

HOW HAS TWITTER CHANGED HOW JOURNALISTS REPORT ON SPORTS?
THE 2012 MISSOURI GRAND PRIX

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by
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The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School, have examined the thesis entitled

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Presented by Rosellen Downey

A candidate for the degree of Master of Arts

And hereby certify that in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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ABSTRACT

The theoretical framework of this study is gatekeeping and it specifically analyzes Twitter use by eight journalists during the weekend of the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix, which took place February 10 through 12, 2012. A convenience sample was used (n=249) representing all of the tweets posted by these eight people between 12:01 a.m. on February 10 and 11:59 p.m. on February 13. Qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to analyze all data collected. This thesis examined the number of tweets per day, the number of tweets per hour, the number of tweets per participant, the number of tweets per tweet category and the number of retweets per participant. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with each participant to find out how Twitter was used during the weekend of the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix and how it is used on a daily basis in their jobs as journalists. A major finding is that these eight journalists use Twitter truly as a social media tool, meaning that they use it to interact with fans and colleagues through the personal messages, replies and retweets. This study contributes to a general lack of research about Twitter use by journalists that currently exists in the scholarly literature.

CHAPTER I LITERATURE REVIEW

Gatekeeping

Gatekeeping cannot be examined without first acknowledging its presence in the culture of the newsroom. It is the sociology of the newsroom that allows for, cultivates and encourages the gatekeeping process. Jeremy Tunstall's landmark 1971 book *Journalists at work* presented a case study of 200 journalists at work. Tunstall's insight into newsroom sociology as a whole helped define concepts like the complex routine that helps explain journalism as a profession, the comparison between newsgathering and news processing and the reasons why the time constraints imposed by deadlines can affect these processes. This book detailed the handful of factors present in most newsrooms that eventually lead to gatekeeping (1971, 1-7).

As described in Vos and Shoemaker (2009), in 1947 Kurt Lewin published a study that described the channels in which food makes its way to the family dinner table. He described in detail the various decisions that go into processing the food so that it can move from the grocery store or family garden to the dinner table. It was his theory that each piece of produce must survive multiple stages of acceptance or rejection before being chosen by the family cook. Lewin, as described in Vos and Shoemaker (2009), even theorized that an item's post store location in the pantry or fridge could affect its ability to survive the entire journey from farm to dinner plate.

This example using food as a metaphor may seem abstract but it was the way in which Lewin, as detailed by Vos and Shoemaker (2009), described the process that

connected it to later gatekeeping studies. His original study was the beginning of research into different levels of influence in the gatekeeping process. He was the first to show that items could be thrown out or accepted at various points in the process and that different gatekeepers have different amounts of influence on the system (Vos and Shoemaker 2009, 12-13).

Lewin, as detailed by Vos and Shoemaker (2009), was not the only academic to theorize that the gatekeeping process could occur in or near the family home. Other researchers have looked at how marketing firms directly target the gatekeeper with hopes of selling their products. These gatekeepers can come in the form of people who work as buyers for retailers. In continuing the metaphor of the family dinner table, the homemaker who looks at the selection of products to purchase and chooses the one that they feel will best feed their family can act as a gatekeeper as well (McQuail and Windahl 1982, 197).

David Manning White (1950) was the first researcher to bring the theory of gatekeeping and the newsroom together. His landmark study examined the choices made by a single wire editor at a 30,000-circulation paper. White (1950) asked his subject to keep every single piece of wire copy that passed through his desk for a period of a week. White (1950) was attempting to determine why each story was accepted or rejected by the wire editor. This study was vastly important for two reasons, it was the first of its kind and it gave some insight into why an individual might choose a specific piece of news for publication.

"Mr. Gates," as he is known in the study, was particular about the news that he picked for his paper and it was usually based on one of two things, he considered it to be

newsworthy or he considered it to be novel and not overly reported. White's (1950) study gave the academic world its first look at gatekeeping at the individual level. This study's methods would be often repeated in the years to come (1950, 383-396).

McQuail and Windahl (1982) noted two major issues with White's original theory. First, he makes no mention of the organizational pressures that can lead to the process of gatekeeping. Second, they found fault in the idea that there is only a single gate with which information can pass through and they felt that the way in which he described the flow of news was very passive. They conclude their criticisms with an acknowledgement that White contributed much to the study of communication and that his "Mr. Gates" study was an influential piece of original research (1982, 167).

Another early study into the effects of gatekeeping came from Warren Breed (1955). Unlike White's research into the gatekeeping process of the individual, Breed (1955) was interested in how the social setting of the newsroom and the organization that housed it affected the gatekeeping process. He theorized that the publisher usually set a paper's policy of news reporting. Breed (1955) also believed that there were a few reasons that employees did not always follow protocol. First is the concept that journalists follow ethical norms. He felt that no professional journalist would want to be accused of printing biased news therefore they would not cave to organizational pressures. Second is the idea that employees might not always follow the gatekeeping process of their employer if their own attitude is more liberal than that of the boss. Third, he wrote that a boss forcing gatekeeping influences onto an employee would not usually be tolerated in the newsroom.

Breed (1955) wrote that protocol could be imprinted on employees in a variety of ways. First was through osmosis. Second, he thought that individual employees would be motivated by real or imagined rewards. Thus, employees in search of rewards might start by looking in their newspaper and reshaping their stories to fit the paper's perceived "style." Fear of punishment was the third way that an employee might learn the newsroom's objectives. Finally, individual employees may learn company policy or the publisher's preferences by listening to the publisher speak in an editorial meeting or internal news conference.

Breed's (1955) research also included reasons for why an employee may follow the unspoken rules set forth by a publisher, like a belief in the power of authority or the fear that sanctions will be taken against them. They may also have esteem for the people that hired them or those that guide them on a daily basis. Additionally, a feeling that it is in their best interest if they wish to be promoted, a lack of an internal group which would usually lead to upheaval of rules, positive feelings towards their work and the stress of news cycle which does not leave much time to think about their place in the company are all reasons detailed by Breed (1955) for employee conformity (1955, 326-335).

These early gatekeeping studies helped set up the initial concept and some of the influences (individual and organizational) that determined the process of news production. Gatekeeping as a theory was in its infancy but this early work on levels of influence would soon be joined by numerous other studies in the decades to come.

Gatekeeping: Levels of Influence

Once gatekeeping as an idea had been established, academics started thinking about the different gatekeepers and how they operated. Included in this was the idea that

gatekeeping could occur at the individual or organizational level and that routine processes in the news cycle could affect the news that was produced.

The individual level of gatekeeping was the first to be fully explained. Certain academics saw it as the second step in a two-step process of making the news. These academics believe that journalists venture out and collect unfiltered data and "in the second this material is selected and abbreviated by the gatekeepers who, through their selective control, literally make the news" (O'Sullivan et al. 1983, 97). Basically, it is a process wherein they open the door to small pieces of news that they think are important and in turn they close the door on those they deem unimportant. Some may see Twitter as an outlet for news that is done at the individual level considering that a good portion of the journalists who tweet work independently as freelancers, bloggers or run their own websites.

Once the first level had been established researchers began looking at the different ways in which individual traits could impact the gatekeeping process. Bleske (1991) conducted a study in which David Manning White's 1950 "Mr. Gates" study was replicated with a female wire editor. He was specifically interested in, "What role might the gender of the gatekeeper play in the selection of news stories?" (1991, 89).

Despite differences in gender, age and circulation of newspaper for which they were employed, Ms. Gates and Mr. Gates tended to pick wire stories from the same categories. They also tended to put emphasis on the same categories. The three most common categories for both were stories with human-interest slants, stories that featured updates on international politics and stories that presented politics at the national level.

The study's overall results prompted Bleske (1991) to write that, "no significant patterns could be related to the possible effects of a female gatekeeper" (1991, 93).

In addition, researchers view gatekeeping as stemming from the routines that exist in newsrooms. Schudson (1989) suggested that news came from three distinct different places. First, he theorized that those who control corporate America and its wealth simply dictate stories to the news media. He acknowledges that this idea appears to have the merit of a conspiracy theory, which may be connected to the fact that it takes a broad view of news production and does not bother to answer the many questions that arise during its presentation.

Schudson's (1989) second idea looks to the political sphere. In his assessment of the studies that attempted to prove that a large amount of news is created in a world where politics rule, "-the story of journalism, on a day-to-day basis, is the story of the interaction of reporters and officials" (1989, 270).

The main problems that Schudson (1989) found with this theory is that it does not conceptualize journalists as individuals who are fully capable of making informed decisions about what is newsworthy. It assumes instead that they are being force fed information from people involved in politics. He theorized that individualism in politics is actually a very attractive quality to the press and that those who take a role in leading the country are usually written about positively in the media. Gans (1979) wrote of the differences in understanding the concept of leadership from sociological and news backgrounds. According to him sociologists see leadership as a role that exists in all cultures and it is assumed that a volunteer will fill it. In contrast, those making the news

look at the individual traits that drive someone to take on a leadership role. The newsmakers then report on these traits in the press (1979, 62-63).

Schudson's (1989) third theory is more abstract. It looks at the culture of news and as he explains, "the cultural view finds symbolic determinants of news in the relations of ideas and symbols" (1989, 273). For example, how the American press often writes about individual achievements instead of focusing their attention on the structure of groups, this is tied to the specific symbols of American culture that praise individual freedoms and accomplishments (1989, 263-282).

Tunstall's (1971) writings differentiated between news organizations and media organizations. He supposed that news organizations consist solely of a company's editorial department. A media organization is much bigger than a news organization and can encompass many other entities (1971, 6).

Organizations and their routines can be looked at to further gain understanding of the gatekeeping process. Shoemaker and Reese (1991) believe that these routines evolved naturally due to something as simple as the media's need for content. They see these routines as coming from three constraints that help determine how individual journalists work. First they look to the audience and what material will attract them. This can be seen as selling a commodity by attempting to keep the audience interested and engaged. The second constraint in how journalists fulfill their job duties looks at how a media company processes information. Examples of this include reliance by the media on stories from the wire and preferences by many reporters in gathering information from fellow media professionals.

Finally, a constraint is put upon journalists with regards to how they collect information from suppliers. The suppliers usually come in two forms known as channels; routine channels and official channels. Routine channels are situations where journalists are not doing enterprising reporting and instead are relying on press releases, press conferences and staged ceremonies. Official channels usually bring carefully constructed and controlled information from government sources (1991, 85-114).

Molotch and Lester (1974) identified three constraints as well but they referred to their constraints as "agencies." They identified these three agencies as "news promoters" consisting of those who promote events as important to other people, "news assemblers" who take the information provided to them by the promoters and assemble it into news pieces for public consumption and "news consumers" made up of the news audience who accept these events in their daily broadcasts (1974, 104).

Molotch and Lester (1974) theorized that there are four real types of events. These events are similar in nature to the news values that are specifically referenced in the selectivity portion of this thesis. They first spoke of the routine event. This is the same as the category referenced by Shoemaker and Reese (1991). Official press conferences are good examples of a routine events because they happen so often that they are seen as routine. There are three separate groups within the routine events category. In defining these groups Molotch and Lester wrote:

- a) Those where the event promoters have habitual access to news assemblers; b)
- those where the event-promoters are seeking to disrupt the routine access of
- others to assemblers in order to make events of their own; and c) those where the

access is afforded by the fact that the promoters and news assemblers are identical (Molotch and Lester 1974, 107).

The second type of event they referenced is known as an accident. These are defined as being different from routine events in that they are not planned and people other than those involved in the accident promote these accidents in the news. Scandal is the third type of event written about by Molotch and Lester (1974). Those involved in a scandal do not usually intend for it to become public but that does not stop it from being promoted. This promotion occasionally occurs from within a group or organization in the form of eyewitness accounts and those who leak controversial materials. Serendipitous events are the fourth and final event and they have the combined distinction of being unplanned but actually promoted by the same people that were involved in the event. Self-described heroes detailing their heroics are an example of this type of event (1974, 106-111).

Selectivity

Tied into the theory of gatekeeping is that of news selectivity. Selectivity theory basically looks at why certain items are picked over other items. The most popular topic in selectivity theory is the idea of "news value." Shoemaker et al. (2001) defined it as a large amount of news and a limited amount of time with which a journalist can present this news to the audience. Shoemaker et al. (2001) made it clear that they believe that time and financial constraints influence this process when they wrote, "However, if an event requires much expense and/or unavailable technology to produce the story, this may work against passage through the gate" (2001, 234).

Individual journalists can get an idea about what makes news through the company that they work for and from the colleagues with whom they socialize. These portions of the journalism profession teach them how to collect bits and pieces of information and arrange it in order of importance. This process aids in the gatekeeping process (McNair 1998, 77).

Two academics highlighted the importance of studying news value when they said, "the concept of news values also helps us to explore the ways in which certain elements of the selected "events" will be emphasized while others will be downplayed or excluded" (O'Neill and Harcup 2009, 171). An understanding of news values as a concept cannot be understood until the term has been defined and an explanation has been provided for how they have been used in a recent history of news selection.

Individual news values have been described by a variety of scholars. One of the earliest news values that were recognized by many in the world of journalism was that of deviation. It is thought that events that demonstrate a disruption in the normal order of things are seen as more newsworthy than more benign events. Deviant events include natural disasters, sexual scandals and unethical behavior by those in politics and business (McNair 1998, 77-78). Gans (1979) elaborated on the press' true feelings towards those seen as deviant when he wrote that the press has continually thrown a suspicious eye on groups or individuals who exist on either end of the spectrum; those that partake in an idea or activity to excess and those who abstain from the idea or activity completely (1979, 51-52).

More recent additions to the list of news values are varied. There are some scholars who believe that news values are comprised of simple and concrete items. These

include frequency, which refers to the ability of the news selector to fit the item into the news cycle because it took place during normal working hours and meaningfulness, which simply refers to the popularity of items that are comfortable and familiar (O'Neill and Harcup 2009, 164-165).

Over time more specific news values became apparent to scholars. For instance, drama, also known as conflict, involving opposing opinions, size which represents the sheer number of people impacted by an event or the large names which made appearances and proximity which refers to the popularity of a piece because of its cultural or geographic proximity (O'Neill and Harcup 2009, 165-166).

One the most often discussed news values is that of negativity. Some think that this preference for negative news selection comes from the press' role as government watchdog and their belief that they should consistently be exposing wrongdoings. Additional researchers theorized that the popularity for negative news could be contributed to four things; negative news is a better match for the frequent news cycle because it is easier to collect and report, there is no disagreement on whether bad news is actually bad therefore it is not ambiguous, people subconsciously seek out negatively tinged news and because negative news is seen as out of the ordinary which in turn makes it unique (Cohen and Young 1981, 58-59). In this way negative news can be seen as similar to the news value of deviation because they both deal with the popularity of the rare and different. These issues have worried journalists for quite some time. They fear that a preference for negative news gives the news provider and the community that it covers a bad reputation (Bohle 1986, 789-796).

Gans (1979) called his version of negative news "disorder news." He theorized that it could be separated into four categories. The first category is "natural" and it refers to natural disasters and accidents like plane crashes. The second also concerns accidents but deals with those that cannot be attributed to nature but instead are caused by technology. The third type of disorder news is social and concerns disruptions of peace, like incidents where a physical threat is made against someone's person or property. He also viewed social disorder news as containing value breakdowns, "such as the nuclear two-parent family" (1979, 53). Finally, the fourth category known as "moral disorder news" deals with breaking of laws but not those that create chaos within the social order (1979, 52-53).

Not all scholars' agree with this assessment though; some feel that the onus is on the audience. They believe that if news is what it truly claims to be, a collection of facts, than these facts are simply presented to the audience and whether they interpret this information as negative or positive is their responsibility (McNair 1998, 79-80).

Some researchers have looked into whether news values are unique to certain regions or if there are internationally held values. One specific study looked into the news values present in *The Times* of London. These researchers found three often referenced news values that were prevalent in this particular English newspaper. The first, meaningfulness referenced events at home in England as well as those regions and countries that the reporters viewed Britain as having a close relationship with, like the United States and Western Europe.

In close relation to this was the news value of "national elitism." Nine countries are considered "elite" and their news items were more often covered than those

considered to be "non-elite." Negativity was also studied for this piece and it showed specifically that *The Times* of London was more apt to cover events seen as containing conflict than they were to cover events seen as cooperative (Peterson 1981, 143-163).

Gant and Dimmick (2000) combined a look at news selectivity in a specific region with the idea of "sensing," which appears to exist mainly in the newsrooms of television stations. The sensing process is described as, "businesses and organizations vigorously pitch news story ideas to TV newsrooms. Despite their efforts, however, most of their news story ideas do not survive the first filtering" (2000, 629). A second filtering method is known as "valuation" and this is where values like novelty, conflict, significance and timeliness determine the fate of a potential news story.

The results of this study showed that in the sensing period traditional news values like proximity and timeliness were helpful in moving a story onto the next stage but that affiliation and novelty were popular values in this study of Midwestern based television news stations. A majority of the same news values were present in stories that were selected out of the valuation stage as well. Two modern values, one positing the idea that stories that do not deplete human and equipment resources are seen as attractive and one that theorizes that the ability of news stories to paint a vivid visual picture is important, were both present in numerous stories that made it to the next level (Gant and Dimmick 2000, 628-638).

Herbert Gans (1979) theorized that two specific news values grew out of the press' nostalgia for the American small town. These two specific news values are nature and smallness. Gans (1979) writes that the press was attracted to preserving the environment before it was popular. The press saw their purpose as a battle against

development. The popularity of this news value continued unaltered until the media was forced to comment on the energy crises, which led to them picking sides between the environment and society's constant need for fuel (1979, 48-50).

Smallness is usually viewed as those things that are human and virtuous with big therefore being seen as bad. Big is represented by large government and it is viewed as impersonal. Gans (1979) wrote that the threat and fear of bigness, "reflects a fear of control, of privacy and individual freedom being ground under by organizations too large to notice, much less value, the individual" (1979, 49). This fear of bigness is often represented in the media's preference for reporting stories where new technology is considered evil and a threat to humanity. According to Gans (1979) an additional type of big is bad story that is often published is that of disappointment in the closing of the mom and pop type store that is built on craftsmanship with it being replaced by a corporate chain (1979, 48-50).

Despite differences in medium and location of newsroom, these various studies show that there is some underlying trend of news stories being based on a handful of very popular news values.

Gatekeeping: Online News

Barzilai-Nahon (2008) suggests that the advent of the Internet has facilitated a need for a new gatekeeping method, "A new theory is necessary since hybrid interpretations of the gatekeeping and gatekeeper concepts are scarcely employed with references to the Internet, information society, or networks" (2008, 1495).

Some researchers have found that the gatekeeping process is similar for online journalists as it is for legacy media journalists. It is thought that selection is tied to the

personal beliefs and feelings of the journalist as well as their professional career values. The one main difference between those working for the online side of the news business and those working for the print side of the news business is how they view their job duties.

Legacy media workers tend to see the importance of their work being tied to interpretation and investigation. Online journalists see their role as more often tied to the speed in which news is delivered to the general public via computers. To clarify, the disseminator role, which has increased its speed since the advent of the World Wide Web, is important to individuals who make their living working in Internet journalism (Cassidy 2006, 6-23).

Discussions of the role of disseminator are a sore subject for some online journalists because they believe it makes people view them as non-journalists. A study by two scholars shows that the overall job of online journalists is essentially the same as the overall job of those employed as traditional media journalists. The job of journalists was defined as having the, "responsibility for the preparation or transmission of news stories or other information" (Weaver and Wilhoit 1996, 248). One could then claim that online journalists are fulfilling the same roles as traditional print journalists because they do in fact complete the above referenced tasks, thus taking nothing away from the jobs that online journalists do on a day-to day basis.

Singer (2001) believes that the web's role is more non-local in origin, that readers actually prefer or at least respect online journalism's ability to cover non-local stories of vast importance. This is slightly altered though when the idea of original content is concerned. Things have changed in the past 15 years but mid to late 1990's studies of

Internet news content showed that it suffered from a lack of original content. Most of its content was actually what is referred to "shovel ware"-content from the print version of the newspaper that is repurposed for use on the web (2001, 67).

Singer (2001) was interested in whether online newspapers were essentially shovel ware or if they were in fact providing new content and a different viewpoint to their audience. This study specifically looked at content of online newspapers in the Rocky Mountain area of Colorado for a single composite week. Her findings were interesting including the comment that, "online, however, metro items accounted for as many as two-thirds of all stories..." (2001, 73). On average it was found that the online papers published more sports stories than they published stories related to business. The preference for sports was especially prevalent in the city of Denver.

The source of this online content was also of interest to this study and this researcher. Coverage of a news story by a combination of a staff member and information from the wire service was common. Nearly 60 percent of all 818 online stories collected during this study's composite week were at least partially written by the newspaper's own staff members. Overall, this researcher found that online versions of newspapers were weakest in their ability to report on local news, which is why they usually turned to the print papers to collect local information. The researcher believes that this makes sense because, "the web gives readers access to literally millions of sources of information both broad and narrow; the one thing a local newspaper knows, arguably better than anyone else among those millions, is its own market" (Singer 2001, 77).

As for where this leaves gatekeeping in regards to the online world, Singer (2001) thinks that some journalists are abandoning the traditional role of gatekeeper because the

web allows readers to create a "Daily Me," which is a daily collection of all of the news and only the news that interests them. This researcher fears the future of the "Daily Me" scenario because society is "poorly served by a myopic view of the place in which we live" (Singer 2001, 78) (2001, 65-80).

Recently, Reinardy (2010) showed that a large number of journalists feel that the immediacy of the Internet is hurting news values. It should be noted that these sentiments were more likely to come from older journalists. It is believed that newsroom strategies have been in a continual state of flux and the poor state of the economy and the Internet has changed the structure of news and its organizations. This is mainly due to newspapers asking their employees to acquire more web friendly skills in this weak economy and the 24/7 web based news cycle. In addition, the news strategy coming from the upper ranks now includes blending multimedia materials into web content.

Reinardy (2010) shows that there have been some positive changes associated with the advent of web journalism; including helping promote stories online that would have previously been buried in the print version of the newspaper. The web's ability to handle a lot of information makes it available for multimedia, which can enhance a more traditional story. Becker and Vlad (2009) wrote that one major way that the Internet has changed the gatekeeping process is by allowing journalists to get the message out through their own distribution channels online (2009, 59). This is seen as a breakthrough and it may mean that some online media may be free of the organizational pressures and routines that influence traditional newsrooms.

The immediacy of the Internet can be seen as a negative because some editors believe its speed compromises quality of content. Reinardy (2010) questions this, because

"time is of the essence with online stories, getting it first and getting it fast appear to supersede other more traditional core newspaper values" (2010, 79-80). The researcher believes that these core values of journalism are important to older journalists and their ability to successfully work without them could be a source of future research (Reinardy 2010, 69-83).

One researcher specifically looked at the role that Chinese bloggers play in gatekeeping. This researcher theorized that their positions as gatekeepers were immediately altered by their new roles as bloggers. Instead of being the ones who select the information for publication, they now interact with the gate by being "gate-watchers" and publishing enterprising investigative journalism, by poking the gate in the way that blogging encourages multiple viewpoints and by mocking the gate (Yu 2011, 379-393).

The author argues for the idea that China's notorious censorship has already created a unique gatekeeping process in the country. The role of journalists in China is explained as individuals having administrated a process of self-censorship, which results in them doing multiple checks in the news production process to ensure that nothing of a politically incorrect nature passes through the gates. The author describes a culture of "j-bloggers," who essentially continue the methods of gatekeeping that already exist in the traditional media. These j-bloggers take media items that have already passed through the censored gates and add things like personal commentary and reader feedback but none of this is a unique gatekeeping function. This work is seen as safe and allows them to receive access to special interviews and events.

The roles of gate-watchers, gate-pokers and gate-mockers are unique to China. The position of gate watching is described as, "starts as 'back door' journalism when the

'front door' is blocked, but it can be readily normalized as a new dimension of mainstream journalism and incorporated in the agenda setting framework controlled by the official media" (Yu 2011, 385). This author sees the line between traditional gatekeeping and gate watching as being blurred.

Gate poking is seen as more independent. It is, "a deliberate blogging practice taken by professional journalists who contend with traditional journalism by openly declaring their 'alternativeness' in the spirit of fun and wit" (Yu 2011, 385). This alternative attitude is demonstrated in their affinity for making public information that relates to controversial topics and viewpoints instead of simply being the one to break news. An American example of a gate poker may be found in the work of Matt Drudge and his website The Drudge Report. As written in a May 15, 2011 *New York Times* article by David Carr titled "How Drudge Has Stayed On Top", Drudge's popularity continues because of the simple way he collects controversial news items and repurposes them for mass consumption by adding scandalous headlines. Carr wrote, "With no video, no search optimization, no slide shows and a design that is right out of the mid-90's manual on HTML, The Drudge Report provides 7 percent of the inbound referrals to the top news sites in the country" (Carr 2011). Gate-mockers do not break news either, their work is more personality driven. It is characterized as, "digestive critiques of journalism through mockery" (Yu 2011, 389). They are also known for their reader interaction in the overall critique of mainstream ideas (Yu 2011, 379-393).

Computer algorithms have also begun to play an interesting part in the gatekeeping process. Many people are aware of Google's extremely popular news website but not as many are aware that the news items for this website are selected by computer

algorithm. This may seem like a novel way in which to circumvent the gatekeeping process but certain researchers feel that Google News sees as much human interference as the traditional gatekeeping processes. "Google News is the outcome of this process, representing a seemingly objective picture of the day, but this objectivity is a characteristic of humans and their understanding of the world, not of computer programs" (Shoemaker, Vos and Reese 2009, 75).

Gatekeeping: Twitter

This thesis fills a hole that exists in scholarly literature. Thus far little research has been published on the topic of gatekeeping the news and information that is posted on Twitter. This could be due to Twitter's place as a new and ever evolving type of social media. Twitter was officially launched on July 13 of 2006 (Jansen et al. 2009, 2172). As early as 2009, it was "increasingly used by news organizations to receive updates during emergencies and natural disasters" (Jansen et. al 2009, 2173).

Returning to strong preference for the news value of negativity, some researchers may have found a correlation between negative sentiment in tweets and popularity of these negative tinged tweets. A study researching sentiment in tweets by Thelwall, Buckley and Paltoglou (2011) found that "give strong evidence that negative sentiment plays a role in the main spiking events in Twitter" (2011, 411). Overall, these results took the researchers by surprise due to the perceived positive image that some of these events, like the Academy Awards and Olympics, appear to possess. In total, the researchers found a low sentiment on Twitter, which "gives strong evidence that important events in Twitter are associated with increases in average negative sentiment strength" (2011, 415), which

makes for an interesting correlation between older studies into negative news slant in traditional media and negative sentiment on Twitter (2011, 406-418).

Some academics see one of Twitter's biggest benefits as being its ability to be straight forward and to the point. Twitter users must focus their attention on communicating short bits of easily analyzed information to their audience. In addition, these researchers see other benefits as the convenience that comes with being able to tweet any place, any time and its robustness, which is specifically visible in its ability to handle large URL addresses through programs that condense them (Lowe and Laffey 2011, 184).

In their study of Twitter use by librarians, Loudon and Hall (2010) "uncovered several reasons why Twitter is seen as an appropriate mechanism for the delivery of news and current awareness announcements of the nature highlighted above" (2010, 238). Like the study by Lowe and Laffey (2011), "The survey respondents most commonly made reference to the ease of use and immediacy of the tool" (Loudon and Hall 2010, 238).

As previously stated, scholarly literature is lacking a formal study that acknowledges the benefits that Twitter affords journalists. Researchers are just beginning to examine Twitter's influence on the news business as a whole. It is this researcher's hope that in the years to come scholars are open to looking at the impact that Twitter's rise in popularity has had on the breaking news process and whether these changes have positively or negatively affected the news industry.

Similarly, a formal study into the use of Twitter by journalists with special emphasis on the gatekeeping process with regards to Twitter's format has yet to be

produced. Focused research into its unique 140-character limit, the immediacy of its information and the intimacy that it creates between users and their followers should be examined before its special relationship with the gatekeeping process can be understood. The lack of research into these areas and the newness of Twitter as a disseminator of information are the reasons this thesis will help fill a gap in the literature. It is believed that this thesis will aid the academic and professional communities by attempting to answer the below research question.

Research Question: How has Twitter changed how journalists report on sports?

CHAPTER II DESIGN AND METHOD

As Mark Hachman reported in a PCMag.com article on September 8, 2011, Twitter can now count 100 million active users. Roughly 50 million of these users tweet at least once a day. About 55 percent of those known as "active users" tweet from mobile devices. In addition, Twitter is currently averaging 230 million tweets per day, which is more than a 100 percent increase from the beginning of 2011.

Twitter has reached mass popularity in the world of sports as well. As Hachman (2011) noted, "Twitter users include 75 percent of the NBA's players, 50 percent of the NFL." According to the website WeFollow, which tallies lists of Twitter users with the most followers and those considered the most influential, there are currently four sports-based Twitter accounts that boast more than two million followers. They are former basketball player Shaquille O'Neal, cyclist Lance Armstrong, the account of the National Basketball Association and current basketball player Dwight Howard.

Twitter's importance in the sphere of ESPN's newsgathering techniques was mentioned by Mike Flacy in a July 20, 2011 Yahoo! News article titled ESPN "Turning To Twitter to Broadcast Breaking News." Previously, ESPN only followed athletes on Twitter and used the social networking site to promote its own media. As a company it now integrates Twitter feeds into scrolls at the bottom of its popular television shows like Sportscenter. In addition, Sportscenter breaks news via Twitter based on information that ESPN reporters and employees glean from the Twitter accounts of professional athletes. Flacy (2011) believes that ESPN's changes came about due to Yahoo! sports reporter

Adrian Wojnarowski's coverage of the NBA draft. He writes, "Wojnarowski repeatedly beat ESPN's live coverage of the event by several minutes on each pick. ESPN's media rights meant nothing on the Web while Wojnarowski made the ESPN coverage look slow" (Flacy 2011). According to a July 19, 2011, Noah Davis article on the website Business Insider titled "ESPN Will Now Take Over Twitter," Wojnarowski's speed can be attributed to his ability to tweet updates before ESPN analysts could make the same announcements on the air (Davis 2011).

The researcher believes that the sheer number of people who are reached by Twitter combined with its uses in the world of sports journalism make this thesis of interest to those inside and outside the academic community. Research into Twitter and its influences on more traditional concepts of media theory, like gatekeeping, may be seen as important if its popularity continues to rise at this rate.

Theoretical Framework

Gatekeeping was the main theoretical framework used for this thesis. Overall the researcher was interested in examining the decisions and production processes that created the content that was tweeted by journalists during the weekend of the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix. On a basic level, some academics believe that gatekeeping decisions are influenced by a variety of pressures including the individual's own personal news preferences, the media professional's specific work environment and controlling elements such as economics, politics and legal entanglements (O'Sullivan et al. 1983, 97).

Lewin's, as found in Vos and Shoemaker (2009), basic visual model showed the channels that allowed food to travel from the farm or market to the family dinner table. This initial example was seen as important because it supposed that forces were at work

in the gatekeeping process (Vos and Shoemaker 2009, 14). This thesis helped define these forces and aided in determining their influence in the selection and processing of information into newsworthy tweets.

David Manning White's (1950) "Mr. Gates" study detailed how a single wire editor selected material for publication. This wire editor based his choices on his own preferences for content, the amount of space that he had to work with and his own evaluations of the article's individual news value (1950, 383-396). Gatekeeping at the individual level has recently fallen out of favor due to its simplicity and the lack of emphasis that it puts on groups and organizations (Williams 2003, 103). It is now thought that organizations and their modes of production may also influence gatekeeping (Vos and Shoemaker 2009, 55-65).

