing short of amazing."

To view the entire article click on the link below.

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Aqua Zone

The Aqua Zone is the ultimate fan experience for fans and is located in Exhibit Hall C. This 100,000-square foot area will feature activities for the whole family, including surf riding, log rolling, rock wall climbing, virtual reality, swimming treadmills and more! All of these are digitally connected so fans can share socially and enter for a chance to win a BMW lease for the year! This FREE admission fan experience is open to the public and will have 30 different exhibitors and fun, interactive experiences.

Hours of Operation

Sunday, June 26: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Monday, June 27: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Tuesday, June 28: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Wednesday, June 29: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Thursday, June 30: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Friday, July 1: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Saturday, July 2: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Sunday, July 3: 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

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STAY CONNECTED



Broadcast Schedule

June 26

6:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Qualifying Heats
NBC Sports Net.

8:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Finals NBC

June 27

6:30 p.m. Olympic Trials - Qualifying Heats NBC
Sports Net.

8:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Finals NBC

June 28

7:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Qualifying Heats NBC
Sports Net.

Trials Guide

Click on the picture below to view the event guide.

8:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Finals NBC

June 29

7:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Qualifying Heats NBC Sports Net.

8:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Finals NBC

June 30

6:30 p.m. Olympic Trials - Qualifying Heats NBC Sports Net.

8:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Finals NBC

July 1

6:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Qualifying Heats NBC Sports Net.

8:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Finals NBC

July 2

5:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Qualifying Heats NBC Sports Net.

8:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Finals NBC Sports Net.

July 3

7:00 p.m. Olympic Trials - Finals NBC

****Times listed are Eastern Daylight Time only. Please check provider listings for time and channel in your area.***

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The Last Gold

Looking for a team building activity for your club? Don't miss out on the nationwide screening of "The Last Gold," on Monday, July 11th.

Narrated by Emmy-winner Julianna Margulies, The Last Gold reveals one of the greatest untold stories in Olympic history. The feature-length documentary details the heroic efforts of the women's 1976 U.S. Olympic swim team as they compete against the systematically doped East Germans in a race to win the last gold.

To purchase tickets or to host a screening, visit: <https://www.tugg.com/titles/the-last-gold>. Currently screenings are scheduled for 136 cities in 34 states

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