



Full Name	Victoria Anne Cervone
Major	Visual Arts
Sport	Swimming & Diving
Events	Individual Medley, Butterfly, Freestyle
Height	6'3"
Class	Junior
Hometown	Closter, NJ
High School	Northern Valley Regional HS
Date of Birth	December 26, 1990

TORI CERVONE

BY WILLIAM QUALKINBUSH

THE JUNIOR IS A LEADER OF WOMEN WITH LOFTY TEAM AND PERSONAL GOALS FOR THE 2011-12 SEASON.

Often times, Clemson Swimming & Diving Head Coach Christopher Ip refers to his swimmers as being "on schedule." This means that the student-athlete is progressing in his or her development at the exact pace that the coaching staff believes he or she should be. Sometimes, a student-athlete can fall a little behind, so it is nice to have someone on the roster who can pick up the slack in a number of areas.

For the Clemson women's swimming & diving team, that person is junior Tori Cervone. A jack-of-all-trades for the Tigers, Cervone has competed in just about every event imaginable during her Clemson career. On a team that is thin on available bodies, using versatile swimmers like Cervone in a number of roles will be more important than ever.

There is responsibility involved with swimming multiple events. Swimming involves a great deal of mental preparation, so rushing around from event to event, particularly when it involves multiple disciplines, is not ideal for everyone.

However, she has become adept at brushing the pressure aside and focusing on one event at a time. In fact, she believes the multi-faceted nature of her role keeps her mentally fresh.

"Regardless of whether I have to do the same events every meet or not, I'm still going to try my best," said the Closter, NJ native. "I like to do different events every meet, just so I don't get bored. I feel like I would get bored if I had to do the same events over and over again. But, I don't feel any more pressure than I already would."

Cervone has grown comfortable enough with her main events that she has begun to establish herself as one of the most successful medley swimmers in school history. She currently holds top-five marks in four events, 200 backstroke, 200 butterfly, 200 individual medley, and 400 individual medley.

She is well within striking distance of several school records and would like to make sure she leaves Clemson as the school leader in at least one event after coming so close a season ago.

"I wish I had gone a little faster in the 200 IM," she said of her performance last season. "I'm only a tenth off of the record. Hopefully, I can get that this year. That's probably one of my biggest goals for this year...to get that record. I made the finals in the 400 IM at ACCs last year and I'd like to do that again, and maybe do it in some other events."

Cervone can afford to focus on her individual accomplishments in 2011-12 due to a shift in focus within the program. Ip has put an emphasis on individual success this season, choosing to err on the side of one-on-one instruction due to the lower number of student-athletes at his disposal.

"It's going to be an interesting year," admitted Ip. "We have to work a little bit more individually with the athletes

and really focus on that. Hopefully, when they individually do well, the team success will appear. We can't go for huge team goals, because our team isn't as large as it has normally been. But, we'll do the best we can."

From leaders on the team like Cervone to the few new faces who will litter the roster this season, the Tigers are hopeful that each individual will pick up some extra slack in events where the talent pool might not be deep. Cervone will obviously be a major part of that plan, but others, including her sister, Alisha, a sophomore, will be counted on as well. The strategy will require a special sense of togetherness and individual responsibility to the collective body.

"As long as everybody gives it our all, and I think everyone will, the overall results will be good," said Cervone. "We might not win every meet, but we should be able to compete with other teams."

"Everyone did their jobs over the summer to stay in shape and improve. Even though our team is smaller in numbers this year, we're stronger than ever."

After watching their male counterparts send four representatives to the NCAA Championships last season, Cervone and her teammates would like to join them this season. There will be several chances for a versatile swimmer like Cervone, who will be asked to compete at a high level in a variety of events, to qualify.

In the program's final season, Cervone has designs to leave her own personal legacy on Clemson women's swimming & diving. Leading a host of Tigers to nationals, a lofty yet attainable goal, would be a nice way to do it.

"That would be awesome, obviously," Cervone said of participating in the NCAA meet this season. "There are a couple of people who are really close, and maybe we can get a relay in there, too. I have a really good feeling about this season."