It is possible that organizational level influences play their part in the creation of online content as well. Economically, individual news organizations may see Twitter as a positive and free way to promote and disseminate their content. In addition, journalists may feel the pressure to join the Twitter world and create original content in the form of tweets because they believe their employer expects it of them.

Methodology

The 2012 Missouri Grand Prix took place February 10 through 12 at the Mizzou Aquatic Center in the University of Missouri Student Recreation Complex (The Missouri Grand Prix 2011, 1-7). The 2012 event marked the fourth time that this event was held in Columbia, Mo. The Missouri Grand Prix made its debut in 2007 in a lead up to the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics (Associated Press 2012). The group known as Missouri Valley Swimming, Inc., on behalf of the organization known as USA SWIMMING,

INC., and their annual Grand Prix series, holds this event under a sanction. The listed host of this meet is the Columbia Swim Club (The Missouri Grand Prix 2011, 1-7).

This year's meet featured a record number of competitors (Associated Press 2012) with more than 700 swimmers racing in at least one event. Per competition specifications, individual events took place in a long course 50-meter competition pool that holds eight lanes and all races were officiated by persons who have been previously credentialed by USA Swimming. Races were held each day on Friday, Saturday and Sunday with preliminaries taking place at 9 a.m. each morning and finals beginning at 5:30 p.m. each evening. Awards were handed out to the top three finishers in each race. The medal ceremonies took place at the conclusion of each event (The Missouri Grand Prix 2011, 1-7) with competitors earning points for each event in which they medaled. These points carry over to the other meets in the Grand Prix series with the last points being awarded at the final Grand Prix stop in Santa Clara, Ca., on June 2, 2012.

The Missouri Grand Prix is the third of seven annual Grand Prix competitions ("Missouri Grand Prix offers Olympic swimming preview" Swieca 2012). Overall, the total point winner in the Grand Prix series receives a cash prize in accordance with rules laid down by USA Swimming (Santo 2012). The current prize purse is valued at \$20,000 (USA Swimming 2010-2011). The Grand Prix series is not affiliated with the Olympics or responsible for picking members of the Olympic Team. Swim team members for the 2012 London Olympics will be chosen during the Olympic Trials, which will be held in Omaha, Neb., June 25 through July 2, 2012 (USA Swimming 2012).

Live results and a video feed of the competition were available for free on the Missouri Grand Prix page on the USA Swimming website. Official results were also

posted in real time through the USA Swimming Twitter account. Tickets in a variety of levels were sold to members of the general public (The Missouri Grand Prix 2011, 1-7). More than 1600-ticketed spectators attended the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix (Christopher Seris, March 19, 2012, e-mail message to author).

In the local press the *Columbia Missourian*, *Columbia Daily Tribune* and an NBC affiliate KOMU, covered this meet. Other notable media coverage came from the Associated Press, Yahoo! Sports, the websites for *Sports Illustrated* and ESPN, the NBC Nightly News and a variety of blogs and publications specifically catering to the swimming community. A large portion of the national press coverage was driven by Matt Grevers proposing to Annie Chandler on the podium after he won the men's 100-meter backstroke ("Olympic swimmer gets engaged after win at Missouri Grand Prix on Saturday" Swieca 2012). Discussion of its impact on the tweets collected during the Missouri Grand Prix and the answers given during the interview section of this thesis is included in the following chapters.

This meet featured a handful of notable Olympians and record holders. The final for the men's 50-meter freestyle included the current world-record holder, Brazilian Cesar Cielo, French champion Fred Bousquet and 2008 American Olympic veteran Jason Lezak. In the end, Cielo edged out Bousquet by one tenth of a second to win the event in a time of 22.13 seconds. Lezak finished third. American Eric Shanteau, another 2008 Olympian, set a meet record in the men's 200-breastroke event (The Columbia Daily Tribune 2012). Amanda Masters and Rachel Ripley met Olympic Time Trial qualifications in the women's 100-yard breaststroke. They both compete for the University of Missouri's women's swimming team (Tiger Talk 2012).

The biggest stars of the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix were the Canadian swimmers who took home more than a dozen medals and won six out of eight events on the first night of competition alone (Briggs 2012). The Canadians were in peak racing form because they had just finished preparing for their Olympic Trials, which took place March 27 through April 1, 2012, a mere seven weeks after the Missouri Grand Prix (Swimming Canada 2012).

The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative methods during the course of this thesis. The researcher used content analysis as the quantitative method. The researcher analyzed the content of individual tweets using a method of counting. The researcher used in-depth interviews as the qualitative method. Eight journalists who cover the sport of swimming or reported about the Missouri Grand Prix were interviewed with regards to their Twitter use during the weekend of this event.

Analysis of content was an appropriate method to use because "studying content helps us infer things about phenomena that are less open and visible: the people and organizations that produce content" (Shoemaker and Reese 1991, 23). An important element in gate keeping and the influence that it has on the people behind the tweets, the content (in the form of tweets) that is produced and the individual and organizational pressures that contribute to these tweets.

Content analysis can handle large amounts of data (Krippendorff 1980, 31). This is important because a total of 249 tweets were collected between February 10 and 13, 2012. The ability of content analysis to code hundreds of sentence long bits of information made it the right choice for this research project.

The researcher conducted a practice coding session of 20 tweets that were randomly collected during the January 30, 2012, men's college basketball game between the University of Missouri and the University of Texas. This practice session helped the researcher refine certain categories and eliminate repetitive categories. It also helped the researcher familiarize herself with the types of items tweeted by sports fans and sports journalists on Twitter.

The researcher "defined the universe" by setting the boundaries for data collection. The operational definition of the population to be analyzed (Wimmer and Dominick 2006, 155) included any and all tweets by study participants during the time frame previously stated. Therefore, tweets for this research were specifically collected during the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix. In order to collect the necessary data the researcher created a Twitter account for this project. The researcher then followed the study participants on Twitter and collected their individual tweets. Copying and pasting them into a Microsoft Word document backed all of the tweets up.

The researcher began the coding process approximately 10 days after all 249 tweets had been collected. Individual tweets were the units of analysis. At the time of collection and coding Twitter as a company had set a limit of 140 characters or less per tweet. The researcher took a systematic approach and analyzed exactly what was tweeted by the study participants. The content of the tweets were broken down into a total of 14 categories. Out of these 14 categories, five of them had sub-categories. These categories are listed in Appendix A. This is also known as "a priori coding" (Wimmer and Dominick 2006, 159) method because the categories have been created prior to coding with the

rationale for their existence pertaining to the researcher's experience with Twitter. This is explained in more detail below.

These categories were created with the intention that they are both exhaustive and mutually exclusive. Categories were slightly redefined prior to coding when the researcher determined that some of them were repetitive (Wimmer and Dominick 2006, 159). A definition of the final categories is as follows, category 1 "Grand Prix swimming event results, " was any reference in a tweet to placement by a swimmer(s) in a race or an official time. Category 2, known as "News and information related to the Grand Prix" was any news or information that was not merely a result. This category was split into subcategories A "News about Matt Grevers' proposal" and B "News about meet not related to Matt Grevers' proposal," so that the impact of the podium proposal on news coverage of the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix could be measured quantitatively. Categories 4, 5, 7 and 10 had subcategories added by the researcher for this same reason.

Category 3 "News/information/results not related to the Grand Prix" was deemed appropriate because of the amount of news that was posted the weekend of the meet that related to other things including; the death of Whitney Houston and the high school championship swim meet of Missy Franklin. Category 4 "Link to a picture" and its subcategories A "Picture about Grand Prix," B "Picture not about Grand Prix" and C "Picture of Matt Grevers' proposal" were included to cover the amount of pictures that were posted on Twitter by these users. Category 5 "Link to an article" and its subcategories A "Article about Grand Prix," B "Article not about Grand Prix" and C "Article about Matt Grevers' proposal" were included to cover the tendency of journalists to link to their own articles and the articles of friends and colleagues.

Category 6 "Link to a website" was created solely to cover tweets that linked to websites instead of linking to a specific page of a website that included a photo or video. Category 7 "Link to a video" and its subcategories A "Video about Grand Prix," B "Video not about Grand Prix" and C "Video about Matt Grevers' proposal" were meant to cover links to multimedia. Category 10 "Commentary/opinion about Grand Prix," its subcategories A "Commentary/opinion about Grand Prix," B "Commentary about Matt Grevers' proposal" and category 11 "Commentary/opinion not related to the Grand Prix" were meant to cover tweets that were more subjective in nature and related to people's personal opinions and feelings on a variety of subjects.

Category 12 "Logistical information about the Grand Prix," was meant to represent anything about the meet related to competition start times, parking information, concessions, ticket sales, souvenirs and the like. Category 13 "Miscellaneous," was included for any item that was deemed not to fit within the other categories as determined by the researcher. An example of this was a tweet containing an inspirational quote.

Category 15 "Interpersonal communication," was created for tweets containing the @ symbol. The @ symbol in a tweet represents a conversation that a Twitter user is having with one or more other users. These conversations can pertain to questions and answers, sharing likes and dislikes or retweeting and commenting on another user's previous tweet.

Category 16 "Link to an online broadcast of the Grand Prix" was included for the people who use Twitter to find and share videos of live events. Finally, category 17 "Advertisement" was reserved for tweets where the administrators of the meet were selling a product, an athlete was writing positively about a product and/or company they represent or are sponsored by and a blatant ad disguised as a tweet.

The researcher tabulated data at the nominal level by using a method that counted the "frequency of occurrence of the units in each category" (Wimmer and Dominick 2006, 161) in tweets by individual study participants. Tallies were made for the following variables: "Tweet author," "Date," "Time," and "Category." The researcher simply interpreted the data as a relationship that exists between a category and its frequency (Wimmer and Dominick 2006, 165) in a particular individual interviewees' tweets and for the sample of interview participants overall.

In addition, the researcher made note of interesting tweets based on content and frequency through a general review of all of the tweets collected during this study. As stated later in this thesis, this review of the tweets helped identify content that was then brought up in interviews with individual subjects.

The researcher has been active on Twitter for over two years and has become familiar with the format of tweets by reading through dozens of them every day. The researcher created these news categories by taking note of the type of tweets that were written by sports journalists during a few high-profile swimming competitions. The news categories referenced in Appendix A are a result of this review.

The researcher believes that these themes reflect the theories of gatekeeping and selectivity because this thesis was specifically interested in how Twitter was used by journalists at the Missouri Grand Prix. The researcher believes that physically counting the number of times that each category is present helped show how these journalists used Twitter for the time period of February 10 through 13, 2012.

The researcher and a colleague each coded the Missouri Grand Prix data. The researcher coded the entire sample of 249 tweets and the colleague coded approximately

10 percent of the sample, or 25 tweets. The colleague was trained with regards to the categories and the coding sheet prior to coding. The colleague was given food in exchange for coding. The researcher used Holsti's formula to calculate intercoder reliability. This was an appropriate method because Holsti's is often used to calculate "the reliability of nominal data in terms of percentage of agreement" (Wimmer and Dominick 2006, 167). This data is nominal because it is a rate of the number of times each theme was present in each participant's tweets. Counting in the form of coding was only a portion of the process. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) see coding as connecting fragments of information. They wrote, "We define them as being about or relating to some particular topic or theme" (1996, 27). Thus the themes counted during the coding process helped inform the questions that made up the interviews in the second part of this thesis.

The second method employed was that of in-depth interviews. These were conducted with the same journalists that the researcher followed on Twitter. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2006), in-depth interviews or as they refer to them "intensive interviews" (2006, 135) are unique for a few reasons. A smaller sample is usually used, detailed information about a respondent's feelings, opinions and experiences can be obtained, interviews are usually quite lengthy and the question list can be customized to each respondent as time goes on (2006, 135).

Two reasons that in-depth interviews can be seen as the correct method are the time constraints of this style and the limited number of journalists who cover the sport of swimming on Twitter. Additionally, the researcher used a convenience sample because the pool of participants came from a naturally formed group that worked as volunteers (Creswell 2003, 164).

The subjects in this study consist of journalists and professionals who tweeted news and information during the Missouri Grand Prix or cover the sport of swimming on a regular basis. The researcher employed a variety of methods in order to find participants for this thesis. The first of these methods was a basic search of Twitter using the terms "Missouri Grand Prix" in the search box. The researcher found those that were written by journalists and media organizations then scanned tweets mentioning previous Missouri Grand Prix competitions. Reporters that previously used Twitter to cover past Missouri Grand Prix competitions were added to the list of people to contact.

A second way in which the researcher found participants was through the organizations that are in charge of facilitating the event. The two main organizations in charge of this event are USA Swimming and the University of Missouri Recreation Center. The researcher contacted these organizations, explained the research and asked them to provide a list of credentialed media professionals.

The third way in which the researcher looked for participants was by using the website WeFollow as a source. This website keeps track of the most popular Twitter accounts based on subject matter. Each subject's group of Twitter accounts is then divided into two labels titled "most influential" and "most followers." The researcher previously noted that the subject matter of "swimming" does exist on this site. The 50 most influential and popular swimming based Twitter accounts were analyzed by the researcher to pick out those that are run by reporters or media organizations. Finally, a Google search of terms like "2011 Missouri Grand Prix" and "2010 Missouri Grand Prix" was completed in an attempt to find articles from national and international level media

who covered past Missouri Grand Prix competitions. Prominent media from various searches were then added to the contact list.

All in all, a total of 19 individuals and news organizations were contacted and asked to participate in this thesis. These individuals and organizations range from the local like David Briggs of the *Columbia Daily Tribune*, who has covered this event in the past, to Nick Zaccardi of SportsIllustrated.com, who is an Olympic journalist and covers a good number of swimming events throughout the year. More than half of the 19 journalists contacted opted out of participating because they were not scheduled to cover the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix. The remaining journalists did not respond to numerous email requests. It should be noted that USA Swimming refused to participate in this thesis but did provide the researcher with a list of media entities that have reported on past Missouri Grand Prix events.

The final list of participants includes eight names. They are: Jason Marsteller of the publication *Swimming World Magazine*, NBC broadcaster Rowdy Gaines, Mizzou Rec employee Jennifer Seris, independent contractor Mike Gustafson, broadcaster Mel Stewart, Braden Keith of the website The Swimmers Circle, Josh Huger of the website Swim Utopia and Glenn Mills of the website Go Swim. It should be noted that during production of this thesis, participants Braden Keith and Mel Stewart went into business together and formed the website www.swimswam.com.

Overall, the researcher was especially curious with regards to the participants' feelings and experiences using Twitter to cover this sporting event. The researcher also collected some additional information about the gatekeeping process through the participants' answers to questions about why they initially joined Twitter and whether

these decisions were tied to individual beliefs about the value of Twitter or pressures stemming from their employers.

All interviews took place over the phone and a digital recorder was used with the individual's permission to ensure validity during the transcription process. Per Institutional Review Board guidelines, all participants were told at the beginning of each interview that they had the option to opt out of the research at any time or not answer any questions that made them feel uncomfortable, without detriment to them. Interviews lasted between 20 and 80 minutes and all interviews were transcribed verbatim. These transcriptions are included as Appendix F.

It was during this transcription process that the researcher looked for common themes and elements that helped inform the research on how Twitter has changed the journalistic process for those in the sports journalism industry. This was done in the data exploration phase where the researcher took a general look at the audio data in its transcription form. The researcher took particular note of items that affirmed the research question and items that did not fit in with previously mentioned themes. The goal was to mine out key concepts and ideas. These notes were done in the form of a qualitative memo, which includes a summary of the data and important quotes (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2011, 314). This process helped the researcher see how the various answers relate to one another (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2011, 305-306).

A list of intensive interview questions was prepared in the format of an unstructured guide. An interview schedule was not used for this research project because of some scholars' belief that an interview schedule is only appropriate when the researchers are looking to get roughly the same answer from all respondents (Ruane

2005, 151-154). Norman Denzin (2009) in his book *The research act* refers to this type of interview as the "nonscheduled standardized" (2009, 125-126). He wrote that its unique attributes include that it uses specific vocabulary that is familiar to the subjects, it allows subjects to elaborate on themes that are of particular interest to them and interviewees will often discover issues and topics during the interview process that were not listed on the original interview schedule (2009, 125-126).

In addition, the researcher paid attention to Norman Denzin's (2009) advice in creating successful interview questions. He wrote these suggestions, "questions should accurately convey meaning to the respondent; they should motivate him to become involved and to communicate clearly his attitudes and opinions" (2009, 129).

This researcher was interested in collecting honest and unique answers from each and every participant; therefore the unstructured guide or nonscheduled standardized appeared to be the best method. The unstructured interview guide is included in this thesis as Appendix B. The interview questions included on the list are a mix of open-ended and close-ended questions (Wimmer and Dominick 2006, 181).

Coding of the interview data began once a memo was written about each interview. The researcher started by reading through each interview sentence by sentence to see what the individual interviewee said and how it related to their Twitter behavior (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2011, 308). A set of categories began to emerge, which helped the researcher compare the results of multiple interviews. These categories are also known as descriptive codes (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2011, 310).

Finally, the interview data interpretation phase began. It was then that the researcher looked for patterns in the transcribed interview data and made conclusions

(Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2011, 317). It was the researcher's goal to compare the content of the participants' tweets with their personally stated reasons for using Twitter during the Missouri Grand Prix.

Limitations

As with all research, this study had limitations. First, the researcher examined Twitter use by journalists at a specific swimming event. These results are not transferable to sporting events of larger scope or popularity. This is a niche area of sports reporting and very specific results were produced. Secondly, the researcher only looked at the use of Twitter and did not monitor the use of other online content like blogs, Facebook or Youtube. The third limitation deals with the uniqueness of the newsworthy event of Matt Grevers' podium proposal. Basically, this event might have seen a bump in coverage that might not be present during future Missouri Grand Prix events because of the one time occurrence of two National Team swimmers becoming engaged during a medal ceremony. Therefore, the results from this study may not be transferable from one year to the next because 2012 may turn out to be an anomaly as far as breadth of coverage is concerned.

Additional research will have to be conducted by scholars interested in this topic before any valid connections can be inferred. For instance, future researchers could examine Twitter use by journalists at a future Missouri Grand Prix in order to see similarities or differences in coverage from one year to the next. Another study could also involve Twitter use by journalists at a political event or rally to see if the gatekeeping and institutional pressures are similar for Twitter use by all journalists.

CHAPTER III DATA PRESENTATION

Sample Information: Tweets

Eight Twitter accounts were followed for this thesis and their tweets make up the full sample. These eight Twitter accounts represent seven men and one woman. They are: Jason Marsteller of *Swimming World Magazine*, NBC Olympic swimming broadcaster Rowdy Gaines, owner of Gold Medal Media Mel Stewart, owner of the Go Swim website Glenn Mills, owner of the Swim Utopia website Josh Huger, co-founder of the Swimmers Circle website Braden Keith, independent contractor Mike Gustafson and Mizzou Rec employee Jennifer Seris.

The sample was comprised of 249 tweets. These tweets were collected between 12:01 a.m. on February 10, 2012 and 11:59 p.m. on February 13, 2012. This collection of tweets includes retweets and interpersonal communication via Twitter. The coding sheet included spaces for tweet number (1 through 249), tweet author, retweet author, date, time-of-day (including hour and minute) and coded category. This coding sheet is included as Appendix D.

Intercoder Reliability

Prior to coding, a colleague was trained with regards to the meanings of the various vocabulary terms relating to Twitter. The colleague coded approximately 10 percent of the original sample of 249 tweets, which amounted to 25 tweets. These 25 tweets were chosen on February 28, 2012 using the random number generator found on

the website www.random.org. Duplicate numbers were generated a total of two times during this process and these duplicates were discarded by the researcher.

The researcher used Holsti's formula to calculate intercoder reliability for the six variables. Percentages are as follows: Tweet number, 100%; Date, 100%; Time, 100%; Tweet author 96%; Retweet author 92%; Category 62%.

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2006), almost all research situations require a reliability coefficient of 80 percent or greater (169). Five out of the six variables included in this thesis fit into the acceptable range. The one true outlier, "Category," currently sits at 62%.

Data Presentation: Tweet Tables

TABLE 1: Table 1 summarizes the data set. It presents the total number of tweets on each of the four days that tweets were collected including February 10, 11, 12 and 13, 2012.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF TWEETS PER DAY

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number of Tweets</u>
February 10, 2012	86
February 11, 2012	66
February 12, 2012	49
February 13, 2012	48
	Total =249

For the first variable of "Date," the most popular date was February 10, 2012, which was the opening day of competition for the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix. February

10th's tweets made up roughly 34.5% of the total tweets collected for this thesis. The second most popular tweet day during the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix for the eight people interviewed was February 11, 2012, with 66 tweets or 26.5% of the total.

The pattern of the next day being less tweeted about than the previous day continued for the two remaining days but the difference was minor. The final day of competition February 12, 2012, had a total of 49 tweets or 19.7% of the total and the Monday following the event (February 13, 2012) had 48 tweets or 19.3% of the sample.

TABLE 2: Table 2 summarizes the total number of tweets per day, broken down by the hour. Tweets were originally collected and coded with hour and minute but final data was tallied on an hour-by-hour basis. It was broken down this way so that readers would be able to easily determine the most popular tweeting times in a 24-hour time period. Individual hours were only listed in Table 2 if they included at least one tweet. The Twitter account that the researcher created specifically for this thesis is located in Missouri and all tweet times included in this research are in Central Standard Time.

TABLE 2: NUMBER OF TWEETS BY THE HOUR

February 10		February 11	
<u>Time</u>	<u>Number of Tweets</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Number of Tweets</u>
1 a.m.	1	5 a.m.	3
4 a.m.	1	6 a.m.	4
5 a.m.	1	7 a.m.	1
6 a.m.	4	9 a.m.	4
7 a.m.	4	10 a.m.	3
8 a.m.	7	11 a.m.	1
9 a.m.	6	12 p.m.	1
10 a.m.	8	1 p.m.	1
11 a.m.	3	2 p.m.	2
12 p.m.	7	3 p.m.	7
1 p.m.	7	4 p.m.	4
2 p.m.	2	5 p.m.	5
3 p.m.	3	6 p.m.	10
4 p.m.	2	7 p.m.	6
5 p.m.	6	8 p.m.	5
6 p.m.	6	9 p.m.	5
7 p.m.	2	10 p.m.	2
8 p.m.	12	11 p.m.	2
9 p.m.	2		

10 p.m.	2
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February 12		February 13	
<u>Time</u>	<u>Number of Tweets</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Number of Tweets</u>
1 a.m.	1	7 a.m.	2
2 a.m.	1	8 a.m.	3
5 a.m.	1	9 a.m.	6
6 a.m.	4	10 a.m.	7
7 a.m.	2	11 a.m.	5
8 a.m.	6	12 p.m.	3
9 a.m.	3	1 p.m.	1
10 a.m.	2	2 p.m.	4
11 a.m.	2	3 p.m.	3
12 p.m.	2	4 p.m.	5
1 p.m.	1	5 p.m.	3
2 p.m.	2	6 p.m.	2
3 p.m.	1	7 p.m.	4
4 p.m.	3		
5 p.m.	4		
6 p.m.	2		
7 p.m.	1		
8 p.m.	3		

9 p.m.	6
10 p.m.	2

The most popular time of day for tweets during the most tweeted about day, February 10, 2012, was 8 p.m. with 12 tweets or roughly 14% of that day's total. On February 10 there were no tweets during the hours of 12 a.m., 2 a.m., 3 a.m. or 11 p.m. The hours of 1 a.m., 4 a.m. and 5 a.m. were tied for least with a single tweet each.

The most popular time of day for tweets on February 11, 2012, was 6 p.m. with 10 tweets. On February 11 there were no tweets between 12 a.m. and 4 a.m. or during the 8 o'clock a.m. hour. On this day, 7 a.m., 11 a.m., 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. each had a single tweet or 1.5% of the total tweets that day each.

The final day of competition, February 12, 2012, had quite a few low ranking hours with its most popular tweeting time of day being split between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m., which had six tweets each. This day had no tweets during the hours of 12 a.m., 3 a.m., 4 a.m. and 11 p.m. The following hours only boasted a single tweet each: 1 a.m., 2 a.m., 5 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Monday February 13, 2012, was the final day of tweet collection and it had both the least number of tweets and the most hours of the day without a single tweet being posted. February 13th's most popular time of day was 10 a.m. with seven tweets, or 14.6% of its total. The least popular time of day for tweeting when at least one tweet was posted was 1p.m. with a single tweet. The blocks of time between 12 a.m. to 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. had zero tweets.

TABLE 3: Table 3 summarizes the total number of tweets per participant. There are a total of eight participants with tweet totals ranging from 5 to 56.

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF TWEETS PER PARTICIPANT

<u>Participant Name</u>	<u>Total Number of Tweets</u>
Jason Marsteller (Swimming World)	56
Jennifer Seris (Missouri Grand Prix)	51
Glenn Mills (Go Swim)	42
Josh Huger (Swim Utopia)	40
Rowdy Gaines	31
Braden Keith (Swimmers Circle)	18
Mel Stewart (Gold Medal Media)	6
Mike Gustafson	5

Out of the eight participants who participated in this research, Jason Marsteller of *Swimming World Magazine* had the most total tweets with 56 or 22.5%. Independent Contractor Mike Gustafson had the least amount of tweets during the weekend of the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix with five or 2%. The rest of the participants fit in as follows: Jennifer Seris of the Mo Grand Prix Twitter account with 51 tweets or roughly 20.5%, Glenn Mills of the website Go Swim with 42 tweets or 16.9%, Josh Huger who runs the Twitter account for the website Swim Utopia with 40 tweets or approximately 16.1% of the sample, NBC Broadcaster Rowdy Gaines with 31 tweets, which is 12.4%, Braden Keith representing the website Swimmers Circle with 18 tweets, which makes up about

7.2% of the sample and Mel Stewart, a broadcaster who posted six tweets or 2.4% of the total.

TABLE 4: Table 4 summarizes the number of tweets per tweet category. This table has more than 249 tallies because the researcher occasionally picked multiple categories for coding because individual tweets represented multiple items. An example of this is tweet number 188, which was coded with both “Interpersonal communication” and “Link to an online broadcast of the Grand Prix,” because the tweet was both interpersonal communication and a link to a broadcast of the Missouri Grand Prix. In addition, two tweets (numbers 217 and 13) were coded as "broken links" because when the researcher coded the tweets on February 26, 2012, the links embedded in these tweets were no longer active.

TABLE 4: NUMBER OF TWEETS PER TWEET CATEGORY

<u>Category</u>	<u>Number of Tweets</u>
Grand Prix Swimming event results	1
News' about Matt Grevers' proposal	5
News about meet not related to Matt Grevers' proposal	10
News/information/results not related to the Grand Prix	9
Picture about Grand Prix	10
Picture not about Grand Prix	24
Picture of Matt Grevers' proposal	2
Article about Grand Prix	12
Article not about Grand Prix	43
Article about Matt Grevers' proposal	4
Link to a website	3
Video about Grand Prix	0
Video not about Grand Prix	31
Video about Matt Grevers' proposal	8
Commentary/opinion about Grand Prix	3
Commentary about Matt Grevers' proposal	2
Commentary/opinion not related to Grand Prix	16
Logistical information about Grand Prix	0
Miscellaneous	9
Interpersonal communication	63
Link to an online broadcast of the Grand Prix	2
Advertisement	3
Broken links	2
	Total=262

With regards to the variable of "Category," there were two "Link to a video: Video about the Grand Prix" and "Logistical information about the Grand Prix" that were never used by the researcher during the coding process. In addition, there were two tweets that could not be coded using these categories because the links embedded within the tweets were broken when coding took place. The sample for this variable was 262 to include the multiple categories that certain tweets fit into.

The two most popular categories were "Interpersonal communication" with 63 tweets or 24% of the total and "Link to an article: Article not about the Grand Prix" with

43 tweets, representing 16.4% of the sample. Other popular categories included "Link to a video: Video not about the Grand Prix" with 31 tweets or 11.8% of the total, "Link to a picture: Picture not of Grand Prix" with 24 tweets or 9.2% of the total and "Commentary/opinion not related to the Grand Prix" with 16 tweets, representing 6.1% of the total.

Some of the least popular categories during coding were "Link to a website," "Commentary/opinion about the Grand Prix," and "Advertisement." The researcher only chose these three categories a total of three times each, meaning that they each represented 1.1% of the total. Categories "Link to a picture: Picture of Matt Grevers' proposal," "Commentary/opinion about Grand Prix: Commentary/opinion about Matt Grevers' proposal" and "Link to an online broadcast of the Grand Prix" only had two tweets each or .08% of the total. In addition, "Grand Prix swimming event results" had a single tweet making up .04% of the sample.

TABLE 5: Table 5 summarizes the total number of retweets per participant. There were a total of 67 retweets, representing roughly 27 percent of the 249 tweets collected.

TABLE 5: NUMBER OF RETWEETS PER PARTICIPANT

<u>Name of Participant</u>	<u>Number of Retweets</u>
Jason Marsteller (Swimming World)	19
Jennifer Seris (Missouri Grand Prix)	16
Josh Huger (Swim Utopia)	13
Braden Keith (Swimmers Circle)	12
Glenn Mills (Go Swim)	4
Rowdy Gaines	3
Mike Gustafson	0
Mel Stewart (Gold Medal Media)	0
Total=67	

Of the eight people who participated in this thesis, Jason Marsteller of *Swimming World Magazine* had the most tweets with 19 or 28.3% of the total number of retweets. Neither Mike Gustafson who self identifies as an independent contractor nor Gold Medal Media’s Mel Stewart posted a single retweet between 12 a.m. on February 10, 2012 and 11:59 p.m. on February 13, 2012. The remainder of the participants fit is as follows; Jennifer Seris with 16 retweets or approximately 24% of the total, Josh Huger with 13 or 19.4% of the total, Braden Keith with 12 retweets amounting to roughly 18 percent of the total and Glenn Mills with 4 or 8% of the total.

Summary: Tweets

The above data presents a few interesting tidbits related to these journalists and their tweeting habits. First, that overall tweeting fell off approximately 25 percent from the first day of February 10, 2012 to the following day of February 11, 2012 and continued to fall roughly another 20 percent on the final day of the meet February 12, 2012 to remain steady on the last day of tweeting February 13, 2012.

Tweeting by the hour matches up with trends of that weekend and what was going on during the meet, most specifically preliminaries in the morning and event finals at night. It also matches up with the fact that in their interviews most participants admitted to tweeting pretty consistently during the day including the use of automated tweeting systems like Hoot Suite.

The researcher was most surprised by the variable of tweet broken down by participant and that fact that a handful of these people barely tweeted at all over the weekend. Jason Marsteller, Glenn Mills and Jennifer Seris were the three biggest tweeters over the four days and this is consistent with the fact that these three individuals are associated with popular swimming publications, events and websites, where it is imperative to keep their product in the public eye through social media. Jason Marsteller, Jennifer Seris and Josh Huger were the biggest retweeters with their combined retweets making up more than 70 percent of that total.

Finally, the most popular categories, "Interpersonal communication," "Link to an article: Article not about the Grand Prix," and "Link to a video: Video not of the Grand Prix," shows that these journalists were using Twitter that weekend to communicate with their friends and followers and highlight their own media work or those of friends and

colleagues. Most interestingly, the links to articles and videos were not about the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix, the quantitative data points to the fact that these eight people spent more time tweeting about other topics than they did tweeting about the Grand Prix.

Sample Information: Interviews

A group of eight people consisting of seven men and one woman were interviewed for this thesis. All participants were initially contacted through email and phone numbers were exchanged once interview dates and times had been secured. All interviews took place over the phone during the months of February and March 2012. A digital recorder was used with the knowledge of all participants, thus ensuring validity during the transcription process. The interviews ranged in length from approximately 20 minutes to approximately 80 minutes. Sets of interview questions and data sheets pertaining to each individual participant's tweets were created beforehand and used during the interviews to spur discussion. The general set of interview questions is included as Appendix B.

Data Presentation: Interviews

Only a few of the eight participants have job titles that reflect traditional journalism roles. These are Rowdy Gaines, who is best known for his work as a swimming commentator during NBC's Olympic broadcasts, and Jason Marsteller, General Manager Media Properties for *Swimming World Magazine*. The rest self-identified with job titles more closely aligned with freelance work and the Internet and social media industries. These are Lead Content Developer for the website Swimmers Circle (Braden Keith), owner of the commercial production company Gold Medal Media (Mel Stewart), Mizzou Rec's graphic designer Jennifer Seris, creator of the website Swim

Utopia (Josh Huger), Owner and Creator of Content for the website Go Swim (Glenn Mills) and independent contractor Mike Gustafson, who writes weekly articles for USA Swimming's website and creates swimming videos for AT&T. It should be noted that participants Braden Keith and Mel Stewart teamed up and created the website www.swimswam.com during the writing of this thesis. It was launched in March 2012. In addition, Braden Keith no longer works for the website Swimmers Circle.

These participants got involved in the world of swimming journalism in multiple ways and the lengths of their careers in this business have been varied. In addition, some have extensive experience in journalism and some are relative neophytes. Keith wrote for the website Swimmers Circle for two years while also working his day job of financier in the oil industry. Glenn Mills has run his website for 10 years and has a degree from the University of Alabama in public relations. Jason Marsteller has worked at *Swimming World Magazine* for six years and prior to that he was a Sports Information Director at Indiana University. Jennifer Seris has been Mizzou Rec's graphic designer for approximately three-and-a-half years and stated that she has no personal background in journalism. Josh Huger started the website Swim Utopia in the spring of 2010 as a class project for a sports management course and has since parlayed it into a thriving online company.

Both Stewart and Mike Gustafson worked in Hollywood prior to joining the world of swimming media. Gustafson worked as an assistant on television shows like *Gossip Girl* and Stewart worked first as a host for an action sports show and later as a screenwriter. Rowdy Gaines has been an announcer and broadcaster for the past 25 to 30

years and got his bachelor's degree from Auburn University in mass communications and telecommunications.

All participants except for Seris and Marsteller have a personal background in the sport of swimming. Seris runs all of the social media pertaining to Mizzou Rec and when she was asked how she ended up doing this work on top of her position of graphic designer she answered, "I was the most qualified person with Facebook experience personally and having to market things and the visuals that go with it. It made sense for my job to be the person to do both." Marsteller learned the sport of swimming when it was assigned to him during his days as a Sports Information Director.

Keith, Huger and Gustafson all swam growing up and Huger and Gustafson swam in college, at Indiana University of Pennsylvania and Northwestern University respectively. Stewart, Gaines and Mills were Olympic swimmers and they bring their expertise to their work in swimming media. Stewart won two gold medals during the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona and Gaines won three gold medals during the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. Mills made the 1980 Olympic Team, which was the year the United States, boycotted the Games in Moscow due to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. His attitude on missing out on the competition in the Moscow is a positive one,

"It's a great life story for people and at this point, as I'm much older now, I use it as a teaching opportunity for young kids and use it as a positive message rather than just turn into a bitter old man," he said.

Mills was the first of the interviewees to join Twitter. He officially created his account for Go Swim in January 2008. Other adopters in the year 2008 included Marsteller in May and Stewart in July. Gaines joined in February 2009 and Gustafson jumped onboard in December of that same year. All participants were on Twitter by the close of 2010 with Keith joining in January, Huger in March and Seris in May of 2010.

Both Stewart and Gaines joined Twitter after being prompted by their wives. Gaines said, "It was really kind of through my wife. She started it for me. I didn't know anything about it." Huger started tweeting as part of his class project. Seris and her team created the account as part of their promotional work for the Missouri Grand Prix. Gustafson never stated a specific reason and Keith made the choice after consulting with his business partner. Mills said, "I'm an early adopter of technology generally," but he stayed off Twitter until he read an article that said that it was an "instant newsletter" and figured it would be a good way to get his site's content to an audience. Twitter's use has evolved for him since. For Marsteller it was less of a conscious decision. He said,

"I kind of made a decision, but sometimes you find those times where stuff in companies, especially when you are a small company like this, you don't really have a policy decision conversation about going into social media, you just kind of happen to do it."

When the interviewees were asked to estimate the amount of time that they spend on Twitter per day, the amounts were pretty varied. Keith estimated the largest amount of time stating that he has a screen open to Twitter during the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 9:30

p.m. each day and said, "15 minutes out of every hour I spend actively doing stuff." The other participants who stated actual amounts were Seris with 2 hours per day spread out over all of the accounts for Mizzou Rec, Huger with an estimated 1 to 2 hours per day, Gaines with 20 to 30 minutes per day and Stewart said approximately 15 to 20 minutes of his average day is spent on Twitter. The amount of time spent on Twitter did not seem to be tied to job duties. At the time Keith and Seris had very different positions and they had the largest amount of time spent on Twitter. The same can be said for Stewart and Gaines, with one running Internet sites and the other being a broadcaster, yet their time spent on Twitter per day was almost equal.

All participants were asked to specifically name where they get the information that they tweet. For Keith, Mills, Marsteller, Huger and Gaines it is a mixture of swimming related content including alerts and news from Google, doing original reporting from unique sources, press releases and other swimming websites. Due to its position as a Twitter account attached to an event, Seris only tweets about the Missouri Grand Prix. Stewart often finds himself posting swim workouts for those that want to follow his training schedule. For example, he will write the exact strokes and number of yards or meters that he swims in a specific practice, so that his friends and fans can swim the same work out that he does. Gustafson commented that he has been linking to more "articles and swimming based stuff" in the last one to three months but that there is a risk to this. "There's such an expectation that if you tweet primarily about one specific thing, you run the risk of forever branding yourself as that thing" Gustafson said.

As part of this thesis' quantitative analysis process the number of tweets were tabulated from midnight on February 10, 2012 until 11:59 p.m. on February 13, 2012 and

then separated them by interviewee. Each interviewee was asked to guess the number of tweets they posted during this time period. Of the participants who guessed a number, only a single person guessed a number larger than their actual total. That person was Keith who guessed 30 but he had actually tweeted only 18 times. His confusion may be attributed to that fact that at the time of the interview he was tweeting from two accounts, his personal account and the Swimmers Circle account.

The rest of the participants guessed fewer tweets than their actual total. Mills guessed 30 but he actually posted 43, Huger guessed between 20 and 30 with the real number being 40 and Gaines estimated "probably a dozen, maybe" with his true total being 30. Seris was closest to her account's true amount with a guess of 50 with the real number being 51 and Marsteller was the farthest off with a guess of 10 to 20 and a true number of 56. This shows that the majority of these people believe that they are posting fewer tweets than what they actually send out on a given weekend.

For the most part, all of those interviewed for this thesis said that they tweeted consistently throughout the day and this matched up with the data that the researcher collected during the study. Two of the participants, Mills and Marsteller, admitted to using automated systems to supplement their tweeting or keep their tweets on schedule. One of the major uses of automated systems is that they allow individuals to type in all of their tweets for an extended period of time (a day, a week) and then schedule the tweets to be posted at designated intervals. This means that the individual Twitter user can make sure that their tweets are being posted even if they are without Internet service or are traveling.

Mills implemented his own automated tweeting system, of it he said,

"I use Hoot Suite and so, I generally try and spread it out from 9 to 5, not extremely scientific but just kind of balanced. I do have some tools that tell me when I should tweet more and when I should tweet less."

Mills often uses an automated system to post a tweet an hour, on the hour, throughout the entire day to keep his followers engaged. The researcher commented on Marsteller's tendency to post tweets into the wee hours of the morning, and he explained that their Internet talk show called *Morning Swim Show* is posted at 12:01 a.m. every weekday and an automated tweet is sent out with it. He accounted for the remainder of his late night tweets by explaining that he has a one-year old and often flips through Twitter while he is up with his child.

Of the five participants who were specifically asked whether anyone reads or edits their tweets before they post them, all answered no. Gaines had a unique perspective on this topic,

"I would assume that some of the more famous people might have, obviously you can see someone like President Obama or people like that in the political world, but no, I don't have that many followers and I'm not that busy that I can't tweet myself."

He had 7,285 followers on Twitter as of this writing. Gustafson, Stewart and Mills were not asked this question because they had previously said that they controlled their own Twitter accounts.

Almost all of the interviewees were in agreement that their followers are the same people that they write tweets for, the swimming community or fans of swimming. Huger's website Swim Utopia has recently begun offering live streams of championship meets free to its visitors, which makes it the first swimming website to cover this niche market live. The effort has paid off in praise and compliments, Huger mentioned that working or retired family members cannot always make it to these meets so, "They'll tell us how much they like being able to watch their kids swim and stuff like that." Gustafson estimated that 90 to 95 percent of his followers are somehow related to the swimming community. This has its detriments though, "if I tweet something that isn't swimming specific I notice that I lose followers," he said.

Opinions were split on the issue of whether Twitter has made their jobs easier or harder. Keith, Huger and Gaines all commented that it has made their jobs easier with a handful of reasons given, including that Twitter has made it easier to interact with professional athletes and has allowed their fans the opportunity to ask questions and get answers in real time. Mills was the only participant who acknowledged that it has made his job more difficult when he said, "Much harder. It's just another thing that you have to keep up with." He went on to say that his company gives away a lot of free content, usually in the form of swim drill videos that he creates himself, and that Twitter is just a part of staying on the public eye. Marsteller commented that it is the whole "technological slavery" issue and that can be both good and bad. Stewart did not outright say if Twitter has made his job easier or harder but he did acknowledge how it, or how social media in general, has helped his career. "I don't think I would work consistently in

this market, in this industry, meaning the Olympic media world if it wasn't for Twitter" he said.

Each and every one of the interviewees was in agreement that the Matt Grevers' proposal story that came out of the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix was newsworthy. The reasons given for why it was newsworthy and why they tweeted about it ranged from Keith's assertion, "That's one of those few stories that actually ends up going mainstream. And so that's sort of why we tweeted about it" to thoughts that it was romantic, surprising and unique. Gustafson and Marsteller pointed to the fact that this lone romantic moment managed to humanize Olympian Matt Grevers, who stands an imposing six foot-eight inches tall. Gustafson elaborated, "In swimming you don't see their faces, you don't see their reactions, you don't see their emotions, so it's a very easy sport to just envision these swimmers as little robots without any lives outside the pool."

Some similar reasons were given for why it became the breakout news story of that meet. Keith provided two unique answers and believes its popularity stemmed from two distinct things, "There weren't that many fast swims if I was perfectly honest. It was not a real high-profile meet," he said referring to the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix's stature. He also added that, "they're two very well liked people," floating the idea that an individual's personality or popularity can help boost a story's reach. For Stewart it all came down to how relatable that moment was for the 2.7 million people who have since watched it on Youtube. He explained it like this, "Because swimming is only important to people who are passionate about the sport, who know the sport. It's like another language, if you don't speak it; it's hard to understand it. But marriage proposals are universal, period."

In addition to the previous two questions about the Matt Grevers' engagement, the participants were also asked what its popularity shows about what people like to share on Twitter. Quite a few of them hinted at its popularity being tied to it being a positive and happy news story. Like Gustafson said, "I've always felt that people like to retweet things that make them happy. Happy things go viral." Keith believes that its popularity might be attached to the fact that it caused the swimming community to get involved, "I think why it was so popular is because the other professional and college swimmers commented on it and a lot of the time they won't interact as much about their own meets as other people will" he said.

One of the more surprising elements of these interviews was the number of times the topic of Facebook came up without solicitation. Facebook's popularity among these eight people is mixed, and they each use it in unique and different ways. For instance, both Seris and Gaines mentioned that last year they tended to use Facebook as their prime source of social media but in the past year, or even the last few months in Gaines case, they have started using Twitter more.

Stewart and Marsteller said that Facebook helps their work. Marsteller said, "It's amazing, the psychology of Facebook as a source management tool as a journalist is insane," referring to his ability to cultivate and communicate with sources within the swimming community on Facebook because these sources do not find it invasive. He mentioned that Twitter does not offer the same access. For Stewart it is about connection too,

"So, I find that it's a much more powerful tool, and you connect and build. We use it aggressively because we've made great friends and because we've built business over Facebook. It just feels a lot more intimate to me."

The intimacy appears to be paying off, during his interview on March 5, 2012 Stewart said that his Facebook fan page had 59,531 fans and was increasing by a thousand every five days on average. In contrast, as of this writing Stewart had 27,785 followers on Twitter, which means that he reaches twice as many people with his Facebook posts as he does his tweets. On the business end of things Keith shared an observation when he said that he and his business partner have noticed that headlines and links to articles spread faster on Twitter, but that more people click through those links when they are posted on Facebook. Twitter's requirement that all news be compressed into single sentences could mean that audiences are taking 140-character headlines as news and sharing them by retweeting them but that Facebook's ability to provide more information at first glance means it piques the audience's interest more and that is an explanation for why they are clicking through.

Close to half of these participants were in agreement that they will not retweet items that are negative with Gaines signaling out "anything inappropriate," meaning items that should not be seen by his young followers, and Marsteller directly stating, "First, we won't retweet anything that is close to profanity."

On the other hand Mills talked about the unique opportunity he has on Twitter to speak his mind when he said, "I've been self-employed for 30 years now, if somebody wants to do something to me because they're mad at what I say, then they're going to do

it. I don't really care." On the issue of specific topics Stewart thinks that religion is off limits for him, "It's a personal matter and no one would probably appreciate the way I think, being that I'm agnostic" he said.

Marsteller personally enjoys some of the comical sentences that he sees on accounts like "swimmerproblemz" but knows that they are not appropriate for his business. "I would like to retweet some of the stuff but our brand dates back to like the 50s, we definitely try not to have sophomoric humor," he commented.

Funny tweets or things that they are personally interested in came up during interviews in response to items that these participants are willing to retweet. Huger has even created a feature for his website Swim Utopia called "Sweet Tweet Tuesday." For this feature he will go through his various retweets from the prior week and pick his favorite and include it in a special tweet and post.

Those interviewees who barely tweeted or did not tweet about the Grand Prix at all were asked why. For Stewart it was simply an issue of being too busy with the launch of his new website Swim Swam to get involved with the Missouri Grand Prix. Gaines and Gustafson both attended the same event in New York City that weekend. Gaines was the emcee and Gustafson was an attendee at USA Swimming's Gold Medal Dining charity event featuring Olympic swimmer Garrett Weber-Gale, which was held on February 11, 2012. Both of these men made it clear that they did not tweet about the meet because they could not attend. "But no, I didn't tweet about the Missouri Grand Prix because I wasn't there and because I was going to the other swimming function and it wasn't, you know, there was no expectation to do it" Gustafson added. Gaines posted four and Gustafson posted a single tweet about the Gold Medal Dining event.

During the analysis of tweets portion of this thesis the researcher noticed that interpersonal communication was a popular form of tweeting for many of these participants. The two with the highest percentages of interpersonal tweets compared to their overall number of tweets were Gaines and Mills with 60 percent and 30 percent respectively. Of its use as a personal communication tool, Mills believes that it is okay to post some bits of information on his Twitter account, where everything is public, but that there is also a time to communicate privately. He said this while using an example to highlight his point,

"There are certain things, like today for instance, Cullen Jones, I wished him a happy birthday and then he thanked me and said he was coming to town. So, I wrote back, probably, 'Yes, no problem' and then I sent him a couple of private messages," Mills said.

For Marsteller it is an issue of privacy "On purpose I will not have a conversation on Twitter." Gustafson makes a point to limit his conversing and social interaction to his friends, "No, I don't think I do interact with a whole lot of other people" he said. The fact that he has 804 followers but only follows 58 accounts on Twitter probably makes his limited interpersonal communication easier.

Random topics or items that were tweeted by the participants during the weekend of the Missouri Grand Prix included coverage of rising swimming star Missy Franklin's high school swimming championship, which was being shown on ESPN 3, and a lip sync video featuring British diver Tom Daley stripping down to his Speedo on the beach.

Stewart and Gustafson had one thing in common when it comes to random tweets, they both like to post information about and pictures of their cats. For Stewart it goes along with the rest of his work, "So, I'm going to NCAAs in a couple of weeks, you know, I'll tweet out interesting times. I do that. And then I tweet out pictures of my cat," he said. Gustafson felt the opposite, saying that tweeting about his cat makes him feel like being on Twitter is not solely about work. This may be an example of Stewart and Gustafson putting up boundaries in different ways.

In the final moments of their interviews the participants were asked about the upcoming London Olympics and Olympic Trials and what place Twitter will have during those competitions. Keith and Stewart were clear that they would be on the pool deck at the Olympic Trials. Stewart believes that Twitter's place in the news world will be prominent with the 2012 Summer Olympics,

"I think that it is going to be the first news source for I think people who can't sit there and watch the events. I think it is going to be first position news over network, over New York Times, over everything," Stewart said.

The remainder of participants, excluding Seris who does not tweet about anything outside the Missouri Grand Prix, said that they will probably be covering the London Olympics and Olympic Trials on Twitter, if simply remotely.

Gustafson sees how Twitter's place may be complicated though, "I think it will be a double-edged sword. I think Twitter will allow some fans that aren't there the luxury of feeling backstage and feeling connected to the event," he said. He is aware of the

detriments of the London Olympics being on tape delay for the United States, which is a minimum of five hours behind Britain though, and NBC's previous pledge to air all events live on the Internet too,

"It would be great to interact on Twitter because there is going to be so much attention on the events. But at the same time as a swim fan, I don't want to know what happens before I see it" Gustafson said.

He will therefore be on a Twitter blackout during the Olympics.

CHAPTER IV DATA ANALYSIS

Research Question: How has Twitter changed how journalists report on sports?

The original purpose of this thesis was to answer the research question of how Twitter use has changed how journalists report on sports. The parameters of this research were narrowed to the eight journalists included in this study and their coverage on Twitter of the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix. The most interesting findings were that these journalists were not using Twitter as much for breaking news as they were for communicating with friends and fans and that many of them do not work in traditional newsrooms with traditional power structures. In addition, the strength of negativity and deviance as news values was not a popular concept with these professionals, as the majority of them said that they think that positive and happy things are more of a draw on Twitter.

Newsroom Factors, News Values and Gate Flow

As previously mentioned in the literature review, Jeremy Tunstall's 1971 book titled *Journalists at work* looked at how the sociological factors present in the newsroom can impact the gatekeeping process. Much has changed in the 41 years since Tunstall wrote his book and the content is truly not representative of the eight journalists interviewed for this thesis. The most glaring difference is also the most basic; these eight journalists do not work in traditional newsrooms. It could actually be argued that seven out of the eight do not work in newsrooms at all, which says a lot about the work environment of the present day working journalist.

For the most part Mike Gustafson, Josh Huger, Mel Stewart, Glenn Mills, Jason Marsteller and Braden Keith work from home, away from the environments in which the earliest gatekeeping studies took place. Jennifer Seris works out of her office in the Mizzou Rec Center, which due to her job as Graphic Designer is not linked to any type of newsroom. Rowdy Gaines' experiences with more traditional newsrooms occur while he is commentating for NBC or Universal Sports. His newsroom is of the broadcast variety but there are seasons to his work and he does not work a normal work schedule in NBC's traveling newsrooms.

David Manning White (1950) looked at how a single wire editor working for a 30,000-circulation paper chose wire stories over the course of a week. Although none of this study's eight journalists work as wire editors, they do share something in common with White's "Mr. Gates" in that they tended to pass similar information onto their audiences. "Mr. Gates" admitted to being impartial to wire stories that were "newsworthy," and all eight of these journalists admitted that they found the Matt Grevers' proposal story to be newsworthy and that was one of the main reasons why they passed it on to their Twitter followers.

In addition, "Mr. Gates" picked and printed stories that he found to be "novel." When Rowdy Gaines was asked what made the Matt Grevers' proposal popular he said, "I think it's because it was so unique." Similarly, Jason Marsteller's answer was, "Because it was different." One of the most likely reasons that novel things are popular is because they are unique and different.

Authors McQuail and Windahl (1982) criticized White's 1950 theory that gatekeeping produces a single flow of information and that this flow is traditionally

passive in nature. One could argue that Twitter has expanded the flow of the gate with information actively flowing in both directions. The flow's expansion can be attributed to the ability of Twitter users and their fans and colleagues to retweet what someone else wrote or how some journalists are now using information they read on Twitter as a jumping off point for a story. Jason Marsteller spoke of this process when he said,

"To me the retweet is identical in a mental process to if I found a news article out there but I have the ability to go actually do a full article on it, I'm probably just going to do a light article on it and still cite that it originated some place else."

As previously stated, 63 tweets out of 249 or 24 percent of all of the tweets collected for this thesis, were coded as interpersonal communication. This shows that these journalists use this particular social media tool for social pursuits and in Marsteller's case it can also provide the occasional story lead too.

Breed (1955) specifically studied how the organizational pressures of the newsroom impacted the gatekeeping process. Breed (1955) made reference to the publisher holding an abundance of control and single handedly creating the paper's news reporting policy. It has already been determined that none of these journalists work in traditional newsrooms and none of them admitted to having their process dictated to them by a superior or publisher. In fact, many of them work as their own publishers. This was highlighted during the interview process when all eight participants mentioned that they all write their own tweets and that no one is editing or reading their tweets before they are published on Twitter.

The majority of these participants are not working under organizational pressures either. Five out of eight of them run their own websites and generally act as their own bosses. Out of the three that do not run their own websites, Jennifer Seris and Jason Marsteller routinely create original content for their company's websites, which may see some publisher control. Rowdy Gaines does not have a strong presence on any particular website, therefore his tweets are his main channel for publishing on the web. Gaines broadcasts for NBC during specific swimming competitions but a look at his Twitter account reveals the words and sentiments of an individual and not a broadcast network. Marsteller did acknowledge one organizational reporting policy when he said that he would like to retweet the occasional humorous tweet "but our brand dates back to like the 50s, so we definitely try not to have sophomoric humor."

Sanctions, Levels of Influence and Information Channels

Further differences between what these interviewees said and Breed's (1955) research were highlighted by Glenn Mills. Breed (1955) mentioned that a way in which a publisher might exert control over his or her reporters is by making them think that they will be subject to sanctions if they did not consistently follow the rules. Mills extolled the joys of non-conformity and working without a publisher when he stated, "I've been self-employed for 30 years now, if somebody wants to do something to me because they're mad at what I say, then they're going to do it. I don't really care." On Twitter audience members may enact their own organizational pressures by directly contacting a user about content that they do not like or by simply choosing to no longer follow them on Twitter, which would be two of the choices available to Mills' followers.

O'Sullivan et al. (1983) and their idea that gatekeeping is done at the individual level partially fits in with the work done by this study's participants. O'Sullivan et al. (1983) had the idea that reporters go out and do original reporting and then they personally filter the information to their audience. These people are doing original reporting but not 100 percent of the time. What they are doing the remainder of the time is more similar to the reporting written about by Shoemaker and Reese (1991).

While commenting both about journalists fulfilling their job duties and the processing of information by news companies, Shoemaker and Reese (1991) noted that many reporters tend to gather information from other people in their industry. This ties into the concept of retweeting. In the world of Twitter, another person or entity on Twitter uses retweeting when an individual wants to promote and share an idea or comment that was originally tweeted. In the world of these journalists, retweeting is often used to share or promote a story or piece of information that they themselves could not write or did not want to write. Thus through the act of retweeting Twitter acts as a direct link to the original source material.

Approximately 27 percent of all of their tweets the weekend of the Grand Prix were actually retweets. Gaines, Gustafson and Stewart did not tweet about the Grand Prix. Stewart specifically mentioned that he usually tweets about the individual Grand Prix competitions but that he had been busy working on the launch of his website Swim Swam. Even on the occasions that he does tweet about an event or competition he still might retweet the work of other members of the media. He explained that it comes down to timing when he said, "And sometimes I'm just not that good about getting the

information out that fast and somebody else is and they're doing it better, I'll retweet them."

Shoemaker and Reese (1991) also wrote about how some journalists rely on information that comes from routine channels, such as press conferences and press releases. Huger of the website Swim Utopia spoke about getting information from routine channels when he said that his website often receives communication from sports information directors at universities. "We put up their press releases," he said.

Matt Grevers' Proposal

Molotoch and Lester (1974) supposed that there are four different types of events that the press reports on routine, accident, scandal and serendipitous. According to the eight journalists interviewed for this study, the Matt Grevers' proposal has elements of a few of Molotoch and Lester's (1974) four different types of events. This proposal can be seen as a routine event in that the promoters of the event (the University of Missouri and USA Swimming) had easy access to the media because they were already there to cover the Missouri Grand Prix. Also, it fits what Molotoch and Lester said in that, "those where the access is afforded by the fact that the promoters and the news assemblers are identical" (Molotoch and Lester 1974, 107).

For example, Seris could be considered both an event promoter and news assembler because at the time of the Missouri Grand Prix she worked for the Mizzou Rec Center, which is partially responsible for staging the Missouri Grand Prix. During her interview she said that she shot one of the two videos of the Matt Grevers' proposal that made it onto the web via her iPhone. Within this same realm USA Swimming can also be seen as both a promoter and assembler because they shot the other Matt Grevers' proposal

video that made it to the web and they were responsible for the remainder of the event's staging.

According to Molotoch and Lester (1974) the proposal would not be considered an accident because the proposal was planned and was promoted by the people involved. It also would not be considered a scandal because it was not controversial and Matt Grevers would not have proposed on the medal stand if he did not intend for it to be public. Finally, Molotoch and Lester (1974) would most likely refer to it as partially serendipitous because although Seris mentioned she knew about it, meaning that it was planned well ahead of time but it was also promoted by the same people who were involved in it.

O'Neill and Harcup (2009) proposed the idea that the big names attached to a story or an event can make it newsworthy. This lines up with what Keith said about why people shared the proposal story on Twitter. "Everybody likes Matt Grevers and Annie Chandler, and they're really just popular beyond their swimming accomplishments, so I think that's why it became such a big deal" Keith said.

Positive is Popular

The biggest difference between what these journalists said in their interviews and the research collected in the literature review relates to the popularity of negative and positive news. Cohen and Young (1981), Gans (1979) and Bohle (1986) all wrote about the popularity of negative news with Bohle (1986) specifically commenting on the negative sentiment that may be passed onto the community via an over saturation of negative news.

More than one of these journalists mentioned happy and positive things as answers to many of the interview questions including the following examples. On the topic of why people shared the Matt Grevers' proposal story on Twitter, Gustafson said that, "I've always felt that people like to retweet things that make them happy. Happy things go viral. I've always noticed that." Stewart singled out the people posting negative tweets when he said, "I don't like people who are nasty and mean," he said, "In swimming there is a sense of decorum because of the swimming world and I like that, so if people do anything negative I try and pounce on them."

Perhaps Stewart is correct and the swimming world's positive attitude has rubbed off onto the journalism created in its sphere or maybe it is simply a single example with these eight journalists and their preference and belief in the positive. Thelwall, Buckley and Paltoglou's (2011) study into sentiment on Twitter found a haze of negativity surrounding events that were usually seen as positive, like the Olympics. Additional research should be done regarding the preference for positive and negative tweets on Twitter to determine whether these participants are members of the minority or members of the majority.

Importance of Beliefs, Visuals and Ease of Use

Gant and Dimmick's (2000) work on "sensing" in broadcast newsrooms has some similarities with this study's interviews. The only interviewee consistently working in broadcast newsrooms is Rowdy Gaines; therefore that portion of this study does not apply to nearly 90 percent of participants. Although, Gant and Dimmick's (2000) reference to a more recent visual trend does relate to these situations and interviews. Gant

and Dimmick (2000) talk about news stories being more popular if they can create a vivid mental picture for their audience.

The video of Matt Grevers' engagement was quite vivid because of the complete look of joy on Annie Chandler's face while she was being proposed to on the podium. Many of these journalists talked about specific portions of the video during their interviews, "Then he gets on his knees, so she doesn't fall off the back of the thing because if she falls off of the back of the thing, she goes and falls in the water," Marsteller said as he recounted the video moment by moment. Gustafson agreed that Annie Chandler's facial reactions were important when he said, "And what made it so popular was Annie's reaction. It was unbridled surprise, it was just amazement. I mean her mouth hit the floor." These specific references show that the proposal video made a distinct impression on these journalists and many of them previously admitted to sharing it because of the joy and happiness that it created.

Cassidy (2006) found that both journalists who work for traditional outlets and those that work for new media use their own personal beliefs and interests in the selection process. When Gaines was asked how he chooses the information that he retweets he said that, "Any tidbits or facts that I think are interesting." Stewart believes that his personal feelings about religion play into his news selection being that he specifically mentioned that he will not tweet about religion because, "It's a personal matter..." In addition, these journalists and their personal belief that people appreciate positivity on Twitter is another example of using their preferences in the selection process.

Loudon and Hall (2010) researched Twitter use by librarians. Although none of these interviewees are librarians, the study's finding that "The survey respondents most

commonly made reference to the ease of use and the immediacy of the tool," when using Twitter. For this thesis Keith, Huger and Gaines specifically used the word "easier" when talking about whether Twitter has made their jobs easier or harder, thus matching them up with the librarians in Loudon and Hall's 2010 study. Mills was the only respondent that said Twitter makes his job harder with his reasoning being that, "It's just another thing that you have to keep up with," showing that not all people believe that Twitter's ease of use is actually a benefit.

CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of this thesis was to find out how journalists use Twitter while they are reporting. The 2012 Missouri Grand Prix was chosen as a case study for this research because it fit within the time parameters set forth by the University of Missouri and because the number of journalists and the number of tweets produced were sufficient for analysis. The results showed that the eight participants use the social aspects of Twitter quite often in their work but that Twitter is used only occasionally to break news or disseminate facts. Overall, Twitter was being used more as a promotional or marketing tool with 43 out of 249, or approximately 16 percent of all tweets for this thesis being coded as links to articles not related to the Grand Prix.

The major findings of this thesis have some similarities and some differences when compared with other news outlets and journalists. For instance, a November 2011 article on Twitter use by the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism and George Washington University, content analyzed over 3,500 tweets by major outlets like *The Washington Post* over the course of a week. Their research found that 93 percent of all tweets contained links back to articles on the organization's own website, compared to approximately 16 percent for the people involved with this study. This thesis saw a large portion of all tweets actually being retweets (approximately 27 percent) but the Pew article states that the top news organizations analyzed for their study only retweeted one percent of the time during the course of a week. This is quite a difference and it is an

example of how the eight journalists interviewed for this thesis use Twitter in a starkly different manner than large media outlets.

One of the more surprising events that occurred during the writing of this thesis was that Mel Stewart and Braden Keith joined together to start the website www.swimswam.com. The researcher had no prior knowledge of formation of this website and the information was only revealed during the interview segment of this study. Swim Swam launched during the first week of March 2012 and Keith and Stewart's knowledge of the popularity of multimedia and social media is evident.

The site features numerous high quality videos and links to their Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Vimeo pages are featured prominently on the homepage. In addition, their "News" pull down button is separated into two columns, "Latest News" and "Twitter News," thus showing that their site recognizes that news found and discussed on Twitter has become its own category. A look at the tweets posted by the site's Twitter account in the past month exposes a similarity between what Keith and Stewart posted on their own during the course of the 2012 Missouri Grand Prix. Like the eight journalists quoted in this study, the majority of Swim Swam's tweets are links back to articles posted on the site. Apparently Keith and Stewart are using Twitter as a marketing and promotional tool in next phase of their careers too.

The popularity of cats on the Internet also showed up in this thesis with both Stewart and Gustafson admitting to posting photos and tweets about their feline friends. In a March 2, 2012, article in *The New Republic* titled "Why Do Cats Run The Internet?" Perry Stein wrote, "It's a long established fact that Internet content-whether it's a cutesy

video, a photoshopped inside joke, or a longform public health article-has a better chance of achieving coveted 'viral' status if it somehow evokes the sound of purring."

It may be that this ties back into these journalists and their belief that people tweet and retweet things that make them happy. It certainly appears that both Stewart and Gustafson gain pleasure and happiness from the act of tweeting about their cats. Stewart and Gustafson might be onto something after all because the immense appeal of cats is visible on Twitter as well. A grey and white cat known as "Sockington" currently has approximately 1.44 million followers on Twitter. That puts "Sockington" among the top 515 Twitter accounts overall according to the website www.twittercounter.com and above Twitter accounts like those belonging to comedian Kathy Griffin, journalist Maria Shriver, and country singer and judge of NBC's "The Voice," Blake Shelton.

At the beginning of this year Andy Hunt, Chief Executive of the British Olympic Association, called the upcoming London Olympics the "Twitter Games" (Satter 2012). Earlier in this thesis interviewee Gustafson commented on the snags that NBC's tape delay broadcast of the London Olympics might introduce into the lives of U.S. sports fans who are looking to remain unspoiled with regards to competition results, while also browsing Twitter during regular business hours.

Olympic fans may not need to worry about staying off the Internet during the Games. British data technicians are currently predicting that the tens of thousands of spectators that will be using their smart phones at Olympic venues combined with the BBC's live stream of events, may monopolize 10 times the amount of digital data that is used on any average day in London. In the end, Gustafson's self-imposed Twitter

blackout may be unnecessary because the United Kingdom's Internet data lines may be experiencing extreme technical difficulties come July (Satter 2012).

Not all of social media's problems surrounding the London Olympics are technical in nature. In September of 2011, the International Olympic Committee posted the organization's official document pertaining to social media use by competitors at the 2012 Olympics titled, " IOC Social Media, Blogging and Internet Guidelines for participants and other accredited persons at the London 2012 Olympic Games." At first glance the document's wording is perplexing, the opening line states, "The IOC actively encourages and supports athletes and other accredited persons at the Olympic Games to take part in 'social media' and to post, blog and tweet their experiences."

However, the number two bullet point with a heading of "Postings, Blogs and Tweets," makes a point to mention that all social media postings need to be "personal" and in "first-person, diary-type format." It goes on to say that these postings "should not be in the role of a journalist-i.e. they must not report on competition or comment on the activities of other participants or accredited persons, or disclose any information which is confidential or private in relation to any other person or organization."

This can be linked to the literature review and gatekeeping at the organizational level. The International Olympic Committee is attempting to exert their control and act as an organizational gatekeeper by aggressively suggesting what information can and cannot be shared by athletes on social media during the London Olympics. A strong area for future research would involve social media's impact on swimming journalists who cover the London Olympics. The size and scope of the Olympics compared to the Missouri Grand Prix and the sheer amount of tweets related to these events would be a great

follow-up to this thesis and would likely hold enough information for a dissertation or multiple research projects. In addition, journalists who cover other Olympic sports like track and field, gymnastics or soccer could be studied to see how their Twitter use differs when compared to those solely covering the aquatic sports.

Social media and Twitter in particular, have blurred the lines between the roles of journalists and citizens and it seems as if this issue will come to a head for the athletes in London. One can speculate that it will be difficult to get all athletes to conform to these sanctions during the Games, especially since they are to make no mention of the experiences of their teammates and coaches and it appears as if they are also prohibited from tweeting about any portion of the Olympic events. Perhaps they will simply continue using social media for social purpose and retweet the personal experiences of their coaches and teammates as a way to get around the IOC's rules. The use of the term "accredited person" in this document is particularly troubling considering that all journalists who officially report on the Olympics are accredited and it seems implausible that the media would be asked to write their social media postings in personal diary format.

The journalists interviewed for this study talked about a few things that may become more difficult once the London Olympics actually begin. For instance, it is not hard to think that Mills, who has found that Twitter has made his job more difficult because it is an additional thing to keep track of, and Marsteller who talked about the concept of "technological slavery" with regards to Twitter, might find these problems exacerbated in the months of July and August as they try and keep their readers abreast of Olympic news.

Gustafson's belief that he loses followers if he tweets about anything other than swimming may correlate with a decrease in the size of his audience if he does not cover the events live while on his Twitter blackout. In contrast, those that brand themselves by providing Olympic swimming commentary may actually gain followers for the week that it takes to hold all the Games' swimming races.

Those journalists who plan on traveling to the United Kingdom for the Olympics may be subject to the problems surrounding both Internet outages and the difficulty of reaching the American audience, which is a minimum of five hours behind London. The swimming competitions will take place during the day when the majority of the American adult population is at work. NBC will once again broadcast the Summer Olympics in the United States and although evening events will be on tape delay, the network has promised to air every single event live on the website www.nbcolympics.com (Hiestand 2011).

At this point there is no inclination how much NBC's airing of the Olympics live on the web will erode the network's ratings, if at all. The 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics ended their 17-day run with an average of 27.7 million primetime viewers. That was an eight percent overall ratings boost from the 2004 Athens Olympics, which were the last Summer Olympics to take place in Europe (Barron 2008). The main difference here being that the Chinese Olympic officials worked with NBC to schedule the sporting events in the morning, ensuring that they could air live in New York, which is 12 hours behind Beijing (Associated Press 2008). The British Olympic Committee did not agree to the same broadcast stipulations, meaning that the London Olympics are not

being tailored for the American audience in the same manner that the Beijing Olympics were.

It was throughout the process of writing this thesis that the researcher realized that Twitter coverage of the swimming events during the London Olympics is relatively open to enthusiastic journalists hoping to attract a following, with the majority of people tuning into Twitter searching for a plethora of information. The researcher recommends covering the events live, all of which can be viewed on NBC Olympics website. There are enough rabid swim fans out there looking for up to the minute information that tweeting each and every single event result as they come in, would garner definite attention.

The researcher also recommends a series of morning tweets that cover that night's upcoming races, their line-up and start times, their World Record and Olympic Record times and who has won medals in these races for the past few Olympics. The researcher believes an abundance of information helps the audience become more invested in the events and allows the journalist to cover a niche area of basic and historical information that is not currently being provided. Finally, the researcher encourages journalists to readily contribute to the conversation online. Tweeting out trivia questions, responding to inquiries and requesting opinions on specific athletes and races will help the journalist feed the flow of information in both directions. As we have learned, it is as important to use Twitter as a social tool and receive information through the gate, as it is to be a gatekeeper and disseminate it.

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Appendix A: Categories for Tweet Content Analysis

- 1) Grand Prix swimming event results

- 2) News and information related to the Grand Prix
 - A) News about Matt Grevers' proposal
 - B) News about meet not related to Matt Grevers' proposal

- 3) News/information/results not related to the Grand Prix

- 4) Link to a picture
 - A) Picture about Grand Prix
 - B) Picture not about Grand Prix
 - C) Picture of Matt Grevers' proposal

- 5) Link to an article (can include the article's headline)
 - A) Article about Grand Prix
 - B) Article not about Grand Prix
 - C) Article about Matt Grevers' proposal

- 6) Link to a website

7) Link to a video

A) Video about Grand Prix

B) Video not about Grand Prix

C) Video about Matt Grevers' proposal

10) Commentary/opinion about Grand Prix

A) Commentary/opinion about Grand Prix

B) Commentary about Matt Grevers' proposal

11) Commentary/opinion not related to the Grand Prix

12) Logistical information about the Grand Prix

13) Miscellaneous

15) Interpersonal communication via Twitter

16) Link to an online broadcast of the Grand Prix

17) Advertisement

Appendix B: Questions for In-depth Interview Sessions

- 1) Please explain your job and state who you work for.
- 2) How long have you been a reporter (been doing this job)? How did you get into this line of work? Do you have a background in PR and/or journalism?
- 3) How long have you been covering sports/swimming?
- 4) Did you or your superior make the initial decision to use Twitter?
- 5) How long have you been tweeting? (Look this information up on Twitter) How did you begin tweeting specifically for this website?
- 6) On average how much of your day do you spend tweeting/reading tweets?
- 7) Where do you get the information that you tweet? Original reporting, commentary, news aggregator?
- 8) Why did you use Twitter during this event?
- 9) How many tweets do you think you published during the weekend of the Missouri Grand Prix? (Count the exact number before the interview)
- 10) What day (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) or time of day do you think that you posted the most number of tweets?
- 11) Can you name three things that you specifically posted on Twitter during this event?
- 12) Can you name three things that you were aware of but did not post on Twitter during this event?
- 13) How did you choose the things that you posted on Twitter?
- 14) Was there a specific purpose behind the things that you tweeted?
- 15) Does anyone read and/or edit your tweets before they are posted?
- 16) In your opinion, were your tweets successful?

- 17) Who is your audience (meaning who do you write your tweets for)?
- 18) Do you interact with your followers on Twitter?
- 19) Has Twitter made your process easier or harder?
- 20) Overall, what is the point of using Twitter in your job?
- 21) Why did you tweet about the Matt Grevers' proposal? What makes this newsworthy?
- 22) Why do you think the proposal was the most tweeted about/media covered moment of the meet?
- 23) What do you think this says about how people use Twitter and what they like about it?

Appendix C: Tweets for Coding

249) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Video Alert: FAU Swimming & Diving Senior Day bit.ly/z6tJgw @FAUSwim_Dive
#swimming #seniorday
February 13, 7:45 pm

248) goswim Glenn Mills

My friend Erik Rehnberg proves swimming is a contact sport!!! Gives new meaning to
STAY ON YOUR SIDE OF THE LANE!!! pic.twitter.com/LOHB68Os
February 13, 7:39 pm

247) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

@
@Vicksburg_Swim @SwimmingWorld @swimcoachprblms @swimmacc
@USA_Swimming 2008 Men's 4x100 freestyle relay youtube.com/watch?v=sVZrne...
February 13, 7:24 pm

246) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Video Alert - Pacific Swimming: Mountain Pacific Sports Federation Championships
Preview bit.ly/xAVjcG @UOPSwimming #swimming
February 13, 7:17 pm

245) MizzouAEAS Academic Exploration

@
Saturday's @MattGrevers proposal at @MOGrandPrix made tonight's @nbcnightlynews.
A solid day of press for @MizzouRec! #Mizzou
17 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by MOGrandPrix
February 13, 6:03 pm

244) AthleticFoodie AthleticFoodieTM

Sweet! RT @swimoutlet: Olympians Giving Back: Garrett Weber-Gale
(@G_WeberGale) #swimming fb.me/1wX9FAuvB /via @SwimmingWorld #swim
18 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 13, 4:55 pm

243) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Vanderbilt head coach Jeremy Organ recaps the season and previews the upcoming SEC Championships bit.ly/A3dFP8 @Vanderbiltswim #SEC
February 13, 6:15 pm

242) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Video Alert: Tennessee Men's Swimming SEC Finals Preview bit.ly/AkETBT
@UTLarsJorgensen #swimming #SEC
February 13, 5:59 pm

241) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Video Alert: Boilermaker All-Access: Big Ten Championships Preview bit.ly/zko3zj
@PurdueWSwim #swimming #bigtenchampionships
February 13, 5:47 pm

240) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

High School State Championships: Washington D.C. Metropolitan #swimming
fb.me/19xUgsQR0
February 13, 5:19 pm

239) goswim Glenn Mills

“@DundeeCAquatics: Great Shot of Youth Gold Squad during camp 2012
fb.me/1mAyFI9Oe” Very cool!
February 13, 4:21 pm

238) goswim Glenn Mills

Lezak is a key link to '08 Olympic feat - Sports - Owner of the most inspirational swim
in history. Amazing guy! ht.ly/928bD
February 13, 4:16 pm

237) goswim Glenn Mills

@
@BrettHawke Have a great meet Brett.
February 13, 4:03 pm

236) goswim Glenn Mills

Lezak is a key link to '08 Olympic feat - Sports - Owner of the most inspirational swim in history. Amazing guy! ht.ly/928bD

February 13, 4:01 pm

235) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

Home for a day to spend some time w the fam and back at ya NY tonight!

February 13, 3:59 pm

234) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Motivate Me Monday: "Some succeed because they are destined to, but most succeed because they are determined to." ~ Henry Van Dyke

February 13, 3:15 pm

233) goswim Glenn Mills

Butterfly - Single Arm, Extended Arm - GoSwim! ht.ly/9283H #swimming

February 13, 3:01 pm

232) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Posted 'Streamlined News: Feb. 13, 2012' to Blip: blip.tv/file/5938344

February 13, 2:55 pm

231) VT_SwimDive VT Swimming & Diving

Three Virginia Tech student-athletes receive ACC postgraduate scholarship: Around The

ACC tinyurl.com/7fao7n6

21 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by SwimUtopia

February 13, 2:16 pm

230) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

High School State Championships: Colorado Girls 4A and 5A #swimming
fb.me/vbFeAPA1

February 13, 2:05 pm

229) goswim Glenn Mills

Video: Matt Grevers proposes to Annie Chandler - In case you missed it, the biggest
victory of the weekend. Very cool. ht.ly/927Y0

February 13, 2:01 pm

228) goswim Glenn Mills

Advanced Swim Workout @AmandaRayBeard - I like the variety - ht.ly/927RV

February 13, 1:01 pm

227) swimmerscircle The Swimmers Circle

@

RT @r_bootsma15 That awkward moment when airport security thinks your dad is your
husband. Um no.

February 13, 12:20 pm

226) goswim Glenn Mills

Freestyle Flip Turn - Far-Hands Flip Turn - GoSwim! ht.ly/927NR #swimming

February 13, 12:01 pm

225) goswim Glenn Mills

Freestyle Flip Turn - Far-Hands Flip Turn - GoSwim! ht.ly/927NR #swimming

1 hour ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by SwimmingWorld

February 13, 12:01 pm

224) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

RT @coachstoddard: @USA_Swimming @DanaMStoddard Great Grand Prix Meet for
Swim Pasadena! A Shout Out & A Thank You to Mizzou & Everyone...

February 13, 11:29 am

223) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Jack Conger Breaks National High School Record in 500 Freestyle, Posts Second-Fastest High School Swim in History... [fb.me/1HbPpj3hc](https://www.facebook.com/1HbPpj3hc)
February 13, 11:29 am

222) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Aerial Footage of Keri-Anne Payne vs. Ashley Twichell #swimming
#openwaterswimming [fb.me/1M5Cl0bJm](https://www.facebook.com/1M5Cl0bJm)
February 13, 11:27 am

221) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

High School State Championships: Tennessee Boys, Girls #swimming [fb.me/1AOy8Ajex](https://www.facebook.com/1AOy8Ajex)
February 13, 11:24 am

220) goswim Glenn Mills

For Rob Aquatics' 1000th Post... a Choppy and Bouncy Sunday Swim! - Congrats on 1000 @smsRob [ht.ly/927IK](https://t.me/927IK)
February 13, 11:01 am

219) goswim Glenn Mills

The truck that shut down the FDR this morning. [instagr.am/p/G9ASj-Ha_d/](https://www.instagram.com/p/G9ASj-Ha_d/)
February 13, 10:55 am

218) MastersSwimming Masters Swimming

A preliminary list for the 2011 USMS Short Course Meter Top 10 is now available! Did you make the list? [fb.me/1L5DCw9zB](https://www.facebook.com/1L5DCw9zB)
2 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimUtopia
February 13, 10:51 am

217) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Such an awesome idea, John! Love getting the interaction with our loyal community!
disq.us/5gnfcp
February 13, 10:39 am

216) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

@
@karensteger Glad you enjoyed it! Good luck at States!
February 13, 10:39 am

215) bravobat bravobat

RT @SwimmingWorld Conference Championships Continue PAC-12 wraps up Duals
#swimming fb.me/1EFaQLADA Lets bring back Men's Swim to UCLA
15 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 12, 9:35 pm

214) Vicksburg_Swim Vicksburg Swimming

RT Please. What's your all- time favorite swimming motivational video?
@SwimmingWorld @SwimUtopia @swimcoachprblms @swimmacc
@USA_Swimming
3 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimUtopia
February 13, 10:05 am

213) GatorZoneScott Scott Carter

A story from Sunday about swimmers Ryan Lochte, Conor Dwyer and a big chain:
bit.ly/yew1XG #Gators #Olympics #London
3 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 13, 9:59 am

212) goswim Glenn Mills

Freestyle - Connection Variation - GoSwim! [ht.ly/927DG](https://t.co/927DG) #swimming
3 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 13, 10:01 am

211) goswim Glenn Mills

Freestyle - Connection Variation - GoSwim! [ht.ly/927DG](https://t.co/927DG) #swimming
February 13, 10:01 am

210) swimmerscircle The Swimmers Circle

Interested in joining our team? We are looking for 3 writers to join our efforts to
mainstream swimming: wp.me/pM9Yg-3ys
February 13, 9:56 am

209) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

U.S. divers having fun in Sheffield #diving fb.me/LZUFSSOW
February 13, 9:54 am

208) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Olympians Giving Back: Garrett Weber-Gale #swimming fb.me/1wX9FAuvB
February 13, 9:50 am

207) goldmedalmel Mel Stewart

Armstrong finishes 2nd in ironman, snubs winner? : bit.ly/zlWd7j
February 13, 9:06 am

206) goswim Glenn Mills

Jeez Louise, Now Jan Ullrich Is Gone Too! CAS Issues Another Cycling Ban. Changing
the history of the sport @dailyhouse [ht.ly/927vw](https://t.co/927vw)
February 13, 9:01 am

205) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Motivate Me Monday: Inspirational Sport Speeches bit.ly/wkUR6Q #motivatememondays
February 13, 8:34 am

204) goswim Glenn Mills

Fast Finish For Fijian - Great picture of a finish of a 19k swim. Still intense! ht.ly/92d4F
February 13, 8:30 am

203) goswim Glenn Mills

Missy Franklin Downs Own National Independent High School Record; Bonnie Brandon Posts Strong Swims - Amazing! ht.ly/927ao
February 13, 8:00 am

202) SENNAmovie SENNAmovie

Great pic of the @SENNAmovie team (and others) after the @BAFTA awards last night
#BAFTA #SENNA @asifkapadia @mpandey69 pic.twitter.com/yp3ZIDSE
13 Feb Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by goswim
February 13, 7:14 am

201) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

All-Time Swimming Fantasy Draft #swimming fb.me/KKGLncby
February 13, 7:13 am

200) goswim Glenn Mills

GNR instagr.am/p/G7tszbHa2V/
February 12, 10:49 pm

199) Braden_Keith Braden Keith

Katie Ledecky swims #2 13-14 time in US history to close Missouri GP
theswimmerscircle.com/blog/katie-led...
14 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by swimmerscircle
February 12, 10: 27 pm

198) CoMissourian Columbia Missourian

Olympic swimmers were at MU this weekend for the Missouri Grand Prix. Check out our photos from the event today. cot.ag/zBvvSJ
15 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by MOGrandPrix
February 12, 9:53 pm

197) peterbusch1 Peter Busch

Worst part of social media...very difficult to watch tape delayed events. #Grammys
15 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 12, 9:51 pm

196) swimmerscircle The Swimmers Circle

@
@RITTERSURGE Thanks, Chris! We're definitely looking forward to adding to the team!
February 12, 9:32 pm

195) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Conference Championships Continue while PAC-12 wraps up Duals #swimming
fb.me/1EFaQLADA
February 12, 9:30 pm

194) GatorZoneSwimDv Gator Swimming

@ryanlochte answers a few questions for NBC Nightly News following Sunday's practice - look at that #Gators cap. pic.twitter.com/JP4V82Rv
20 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimUtopia
February 12, 4:42 pm

193) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Aaaand...our last pics are up! Thanks again, everybody! #MOGrandPrix ow.ly/91Ipi
February 12, 9:01 pm

192) swimmerscircle The Swimmers Circle

We are looking for 3 writers! Take a look: wp.me/pM9Yg-3ys
February 12, 8:55 pm

191) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

What a fantastic meet! Thanks to all the athletes, coaches and officials, etc. for making the trip, and thanks @USA_Swimming!
February 12, 8:34 pm

190) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@
Our pleasure! What a great meet! RT @islandswimming: Thanks @MOGrandPrix & @USA_Swimming for a great meet and for timely results & updates!
February 12, 8:06 pm

189) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

USA Swimming Grand Prix, Columbia: Katie Ledecky Smokes 800 Free, Thiago Pereira, Sinead Russell, Ryan Murphy... fb.me/1qixLCqYd
February 12, 7:27 pm

188) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@
@cassidaynicole How'd you miss it? Did you catch the live stream? Still some great races left! ow.ly/91CiS
February 12, 6:27 pm

187) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@
@csutswim We're so glad you were able to swim here! Thanks for making the trip and best of luck to you in the months ahead!
February 12, 6:21 pm

186) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Last night of the #MOGrandPrix - let's finish strong, swimmers!
February 12, 5:25 pm

185) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@

@JudeCostaNC9 this was true?

February 12, 5:09 pm

184) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@

@rookietweeter thanks...made it home!

February 12, 5:09 pm

183) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@

@G_WeberGale thank YOU! Keep up the great work!

February 12, 5:08 pm

182) goswim Glenn Mills

Guns N' Roses - Heading to the show tonight with Craig Beardsley - Should be great!

ht.ly/91zgc

February 12, 4:48 pm

181) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

2012 Metros: Jack Conger 500 Free 4:17.51 bit.ly/zNYfZn #swimming

February 12, 4:35 pm

180) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

New Blog Post - Harvard Swimming: The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

bit.ly/AqpJbU @HarvardSwim #swimming #tapertime

February 12, 3:17 pm

179) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@

@raeb76 You've still got plenty of time! Glad you had fun!

February 12, 2:36 pm

178) goswim Glenn Mills

Just saw video of @MattGrevers proposing. Now THAT was cool. Talk about a double win. Congrats!

February 12, 2:25 pm

177) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Photos from this mornings prelims posted! Go check 'em out! ow.ly/91sVE

February 12, 1:28 pm

176) mikelgustafson Mike Gustafson

Big congrats to @MattGrevers for his awesome podium proposal last night! Here's the video: youtube.com/watch?v=4LWvLN...

February 12, 12:53 pm

175) mikelgustafson Mike Gustafson

Can't believe I actually shared the same room with Tom Colicchio, Daniel Boulud, and David Bouley last night. Awesome watching them cook.

February 12, 12:51 pm

174) goswim Glenn Mills

@

@Swimmunity Very cool. We will be preparing more beginner level content in the near future. More beginner content on goswimtv.com

February 12, 11:57 am

173) goswim Glenn Mills

@

@Swimmingatlast @Swimmunity Thanks but certainly not everything. There's always more. So much to think about and learn. :)

February 12, 11:38 am

172) Vicksburg_Swim Vicksburg Swimming

I think it's obvious that Lance's swim foundation is what makes him such a stellar athlete;)! @USA_Swimming @SwimmingWorld @SwimUtopia
5 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 12, 10:40 am

171) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Video Alert: Bryant Swimming & Diving Teammate Trivia bit.ly/whTY40
@BryantAthletics #swimming
February 12, 10:44 am

170) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Aussie swimmers struggling with form bit.ly/wGURKh
February 12, 9:52 am

169) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

NSW State Championships: Ellen Gandy, Emily Seebohm, Tae Hwan Park Post Top Times in World #swimming fb.me/logfwkJqZ
February 12, 9:42 am

168) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Video Alert: Big Ten Championships: Fighting Illini Pump-Up Video bit.ly/wxF0mR #swimming
February 12, 9:13 am

167) swimmerscircle The Swimmers Circle
@
@CayleyGuimaraes seems to be crickets so far!
February 12, 8:32 am

166) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines
@
@rookietweeter patience is running thin
February 12, 8:28 am

165) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Video Alert: CardsTV - Swimming & Diving Coach's Show bit.ly/w6iBZW
@UofLswim_dive #swimming #itsconferencetime #bigeast
February 12, 8:24 am

164) goswim Glenn Mills

Sunday morning test set. Glad I'm on deck. instagr.am/p/G6HXnuHa3U/
February 12, 8:22 am

163) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

Really... pic.twitter.com/AKSmWzLx
February 12, 8:20 am

162) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

This doesn't look good...90 minutes and counting... pic.twitter.com/jJEGJjJ0
February 12, 8:18 am

161) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Video Alert: Matt Grevers proposes to Annie Chandler at Missouri Grand Prix.
bit.ly/xYQptf #swimming
February 12, 7:48 am

160) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

At the gate to go home and the pilot says the heating in his windows he sees out of is
broken and could crack in air...major delay to come
February 12, 7:42 am

159) mgsportsevan Evan Morgenstein

#tmz is reporting rx found near #WhitneyHouston and possible drowning. What a shitty way to. I'm going big!

9 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by RowdyGaines

February 12, 6:43 am

158) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@

@bppenny great meeting you too...fun night huh?!

February 12, 6:50 am

157) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@

@BigNatePursley no just the nice ones

February 12, 6:50 am

156) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

We got to meet Whitney...we'll miss that golden voice...as my wife said "a gift from God" pic.twitter.com/cua8PfsE

February 12, 6:37 am

155) goswim Glenn Mills

RT @MastersSwimming: Michigan Masters swimmers take on the English Channel to raise awareness and funds to fight ALS. fb.me/1JDD1nj8X

February 12, 5:54 am

154) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Japanese Short Course Championships: Satomi Suzuki, Yuki Okajima Set Japanese Records #swimming fb.me/1ANzeXaue

February 12, 2:23 am

153) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Another awesome video of THE Podium Engagement of Matt Grevers and Anie Chandler! Her reaction is priceless!... fb.me/1r0KSmAqN
February 12, 1:26 am

152) goldmedalmel Mel Stewart

Olympian, Matt Grevers, is engaged to US National Team member, Annie Chandler...
February 11, 11:51 pm

151) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@
@JocelynWeyer you did great! Way to power through ;)
February 11, 11:17 pm

150) goldmedalmel Mel Stewart

Saturday night instagr.am/p/G5HgXmQ7tL/
February 11, 10:38 pm

149) MapleLeafLawyer Keith Reichert

That's how you celebrate a win! "@SwimmingWorld: Video of Matt Grevers and Annie Chandler getting engaged! #swimming fb.me/1zVUts5dy"
18 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 11, 10:01 pm

148) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Photos from finals are up...including some more shots of @MattGrevers and Annie Chandler's engagement! #MOGrandPrix ow.ly/91874
February 11, 9:59 pm

147) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

What a night!! Record-breaking swim by @shanteau and a surprise proposal by @mattgrevers...and there still tomorrow! ow.ly/917Pp

February 11, 9:51 pm

146) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Video of Matt Grevers and Annie Chandler getting engaged! #swimming

fb.me/1zVUts5dy

February 11, 9:45 pm

145) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Baylor School Ladies Set National Record in 200 Free Relay at Tennessee State Champs

#swimming fb.me/I8PEDWHN

February 11, 9:40 pm

144) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

USA Swimming Grand Prix, Columbia: Eric Shanteau Downs Meet Record; Matt

Grevers, Annie Chandler Get Engaged... fb.me/1uS1HD8Mj

February 11, 9:40 pm

143) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Meet Results: No. 7 USC Women Win 5th Straight Over UCLA bit.ly/xvdPeE

#swimming

February 11, 8:54 pm

142) Shanteau Eric Shanteau

Broke my meet record tonight in the 200 w/210.4. Big story though was fellow national teamer @MattGrevers gettin engaged on the podium!

19 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by MOGrandPrix

February 11, 8:40 pm

141) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Meet Results: Cardinal Women Knock Off No. 1 California in Season Finale
bit.ly/xT6hgz #swimming
February 11, 8:45 pm

140) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Video Alert: Missy Franklin (Regis Jesuit) sets new national record in 200 Yard Freestyle
bit.ly/AkhxJF #swimming
February 11, 8:33 pm

139) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Matt Grevers Proposes To Fellow National Teamer Annie Chandler bit.ly/xKwooL
February 11, 8:02 pm

138) Braden_Keith Braden Keith

Updated: we've got unofficial word of what Missy Franklin's split was on the 400 free relay. Hint: BLAZING theswimmerscircle.com/blog/missy-fra...
1 minute ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by swimmerscircle
February 11, 7:42 pm

137) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@Shanteau breaks his own #MOGrandPrix record in the 200 Breast!
February 11, 7:40 pm

136) USA_Swimming USA Swimming

Breaking the #MOGrandPrix record with a time of 2:10.47, Eric Shanteau wins the men's 200m breaststroke
4 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by MOGrandPrix
February 11, 7:38 pm

135) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

Loving the gold Medal dining experience w @G_WeberGale w some of the best chefs in the world supporting @SwimFoundation
February 11, 7:36 pm

134) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Meet Results: Arizona's No. 1/9 teams ended their regular seasons on a high note as both teams defeated Arizona State bit.ly/wHJdl9
February 11, 7:19 pm

133) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Pics and video of the best #MOGrandPrix engagement EVER! Congrats again, you two!
@MattGrevers facebook.com/video/video.ph... pic.twitter.com/qpqF7OOd
February 11, 7:06 pm

132) Braden_Keith Braden Keith

@MattGrevers just proposed to Annie Chandler on the podium at the Missouri Grand Prix! She said yes! theswimmerscircle.com/blog/matt-grev...
3 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by swimmerscircle
February 11, 6:43 pm

131) RickyBerens Ricky Berens

Congrats to @MattGrevers! RT @USA_Swimming: Matt Grevers just proposed to his girlfriend on the podium... she said yes! #MOGrandPrix
3 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 11, 6:40 pm

130) csutswim Chloe Sutton

GREEVERS JUST PROPOSED TO ANNIE CHANDLER!!! Cutest thinggg everrrr!!!! :)
7 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 11, 6:35 pm

129) USA_Swimming USA Swimming

Congrats to Matt Grevers and Annie Chandler! #MOGrandPrix
4 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 11, 6:36 pm

128) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

BIG CONGRATS to @MattGrevers and his fiancée Annie Chandler!! #MOGrandPrix
February 11, 6:39 pm

127) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Congrats! RT @USA_Swimming: Matt Grevers just proposed to his girlfriend on the podium... she said yes! #MOGrandPrix
February 11, 6:38 pm

126) Braden_Keith Braden Keith

Say "I" if you've got a HS State Meet coming up, and watching Colo. just got you Really pumped up. #I
1 minute ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by swimmerscircle
February 11, 6:23 pm

125) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix
@
@CarmelitaNews @tobiasoriwol
February 11, 6:22 pm

124) Braden_Keith Braden Keith

WOW! No relay attempt for Missy on the relay, as Regis is going to put her on the anchor. Head to Head with Bonnie! #ShowTime
1 minute ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by swimmerscircle
February 11, 6:15 pm

123) swimmerscircle The Swimmers Circle

Swiming Mid-Major Conference Championships Vitals/Links/Live Results landing
theswimmerscircle.com/blog/linksvita...
February 11, 6:13 pm

122) swimmerscircle The Swimmers Circle

Missy still sitting on one record after 52.76 in 100 back
theswimmerscircle.com/blog/missy-fra...
February 11, 5:59 pm

121) Braden_Keith Braden Keith

I've never set foot in Colorado, but I'm still getting wrapped up in this HS State
Championship battle. #ILoveThisStuff
7 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by swimmerscircle
February 11, 5:58 pm

120) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Missy Franklin lights up 100-yard backstroke finale, but misses her national independent
high school standard.... fb.me/1lQwyWGu6
February 11, 5:55 pm

119) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

While Missy Franklin is getting top billing, future Arizona Wildcat Bonnie Brandon is having a career meet,... fb.me/HvouBxP3
February 11, 5:36 pm

118) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

RT @G_WeberGale #goldmedaldiningexperience w @robertbohr @DBNewYorkNY @tomcolicchio @DavidBouley Daniel Humm @FlorianBelanger !! Me too!
February 11, 5:01 pm

117) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@
@Braden_Keith awesome! Keep up the great work!
February 11, 4:58 pm

116) G_WeberGale Garrett Weber-Gale

Preview of my culinary event for tonight. Forget about it!!! pic.twitter.com/youQ68jWo
28 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by RowdyGaines
February 11, 4:33 pm

115) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

Heading to a culinary delight w some of the best chefs in the world!
February 11, 4:56 pm

114) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

@
@jdmoore1022 good luck
February 11, 3:16 pm

113) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Evendivers are getting into the Sexy and I Know It! #diving #swimming
fb.me/1BbAyFRbR
February 11, 4:42 pm

112) Braden_Keith Braden Keith

Missy Franklin re-breaks National Private HS Record in the 200 free in Colorado;

@DagnyKnutson08's overall mark intact theswimmerscircle.com/blog/missy-fra...

1 hour ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by swimmerscircle

February 11, 3:34 pm

111) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Missy Franklin Downs Own National Independent High School Record @franklinmissy

#swimming fb.me/1awhPvtdI

February 11, 3:32 pm

110) Braden_Keith Braden Keith

Love that Missy Franklin gives Bonnie Brandon lots of love in the interview. Helps

capture a broader audience, grow the sport. #MissyTime

1 hour ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by swimmerscircle

February 11, 3:29 pm

109) Braden_Keith Braden Keith

MISSY wins in 1:43.1 Rebreaks Independent School record, just short of overall mark.

#MissyTime

1 hour ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by swimmerscircle

February 11, 3:26 pm

108) rebsoni Rebecca Soni

USC women vs UCLA duel meet today!!! Warmups going on now. Excited for this

awesome rivalry. Was my fave when I was in school! TROJANS! #fb

3 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by SwimUtopia

February 11, 1:12 pm

107) TyMcGill Tyler McGill

As always an auburn packed final heat of the 50 free tonight. Just glad I'm one of them
#MOGrandPrix

Retweeted by SwimUtopia

February 11, 12:59 pm

106) GreenTerrorSwim McDaniel Swimming

That's weird... for some reason the swimmers like the new coach more.

pic.twitter.com/VZRHGosc

Retweeted by SwimUtopia

February 11, 10:50 am

105) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Missy Franklin and the rest of the Colorado high school state championships are LIVE on
ESPN3. Todd Schmitz is... fb.me/17gPFB00j

February 11, 3:04 pm

104) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

British University and College Championships: Rebecca Adlington, Fran Halsall,

Elizabeth Simmons Blast Top Times... fb.me/1LXgnuMRD

February 11, 3:02 pm

103) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Don't forget to stop by the #FastWaterShop and get your #MOGrandPrix merch before
it's gone! ow.ly/i/sipU

February 11, 2:36 pm

102) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Awesome photos from this morning's prelims are up on our Facebook page! Check 'em out and tag yourselves! ow.ly/90VSq

February 11, 2:25 pm

101) SwimmingCanada Swimming Canada

Canadian swimmers win eight of 10 races at U.S., Grand Prix event

swimming.ca/NewsArticle.as... fb.me/GKEWlmmT

18 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by SwimUtopia

February 10, 10:01 pm

100) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@

@JordyGroters whatever works!

February 11, 11:03 am

99) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

RT @komusports: #Mizzou Completes Day One of Missouri Grand Prix: cot.ag/xxyU83

February 11, 10:50 am

98) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

You're welcome! @TyMcGill: Best national team area ever at #missouriGP. Thanks

@USA_Swimming!

February 11, 10:28 am

97) goswim Glenn Mills

Found a new use for my @LifeProof case - real life! Snow on my iPhone... No worries. Who woulda imagined. Thought it was just for the pool.

February 11, 9:25 am

96) goswim Glenn Mills

@

@Iceysparkz - good morning! Have a great weekend.

February 11, 9:16 am

95) goswim Glenn Mills

Not much snow. But enough that ya can't see too far. [instagr.am/p/G3rVD5Ha86/](https://www.instagram.com/p/G3rVD5Ha86/)

February 11, 9:13 am

94) goswim Glenn Mills

Perfect place for a no parking sign. [instagr.am/p/G3p5eBHa8l/](https://www.instagram.com/p/G3p5eBHa8l/)

February 11, 9:02 am

93) swimmersdaily Swimmer's Daily

New post: Tom Daley lip sync video goes viral, proves the world is cruel

swimmersdaily.com/2012/02/11/tom...

11 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by SwimmingWorld

February 11, 5:13 am

92) goswim Glenn Mills

The lane to avoid. @ Aquatic Center [instagr.am/p/G3PdVxna5O/](https://www.instagram.com/p/G3PdVxna5O/)

11 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by SwimmingWorld

February 11, 5:09 am

91) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Japanese Short Course Championships: Quartet of National Records Fall #swimming

fb.me/RU4YRe61

February 11, 7:08 am

90) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@

@Wareagle1515 War Eagle!! Swim fast and do us proud!!!

February 11, 6:42 am

89) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@

@bodiddley2 I'm not there this weekend so I'm not sure..go to usaswimming.org and that might help

February 11, 6:41 am

88) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

NSW State Championships: Emily Seebohm Rockets to World Best in 100 Back

#swimming fb.me/1tV6agcz1

February 11, 6:39 am

87) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

HIGHLY recommend - we love Vida! RT @vidacoffeeco: We open EARLY at 6am this Friday-Sunday for the MO Grand Prix! *Barista Keith*

February 11, 6:25 am

86) goswim Glenn Mills

The lane to avoid. @ Aquatic Center instagr.am/p/G3PdVxna5O/

February 11, 5:09 am

85) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

RT @comosports: Auburn teammates push each other to success at Missouri Grand Prix tonight at Mizzou Aquatics Center. cot.ag/yZQzTh

February 10, 10:14 pm

84) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Photos from tonight's finals session are up on our Facebook page: ow.ly/90vH6

February 10, 9:49 pm

83) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Yw RT @NACswim: @SwimmingWorld slower tonight, 6.8 I think. Thanks for the press!

February 10, 9:24 pm

82) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

We clean up in style around here. Literally! pic.twitter.com/GtA17TWP
February 10, 8:56 pm

81) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@
@AngHines thanks for the #FF!!
February 10, 8:49 pm

80) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Missy Franklin closes prelims by just missing her 100-yard free national record as a relay leadoff #swimming fb.me/1m8a19bSa
February 10, 8:49 pm

79) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Maclin Davis comes up short of breaking his prelim national record. #swimming fb.me/1wd8cYAYd
February 10, 8:43 pm

78) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix@

@cstrathmeyer That's awesome!
February 10, 8:33 pm

77) MikeWSY G. Michael Gobrecht

RT @KEYSwim_SouthY: Wow. Swim meet delay due to someone pushing starter into pool. Fun times at WTRC during high school boys sectional meet
7 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 10, 8:26 pm

76) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@
@csutswim Some of the more "winterized" teams must have brought the weather with them...we've been in the 50s the past few weeks!
February 10, 8:20 pm

75) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

@NACswim any update on final? live results are hung up
February 10, 8:15 pm

74) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Missy Franklin misses her national record in the 100 back after setting mark in the 200 free. @franklinmissy... fb.me/1eabJzIMA
February 10, 8:12 pm

73) KOMUsports KOMU 8 Sports

The @MOGrandPrix is back. We'll recap the key heats from day one tonight at 10 -
pic.twitter.com/QKspYRnJ /via @ashleycolley
50 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by MOGrandPrix
February 10, 7:18 pm

72) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@
@clairedonahue Congrats and good work. See you tomorrow!
February 10, 8:06 pm

71) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

USA Swimming Grand Prix, Columbia: Canada Dominates Night One #swimming
fb.me/NSV74EP8
February 10, 8:05 pm

70) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@
@shanteau Congrats and good luck!
February 10, 8:04 pm

69) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Does anyone know if there are swimmers from Canada in this meet...?
#somethinginthewater #MOGrandPrix
February 10, 7:38 pm

68) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

University of Maryland Extends Fundraising Deadline for Swimming and Diving to
Avoid Being Cut #swimming fb.me/1AQrLMcT6

February 10, 6:56 pm

67) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Live results link is currently not working - we're looking into it! Thanks!

February 10, 6:45 pm

66) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@

@lindsayrunning Looking into it - hopefully resolved soon!

February 10, 6:44 pm

65) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@

@duggank710 well then then I guess I'll do it!

February 10, 6:33 pm

64) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

RT @lanceasti: Be sure to watch former tigers jane Trepp and Hannes Heyl swim the 100
fly at the Missouri grand prix #sprinthead

February 10, 6:19 pm

63) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Thanks! RT @theswimaids: Are y'all watching the Missouri Grand Prix? Great facility!
One of the nicest I've had the pleasure of visiting.

February 10, 6:15 pm

62) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Missy Franklin Smashes Independent National High School Record in 200 Freestyle
#swimming @franklinmissy fb.me/1w0tfYDJD

February 10, 5:56 pm

61) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

RT @usa_swimming: First heat of the 200m freestyle final has begun! #MOGrandPrix
February 10, 5:38 pm

60) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Dryland Tip: Side Lying External Rotation with Manual Resistance and Perturbations
#swimming fb.me/14COhoqW9
February 10, 5:22 pm

59) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Video Alert: Michael Phelps Head & Shoulders Ad bit.ly/yniJ7G
February 10, 5:17 pm

58) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@
@SwimOutlet we're all over it! :) #MOGrandPrix
February 10, 5:16 pm

57) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Men's All-Time Top Performances in Long Course Meters #swimming fb.me/XLwDtrRP
February 10, 5:09 pm

56) Vol_Swim Tennessee Swimming

Assistant Coach Mason Norman's SEC Preview Interview ... #SECSO starts in Knoxville
in 4 days! pic.twitter.com/s8qoPRHA
3 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimUtopia
February 10, 1:56 pm

55) BeckAdlington Rebecca Adlington

Raced at BUCS in Sheffield this evening. Swam the 800 and pleased with the time. Went
8.22. Happy but was painful! Haha
3 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimUtopia
February 10, 1:52 pm

54) mikelgustafson Mike Gustafson

Interesting article. I wish my cats would let me subscribe to The Atlantic.
theatlantic.com/magazine/archi...

February 10, 4:24 pm

53) goswim Glenn Mills

@

@PCSwimCamp Have a great meet PC!

February 10, 4:21 pm

52) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@

@mizzouaeas Solid work!

February 10, 3:56 pm

51) goswim Glenn Mills

Meet Results: 2012 Missouri Grand Prix - ht.ly/90hKV

February 10, 3:53 pm

50) mikelgustafson Mike Gustafson

@

@kswan3 me no crazy u crazy here kitty kitty gotta go sulk with my precious kitty....

February 10, 3:28 pm

49) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Photos are up from the #MOGrandPrix prelims session this morning! ow.ly/90d8H

February 10, 2:52 pm

48) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Posted 'Streamlined News: Feb. 10, 2012' to Blip: blip.tv/file/5931995

February 10, 2:05 pm

47) goswim Glenn Mills

@

@retiredPSUswimr @axiswimming - That's hilarious! Nice.

February 10, 1:41 pm

46) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@

@raychwrites We know which one we'd pick...#olympianseverytime

February 10, 1:40 pm

45) goswim Glenn Mills

“@SwimmerJoe: Are You Doing More Than Anyone Else? swimmerjoe.com

@goswim @usa_swimming @ironmantri” Nice! Good stuff.

February 10, 1:32 pm

44) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Yes! #MOGrandPrix RT @mizzou: The road to the 2012 London Olympics goes through the Mizzou Aquatic Center this weekend: ow.ly/904KW

February 10, 1:22 pm

43) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Happy Birthday, Mallory! RT @pcswimcamp: Mallory celebrates her 18 birthday at Missouri Grand Prix today

February 10, 1:06 pm

42) mattflippin Matt McPherson

@

@SwimmingWorld @NACswim in PRELIMS!

4 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by SwimmingWorld

February 10, 12:35 pm

41) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@

@4AllSurfaces I'll let you know how it progresses

February 10, 12:22 pm

40) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@

@fitnessbrooke already started and you are definitely in it!

February 10, 12:22 pm

39) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@

@jjohnson303 thanks! I'll let you know!

February 10, 12:21 pm

38) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@

@zzSwim for me it will always be The Science of Swimming by Ernie Maglisco...it still holds up so very well

February 10, 12:20 pm

37) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

@

Gotta keep those feet warm! RT @stefburt: Spotted at the Missouri Grand Prix: a hot guy in uggs, I can work with that

February 10, 12:18 pm

36) goldmedalmel Mel Stewart

CONGRATS to MACLIN DAVIS for the fastest 100 yard butterfly in high school history, 46.64 (thx Stovall)

February 10, 12:08 pm

35) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Montgomery Bell's Maclin Davis Downs National High School Record in 100 Fly
#swimming fb.me/1pGL01dyq

February 10, 11:50 am

34) Braden_Keith Braden Keith

Breaking! Maclin Davis OBLITERATES 100 Fly National HS Record in Tennessee
theswimmerscircle.com/blog/maclin-da...

16 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by swimmerscircle

February 10, 11:39 am

33) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

@NACswim where r official results
February 10, 11:39 am

32) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@
@cubanjusto now
February 10, 10:55 am

31) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@
@36laps I am!
February 10, 10:51 am

30) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

@
@4AllSurfaces Thanks!
February 10, 10:51 am

29) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

Cant wait to be in NY tomorrow w @G_WeberGale for an amazing culinary experience
to help raise \$ for @SwimFoundation ...still tiks left!
21 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
February 10, 10:50 am

28) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Pics from last night's warm-up session ow.ly/8ZQoH
26 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
February 10, 10:45 am

27) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

I should write a book...
28 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
February 10, 10:43 am

26) goswim Glenn Mills

Go Swim - Breaststroke Drill & Talk to Glenn Online - eepurl.com/i9CbL
3 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 10, 7:48 am

25) mattfarrell_ Matt Farrell

Ticket scalping at a high school #swimming meet? Yep. Not your typical year in Colorado. bit.ly/xUwEoA
1 hour ago Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by SwimmingWorld
February 10, 9:46 am

24) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Video Alert: Michigan State - Coach Milloy Takes A Tumble bit.ly/yovxE5
[@coachmilloy](https://twitter.com/coachmilloy) [@MSUcoachtimSWIM](https://twitter.com/MSUcoachtimSWIM) #swimming #basketballstar
46 minutes ago Favorite Retweet Reply
February 10, 10:25 am

23) goswim Glenn Mills

Can't Miss Race at the Missouri Grand Prix - W100 Back [@USA_Swimming](https://twitter.com/USA_Swimming)
[@mikelgustafson](https://twitter.com/mikelgustafson) ht.ly/8ZpED
February 10, 10:01 am

22) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

Real time results for the meet can be found here: csctigersharks.org/realtime/
#MOGrandPrix
1 hour ago Favorite Retweet Reply
February 10, 9:55 am

21) Braden_Keith Braden Keith

They were hiding, but finally found the @MOGrandPrix live results!

cstigersharks.org/realtime/

1 hour ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by swimmerscircle

February 10, 9:44 am

20) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

RT @aupairmama: Psyched to watch current & future Olympians swimming like they stole something. #Missouri grand prix

1 hour ago Favorite Retweet Reply

February 10, 9:53 am

19) mikelgustafson Mike Gustafson

"I couldn't put a price on swimming in high school." -Missy Franklin. Completely agree.

Good for her. nytimes.com/2012/02/10/spo...

1 hour ago Favorite Retweet Reply

February 10, 9:41 am

18) MikeBottom Mike Bottom

CW Relay 4X100 or 4x50, any challengers? yfrog.com/hsglxkvj

2 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by SwimUtopia

February 10, 8:31 am

17) sbuswim Sean McNamee

November 22nd, 2011 Dear Friends of St. Bonaventure Swimming and Diving, For the

17th year in a row, St.... fb.me/1uKmxsW2V

3 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by SwimUtopia

February 10, 7:44 am

16) goswim Glenn Mills

Tennis Star Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario To Folks: “You Lost All My Money”; Folks: “Nuh-Uh!!!” @dailyhouse ht.ly/8ZpzR
February 10, 9:00 am

15) RowdyGaines Rowdy Gaines

The Unbitter End wp.me/p1RcNI-8q via @wordpressdotcom great article AGAIN by Casey....and so true
2 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
February 10, 8:59 am

14) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Tom Daley & Team GB -- Sexy And I Know It bit.ly/Ar3yoU @TomDaley1994 #diving
2 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
February 10, 8:49 am

13) goldmedalmel Mel Stewart

Aussie swim star, James Magnussen, shows he's human facebook.com/GoldMedalMel1
2 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
February 10, 8:49 am

12) goldmedalmel Mel Stewart

Catalina Swim Team *OFFICIAL VIDEO* - facebook.com/GoldMedalMel1
2 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
February 10, 8:42 am

11) goswim Glenn Mills

Updated Content | goswimtv.com Updates - Fresh Lezak Clips and many drills - ht.ly/8ZuGa
February 10, 8:30 am

10) goswim Glenn Mills

USA Swimming Rebranding Athlete Protection to Safe Sport; Exclusive Interview With Safe Sport Officer Susan Woessner [ht.ly/8ZnZa](https://t.ly/8ZnZa)
February 10, 8:01 am

9) goswim Glenn Mills

Go Swim - Breaststroke Drill & Talk to Glenn Online - eepurl.com/i9CbL
February 10, 7:48 am

8) MOGrandPrix Missouri Grand Prix

It's officially here!! ow.ly/i/s6Ex
3 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
February 10, 7:15 am

7) mismads Madeleine Crippen

@FC_Elevation @CRirish @clairebear1128 @plankstar1 @kerrmac14 started training for #broadstreet this am. 1 mile jog. Team Fran MVP!
10 Feb Favorite Retweet Reply
Retweeted by goswim
February 10, 6:56 am

6) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Be sure to tune into day one of the @MOGrandPrix live. Prelims begin at 9 am
bit.ly/wW28j2 #missourigrandprix
4 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
February 10, 6:14 am

5) SwimUtopia SwimUtopia.com

Olympic Silver Medalist Duje Draganja Joins Club Wolverine Elite Training Group
bit.ly/xTZLTo
5 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply
February 10, 6:07 am

4) bretfras Brett Fraser

up early for work pic.twitter.com/6Bb7eD4A

5 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply

Retweeted by SwimUtopia

February 10, 6:05 am

3) goswim Glenn Mills

@

@DartmouthSwim See you at the meet!

February 10, 5:54 am

2) goswim Glenn Mills

@

@nomisknarf - Maybe not the fanciest, but ours remains about the content. Thanks for the support.

February 10, 4:48 am

1) SwimmingWorld SwimmingWorld

Posted 'MSS: Black History Month with ISHOF, Part One' to Blip: blip.tv/file/5929600

10 hours ago Favorite Retweet Reply

February 10, 1:05 am

Appendix D: Coding Sheet

Tweet number: 249
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 7:45 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 248
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 7:39 pm
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 247
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 7:24 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 246
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 7:17 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 245
Tweet author: MizzouAEAS
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 6:03 pm
Category: 2A

Tweet number: 244
Tweet author: Athletic Foodie
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 4:55 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 243
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 6:15 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 242
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 5:59 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 241
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 5:47 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 240
Tweet author:
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 5:19 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 239
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 4:21 pm
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 238
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 4:16 pm
Category: 5A

Tweet number: 237
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 4:03 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 236
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 4:01 pm
Category: 5A

Tweet number: 235
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 3:59 pm
Category: 13 (personal information)

Tweet number: 234
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 3:15 pm
Category: 13 (inspirational quote)

Tweet number: 233
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 3:01 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 232
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 2:55 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 231
Tweet author: VT_SwimDive
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 2:16 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 230
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 2:05 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 229
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 2:01 pm
Category: 7C

Tweet number: 228
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 1:01 pm
Category: 13 (link to a swim workout)

Tweet number: 227
Tweet author: r_bootsma15
Retweet author: The Swimmers Circle
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 12:20 pm
Category: 11

Tweet number: 226
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 12:01 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 225
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 12:01 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 224
Tweet author: Coachstoddard, USA Swimming, DanaMStoddard
Retweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 11:29 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 223
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 11:29 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 222
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 11:27 am
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 221
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 11:24 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 220
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 11:01 am
Category: 4B and 7B (link to photo(s) and video not about event)

Tweet number: 219
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 10:55 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 218
Tweet author: Masters Swimming
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 10:51 am
Category: 2B

Tweet number: 217
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 10:39 am
Category: Link is broken

Tweet number: 216
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 10:39 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 215
Tweet author: bravobat
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 9:35 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 214
Tweet author: Vicksburg_Swim
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 10:05 am
Category: 15 (Request for information from various sources)

Tweet number: 213
Tweet author: GatorZoneScott
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 9:59 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 212
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 10:01 am
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 211
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 10:01 am
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 210
Tweet author: The Swimmers Circle
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 9:56 am
Category: 13 (recruitment for writers for their website)

Tweet number: 209
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 9:54 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 208
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 9:50 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 207
Tweet author: goldmedalmel
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 9:06 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 206
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 9:01 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 205
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 8:34 am
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 204
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 8:30 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 203
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 8 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 202
Tweet author: SENNAmovie
Retweet author: Go Swim
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 7:14 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 201
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 13
Time: 7:13 am
Category: 5A

Tweet number: 200
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 10:49 pm
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 199
Tweet author: Braden_Keith
Retweet author: Swimmers Circle
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 10:27 pm
Category: 5A

Tweet number: 198
Tweet author: CoMissourian
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 9:53 pm
Category: 4A

Tweet number: 197
Tweet author: peterbusch1
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 9:51 pm
Category: 11

Tweet number: 196
Tweet author: Swimmers Circle
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 9:32 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 195
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 9:30 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 194
Tweet author: GatorZoneSwimDv
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 4:42 pm
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 193
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 9:01 pm
Category: 4A

Tweet number: 192
Tweet author: Swimmers Circle
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 8:55 pm
Category: 13 (recruitment for writers for website)

Tweet number: 191
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 8:34 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 190
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 8:06 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 189
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 7:27 pm
Category: 5A

Tweet number: 188
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 6:27 pm
Category: 15 and 16 (interpersonal communication and link to broadcast)

Tweet number: 187
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 6:21 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 186
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 5:25 pm
Category: 2B

Tweet number: 185
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 5:09 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 184
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 5:09 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 183
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 5:08 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 182
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 4:48 pm
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 181
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 4:35 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 180
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 3:17 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 179
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 2:36 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 178
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 2:25 pm
Category: 10B

Tweet number: 177
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 1:28 pm
Category: 4A

Tweet number: 176
Tweet author: mikelgustafson
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 12:53 pm
Category: 7C

Tweet number: 175
Tweet author: mikelgustafson
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 12:51 pm
Category: 11

Tweet number: 174
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 11:57 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 173
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 11:38 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 172
Tweet author: Vicksburg_Swim
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 10:40 am
Category: 11

Tweet number: 171
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 10:44 am
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 170
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 9:52 am
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 169
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 9:42 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 168
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 9:13 am
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 167
Tweet author: Swimmers Circle
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 8:32 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 166
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 8:28 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 165
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 8:24 am
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 164
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 8:22 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 163
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 8:20 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 162
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 8:18 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 161
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 7:48 am
Category: 7C

Tweet number: 160
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 7:42 am
Category: 13 (personal information)

Tweet number: 159
Tweet author: mgsportssevan
Retweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 6:43 am
Category: 11

Tweet number: 158
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 6:50 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 157
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 6:50 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 156
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 6:37 am
Category: 4B (picture of himself with Whitney Houston)

Tweet number: 155
Tweet author: Masters Swimming
Retweet author: Go Swim
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 5:54 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 154
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 2:23 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 153
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 12
Time: 1:26 am
Category: 7C

Tweet number: 152
Tweet author: goldmedal mel
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 11:51 pm
Category: 2A

Tweet number: 151
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 11:17 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 150
Tweet author: goldmedal mel
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 10:38 pm
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 149
Tweet author: MapleLeafLawyer
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 10:01 pm
Category: 7C

Tweet number: 148
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 9:59 pm
Category: 4A and 4C (photos both of engagement and of event)

Tweet number: 147
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 9:51 pm
Category: 5C

Tweet number: 146
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 9:45 pm
Category: 7C

Tweet number: 145
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 9:40 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 144
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 9:40 pm
Category: 5A and 5C (article about event and article about Matt Grevers' engagement)

Tweet number: 143
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 8:54 pm
Category: 3

Tweet number: 142
Tweet author: Shanteau
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 8:40 pm
Category: 2A, 2B (News about meet, news about Matt Grevers' proposal)

Tweet number: 141
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 8:45 pm
Category: 3

Tweet number: 140
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 8:33 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 139
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 8:02 pm
Category: 5C

Tweet number: 138
Tweet author: Braden_Keith
Retweet author: Swimmers Circle
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 7:42 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 137
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 7:40 pm
Category: 2B

Tweet number: 136
Tweet author: USA_Swimming
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 7:38 pm
Category: 1 (Grand Prix event results)

Tweet number: 135
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 7:36 pm
Category: 11

Tweet number: 134
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 7:10 pm
Category: 3

Tweet number: 133
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 7:06 pm
Category: 4C, 7C and 15 (photo and video of Matt Grevers' proposal and interpersonal communication)

Tweet number: 132
Tweet author: Braden_Keith
Retweet author: Swimmers Circle
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:43 pm
Category: 7C and 5C (link to an article and a video about Matt Grevers' proposal)

Tweet number: 131
Tweet author: RickyBerens
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:40 pm
Category: 15 (interpersonal communication)

Tweet number: 130
Tweet author: csutswim
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:35 pm
Category: 2A and 10B (news related to Matt Grevers' proposal and opinion/commentary related to Matt Grevers' proposal)

Tweet number: 129
Tweet author: USA_Swimming
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:36 pm
Category: 2B

Tweet number: 128
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:39 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 127
Tweet author: USA_Swimming
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:38 pm
Category: 2A (news about Matt Grevers' proposal)

Tweet number: 126
Tweet author: Braden_Keith
Retweet author: Swimmers Circle
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:23 pm
Category: 11 (commentary/opinion not related to meet)

Tweet number: 125
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:22 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 124
Tweet author: Braden_Keith
Retweet author: Swimmers Circle
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:15 pm
Category: 3 (news not related to meet)

Tweet number: 123
Tweet author: Swimmers Circle
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:13 pm
Category: 3

Tweet number: 122
Tweet author: Swimmers Circle
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 5:59 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 121
Tweet author: Braden_Keith
Retweet author: Swimmers Circle
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 5:58 pm
Category: 11

Tweet number: 120
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 5:55 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 119
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 5:36 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 118
Tweet author: G_WeberGales
Retweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 5:01 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 117
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb.11
Time: 4:58 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 116
Tweet author: G_WeberGale
Retweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 4:33 pm
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 115
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 4:56 pm
Category: 13 (information about social plans)

Tweet number: 114
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 3:16 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 113
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 4:42 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 112
Tweet author: Braden_Keith
Retweet author: Swimmers Circle
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 3:34 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 111
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 3:32 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 110
Tweet author: Braden_Keith
Retweet author: Swimmers Circle
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 3:29 pm
Category: 11

Tweet number: 109
Tweet author: Braden_Keith
Retweet author: Swimmers Circle
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 3:26 pm
Category: 3

Tweet number: 108
Tweet author: rebsoni
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 1:12 pm
Category: 11

Tweet number: 107
Tweet author: TyMcGill
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 12:59 pm
Category: 10A

Tweet number: 106
Tweet author: GreenTerrorSwim
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 10:50 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 105
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 3:04 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 104
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 3:02 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 103
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 2:36 pm
Category: 17

Tweet number: 102
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 2:25 pm
Category: 4A

Tweet number: 101
Tweet author: Swimming Canada
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 10:01 pm
Category: 5A

Tweet number: 100
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 11:03 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 99
Tweet author: komusports
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 10:50 am
Category: 5A

Tweet number: 98
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 10:28 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 97
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 9:25 am
Category: 13 (information about iphone case)

Tweet number: 96
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 9:16 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 95
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 9:13 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 94
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 9:02 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 93
Tweet author: swimmersdaily
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 5:13 am
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 92
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 5:09 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 91
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 7:08 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 90
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:42 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 89
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:41 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 88
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:39 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 87
Tweet author: vidacoffeeco
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 6:25 am
Category: 17

Tweet number: 86
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 11
Time: 5:09 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 85
Tweet author: comosports
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 10:14 pm
Category: 5A

Tweet number: 84
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 9:49 pm
Category: 4A

Tweet number: 83
Tweet author: NACswim
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 9:24 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 82
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:56 pm
Category: 4A

Tweet number: 81
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:49 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 80
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:49 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 79
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:43 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 78
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:33 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 77
Tweet author: KEYSwim_SouthY/MikeWSY
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:26 pm
Category: 11

Tweet number: 76
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:20 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 75
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:15 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 74
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:12 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 73
Tweet author: KOMUsports
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 7:18 pm
Category: 4A

Tweet number: 72
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:06 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 71
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:05 pm
Category: 5A

Tweet number: 70
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:04 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 69
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 7:38 pm
Category: 10A

Tweet number: 68
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 6:56 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 67
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 6:45 pm
Category: 2B

Tweet number: 66
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 6:44 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 65
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 6:33 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 64
Tweet author: lanceasti
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 6:19 pm
Category: 2B

Tweet number: 63
Tweet author: theswimmaids
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 6:15 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 62
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 5:56 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 61
Tweet author: usa_swimming
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 5:38 pm
Category: 2B

Tweet number: 60
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 5:22 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 59
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 5:17 pm
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 58
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 5:16 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 57
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 5:09 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 56
Tweet author: Vol_Swim
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 1:56 pm
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 55
Tweet author: BeckAdlington
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 1:52 pm
Category: 3

Tweet number: 54
Tweet author: mikelgustafson
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 4:24 pm
Category: 11 and 5B (link to article not related to event and commentary/opinion not related to event)

Tweet number: 53
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 4:21 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 52
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 3:56 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 51
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 3:53 pm
Category: 5A

Tweet number: 50
Tweet author: mikelgustafson
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 3:28 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 49
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 2:52 pm
Category: 4A

Tweet number: 48
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 2:05 pm
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 47
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 1:41 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 46
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 1:40 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 45
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 1:32 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 44
Tweet author: mizzou
Retweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 1:22 pm
Category: 6

Tweet number: 43
Tweet author: pswimcamp
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 1:06 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 42
Tweet author: mattflippin
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 12:35 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 41
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 12:22 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 40
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 12:22 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 39
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 12:21 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 38
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 12:20 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 37
Tweet author: stefburt
Retweet author: MO Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 12:18 pm
Category: 15

Tweet number: 36
Tweet author: goldmedalmel
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 12:08 pm
Category: 3

Tweet number: 35
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 11:50 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 34
Tweet author: Braden_Keith
Retweet author: Swimmers Circle
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 11:39 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 33
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 11:39 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 32
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 10:55 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 31
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 10:51 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 30
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 10:51 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 29
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 10:50 am
Category: 11

Tweet number: 28
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 10:45 am
Category: 4A

Tweet number: 27
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 10:43 am
Category: 11

Tweet number: 26
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 7:48 am
Category: 6

Tweet number: 25
Tweet author: mattfarrell_
Retweet author: Swimming World
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 9:46 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 24
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 10:25 am
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 23
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 10:01 am
Category: 5A

Tweet number: 22
Tweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 9:55 am
Category: 2B

Tweet number: 21
Tweet author: Braden_Keith
Retweet author: Swimmers Circle
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 9:44 am
Category: 2B

Tweet number: 20
Tweet author: aupairmama
Retweet author: Mo Grand Prix
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 9:53 am
Category: 10A

Tweet number: 19
Tweet author: mikelgustafson
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 9:41 am
Category: 5B and 11 (link to an article not about event and commentary/opinion not about event)

Tweet number: 18
Tweet author: MikeBottom
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:31 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 17
Tweet author: sbuswim
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 7:44 am
Category: 13 (letter requesting support)

Tweet number: 16
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 9 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 15
Tweet author: Rowdy Gaines
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:59 am
Category: 5B and 11 (link to article not about event and opinion/commentary not about event)

Tweet number: 14
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:49 am
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 13
Tweet author: goldmedalmel
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:49 am
Category: Link is broken

Tweet number: 12
Tweet author: goldmedalmel
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:42 am
Category: 7B

Tweet number: 11
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:30 am
Category: 3 and 7B (link to video not about event and news and information not about event)

Tweet number: 10
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 8:01 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 9
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 7:48 am
Category: 6

Tweet number: 8
Tweet author: MO Grand Prix
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 7:15 am
Category: 17

Tweet number: 7
Tweet author: mismads
Retweet author: Go Swim
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 6:56 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 6
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 6:14 am
Category: 16

Tweet number: 5
Tweet author: Swim Utopia
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 6:07 am
Category: 5B

Tweet number: 4
Tweet author: bretfras
Retweet author: Swim Utopia
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 6:05 am
Category: 4B

Tweet number: 3
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 5:54 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 2
Tweet author: Go Swim
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 4:48 am
Category: 15

Tweet number: 1
Tweet author: Swimming World
Retweet author:
Date: Feb. 10
Time: 1:05 am
Category: 7B

Appendix E: Colleague Coding Sheet

Tweet number: 58
Tweet author: MOGrandPrix
Retweet author:
Date: February 10
Time: 5:16 p.m.
Category: 15

Tweet number: 98
Tweet author: MOGrandPrix
Retweet author:
Date: February 11
Time: 10:28 a.m.
Category: 15

Tweet number: 41
Tweet author: RowdyGaines
Retweet author:
Date: February 10
Time: 12:22 p.m.
Category: 15

Tweet number: 75
Tweet author: SwimmingWorld
Retweet author:
Date: February 10
Time: 8:15 p.m.
Category: 12

Tweet number: 68
Tweet author: SwimmingWorld
Retweet author:
Date: February 10
Time: 6:56 p.m.
Category: 5b

Tweet number: 191
Tweet author: MOGrandPrix
Retweet author:
Date: February 12
Time: 8:34 p.m.
Category: 2b, 15

Tweet number: 195
Tweet author: SwimmingWorld
Retweet author:
Date: February 12
Time: 9:30 p.m.
Category: 3, 5b

Tweet number: 36
Tweet author: goldmedalmel
Retweet author:
Date: February 10
Time: 12:08 p.m.
Category: 3, 5b

Tweet number: 7
Tweet author: mismads
Retweet author:
Date: February 10
Time: 6:56 a.m.
Category: 3

Tweet number: 214
Tweet author: Vicksburg_Swim
Retweet author:
Date: February 13
Time: 10:05 a.m.
Category: 15

Tweet number: 236
Tweet author: goswim
Retweet author:
Date: February 13
Time: 4:01 p.m.
Category: 5b

Tweet number: 120
Tweet author: SwimmingWorld
Retweet author:
Date: February 11
Time: 5:55 p.m.
Category: 3, 5b

Tweet number: 115
Tweet author: RowdyGaines
Retweet author:
Date: February 11
Time: 4:56 p.m.
Category: 13

Tweet number: 86
Tweet author: goswim
Retweet author:
Date: February 11
Time: 5:09 a.m.
Category: 4b

Tweet number: 172
Tweet author: Vicksburg_Swim
Retweet author: SwimmingWorld
Date: February 12
Time: 10:40 a.m.
Category: 11

Tweet number: 71
Tweet author: SwimmingWorld
Retweet author:
Date: February 10
Time: 8:05 p.m.
Category: 1, 5a

Tweet number: 97
Tweet author: goswim
Retweet author:
Date: February 11
Time: 9:25 a.m.
Category: 13

Tweet number: 143
Tweet author: SwimUtopia
Retweet author:
Date: February 11
Time: 8:54 p.m.
Category: 3, 6

Tweet number: 223
Tweet author: SwimmingWorld
Retweet author:
Date: February 13
Time: 11:29 a.m.
Category: 3, 5b

Tweet number: 81
Tweet author: RowdyGaines
Retweet author:
Date: February 10
Time: 8:49 p.m.
Category: 15

Tweet number: 91
Tweet author: SwimmingWorld
Retweet author:
Date: February 11
Time: 7:08 a.m.
Category: 3, 5b

Tweet number: 64
Tweet author: MOGrandPrix
Retweet author:
Date: February 10
Time: 6:19 p.m.
Category: 2b, 15

Tweet number: 96
Tweet author: goswim
Retweet author:
Date: February 11
Time: 9:16 a.m.
Category: 15

Tweet number: 8
Tweet author: MOGrandPrix
Retweet author:
Date: February 10
Time: 7:15 a.m.
Category: 6

Tweet number: 222
Tweet author: SwimmingWorld
Retweet author:
Date: February 13
Time: 11:27 a.m.
Category: 7b

Appendix F: Interview Transcripts

Braden Keith-Swimmers Circle Interview Transcript 2/28/12

RD: I'm going to start by asking you what your job is and who you work for as far as the website is concerned?

BK: It's actually an independent operation. It's owned by me and one other guy. My role is, I think the official title is lead content developer. Basically I create most of the content as well as manage a few other people that help create other content.

RD: How long have you been doing this job?

BK: For two years.

RD: Do you have a background in PR or journalism?

BK: I wrote for about a semester for my university newspaper but I'm a financier by trade. I work in the oil industry as well.

RD: What's your background with swimming?

BK: I've swam since I was a kid, worked at a swim shop. I am currently a high school swim coach in addition to the website and my other job. I've done pretty much everything in swimming that there is to do.

RD: As far as Twitter is concerned, I looked it up and it looks like Swimmers Circle has been on Twitter since January 2010. How did the website get started on Twitter and did you make that decision or did someone else make that decision?

BK: Our overall goal of the website has been to use the news to develop a social media platform, so you need a basis on which to do that. I guess my partner made the final decision but it was sort of something we discussed mutually. This was obviously before everyone was on Twitter, so it wasn't just a "no duh" kind of thing. It fed into what we were trying to do.

RD: If you had to say, on average how much time during the day do you think you spend tweeting or reading tweets?

BK: A lot. Do you want a number?

RD: If you just want to estimate.

BK: I always have it open. I have it open from 7:30 in the morning until 9:30 at night. I've got two monitors and I've always got it open on one monitor. Probably, 15 minutes

out of every hour I spend actively doing stuff but it's always open and sort of in my periphery.

RD: Where do you get the information that you tweet? Does your site do original reporting? Are you tweeting commentary? Are you getting it from a newswire?

BK: It's a big combination. It's a lot of commentary, some of it is stuff we hear from independent sources, you know swimmers who we talk to, coaches who we talk to. A lot of our tweeting is basically promoting our own articles. We don't do just that because people don't respond if you do just that. It's a mix of everything.

RD: Specifically concerning the Missouri Grand Prix, I collected all of the Swimmers Circle tweets and all of the tweets of the 7 other people I'm interviewing for my thesis during the weekend of the Grand Prix. I made a little data sheet specifically concerning the Swimmers Circle tweets of that weekend. If you had to guess, how many tweets do you think you posted in total that weekend?

BK: I'm not sure how this plays in but the past, probably starting shortly before the Grand Prix, I started doing some of the tweeting from my personal Twitter account to try to build that following as well. That will sort of skew the data if you want to know just from the Swimmers Circle account. Do you want to know from both, do you want me to guess from both or do you want me to guess from just the Swimmers Circle account?

RD: I collected all tweets including retweets, so I did catch a few tweeted from your personal account and then you retweeted it from Swimmers Circle. If you had to guess from that, do you have an estimation?

BK: About the Grand Prix? If I had to guess, I would guess 30. Am I close?

RD: Close, it's about 18. You're right in the ballpark. Some people have been guessing much higher and some people lower. You're pretty close. As far as tweeting that weekend, this kind of relates to how people tweet in general, do you think that there is a time of day you tweet more or are you tweeting pretty consistently throughout the day?

BK: I do tweet consistently throughout the day. There are obviously times where I tweet more and less, so if there is a big meet going on more of my tweets will be concentrated in the evening because that's when people are sort of seeking the information. Missouri Grand Prix wasn't a huge meet, I guess, I'm sure you've done the research on it but there's a series, like a Grand Prix series and it's not sort of the premiere Grand Prix. So, there wasn't a ton of people actively looking for information on it, so other Grand Prixes will probably be more skewed toward the evening than this one was.

RD: Yeah, that's pretty much right on. You do tweet throughout the day and you did that weekend specifically. A handful of your tweets that were about the Grand Prix were about the biggest item of the Grand Prix, which was the Matt Grevers' engagement. Of all

the stuff I collected about the Grand Prix that got the most press. You did use Twitter occasionally to, what I am referring to as interpersonal communication, so you were tweeting at people, having discussions or giving information or asking for information. You had a couple of commentaries and then you had a couple where you are recruiting writers for the site.

BK: Right.

RD: Those were kind of more random tweets. You had a couple of updates about things that happened during the Grand Prix and some information if someone swam fast or something. Also, this is something I picked up that other people are doing. You had quite a few tweets that weekend because there were a lot of fast high school swims going on, especially Missy Franklin.

BK: Yes, there was.

RD: Do you just cover swimming in general, no matter what it is or do you have specific breakdowns of what you try to cover?

BK: We do try to cover most of it. High school, generally there is a championship season basically, so it's very cyclical. This time of year it becomes heavily high school and college orientated. If you had gotten closer to my personal Twitter that weekend you would have seen a whole lot more about Missy Franklin specifically. That was the biggest story going on that weekend and probably the biggest story going on in the swimming world like the whole spring because it was on ESPN and it was a big deal. It's very cyclical, so high school and college will get a lot of play this time of year, the summer moves more towards USA Swimming and international level stuff as they get to the Olympics and world championship stuff. We cover everything but it kind of goes up and down in terms of what we cover when.

RD: Definitely, do you have a plan in place for the Trials and the Olympics yet?

BK: Yes, we do. How specific do you want me to be? With regard to Twitter?

RD: Just however much you are comfortable saying and yeah, with regards to Twitter. I've talked to a few people who have been saying that this will be an interesting Trials and Olympics because this is the first time that Twitter has been huge.

BK: Right.

RD: I've been curious.

BK: Well, it's sort of interesting and if I were to be fully frank with you and I'm not sure exactly who else you are talking to, if they are other swim specific sites I can guess who it is. I'd like this to not go very far but I am actually leaving the Swimmers Circle to start

a new site in the next couple of weeks, so as part of that new site. So, I can tell you both what we're planning for the new site and both what the Swimmers Circle is planning if you want to hear it.

RD: Okay.

BK: For the World Championships, which is sort of, outside the Olympics and the Olympic Trials it's the biggest thing last year, we did a lot of tweeting and we grew a lot from that, so we tweet consistently throughout the meet, every event and every race we just tweet, tweet, tweet. And it grew a lot of followers, a lot of big name swimming people who don't follow many people started following us just so that they could read the updates on the World Championships. Dara Torres followed us and she only follows 11 or 12 people. That is what the Swimmers Circle is probably going to do, they'll live tweet the events and put a recap up at the end, just on the site. In terms of the new site, we are actually going to be on-deck at Trials, which makes things a little bit trickier because the USOC from what we understand and the IOC have started to enact rules about what you can and cannot tweet when you are on-deck. There's a lot of uncertainty I'm sure from everybody about how that's all going to play out. In regards to who's going to be able to tweet and what, we're not really sure because as an industry it's evolving. This whole swimming niche media coverage, it's a very evolving industry and in addition to that, obviously Twitter is evolving. What's actually going to happen? We don't know it's a lot of uncertainty.

RD: That's interesting. I have to tell you just so you are aware, a transcript of this interview will go in the back of my thesis in appendicies, so if for instance you don't want me to put that in the transcript just tell me right now and I'll keep it off the record but I just wanted to give you a heads up.

BK: As long as your thesis is published after March 7, it's fine.

RD: It's going to be published in May.

BK: Okay yeah, that will be fine. I have a feeling our competitors aren't going to go seeking a competitive advantage by reading a thesis.

RD: I just wanted to give you a heads up because people sometimes say things in interviews they don't understand than in a thesis the entire transcript goes in, so everything they said. Okay, cool. Let me look at the next set of questions, as far as how you choose things that are posted on Twitter, do you post pretty much everything or do you have intent behind what you post?

BK: In terms of general tweets? Or when we post links to our articles?

RD: I guess both.

BK: In general tweets it's sort of hard to describe, there are certain people that you pick up on that are either, I hate to sound like I am in high school but the most popular person on their team or the most popular person in their little group of friends, so when you get them interacting with you, it increases your followers, which is the whole goal of tweeting at people. I'm not really sure where I was going with that. There are certain people, certain followers who are more interactive than others and we know that as tweeters, we recognize it. Me and my partner both actually tweet from the same account, we know who we can tweet at to start conversations and then other people jump in. We don't really have a science to it, we treat it more as an art form, that sounds cheesy but we don't have a formula for what we tweet and what we don't tweet. We just kind of feel it out. We've been doing it long enough that we know what gets a response and what doesn't, so that's sort of what we go off of. In terms of articles, we tweet basically everything. Twitter is different than Facebook, from our experiences, Twitter stuff will spread faster, so more people will see the headline that you've tweeted but fewer people will click through to the article than do on Facebook, which is interesting. Tweeting everything, people want to see the headlines on Twitter, they don't want to click through and read the whole thing. So, we kind of tweet everything and they see the headlines and we hope that something sticks and people start clicking through on it. So, that's kind of our strategy with posting articles.

RD: Okay. Does Swimmers Circle have a Facebook fan page and if so, is it pretty successful?

BK: We do have a Facebook fan page; we don't put as much emphasis on it. I think at this point we get more of a thrill out of Twitter because people, our fans, have interacted more on Twitter, like I said they click through more off of Facebook but they interact more through Twitter. Interactions is what we are seeking at this point in the growth of our company.

RD: Okay. Does anyone read or edit your tweets before they are posted or is it just up to you and your partner?

BK: No, it's just up to me and my partner.

RD: Okay, who do you think your audience is, meaning who do you write tweets for? Is it just the swimming community? Have you found followers and fans outside?

BK: It is almost exclusively for the swimming community. There are people outside of the swimming community who will read it and sort of get sucked into the swimming community but then I guess we don't consider them outside the swimming community anymore. It's very few sort of mainstream sports fans who follow us but sometimes stuff will spread if it's about the right people. If it's about Michael Phelps it will spread to the mainstream sports fans but generally it's the swimming community.

RD: Okay, out of the 18 or so posts that you did during the week of the Grand Prix, 16 percent of them were interpersonal communication, so you were discussing stuff with people. Do you think Twitter is a good tool for interacting with fans or how do you use it that way?

BK: I absolutely think it's a good tool for interacting with fans and part of that is because people seem to be less guarded about their Twitter accounts than they are other social media platforms, which is part of my theory on why people don't click through, yada, yada, yada. On Facebook people seem to be very careful about what they say, where as on Twitter people will really just say anything. They aren't worried about their employers seeing it; they aren't worried about their coach seeing it. People just seem to not have to same hang-ups about it as they do on other social media platforms. We love interacting through Twitter because of that.

RD: Do you think Twitter has made your job easier or harder?

BK: Much easier. It's become 10 times easier to interact with professional athletes and to contact them than it ever was before.

RD: Awesome. Specifically related to the Matt Grevers' proposal, why did you tweet about that and do you think it's newsworthy?

BK: I think it's newsworthy because his fiancée is also a very high profile swimmer. The reason we tweeted about it is because that's kind of, it's something that people like to hear about and it's something that people like to read. It's something that is a little bit mainstream. The Huffington Post actually picked up on that article and linked to it. That's one of those few stories that actually ends up going mainstream. And so that's sort of why we tweeted about it.

RD: Okay. Why do you think that that proposal was the most covered moment of the meet versus like I don't know, a fast swim or some high-profile people that were there?

BK: There weren't that many fast swims, if I was perfectly honest. It was not a real high-profile meet. If the average person were able to name 5 swimmers, none of them were there. So, it was just not that high-profile of a meet. The engagement, they'd been dating forever and everyone kind of knew it was coming and they're two very well liked people, which is part of it, everybody likes Matt Grevers and everybody likes Annie Chandler and they're really just popular beyond their swimming accomplishments, so I think that's why it became such a big deal.

RD: Okay because that was the most popular piece on Twitter as well about the Grand Prix. There were photos of that and people were tweeting the video, etc. So, what do you think that says about how people like to use Twitter? Or what they like to use it for?

BK: That's a good question. I think why it was so popular is because the other professional and college swimmers commented on it and a lot of the time they won't interact as much about their own meets as other people will. So, because it was not as high-profile as a meet they weren't talking about it because they weren't that interested but that's something that Matt and Annie's peers would talk about and when their peers, who are the professional swimmers, start talking, that's when everybody starts talking. I don't know if it speaks to how normal people use Twitter, I think it speaks to who sort of leads the conversation and how they choose to lead the conversation.

RD: Okay, well those are my questions. Is there anything you want to add or do you have any questions for me.

BK: I'm kind of curious about hearing what your actual thesis is and what sort of angle you're trying to take on this.

Glenn Mills-GO SWIM Interview Transcript 2/29/12

RD: I'm going to start by asking you, explain what your job is and the website that you work for.

GM: Boy, that's a tough one. My job. I am the owner of the company. I am self-employed. What my tasks are to create technical and educational swim content hopefully for the swimming community and try to educate people on how to swim faster, better, easier. That sort of thing.

RD: Okay, how did you get into this work and how long have you been doing it?

GM: It really kind of builds, one thing off of another. I started out as a swimmer and after college I was coaching and got involved in a couple other professions and my love of the sport brought me back into it. Pretty typical coaching career initially and then I just decided that I'd be better off doing more teaching orientated sort of things. I wanted to examine the high end of the sport, so I started developing these products about 10 years ago now.

RD: Okay, did you have any background in journalism or public relations?

GM: My degree is in PR from the University of Alabama but I don't use it as much as I should because I spend too much time under water.

RD: As far as your background in swimming, can you kind of explain-where you an age group swimmer? Did you swim mostly in high school and college?

GM: I won Olympic Trials in 1980, so I'm a member of the Olympic Team. I've won NCAAs, finaled at World Championships, won Senior Nationals a few times. I started

like everybody else and just progressed up, got pretty good and I have a couple of Masters' World Records, so I still compete periodically but not a lot, I'm too busy. It was just one of those things, like every other kid, started as a really bad age group swimmer and progressed up and ended up being pretty good.

RD: Did you say Olympic Trials of 1980?

GM: Yeah, I won Olympic Trials in 1980.

RD: Yeah, that's um, obviously I know what happened that year, so that's a tough break.

GM: Yeah, it was a bad year to be a really good swimmer or athlete. It's a great life story for people and at this point, as I'm much older now, I use it as a teaching opportunity for young kids and use it as a positive message rather than just turn into a bitter old man.

RD: Well, that's a good feeling to have, so congratulations.

GM: Yeah, thanks.

RD: As Twitter is concerned, how did you decide that the website should be on Twitter? Or how did you start tweeting?

GM: I stayed off it for what I thought was a long time. I'm an early adopter of technology generally and it wasn't until I read an article about social networking and Twitter that basically said you need to look at it as an instant newsletter. I initially started it out as a way to get new content from my own website out to the swimming community. What I do now is, I try to mix it with content from my website with things that I find interesting that wouldn't be necessarily the full mainstream sort of stuff. I try and put a lot of Paralympic stuff in, then Olympic stuff. Just different things that I would find. I try to do a few things from a couple different websites each day to support some friends but it's just generally a mix of things I find interesting that I think other people may and then a few things from my own website every day.

RD: Okay. If you could estimate on average how much time a day do you think you spend tweeting or reading tweets?

GM: Well, it's on all day long. I've got a few monitors sitting in front of me because I'm a video editor, so I've got ample real estate in front of me, so to have something running it's almost like a computer geek sort of thing. And so it's always on but I don't always look at it. I'll get notifications if someone has mentioned Go Swim in it but if I'm really focused on writing or right now like talking on the phone, or producing video then I don't pay much attention to it. In the mornings I come back from the pool and I'll try to set up my tweets for the day, you know, go through all my Google News pages and things and I'll actually schedule most of the tweets to go out during the day. It might be some

committed time in the morning and then I'll up on stuff later in the afternoon when my day calms down a little bit.

RD: I put together a little fact sheet of the tweets that you posted the weekend of the Missouri Grand Prix and that was one of the questions I had for you because I noticed that you do tweet pretty consistently throughout the day, starting very early in the morning, which makes sense if you're coming back from a morning practice but it seemed like at certain times of day there was like a post every hour and I was wondering, so you use an automated system then?

GM: Yeah, I use Hoot Suite and so I generally try and spread it out from 9 to 5, not extremely scientific but just kind of balanced. I do have some tools that tell me when I should tweet more and when I should tweet less. I have also read enough stuff that says people don't follow businesses, people follow people and so I try to keep them somewhat personal so that people know it's coming from me and not just forwarding a tweet. I'll do my best to put as much little short little feeling into it. You have such small space in it, you just want to say that it's something you like or something you don't, something you agree with or something you don't agree with. I will generally try and stay on the positive side of things just because I feel there is enough negative stuff out there, so I'll send out a negative tweet once every 2 weeks probably just if something really ticks me off. For the most part we try and stay very positive.

RD: As far as the information that you tweet, are you getting this from original reporting? Is it mostly commentary? Are you using like a news wire?

GM: The stuff that I tweet?

RD: Yeah.

GM: Well, like I said I have multiple, I have a number of websites that I check every day for news. There's probably 10 to 15 different websites that I'll go through and try and find something from and then I have Google News pages set up for specific searches that I want to do. I'll go through those to see what really strikes me that hopefully would interest some other people.

RD: Are the websites that you're checking every day just swimming based? Or are they sports or just general?

GM: Mostly swimming based for the tweets. I have other things I use for technology. I'm kind of a geek from a technology standpoint being a video producer and a web developer and stuff, so I'll use Google Plus and things like that. I'm reading all the time. My wife always kids me that I don't read books, she loves books and I never read books. But I'm constantly reading and everything from swimming websites to technology sites to newsletters. All kinds of stuff. Mostly what I do here is swimming.

RD: Alright, okay. I noticed that you post on Twitter links to videos showing forms for swimming or how to do different strokes. Are those videos you are creating in house?

GM: Yes, I do all of those.

RD: Well, congratulations because I definitely think that that's something unique. You're the only one I've seen doing that really.

GM: That's great, thank you.

RD: That's definitely original content. I'm going to go over kind of your data sheet about the weekend of the Grand Prix. If you had to guess, that 3 to 4 days around that weekend, how many tweets do you think Go Swim posted? And this includes all tweets, not just about the Grand Prix, including retweets or if you are talking to someone.

GM: Um, well I don't tweet much on weekends generally, so I'm going to say, I don't know, maybe 30?

RD: Because I included in my research the Friday and the Monday, you posted a total of 43, so fairly close to 30. I collected 249 total tweets from the 8 people that I'm interviewing, so your 43 made up about 17 percent of everything that I collected.

GM: Alright.

RD: From what I did, as far as the Grand Prix was concerned, it looks like you posted 2 things about the Matt Grevers' engagement, which was the big story that weekend and then 2 things about the Grand Prix not related to the engagement. One thing I noticed that, I tallied all of these various things, and one thing I noticed that was high in your tweets was, at least 30 percent of your tweets that weekend were what I call interpersonal communication, you were using it for talking to people, asking questions, answering questions.

GM: Okay.

RD: I was curious to see, why do you use it that? Or do you think it's a good tool for interpersonal communication?

GM: It depends who I am talking to. There are certain things, like today for instance, Cullen Jones, I wished him a Happy Birthday and then he thanked me and said he was coming to town. So, I wrote back, probably, "Yes, no problem" and then I sent him a couple of private messages. There's certain things that I'll leave public and then there's certain things that I think should remain private. I mean every once in awhile I'll get caught into conversations with somebody that might post something that I don't think should have shown, or whatever, and I always have to judge how I am going to react to that. Whether I try and laugh it off and ignore it or respond more harshly or sternly. I'm

50 years old with 19 year old twins, you know a lot of people think I'm too old to be doing some of this stuff but again, being pretty techy orientated it fits me. But at the same time I find that I try and have some responsibility and what people would think when they read these things, so I try and be careful who I respond publicly to and how. Hopefully that shows in whatever I've said back anyway.

RD: Okay. Out of the random tweets that you posted that weekend, there were a few kind of humorous photos relating to swimming but not necessarily the Grand Prix. I actually noticed that you use media, you actually post videos and photos a lot more than some of the other people I'm interviewing, so I was curious, do you think that helps bring attention to your site? Or do you get a lot of click throughs that way?

GM: What I find with Facebook and Twitter are the things that tie directly to my website, I actually get higher click throughs on average than say general news stories. So, if I was only interested in just driving traffic back, I mean I would just post 12 different links every day that just go back to the website. But I think that gets back to the statement that people follow people, not businesses. I think that people would catch on right away that there was no hiding the fact that I'm just trying to get them to go to my website. And after being involved in the sport for 45 years, I have a lot of friends in the sport and I want to make a lot more. So, it's more than just the business, it's about serving the community in any small way that you can. So, again that's why I do some of both. But my business is very visual. It's video production and it's instruction through still frames and photography and explanation of angles and body positions. The stuff that I would tweet that comes back to the website, or if I find something on the outside that's intriguing from that stand point, then I think it can help somebody or inspire somebody, then I'm gonna link to something more visual. I think today, I think every thing I posted was either a picture or a video.

RD: Okay.

GM: It might all be pictures today. There wasn't really a plan for it. I just woke up this morning and the first thing I saw was this unbelievably beautiful picture of a free diver ascending. The name of the picture was "peaceful." And it was just what I got and I thought it would be cool to share that with people and then I kind just got this thing that was like, well what if that's what I did all day? And so I just started looking for pictures, some come from my website and some from other websites and I cam across some pretty cool stuff. So, hopefully people are enjoying it.

RD: Well, that's awesome. It definitely seems like they are on Twitter. Let me get back to my regular questions. How do you specifically post things on Twitter? Do you have things that you decide, you know, that people won't like? Or do you just kind of post everything you have for that day?

GM: No, like I said I go through, on the average 10 to 15 tweets a day. I would probably look at 30 to 50 different stories. Each website that I go to is going to have 3 or 4

different things on it that might be valid. I figure, they're probably tweeting it too and if it's a swimming orientated person they're going to get the same message from me and them. So, I don't want to do too much of that. You know, what I'm trying to do is pick the things; you know the things that interest me the most are pretty much the things that I'm going to tweet. I'm trying not to read too much into what other people think. I guess if you followed me long enough on Twitter, you'd know more about me. I don't mean, not to you but just in general. The things that really interest me, like the Paralympics and the Olympic movement. I think if you look over time at my tweets even on the Olympics you would begin to understand that maybe at some point in my history, the IOC and the USOC did something that I wasn't really happy with.

RD: Yes, what happened in 1980 was definitely a shame.

GM: Yes, so something like that. Now, I try not to do that all the time but you know, if I see corruption out there it might make it into a tweet somewhere. You know? For the most part, because I work with so many current Olympians as well, I try and make sure we really build up the whole idea of the Olympic spirit and the movement because the people that are doing, the athletes that are doing it, are doing it for the absolute pure and right reasons. It's the people that are running it that I have a little bit of a different issue with.

RD: So, you're basically not afraid to speak your opinion on Twitter if you feel that it's the right thing?

GM: I've been self-employed for 30 years now, if somebody wants to do something to me because they're mad at what I say, then they're going to do it. I don't really care. The one great thing about being in a very small business, in a niche business, is that I don't have to be worried or afraid of anybody because I try not to lie about people. I try not to say bad things, if there is something out there that should be brought to an issue, whether or not I'm the one or if it's my position or place, they should sit back and say, "Who really cares what Glenn says?" I'm certainly not afraid to say anything but at the same time, politics are like athletics. They're a double-edged sword. When somebody wins a race then they're very happy, that means somebody's lost a race and they're very sad. There's a victory and a loss in every race. In politics there is a winner and a loser, so if I get too excited about one thing and it's from the winning side, then I don't factor in how the people that lost feel. I try to take that into consideration when I post something as well.

RD: Okay, that's a nice approach. As far as the upcoming Olympics and Olympic Trials, do you have any plans in place right now for your website as far as covering it and covering it on Twitter?

GM: Well, I'm sure I'll be tweeting about it. I'm still trying to decide if I'm going or not. We have an Olympian reunion every four years and it's great to see all my old friends, my wife is taking 6 athletes out to it, so it's a lot of mixed emotions. I don't want to just go out there for a good time when she's going to be so stressed. I may not even go, if I

don't go I'll be tweeting stuff that other people tweet. Or I'll be tweeting stuff that I see on TV. If I do go, I'll have my phone with me and I'll be taking pictures of the event probably and sending things out. I'll definitely be doing something but I think they'll be a lot of people who are really on the inside who will have a lot better track on things than I will. Even like the Olympian reunion, when you're surrounded by 100 to 200 Olympic or former and present Olympic athletes, you have to be careful that you're not in there taking advantage of the whole situation and taking pictures and sending them out. You know, those people might not want to be in the public eye anymore. So, generally with things like that I wouldn't really be doing a lot of tweeting, you know here's this person, here's that person, you know because I want to protect their privacy as well. It would mostly just be events around the meet but like I said if I don't go I'll just be doing the same thing that everybody else is.

RD: Okay. Do you think Twitter has made your job easier or harder or neither?

GM: Much harder. It's just another thing that you have to keep up with. We're a very small business and we try and make sure that we're in the public eye as much as possible as a small business. Just an example of what we do, we do a free drill every week for the last 8 years and the last 4 years we've been posting on Youtube. So, we give away a lot of information and a lot of content. We've played 11 ½ million videos on Youtube and that's all been for free.

RD: Wow.

GM: And so, it's just one of the aspects, Twitter becomes another aspect of what we deal with. We need to do from a technological standpoint stay in front of people, and as technology and social networks and as all avenues open up we have to take a serious look at them because we don't want to get left behind.

RD: Okay. The last few questions I have relate to the Matt Grevers' proposal at the meet. The first one is, why did you tweet about the proposal and do you think that it's newsworthy?

GM: Newsworthy is a good question. I've met Matt a few times and I think he's a great guy, I really like him as a person and I was very excited for him as an individual and for his fiancée. I was really happy for him, it's almost like when you do something like that out in public, I guess there's a couple different ways to look at it, I'm not skeptical at all about any reasons why he did it other than that he loves Annie very much and he wanted to make sure that everybody knew about it. I think one of the reasons that he did it publicly that was one of the them. She's never gonna forget that moment and neither will he, and I thought it was a very personal moment for them and they shared it with the community and it was almost not an obligation but when you do something like that publicly it's almost like they want everybody to know how happy they are and it just makes everybody else happy. It just spread like wildfire and it's hard to watch it without being happy. You know, if I had heard that they had gotten engaged and in fact, I did

hear earlier in the weekend, I didn't know how, to be honest with you, it didn't really strike me. Until I saw that video of them, it was like, I'm sitting here watching it on Youtube or wherever I saw it and even I got teary eyed and started crying. I thought it was beautiful and so that's the sort of emotion that you want to share with people. That they're is so much good going on in the world, that it was just such a positive thing, that, whether or not you call it newsworthy, it was just, it was great. And so that's the sort of thing that you want to share, they shared it with us and I felt that it was fair to share with as many people as I could.

RD: Okay, as far as the proposal, it was obviously the most covered moment of the Grand Prix here in Missouri. Why do you think it was the most tweeted about or the most media covered moment of the meet versus like, I don't know, a fast swim or a big athlete, like a famous athlete that was here in town?

GM: The timing of the meet was difficult; the athletes are in a very touchy time right now. If they swim too fast it probably shows that they might not be ready for Olympic Trials, the times weren't as fast as some of the other Grand Prix meets because of the timing of it. You've got a lot of swimmers resting for NCAAs that wouldn't have gone and it was the sort of meet that is incredibly great competition but at the same time, the times of the meet weren't what was newsworthy. It wasn't as fast as other meets. But it's nothing against the athletes, it's the time of year that it is, it's the time of season coming up to the Olympic Games. You know, so the times and the races weren't really what the meet was all about. It was athletes getting together to race each other and that happens every weekend across the globe. The thing that really stood out was the special event that occurred at that meet. That made it a different meet that made it more special than anything else because as far as the races were concerned, yeah, there were a lot of great races and a lot of people tried really hard but it wasn't the sort of meet that is going to draw all of the attention simply by the performances.

RD: Okay, as far as that being the most covered moment or the most tweeted moment, what do you think it says about how people like to use Twitter and what they like to share on Twitter?

GM: People love, I think people love very positive things. People love to see their Olympic heroes as regular people. Matt Grevers, until you sit next to him, it's hard to know what an imposing, impressive figure he is just as a human being. People would generally look at someone like that generally as just a rugged, rough, you know, almost intimidated by his presence. To see, to hear that this hero to so many people, this champion, is down on one knee in front of the woman that he loves, I mean it's just such a cool thing to humanize him, like every other one of us that's done that. I think that people really appreciate seeing that their heroes are human, in a positive way. I mean, I think people love to tell bad news more than they love to tell good news and I think this shows that people, you know, maybe who knows, I'm an optimist. So, maybe everybody's changing. The reason it was the biggest news was because it was the best news of the weekend.

RD: Okay, well those were the questions I had planned. Is there anything you want to add or do you have any questions for me?

GM: No, not that I can think of. I think that it's great that it turned into a Matt Grevers and Annie Chandler question because to be honest with you, I forgot that was the weekend because that kind of overshadowed everything. That was a really cool event. I was very happy for both of them. Very genuine.

Jason Marsteller-Swimming World Magazine Interview Transcript 2/21/12

RD: So, your job or position is General Manager Media Properties for Swimming World Magazine?

JM: Yes.

RD: You also said that you break most of the stories for the site, is that true as well?

JM: Yes.

RD: You also previously said that you've been working there for 6 years and that you worked in PR as a Sports Information Director before, that's true as well?

JM: Yeah, I'm in my sixth year and yes, prior to this I was in public relations before Swimming World for 1, 2-8 years.

RD: Where did you work previously?

JM: The two years before I was one of the Sports Information Directors at Indiana University.

RD: Okay.

JM: Two years before that I was going to grad school for my Sports Administration degree. I was at the University of Tennessee, where I was a graduate assistant.

RD: Okay.

JM: The four years prior to that I was at Southern Utah University and I was a student intern there for 3 to 4 years. The fourth year I was kind of a volunteer that did a lot so, I put three years on the resume and the fourth year I was a volunteer. So, I was at Southern Utah University of four years.

RD: How did you end up covering swimming and do you have a background in the sport?

JM: I do not have a background. I ended up starting into the sport at Tennessee. I started there with golf, rowing and special projects. I was working for the women's athletics department there. Up until recently they were completely split, a men's side and a women's side. I worked for those sports and then they had a sports shakeup after my first year there, where one of the GAs got a job opportunity that he couldn't turn down, so he accelerated his graduate program to one year, so once he left and they brought someone else in, we had a sports shakeup and I wound up with swimming as well and dropped rowing I think. I can't remember, I just remember that I still had golf and I still had swimming and diving and I still did all the other stuff I did and they added that and that's where I started learning the sport. The first year I didn't know anything about it. This whole relay lead off stuff made no sense to me, it's like what do you mean you can get a 100 back time in a 400 medley, you mean I have to look for splits now? It was a completely football mentality. Everything I've ever done I've did it, if that's the job I'm going to pour myself into it, so I treated that sport like it was so important and learned it as much as possible. So, that led to my job in Indiana and when I was hired in Indiana I was primarily swimming and diving, so both men's and women's instead of just women's and I poured myself into the sport there and then this job opened up and the coach at Indiana, Ray Lews knew the CEO here and also collegesswimming.com's owner Greg Garheart, I worked with him a lot when I was at Indiana. He also knew Brent, my boss here, so I got two recommendations and it's a public place and not a private institution so he said, that's good enough for me-you're hired. It brought me closer to home because my family is in California and my wife's in Utah. That's really as quick as I can explain the history of my getting into the sport.

RD: Were you the one or did someone else at the company decide to start using Twitter for Swimming World Magazine?

JM: Nobody really made a decision, it kind of just happened. I've been on Facebook ever since it first came out as part of a Sports Information person, as part of a Sports Information guy you've got to monitor your athletes and I got on Facebook to monitor the athletes and find when they put inappropriate pictures and stuff like that. So, I've been on Facebook forever, so I really understood Facebook and I came in here and there still wasn't a culture of understanding social media but about three years ago there was a big push for Facebook fan pages, so I just took it on. I created that, I created the Twitter account, I linked them, so everything that goes on my Facebook fan page goes on Twitter now and then I linked a couple things to automatically be linked into Facebook fan page and that automatically goes to Twitter now. And then some of the stuff we just post manually. We never really sat down and said, we need to get into Facebook or Twitter, it just kind of happened. I don't know, I kind of made a decision but sometimes you find those times where stuff in companies, especially when you are a small company like this, you don't really have a policy decision conversation about going into social media, you just kind of happen to do it. So, that's kind of how it went down.

RD: Do you think your Facebook fan page is more popular than your Twitter or do you know it is?

JM: Well, based off numbers yes. We haven't put any advertisement into any one of them at all. All of our numbers are completely based off of word of mouth. Social media spreads. Facebook fan page we broke 10,000 fans and our Twitter followers are over 4,000 or more than 4,000. Just broke my own little pet peeve on over or more than, sorry. So, that's where we are at but we haven't even put it on our website and our website is way bigger than those numbers. We are definitely going to start advertising on our page that we have a fan page and that we have a Twitter but like you and I discussed before, when you are in a position like us where the views on your page matter more than your exposure, we have to be very careful about what we are doing. Some other places are like hey we want people on Twitter so talk to us, it's easier than having to email us or call us but when your livelihood is based off increasing your views on your website you don't want to give away, my boss calls it "scoop yourself" on Twitter and compete against yourself via the social media aspect. So, you've got to be real smart about how you use it.

RD: So, are you using it for branding then or no?

JM: Not really, our brand's bigger than our social media. Like everybody in the sport knows this. What we do, what we use it for is a potentially new tool to help people in the sport find out material. Everything that we post has a link back to our original material. We also use it as kind of a diplomatic ambassadorship within the sport, where other sites out there that we're friendly with, that follow the rules and don't steal content, we try to support them by sharing their links, sharing their content, retweeting, we try to do that. We try to positively reinforce the swimming universe that's out there online that does it the right way. We ignore the people that are content thieves and are just trying to capitalize on someone else's content.

RD: I looked at your Twitter to see when it was started and it said May 6, 2008. Do you think that had anything to do with the upcoming Beijing Olympics or did you know that was going to be a popular time for people to be reading swimming news because Michael Phelps would be going for his 8 gold medals, or was it just happenstance that it was May 2008?

JM: It was correlation not causation. Facebook and Twitter happened about the same time, so Twitter came after Facebook because we got into Facebook because there was some need to do it for some reason, or there was some desire to get into it, so we started it and I was the one that linked the Twitter account and started the Twitter account, so we linked the Twitter account to our Facebook account. It's never been a thrust of what we do because we can contact way more people on our own website than we can via the social media vehicles and the other part about the social media vehicle is that is it so fleeting, you spend so much time on an article to make sure it is all right and all of a sudden you are supposed to turn around and post something using 140 characters. You either have one of two choices; you either go and really dumb down your content or you

spam someone by blasting them with four different pieces of content. Part of the social media concept is we're really trying to make sure we're not annoying the people that opt into those. I mean when you get a friend who all of a sudden loves Farmville and you don't have time to be playing games all day long on Facebook, it gets annoying when you pop in and your entire news feed is people requesting you to be part of Farmville or that they happen to build a new plot, at point you are going to hide from that. So a goal is not have people unlike you on Facebook because we don't want people opting out. We want them to be happy with the content that they are getting, or helping them get it in a different location versus having to go to our site, to navigate to us versus finding us on Facebook because they are on every day.

RD: Do you have any kind of estimation that you think you spend tweeting per day for Swimming World Magazine?

JM: I don't do a lot of tweeting for Swimming World, I'll track it every once in awhile to see some stuff that we might retweet here or there. The actual Twitter usage, not huge. The Facebook usage, it depends-there are two things that are involved in Facebook, and this is almost completely like pulling away from the business aspect and also being a journalist. I'm on Facebook a lot, and it's also a very strong source generation tool because it's amazing. I can email someone at 2 o'clock in the morning, first they can be annoyed because they got an email from a media member, second they check and it's 2 o'clock in the morning and they freak out and think something is weird. I can add someone on Facebook and message them on Facebook at 2 o'clock in the morning if I need to and they'll respond as soon as they get it and not think different about it and yet it's the exact same thing, I just emailed you. I just happened to email you through Facebook. People are way more open to interaction on Facebook than they are via email or a phone call. It's amazing, the psychology of Facebook as a source management tool as a journalist is insane. It sort of dawned on me like four years ago and it's still blowing me away ever since. Just how people will be so upset if you email them, like-what I don't want to talk to you about this but all of a sudden you Facebook and they'll talk all day long. They'll sit there and they'll chat with you on Facebook chat. They'll send you pictures, they'll tag you in the picture, so you can see the picture. That has actually happened. As a journalist Facebook is amazing. The only difficult thing that happens is when people start breaking news off of Facebook and off of Twitter. I personally will not break news off of social media unless I've confirmed it and I've confirmed that they will allow me to go with that because I don't want to lose that pipeline of contact. If you break something off of someone off of Facebook, they defriend you, they block you and you're done. If you start doing that stuff on Twitter they are less likely to want to give you that opening to the public of what they want to say because they got burned and they are more careful. I always give sources a last chance, where I'll contact them and I'll say-Hey, do you really want me to report this? The only time I'll report something directly off of Twitter is if it's already out there. Or if someone has already run with it. Then I'll report that the tweet is where it started but I'll get the background information as well, like in an actual quote.

RD: Where do you get the information, the news that you post on Twitter or Facebook? Do you guys do original reporting, do you use wire service, do you take commentary from other people, news aggregator, etc?

JM: That's kind of hard to answer. It's more than just where we post because almost everything we do post is based off of what we do on our site. That's more just a direct question of how do you gain information in general and it's all the standard ways. There's Google Alerts, is one of the ways for some of the international stuff. Like today I posted something on Nick Darcy down in Australia and that's because in Australia this morning before I woke up there were like 18 different articles about being deemed eligible to make the Australian Olympic Team. So, if it's already been reported out there, unless I have source ability or the source structure to bring something new to the table, I just cite the original source and try to send them traffic. That's in an article. I will rarely just tweet out someone else's article unless it's like a blog and it's commentary. Other than that, it's original reporting. Sometimes I'll write about 10 to 15 meets in a weekend, especially during sectional time. That's all based off reading the live results and reporting on it and throwing context to go with it. Like, "Hey, this person broke this record." You know swim meets; it's all about how you rank versus the records you're being kind of compared against. There's sometimes investigative journalism that goes on, where we have to break a full on story like Fran Crippen dying. We broke that story. Or Jessica Hardy, we broke that story. Stuff like that. That's just full on normal journalism, just talking to people and stuff and sometimes you've gotta go anonymous on it. That's that direction.

RD: As far as the Missouri Grand Prix is concerned, for a meet like that, what do you feel like your responsibility is to cover it? And how much coverage do you give it?

JM: We have different levels of coverage and we used to be a little bit more strict about what level deserved what kind of coverage. It changes sometimes based off of the level of need. We have A Coverage, a B Coverage, a C Coverage. Where the A Coverage is like when we're covering NCAAs, I'm there. Like at an Olympics where every single event will be covered as a separate story. So, if there are 8 races at night, I'll write 8 stories and they're all individual stories and I'll do prelims all together. For a Grand Prix, it's more like an A, B, C, D, E. That one's more like a C because a B level you do a prelim report and you do a final report. Grand Prixes, unless there is an inkling that it is going to be a really strong meet, most of them are in-season swims and there's not a lot of fast swimming. In comparison to all-time rankings. In-season wise at Missouri was pretty big because there were some swims that were top of the world just for this year but this year is only like 2 months old. We just do a daily report, which is like a C. A D-level is a full meet recap, where we recap just the winners. An E-recap is like what we did with Elizabeth Pelton and Eileen Atkinson this past weekend. It was the Florida Gulf Coast Senior Championships and there wasn't a lot of fast swimming other than the people from T2. So, we just reported on the fast swims and that was it. That tends to come from out of the blue, like with Katie Hoff a couple years back when she went and broke a couple of American Records at the Maryland Swimming Championships. One person does well and just because one person does well doesn't mean you have the resources and time to go

and cover every single thing else in that meet like you typically would for a bigger meet. It's all about time management and what you have time for; you'll never have enough time in this sport to cover everything. There's just too much going on. There was a time literally where I went 2 years without a day off, during the tech-suit era. Someone was breaking World Records on the 31st of December. It was ridiculous. I remember this, I wrote an article about it. A French team broke a World Record during a club championship. That was after 200 World Records that year and I was like "Uh-uh, I give up. I'm never getting a day off." Literally, that weekend I was like, I'm going to get away from swimming and I'm not going to do anything and this weekend there is not going to be anything going on. All of a sudden I get home, I'm with my family and all of a sudden it was the Michael Phelps's Steel Laz-R Racer, on The Amazing Race. Where all the teams had to either do synchro diving or swim in a Laz-R Racer. I was like; you've got to be kidding me. My mom is watching The Amazing Race and I'm seeing swimming. Swimming never ends. There's always swimming and it's good because it keeps you consistent but the life balance gets a little difficult sometimes.

RD: I can imagine. I created a little data sheet of all of the tweets that Swimming World did during the weekend of the Grand Prix, just to ask you some questions. So, if you had to guess and I collected starting at midnight on February 10 the day the meet started and stopped collecting at midnight on February 13, the day after the meet ended. How many tweets do you think Swimming World posted in total?

JM: 10 to 20.

RD: You actually, including retweeting and talking to people like @ statements, you posted 56 over three or four days.

JM: Wow. I didn't realize that, cool.

RD: It's actually 22 % of the total tweets I collected for my thesis because I am interviewing 8 people and I collected a total of 249 tweets over the weekend of the meet, so Swimming World accounts for 22 % of that. Do you think there is a time of day, I know that most of your tweets are coming from stuff you post on your Facebook fan page, but do you think there is a time of day that you are posting the most?

JM: The time the posting happens generally there are three times during the day. It's when I first get in in the morning I'll post a lot of stuff. Then I'll get to more my content stuff and my management stuff throughout the day. Then later on in the afternoon sometimes stuff will break or something in Europe will happen, which is during the day for us because it's night there. At night that's probably when a lot of the retweeting happens because that's when I'm at home and I'm on my cell phone a lot more, so that's when I'm on my app. That's when I do a lot more of my retweeting, is in the evening.

RD: You did tweet pretty consistently throughout the day, there wasn't just one time of day that you were sending out all of your tweets, which some people do. Occasionally, I

would see a tweet in the middle of the night, at midnight or one am, and I had to ask if you really do tweet in the middle of the night? Or some people have services that tweet stuff for them that they post earlier.

JM: There's two of them. One, if it's an MSS one, that's an automated. That's every midnight during the week because we post our show for the day at like 12:01 a.m. If it is anything else it's because I have a one year old and I'm sitting there reading tweets while I'm up with him. That's kind of the middle of the night stuff. If I'm up, I'm looking at my cell phone just to make sure because this sport never ends anywhere. Fran Crippen died at like 4 a.m. my time and that's when I got contacted, so if I wasn't available at all times I would miss out on being able to get the cleanest story out there versus other people that are going to try and be salacious about it. So, at all times I'm checking my stuff in case I have to stop and work. My wife and everybody around me understands that I don't have a normal work schedule like everybody else around me. If they have overtime they know they are going to be done at 8 but my job never ends. I'll be at home and I'll get a text and all of a sudden I've got to work. We have a rule in my house and all my friends and all my family knows this, if my face is in a laptop don't talk to me. It's just like a mechanic being underneath the car. I've got to focus and I've got to concentrate. The quicker you let me concentrate the quicker I'm getting back to being a normal person and do my job and be able to talk. That's what happens with this position. That's how this job is. If it's midnight and it's an MSS, then it's an automated but anything else is just stuff I post.

RD: Out of your 56 total tweets 7 of them were about Matt Grevers' engagement and a few of those were retweets of stuff Ricky Berens, Chloe Sutton and USA Swimming had tweeted previously. Three tweets were about the Grand Prix but not about Matt Grevers' engagement. And then other things that you posted, there were actually 7 tweets about Missy Franklin's high school swimming championships and then just a lot of general swimming news. Like international and college stuff because there were some other meets going on like the USA Swimming Gold Medal Dining event with Garrett Weber-Gale. You posted a couple of links for articles like that one about a swimming fantasy draft. I wanted to ask you, the stuff that you posted that wasn't about the Grand Prix or the Grevers' engagement because I'll get to the Grevers' engagement later. For instance, Missy Franklin's high school swimming championships, that was actually a big story too that weekend and I wanted to know if you were writing articles about it and following it the whole weekend or because it was on ESPN 3 was it a bigger story?

JM: There's multiple layers to that one. A couple things, number one Colorado was not having live results for that meet. So, it got pretty difficult because we had to watch the meet the entire stream. I luckily had someone at the meet that was texting me the Missy Franklin stuff but also Bonnie Brandon started putting up some really good swims as well. It became one of the highest profile high school swim meets I've ever seen. ESPN 3 didn't really do it, what it was, was the local high school swim meet-Chaffa TV is what they called it, they worked a deal with ESPN to cosign it. The finals. If you watched it the second day, I don't think I saw an ESPN graphic. When she broke that first national independent record it was like okay, all hands on deck. I spent way more time on high

school that weekend than on the Grand Prix because there was way more records going on that weekend for high school than how things were going at the Grand Prix. The time that the Grand Prix really became a major issue was the podium proposal. I have personally never, ever, ever seen anything go that viral in this sport ever.

RD: I can tell you I was sitting there obviously because I went to the meet and the crowd went crazy and right away I knew that people were going to be really excited but I didn't realize the level. Because I went on Twitter 2 or 3 minutes after it happened and it started popping up everywhere and I was very surprised as well.

JM: Did it trend, I never looked at that but did it trend?

RD: I never saw it actually trending. I've always tried to figure out how many millions of tweets you need or hundreds of thousands of tweets you need to trend because it seems like things trend differently. The Whitney Houston death was the same night.

JM: Yeah.

RD: Right away that trended almost; of the ten topics that were trending almost all ten of them were about Whitney Houston. So, if it were going to trend I think that Whitney Houston's death probably made it impossible.

JM: Yeah, definitely. I forgot about that because I actually found out about it because of a tweet. I was out watching a softball game and I was coming back, I was going to come back and cover it that night and one of my friends from Northwestern, I've known him for a very long time, the Northwestern softball team comes out to play at the Arizona State Tournament every year and it's like the only time I get to see the guy. So, we always go and see them at least once and that was the only time we could go because my wife's schedule is all during the day now. So, we went there and he comes up and says, "Whitney Houston just died" and I'm like, "No, you're lying." So, I look at Twitter and a couple of seconds later USA Swimming tweeted out Matt Grevers and I looked at him because Matt Grevers actually went to Northwestern. So, I told Doug and he's like-"No way!" and looks at it and then he went and retweeted the USA Swimming things from Swim Northwestern to make sure he got to say, "Hey, congrats Matt!" Here's some of the funny stuff, I'll have to find it, it's a website I really like it, called Swimmer'sDaily.com and it's a guy out of the Faroese Islands who helps coach Hal Johnson. He had posted a video, you know Tom Daley the diver, that had 220,000 views on him and a bunch of Great Brit divers who did a remake of "Sexy and I Know It." He was talking about how it's a shame that this had 220,000 views and we can't get anyone to watch swimming. Then he posted another blog later on after the Grevers' thing that said, and that was when it was like 400,000; at least this broke the 220,000 that this other one got. Then I looked and it was like 900,000 and then it was number 10 on ESPN Sports Center that night. It was totally crazy and some of the Chinese that I follow, even they posted it. That thing was crazy.

RD: Actually that Tom Daley lip sync video was one of the things I wrote down on your data sheet under random tweets. Things you tweeted that were just funny or whatever, that was one. You had retweeted what Peter Busch said about how difficult it is to tweet about the Grammy Awards because they are on tape delay. Do you just find things that are funny or interesting that you retweet? Or how do you choose stuff?

JM: Sometimes it's me accidentally messing up on my path, where I'll mean to send it out on my personal tweet like the Peter Busch thing I think and I actually tweeted it out on Swimming World. I'm horrible about that. Tweetcast is awesome but it's not really good with that stuff. What was the question?

RD: The interpersonal communication, which I'm keeping track of too, where people write to each other over Twitter, you actually only wrote with the Nashville Aquatic Club during the weekend. I think you were asking them about results, so those were the only ones of those that you were sending out.

JM: On purpose I will not have a conversation on Twitter.

RD: Okay.

JM: Because first I don't want to mess around with the direct messaging stuff. I was even questioning that because I couldn't find live results from that meet. Before they even got back to me on Twitter I found them. I will have a conversation on Facebook because that's not public. As a journalist you know you need to be real careful about how you have conversations. You can have a conversation that starts and then all of a sudden it turns into something crazy, you never knew you were going in that direction and if some of it's public then good luck trying to help someone stay anonymous. I'm real careful about conversing on Twitter about anything that might touch into my business life. I'll talk through my personal Twitter, I'll try and talk to Dana White sometimes. I'm very, very careful about the communication because no matter what, all this social media is great but if you don't follow the basic concepts of being a journalist you're going to blow yourself up.

RD: Now I'm done with this data sheet, so we'll go back to regular tweeting and then get to the Matt Grevers' engagement. I think I asked you previously about reading or editing tweets before they are posted and you said you pretty much are the final person, that you do that yourself.

JM: What was that again?

RD: You don't have anyone, no one edits or reads your tweets before you post them for the most part, your responsible for posting stuff on Facebook. There's no next level?

JM: No, I'm pretty much the final level. We don't have any editing process of it.

RD: For Facebook and Twitter, who do you think your audience is? Or who are you writing tweets for? Are you mainly writing them for the local swim community that's really interested? Do you also pick up people that maybe are just getting into swimming? Who do you think you are mainly writing for?

JM: It's the primary demographic that we have. It's just another avenue to get to them. To make it easier for them to get to our content. It's definitely not an expansion concept; it's mainly just a way to energize the base if you want to talk political terms. We have our base demographic, we got the largest base demographic or base readership of any other media types out there that are related to swimming and that's by far. The only place that I think we really fall behind is something like Mel Stewart because that's what he does; he's a personality, that's his gig. He's not interested in this and never wants to be. It's more about that. At some point we'll start trying to break out and then, and obviously social media is a kind of way we can break into finding new readers like that. By and large we aren't really at a place to pursue that yet.

RD: As far as retweeting, what will you retweet and what will you not retweet?

JM: First, we won't retweet anything that is close to profanity. So, even though I laugh my butt off to all the stuff that swimmers say or stuff that sprinters say and all that stuff that actually does cuss. I was laughing but I wouldn't retweet it. The Swimmers Problems stuff is funny, I die laughing at some of those but I would like to retweet some of the stuff but our brand dates back to like the 50s, so we definitely try not to have sophomoric humor. And we try and remain very credible and some people think boring but it's very effective and it's very trustworthy. Like some of our demographic, one time we had a picture of Michael Phelps on the cover and he was in briefs and the brief was low enough to show one of his tattoos and we got complaints that you could see pubic hair and it wasn't a shave meet. The picture was fine to me. It's not even close to that. Yet you still have, I don't know if I retweeted or not Natalie Coughlin being in the body paint this year. I think I thought about it but I think I didn't do it just because she was technically naked. We even had internal conversations about, would we cover Amanda Beard being in Playboy or not. We still wound up covering it but we didn't really go big on it like some other places did. There's definitely a brand and we try and follow what we see the brand as with what we will retweet. Some of it is just based off of people that we like, they do things well and we support them. I've always seen a retweet or a share as being supportive, not necessarily trying to pass along information to our readers. To me the retweet is identical in a mental process to if I found a news article out there but I have the ability to go actually do a full article on it, I'm probably just going to do a light article on it and still cite that it originated some place else. If it has enough gravitas to it, to actually devote attention to it, then I'm going to go do my real article about it and that's going to be when it gets tweeted out. If it's something that doesn't seem as big of a deal or it's something that we like or something we're comfortable with then we'll retweet.

RD: Do you like Facebook and Twitter have made your job easier or harder or is it just one part of it?

JM: It's the whole technological slavery thing. Technology has done both and I have to laugh. They're putting into place laws where they can start charging for overtime phone calls from email. It's the concept of technological slavery. I love having my smart phone now, it changed my life but there are times that it's like, did it change it for the worse? Like getting up in the middle of the night. I could sleep better beforehand because if I really wanted to double-check it gave me the time period of getting up, going and turning on my computer to look at my email even if I had my email on. Even if I just left my computer on, I'd still have to go, sit down, turn the monitor on, wait for the monitor to light up, looking at my email on the road, you know the whole process of, hey do I really want to check my email? Now I'm always up at 2 o'clock in the morning because of my kid, so it's no big deal. Where before it was around, before I had a smart phone and then it just started happening. You know you wake up at 2 o'clock in the morning to get up to go to the bathroom and go back to sleep sometimes. Now it's so easy for me to check it costs me sleep. Because all of a sudden I'll see something and it's like, oh I've gotta take care of that. Because we're a global site, we have people all over the world reading us. So, if I have something that's messed up on the site and I notice it at 2 o'clock in the morning, it might be 5 or 6 but I'm going to fix it instead of just sleeping through and doing it in the morning. So, what if a story breaks at 2 o'clock in the morning? I've got to go start calling people in Australia. Facebook from a source management standpoint is just huge. It makes it so much easier because I don't have to remember everybody's phone number, or have everybody's phone number in the phone. Nobody answers your phone calls anymore, you're just texting anyway. Especially in this business, nobody answers the phone anymore.

RD: That's interesting.

JM: But they'll sit there and they'll text me for 20 minutes straight but they won't answer the phone.

RD: Will you use a text as a quote in an article?

JM: I have a stricter level than typical journalism but it's because it's so small of a niche that I can't burn sources. If you're covering politics they have to talk to you anyway, it doesn't matter if they hate you; they have to talk to you. You're the media. They relationships matter way more if you are covering a niche like this. My standard policy is everything is off the record until we both go on the record. So, I'll text with people back and forth and all the ones that will text with me like that, they understand one of two things happens. Either, I'll tell them, okay we need to go on the record now because I have some questions or I'll say, hey can I use that. Nine times out of 10 on the hey, can I use that, they'll say, "Don't use this but here is the quote I want you to go with." It's like the conversation I had with you, I had an off the record conversation first and now I want to make sure whatever I'm telling you is direct. Versus having a normal human being conversation that develops an understanding of being a human being. That's the core of what we do as journalists. You have to understand what that human being is going

through and not just be an agenda because if you are an agenda, go and work for Fox News. That's what those places do because they are all about the numbers and not about true journalism anymore. True journalism is all about relationships.

RD: Just out of curiosity, because at my school if you write an article and you get a quote from someone that is a non-traditional source like, unless it is from a phone interview or an in-person interview, if you got a quote from an email, we are supposed to say, so and so said through email. So, would you say that they said it through text or would you say that it was a quote?

JM: I'd just say it as a quote because the person said it. Said is then kind of redefined. Just because, watch a teenager with a cell phone, do they talk on the phone anymore like they used to? No, they're texting all day long. In their mind they had a conversation where they said, this, this and this and he said that and she said that. They didn't say he texted that, she texted that, no he said it. That's the new definition of "said." I still agree that everything should be said instead of commented and explained and all that stuff because it's not your place to inject emphasis. So, you don't want to get into that explained, or laughed or laughed through what he said and all that stuff. Texting is a new way of saying. It's just how it is now.

RD: That's interesting, I would have never thought about texting through interviews but I can see how with athletes it can be a good way to get a hold of them.

JM: Even the posture of holding up a cell phone. I've been talking to you for like 30 minutes right now and my hand is about to fall off. Versus, I just sit there and in the same posture as I use to type out on a laptop I use to text with both my hands. It's just because while I do that I can actually be laying down, I can be stretching. If you're a swimmer you can be getting massaged down and you can be texting. You can be working out and you can be texting.

RD: It's true.

JM: You can be doing a leg workout and you can be texting. Where if you are trying to be on a cell phone, or if you're trying to do cardio, you can't talk. People, the only thing they have to worry about is thumb tendonitis now.

RD: Yes, I know. These kids with their sending of 10,000 texts a month. It's a different lifestyle than I grew up with.

JM: Trust me, I grew up in the days where you had to know everybody's phone number and it was before call waiting and it was cool when you had a really, really long cord so you could walk around the house instead of just sit in one seat. It's just a completely different mentality now. You accept it, you move into it or you die. You kind of just have to live in it.

RD: Definitely. As far as the Matt Grevers' proposal is concerned, why did you post about it and what do you think makes this story newsworthy?

JM: First, I posted about it because I loved it. I typically try and stay away from the TMZ type of stuff but Andy's blogged for us a couple of times, I've met Grevers a couple of times. I don't know him as friends or acquaintances but I know them enough to know how cool they are and that they are genuine people. It was one of the few times that I think we could cover something that humanized people without having to go in-depth like we normally would have to do from a reporting standpoint. Those are the moments that I love because as I've talked about the brand before, we don't do a whole lot of features and it's one of the places that we wanted to delve into but to be able to succeed in a content drive place you have to be able to produce massively. Doing features is really hard to do massively unless that is all you do. Even if that is all you do, at best you can do one a day. I'd cover 40 meets in a day if I had to. I'd love it but I can't. If I have a formula down I can apply it to that formula but I covered it because I do believe it is newsworthy. An Olympian popped a proposal out on an internationally streamed event. In the old days it would have been a regionally televised event, so it would have been the same thing but you can take a regionally televised event level of production and they'll stream it internationally. I knew internationally everybody was seeing it. I thought it was newsworthy, so we covered it because that's a big deal especially when he did it during a meet. It's not like, if someone just got engaged away from a meet we probably would have covered it, like if Dominik Meichtry and Jessica Hardy got engaged today we probably would have covered that. But if you popped it on top of a podium and there is video of it? Yeah, we cover it. The video definitely trumped that. When there's video and there's pictures of it, the multimedia aspect of it lends itself towards coverage too. If all I can say about it in a paragraph is this person got engaged to this person, you're not going to put a 50-word article up but if you can put it in as part of another article and also add multimedia with it-sold.

RD: Yes, I am interviewing the woman who runs the Missouri Grand Prix Twitter and she of course is here on campus, she works for our swim stadium and I was surprised in a good way how quickly they were able to get that video online. It literally seemed within an hour or two. They were posting photos of it within like 20 minutes and then they got the video up very quickly.

JM: It doesn't hurt that his brother was at Missouri and set the whole thing up. It wasn't like he just popped it. That's the thing about it, that multimedia helped because it's kind of like the PR thing of being prepared for a PR element. Being on the side of the PR, you have to be prepared to capitalize on moments. If you aren't prepared you lose moments. The place like Missouri is perfect, especially since his brother was there, he's at Missouri and he was there. He helped set it up. He's the one that made it happen. It was like, all of a sudden that friend came up, slipped him the ring so he had it in his warm-ups, Matt gave a little weak nod to his brother, his brother said okay and you starting seeing what happens. They set it up, so it was like hey, why don't you go present this and it's like I want Annie Chandler, I want a national teamer because they never have enough people to

present. Half the time the coach who wins goes up and presents. Then it's like; hey let's take a picture with the brother. They were smart, they said, "Why don't you go up there a take a picture?" If you watch the video, actually there's two videos, there's one from USA Swimming that's out everywhere and then there is the one that's on Facebook. It's shot from the other side. You watch Annie with Andy taking pictures with the photographer and then he says, hey why don't you go take a picture with Matt? And she's like, oh yeah whatever. He disarmed her on the whole taking pictures thing because she said that the only time she felt uncomfortable was when she was asked to take a picture with him but Andy had already established, it's kind of like when you are trying to go date a girl, you have to establish that you are pre-qualified before you go ask. You pre-qualify the situation, you're taking pictures with someone who is a family member and that put her in that mind frame and then she went and walked up there and completely had no idea. Then he gets on his knees, she freaks out, she almost falls off the back and he helps her get back on her knees, so she doesn't fall off the back of the thing because if she falls of the back of the thing she goes and falls in the water. I don't know if you've seen the one that's on Facebook but you've got to find that one.

RD: I think I've only seen the USA Swimming one.

JM: I'll have to find that other one, that night someone posted that. I think Matt posted it. It's from the other side. You see the whole thing kind of happen. How they put it up, it was awesome.

RD: I also think people liked the story behind it, being that he was going to propose the night before if she medaled in her event but she didn't, so then he knew that he had to try and win his event so he would be on the top of the podium, so he could pull it off. I think people liked the planning behind it as well.

JM: Oh yeah. All that stuff definitely came out in the wash. The best article of all was Gustafson's article on USA Swimming. I emailed him and I was like, that was the best article, I love your stuff. He's awesome.

RD: I'm interviewing him as well, later this week.

JM: I love that guy.

RD: I think he'll be a good interview also. As far as what it says about how people use Twitter and what they like about it. Why do you think this type of human-interest story is what really blew up from this meet and brought the meet a lot of attention?

JM: Because it was different. It was different, it was well pulled off. A thing about swimming that's difficult and it's one of the things we talked about, why this sport is so difficult to break out of being every 4 years. There are only two meets that are really fun to watch, if you're a fan, every year. It's NCAAs and it's the Olympics. Not every year because the Olympics are every four years. Those are the two meets where the clock

doesn't matter. All that matters is that you win and that's the key to being good television. And good entertainment is when it's true competition. When you have someone swim through a nationals and they win a national title and you are watching them and they turn around and look at the time and they're upset and yet they just won a national title. That'd be like any other sport, like a club championship team in softball winning it but because they didn't win 20 to nothing, they only won 2 to 1, they're mad. That's why typical normal swimming, unless you're a swimmer, it's not enjoyable to watch. You don't get really excited about it. There's always talk about pro teams and pro swimming and trying to make a pro league and I've even joked around with some people about organizing it, just take the time off the scoreboard.

RD: That would be interesting.

JM: Or just show them the time afterwards. All that matters is that they won. I wonder what would have if you just had no time with a swimmer for nationals and what they're reaction would be. That's the type of stuff that is missing in the sport, so when you do get something that is truly emotional, that's truly entertaining, they everybody goes ballistic about it. Yeah, cool. Someone became the third person to break a time in certain event, okay cool. Most people that are reading it are like, oh is that fast? Then the tech suits happened and people have an even harder time of understanding fast. It used to be; hey I almost broke the World Record, okay cool that's fast. Now it's like, I don't know is it fast or not. The thing that happens a lot is that people in swimming kind of look down on people who aren't in swimming because they want their attention. They look down at them from a standpoint of, they don't understand my sport and my sport is so much harder than other sports. So, it's not fair that you don't give me the proper respect. When a normal person out there, they don't care they just want to be in the thing. If your desire is to capture that market, you have to entertain. If not, then you just have to accept that this is how it is going to be and that we will be an every four years sport and no complaining.

RD: Out of the tweets that were posted during the Grand Prix and about the meet, probably the most telling in my opinion was that Eric Shanteau had posted a tweet where he basically said that he was fairly happy because he had broken his own meet record in the 200 Breaststroke but then he said the real big news from this meet is that Matt Grevers proposed to Annie Chandler. Even he recognized that breaking a meet record really didn't mean as much as this human-interest story.

JM: Yep. He nailed it. You nailed it right there.

RD: That's it for those questions and then the last question is about social media in general. I know that previously you had said that Twitter is not really part of your organization's business model.

JM: Yes.

RD: Do you think social media can make money? What is the financial interest for your company if it's not social media? How do you think you're going to make money in the future?

JM: We're debuting a meter paywall and that's in a couple of months. New York Times debuted it and it's amazing. The whole concept is amazing, it doesn't make common sense but it actually makes human sense of why it works. First of all, everyone thinks everything on the Internet is free all of the time. Social media can only make you money from the standpoint of, if it funnels people into your capitalization functions. You can do a contest to make people subscribers, get free subscriptions out there then all of a sudden maybe someone subscribed because they liked your content and they stayed. There's a lot of effort in that on top of the content effort you do just to provide great content. What New York Times did with the meter paywall is brilliant. No specific content is any more special than other content. You walk in with the assumption that this is all awesome stuff. You should be paying for every bit of this with the understanding that you don't want to pay for every bit of it, you want a taste. We're going to give you a taste monthly. We're going to give you 20, it doesn't matter what it is, we're going to give you 20 of them. Once you hit that 20, if you're going to use up all of that then we're a content service, which is different than just being a content provider. We service you by providing you content that you want and we sympathize in a way where you can trust our content. We're not just Google search, where you have to do the research yourself. Since we do that, you need to support that service if you're going to use it in the grand scheme. Here's the kicker, when you put a number, let's say 20, they go by 20 a month, people who refuse to pay but always want to be free. They make sure they get as much as they can until they hit 20. So, they use it until they hit the thing every month. And they make sure they use it because they want to make sure they use as much free to feel like, hey I'm getting one over on them. So, your users that typically aren't going to use you a lot don't find value in paying you, they're going to still find value in using it a lot. So, their views go up. Then also because you put a number of 20, or whatever number, the people who are paying they want to make sure they get their money's worth, so they make sure they use more than 20. When you start collecting in this format, you actually increase your views. People are always saying that if you put in any type of a paywall you are going to lose your viewers. You actually maximize how many people use you and how much they use you.

RD: It's very interesting.

JM: That's where our business model is going. Social media, we'll figure it out. At some point we'll focus in on it and find it but we have bigger fish to fry than that right now.

RD: Definitely, well those are all the questions I have. Is there anything that you want to add?

JM: No, it's been fun talking to someone about the business and not just talking specifically sports or whatever. It's fun talking about the thing that we do versus just talking about trying to get content.

Jennifer Seris (MO Grand Prix) Interview Transcript 2/23/12

RD: If we could start by you telling me what your job is and who you work for?

JS: My job is, technically my title is Graphic Designer but I also am in charge of all of the social media accounts that pertain to Mizzou Rec and the programs under it, which includes Missouri Grand Prix, the Tiger-X Fitness Program and our main general page. So, both Facebook and Twitter and we just answered someone's request for a Google Plus page, so now we have one too.

RD: How long have you been doing this job?

JS: I've been the Graphic Designer for 3 ½ years and then the social media stuff we started about a year and a half ago, really hitting it hard and kind of trying to have a plan for things.

RD: Do you have a background in PR, marketing, journalism or anything like that?

JS: No, no I do not. I was the most qualified person with Facebook experience personally and having to market things and the visuals that go with it. It made sense for my job to be the person to do both.

RD: As far as the Mizzou Grand Prix being on Twitter, was that a decision that you or someone else made or how did they end up on Twitter?

JS: We actually started our Twitter account with last year's Missouri Grand Prix and it wasn't really anything that we did much with it. It was just kind of, we had a new website, we had a Facebook page, it was still just kind of a figuring things out as we went along thing and honestly, it still kind of is that. It was something that was-we'll we might as well have that outlet out there and since it's an isolated event it was a safe thing to kind of play around with and now that it was a short term building up to the event, trying to generate interest and then kind of keeping people up to date as the event was happening and then to do really, really sparse posts in the in betweens of events.

RD: Do you yourself have a background in swimming?

JS: No, I do not.

RD: I know that you post very rarely on Missouri Grand Prix during the rest of the year. During the couple of days leading up to the meet and during the actual meet how much time do you think you were spending on Twitter per day?

JS: That's hard to tell and isolate it just for the Missouri Grand Prix page because like I said I monitor the main Mizzou Rec page and all that other stuff. I'd say I spent at least two hours per day, at least monitoring, you know if someone was tagging us in their tweets-the terminology is still not my strong suit. Just checking out what people were saying and monitoring the different searches that I had going and occasionally posting, "Oh, we still have tickets for sale" or "We're excited that this person is coming." Just that kind of stuff.

RD: So, kind of like promotional stuff?

JS: Yes.

RD: I created a little data sheet where I looked at that tweets that you posted starting at midnight on February 10 and running through midnight on the 13, just to see what the tweets were about, when they were posted. If I had to ask you to guess how many tweets you think you posted those 3 or 4 days in total?

JS: In total? Maybe 50.

RD: You are actually almost exactly on it. You posted about 51.

JS: That's awesome.

RD: I'm interviewing a total of 8 people and I collected a total of 249 tweets for that weekend, so your 51 is about 20 percent of all of the tweets I collected.

JS: Okay.

RD: Do you think there is a time of day that weekend where you were tweeting the most? Or do you have a guess?

JS: It was probably a little heavier at night. Either that or right away in the morning when we had new photos to post because the final sessions were the more exciting of the sessions. It was planned but not totally planned and some I'm not entirely sure, I don't know if I was overcompensating in the slow times in the morning or if I was doing more in the evening. It was just kind of as things were happening because I was here and I was obviously keeping track of what was going on and the photographers work for me, so I was in for when they had their photos ready for update and that kind of thing.

RD: I looked through and that definitely kind of lines up. You definitely tweeted in the morning, kind of in the afternoon leading up to the competition and then more right as

soon as the competition ended but not as many tweets as actually during the competition itself.

JS: Yeah.

RD: I noticed that USA Swimming was posting a lot of the results during the meet. Did you not post results during the meet because they took care of that?

JS: Yeah, that was kind of my take on it. We were more the host for the event and people were following us but not nearly as many people as were following them and since they have the background in swimming. I'd occasionally retweet their stuff. If someone wanted the actual results they were going to go to USA Swimming to get those.

RD: I'll ask you more about the Matt Grevers' engagement in a minute but out of your 51, 6 of them were about the engagement. You actually used Twitter a lot during the weekend for interpersonal communication. So, either answering people's questions or retweeting what other people had said, positives that they had said about the meet. Out of the 8 people I am interviewing, you probably had one of the highest interpersonal communication uses for Twitter. Do you think that that is a benefit of Twitter or is that something that you noticed at all?

JS: Honestly, I think that's what is fun about it to me. Obviously, I do it more than just for fun. I think if people are wanting to have that relationship with the people they are following or the entities that they're following. It seems to be a place that they can go to get the answers that they want. They're going to have to count on getting responses on things. Even if it's not a question, it's just the swimmers that commented that it was fun to be here. Then we want to say, "Thanks, we were glad you were here too." I think it's important to have that element of the interpersonal communication, so it's not just a bunch of people feeding information out with no response.

RD: Do you have anyone reading or editing your tweets before you post them? Or are you kind of the last---

JS: I'm the last one, yeah. If I'm sitting next to someone I'll be like, "Hey, does this look okay, does this sound right, can I say that?" Usually it is just me.

RD: In your opinion, were your tweets pretty successful during the weekend?

JS: I'd say so. We definitely garnered more followers as the meet went on and that was never something that I was like expressly trying to do. I wanted people to know we were there but it was more about, make sure everybody is having fun, so this is an outlet for people to get the responses that they want. Not that they want but from somebody directly.

RD: In your opinion, who is the audience for the Missouri Grand Prix Twitter account and who do you write the tweets for?

JS: That's kind of a tough question because that was the same kind of question we asked ourselves when building the website. We've got swimmers coming, we've got officials coming, we've got the parents of the swimmers or their families that want to know what spectating is about. We've got all kinds of people. I guess my audience are more, during the meet and leading up to it, is getting people interested in coming to watch the swimmers. The swimmers are already going to come; if they follow it's great, if they want to tweet about it, it's great. It's just another outlet for people to get to know about us or the event rather and go from there.

RD: Do you think Twitter made your job easier or harder that weekend?

JS: I don't know if it's really an element of easier or harder. It's definitely one of those elements of my job that goes beyond what I was originally hired to do but I enjoy it and it supplements what I do. I can control both the words going out and the images that go with them. You know, it's fun. Usually for that event I'm done with making the signs and the graphics for things and I'll just hang out and volunteer during the event. For the past two years it's been more of a, I need to be here in the capacity of someone who is professionally in charge of the social media element. Either way I was going to be here and it was fun to have more of a deeper connection with people who were actually coming in. Again without the background in swimming. It's more of just a helping people navigate. There was somebody who asked online, I put it on Facebook and on Twitter, that asked about places to eat and that's on our website but it was more fun to just directly say "Hey, these are some of our favorite restaurants, go check them out."

RD: Definitely. I saw that you had at one point retweeted about Vida coffee shop that's across the street from the Rec Center, kind of helping promote them and also let swimmers know that there is coffee available right there if they want it.

JS: Absolutely.

RD: Specifically related to the Matt Grevers' proposal.

JS: Yes.

RD: The first question that I have to ask is, why did you tweet about it and what do you think is newsworthy about it?

JS: On the backend of things, we were in on it. I knew about it ahead of time and our Senior Aquatic Coordinator was integral in making it run smoothly. We were some of the few; I'd say less than 7 people that knew it was going to happen. And my photographers actually didn't know specifically what was going to happen but I was in charge of making sure they were in place to get it because we knew whether it was newsworthy or not it

was a very exciting thing. Matt Grevers' brother is actually a swim coach for Mizzou, so he works in our building all the time at the Mizzou Aquatic Center. It was more of just like a, I wouldn't say personal thing. It was exciting and fun and we wanted to make sure we had it documented. Then when it became newsworthy, we had what I would say were the better photos because we were more in place to have that happen. They knew something was going to happen and they were positioned well for that. We were able to print them off in house and give them to Matt, and to Annie and to his mom and just add the more personal element to it.

RD: Why do you think that the proposal was the most tweeted about or talked about moment of the meet versus maybe a meet record that was broken or a big, famous athlete that was there?

JS: I don't know. I think engagements are just one of those things where it was just a cool way for him to do it. You know, it depended on him winning that race honestly to have it be really impactful. I don't know, it was just exciting. I think that are both really well known swimmers, so a lot of the tweets came from people who weren't even here but were really excited for them. You can be excited about the swimming events that are happening if you're not here but you're not necessarily going to get all tweet happy about it. Where as, if they are your friends or people that you know, it's just going to keep spreading that way. It's just a different kind of thing than swimming.

RD: Were you personally shocked by the amount of media coverage that it got in the days following?

JS: A little bit. It was funny, it was like that was us on The Today Show, somebody said we were on The Today Show. The coverage of it from the other angle, yes, that's us in the background, that's me filming it with my iPhone, so that someone has it right away. That's crazy.

RD: You guys are quick because I was very surprised in a good way how quickly you got it up online with the photos and then I think the video was posted later that night. Was that something that you were working on to kind of capitalize on the popularity of it?

JS: Yes. We were there, we knew it was coming. Honestly our images are not going to be done and are used more for our personal use for the event website and our other publications and stuff. If other people want them we'll talk about it but it was more of like-Hey, we can leave the event right now to go and dump these photos and make sure we look like we are on top of things, because we knew about it, so we had the advantage in that way. My silly iPhone video went up right away; obviously the USA Swimming cameras were much better than ours. I didn't know what they would do with it; obviously we weren't expecting it to become what it did, so I'm glad that there was better footage of it. It was just, it was exciting.

RD: In journalism we would call that a human-interest story, there's an element of humanity or something people are excited about with romance and it was right by Valentine's Day, which made it kind of perfect in that way. So, what do you think it says about what people like to use Twitter for-they like human-interest stories versus just news?

JS: I think anytime you can personally relate to something, even though you don't know these people, they're well known enough that you can be excited for them and the way that it happened was just cool. And the genuineness of her, well most people would be genuine in that situation. She was very expressive and you could just tell how excited she was and most people are going to be happy for that and happy to share that. I think we're all so used to presenting ourselves in a certain way or being excited after winning a race, you reserve yourself a little bit. This time he caught her off guard and it was just fun to see that genuine reaction of excitement and surprise and all that stuff. I think that just resonates with people more than, you know you can register excitement but not experience it the same way as if it's something like that. Does that make sense?

RD: Yes, definitely. I think this is one of my last questions, so I've done a few of these interviews so far and people aren't just talking about Twitter, they're talking about using Facebook a lot also. So, does the Missouri Grand Prix have a Facebook page?

JS: Yes it does.

RD: How is the Facebook fan page? Do you have a lot of followers or is that a way that you get the news out as well?

JS: I use it pretty similarly and honestly I used Facebook more last year, I used them both both years, but I was more comfortable with Facebook the year before and now this year with Twitter it was just a much more personal interaction place and so it was more fun to see what was happening there and to be able to follow the swimmers. Where you can't really do that on Facebook but we used Facebook this year more to post all of the images after each session and to share it between the Missouri Grand Prix fan page, which only has like 325 followers and our Mizzou Rec page, which has 2600. We didn't cross promote too much, we wanted our members and our biggest source to know what was going on and why the pool was closed for those three days. It was just a good opportunity to use something like that positively, especially with the engagement and to share that with our larger crowd and for them to know that, "Hey, exciting stuff is happening" and it's not just a we're closed. This is a fun thing that you should be aware of. We got more followers and because of, or including the big album of the engagement. That album definitely had so many notifications and so many comments and likes of different images in that album than we do just regularly. Our photos are not, they're photojournalism students that work for us, we don't caption them. It's more of just; we'll get the people that are obviously more newsworthy or noteworthy. But we'll also just get what they see, so someone who is just a swimmer from Minnesota, that swims in high school and no one necessarily knows here, can maybe find an awesome picture of themselves on our

Facebook page and tag themselves because we won't necessarily know who they are. There's too many photos and it happens too fast to do it that way, and that's just not how we operate. It's more of the personal; here are some photos from the event-have at them, kind of thing.

RD: As far as my last question, if the Grand Prix continues at Missouri next year and the years following, do you see social media like Twitter and Facebook growing with the meet or do you see it playing a bigger or smaller part?

JS: Yeah, definitely. I think as it gets more like something that we're familiar with and more that fits into our work flow a little bit more and as I get more help with other aspects of things. I think that it can definitely be utilized more, like I'd say we used it definitely more effectively than we used it last year. And part of that is hard to tell because there is a really newsworthy-ish event that happened that drew more people to our page. I think we have the opportunity and I'm learning more about what interests people and what they want to hear versus, just "Okay, tickets are for sale" who wants to hear that or who am I talking to kind of thing.

Josh Huger Swim Utopia Interview Transcript 2/22/12

RD: First I am going to ask you to explain what your job is and who you work for?

JH: I run SwimUtopia.com. I created it and I go out to swim meets, do streaming, post news and videos, go out to schools and do tours, stuff like that.

RD: How did you get into this and do you have a background in PR or journalism?

JH: I got started in it, it was actually a school project for me a couple of years ago and it just kind of grew. We created it in a class and within the first month we got like 20,000 views or something like that and we thought-okay we can do something fun with this and we just went along with it from there. And, I don't have a background in PR or marketing.

RD: Do you have a background in swimming?

JH: Yeah, I saw all four years in college.

RD: Okay, where did you go to college?

JH: Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

RD: So, how did Swim Utopia end up on Twitter?

JH: Just as we grew we realized that we needed to take our site to social media and Twitter is obviously one of the leading sites for that, so we jumped on that and Facebook and Youtube.

RD: I looked it up and it looks like you've been on Twitter since March of 2010, was that a little after you started the website or when did you actually start the website?

JH: That's probably actually right around the time we started the website. Give or take maybe like a month or so.

RD: Do you know how often or how much time you spend a day tweeting for Swim Utopia or reading tweets?

JH: Probably like an hour to two hours a day. With phones now-a-days, you're always on it, getting tweeted at and just looking at tweets. Stuff like that.

RD: The information that you tweet, how do you get it? Do you do strictly original reporting? Do you get information from a news aggregator or a wire service?

JH: A lot of the stuff we get now is sent to us from different schools, from their SIDs. We put up their press releases. Some of it we find and some of the other stuff is original content. So, it's just a little mixture of everything.

RD: I created a data sheet for your tweets the weekend of the Grand Prix. Do you have any idea of the 3 to 4 days around the Grand Prix, how many tweets do you think you posted in general?

JH: I'm not actually sure; I'm going to guess. I'm pretty sure that we didn't post too many actually about the Grand Prix that weekend but there's probably 20 or 30 tweets that weekend.

RD: Yeah, you are pretty close. In total, you posted about 40 tweets but only 3 of them were about the Grand Prix not related to the Matt Grevers' engagement and then you posted another 2 related to the Matt Grevers' engagement.

RD: Do you have any idea just in general, what time of day you tweet? Do you think you tweet certain times of day?

JH: I wouldn't be able to guess that. I would think maybe at night, are you talking in regards to the Grand Prix? Or just in general?

RD: Just in general, do you find yourself tweeting certain times of day or just throughout the day?

JH: Probably throughout the day since I do check a lot of it on my phone.

RD: I don't what time zone you're in, I looked through the tweets I collected of yours for that weekend and it looks like you start pretty early, I'm in the Midwest so it was showing up here starting at like 6 am. It seems like you also tweet more in the evening, from like 4 to 5 pm until about 8 or 9 pm.

JH: Okay because I'm based out of Pennsylvania.

RD: So, you're on the East Coast then?

JH: Right.

RD: As far as other stuff that you had written about on Twitter that weekend, there was obviously a lot of stuff about college swimming championships, general swimming news and some notices of new blog posts and videos for your site. Do you cover college swimming for a specific reason or is that just kind of how it got started?

JH: We got started while I was college swimming. I'm actually also on the side a college assistant coach, so college is probably primarily what I enjoy the most. I find it the most exciting but we try to cover a little bit of everything.

RD: Interestingly enough, you retweeted things 12 out of the total 40 that you tweeted. That's about 30 percent of all of your tweets, so you were retweeting pretty often. Is there anything you won't retweet or what do you like or retweet?

JH: Anything that I think might be useful for other people to read about or things that I think are funny. Things like that I normally like to retweet. We actually every Tuesday run a part of the site that we call "Sweet Tweet Tuesday," so I'm constantly retweeting. I'll go through the tweets that I've retweeted throughout that week and I'll put that up in a post.

RD: How do you choose the things that you post on Twitter? I know you said that you like to retweet things that are funny or interesting. Do you pretty much post every piece of news that you get on Twitter or do you pick and choose things?

JH: Sometimes if we get a lot of stuff all at once I'll just kind of put up the first couple things that we get. Sometimes I'll put up 10 to 20 things in an hour and I don't want to tweet that much, so sometimes I won't tweet those things. I'll just let people find them on the site.

RD: Do you have final say on tweets or does anyone else read them or edit them before you put them up?

JH: I'm pretty much the final say. I run it. I have some other people will post articles and stuff like that but I'm primarily the one that puts them out.

RD: Do you think that in general your tweets are pretty successful, people respond to them and they get a lot of information off your site that way?

JH: I think so. I think that's one of the main ways people read our stuff if through social media. They'll see the links on Facebook or see our posts on Twitter. Or our subscribers on Youtube. As we put it up there, I think that's the way it gets viewed the most.

RD: Who is your audience, who are you writing tweets for? And who is the audience for your website for the most part?

JH: I think it's all ages that view my site. I get emails and stuff from older people that tell me that they really like this or that, or some younger kids that'll post stuff on a video that's out there. They'll really enjoy and they'll comment on it. Stuff like that, so it's a wide variety. A big thing we're starting to get into is the live streaming of championship meets, so we'll have family members from all over, normally the ones that are working or retired in certain ways and they can't get there. They'll tell us how much they enjoy being able to watch their kids swim and stuff like that. So, I think it's a good variety.

RD: Do you think Twitter has made your job easier or harder?

JH: I'd say easier. Definitely easier.

RD: Speaking specifically about the Matt Grevers' engagement, which obviously happened at the Missouri Grand Prix and you posted a few tweets about it, why did you tweet about it and why do you think that's a newsworthy story?

JH: It was just big. It was a surprise. I don't think anybody; I mean people knew that he was going to do it because I'm sure he had to ask people about it, I mean you saw the reactions from the people in the video. I mean everybody was just shocked. It's that stuff that everybody likes to see, good, fun stuff. That's the type of thing that we want to get out there. Obviously tons of other sites and people are retweeting it because I think it had a million views in the first three days that it was up. That's just the type of stuff as a swimming community we all want to get out there.

RD: As far as that being the biggest thing about that meet, not who was swimming in it or that there were a few local records that were broken, why do you think that that was the biggest moment of the meet?

JH: Pretty much, everybody expects fast times at the Grand Prix. Nobody expects somebody to propose on the medal stand. I think that it's just that it's shocking, that's what makes it big-it's not that norm.

RD: What do you think that says about what people like to use Twitter for? I was at the meet, obviously I saw the proposal live and right away I went on Twitter and it started

blowing up about that. What do you think that says about people liking kind of human-interest stories versus just events and times from a meet?

JH: What was that?

RD: What do you think that says about people kind of preferring human-interest stories versus just straight facts about a meet?

JH: I don't know what that would say in regards to what people enjoy about that. Normally, when I'm putting up my stuff, I'll flip through results, I'll look through the events I want to see and I'm sure other people do the same thing. I'd much rather look at the live results that are up there and pick and choose what I want to see rather than read down a huge long list. But if I see a title "Matt Grevers' Proposal on the Medal Stand" I'm going to click on that and want to read and talk about that. Rather than put out an article that just lists all the times that people see every day. If that answers your question.

RD: Yes, it does. As far as Twitter goes, do you think anyone else in the swimming world is doing a really good job on Twitter or what can you learn from it?

JH: I definitely think that there's other swimming websites that are out there that are bigger than us and swim fans all around. I think that's great for the sport, I think the sport needs people constantly putting that information in the news to help spread the word about it and have people see what actually goes on in the swimming community.

RD: What are your website's plans for the upcoming Olympics and the Olympic Trials and stuff?

JH: Just keep trying to put out as much information as we can. We feature a lot of swimmers on our site, so we're going to try and get some of the people that will hopefully be making the team or that will be finaling or swimming in the finals and spotlight some of them. Chart their progress towards the Games.

RD: Do you think that Twitter is going to be a bigger deal at this Olympics and Olympic Trials?

JH: I think it will be a huge deal. Even us, we're out at the A10 Championships in Buffalo right now and after every heat and event I'm tweeting the results. I think that's going to be a huge part in what all the swimming companies that are out there that are going to be at the meet, I think they'll all be doing that. USA Swimming will be doing that. Every little thing that takes place, that will just be out there. Twitter's the easiest way to spread the word around.

RD: My final question is that I noticed that you tweet some updates from your Twitter that you maybe have a new blog post up or a video up. Do you think or do you know that that's helped people find stuff on your site through Twitter?

JH: Yeah, yeah. I think people find fun stuff on our site through Twitter just because our followers and stuff, they'll see it up there and then they'll retweet it and then their followers will get it and everything. I think that's the number one way we get our information out there.

Mel Stewart-Interview Transcript 3/5/12

RD: If you could start by just kind of explaining your job or what you do in the world of swimming journalism?

MS: Right now I'm launching a website to cover swimming news. Did you talk to Braden?

RD: I did. I interviewed him last week.

MS: Did he tell you what he was doing?

RD: He basically told me that he was launching a new website, leaving Swimmers Circle and that you were involved with it as well.

MS: Yeah, it's me, Braden, Garrett McCaffrey from your school. We have a few people who are contributing support and so that's what we are doing.

RD: Cool, well I look forward to seeing it in the relatively short future.

MS: Yes, we launch very soon and I'm very stressed.

RD: I can imagine. How did you kind of get into this line of work and do you have a background in journalism?

MS: No, my undergraduate degree, I studied public administration at the University of Tennessee. I had a minor in theater. I moved out to Hollywood after the Olympics Games. I had a television show on ESPN called American Outback, it was an adventure show, it was on ESPN 2 and I got into that basically after the Olympic Games. Someone gave me a shot at on-camera work. I did that and enjoyed that, I went into commercials and did a few things with, how would you say, I did some cheesy TV, Baywatch, I was in a Dolph Lundgren movie and I found out I liked hanging out with writers more than anything else and I liked writing. I found that out very, very quickly and I started writing and within a few years I sold my first script and made more money than I would make in three years hosting a television show on ESPN. So, I put in my notice at the show and I decided that I was going to be Steven Spielberg and what I didn't realize was that I got very, very lucky with the script that I had written. I had written a great script, you know, I might have 1 or 2 of these in my lifetime. Long story short was that I didn't sell for 3

more years. Then I started getting work consistently as a development writer, I don't know if you know the business but you basically sit down with the producer and they tell you the idea and you write for them and you write what they want. So, I did that for years and years and years, well over 10 years and it was wonderful and exciting and it was great but you only see about 1 to 2 percent of writers in the feature film business actually writing and making money. Meaning, making you know, Writer's Guild minimum to \$200,000 a year, sort of bottom of the barrel. The rest are the multi-million dollar writers and you're one step away from them and those are the writers who get greenlit movies, those are the movies you actually see. In between that there could be 20 writers on a project and I never got out of the 20-writer quagmire. So, I spent years doing this and it was sort of like swimming, it's like you're headed down-you focus on one thing, you focus for a long time to have one moment where people judge your project. My issue was that I never got out of that, so it was if I was training for a big event but never got to compete. I was always stuck in the room and it was just, I felt I was chasing a tail. The money was good but it just wasn't very satisfying. So, about 2004 I looked at my wife and I said, "I think something historic is going to happen in swimming and I kind of want to see it" and that thought stayed with me for 2 ½ -3 years. By 2007, I told her "You know, I'd like to be on-deck at the Olympic Games, I'd like to witness what's going to happen because I think this guy is going to make history" and I'm talking about Michael Phelps. So, I went to the big, higher ups at swimming at told them what my background was, it was a whole new administration I didn't know them, I knew a lot of the folks but not all of them, and they hired me on to do highlights and produce video and I had that skill set because I'd spent so many years in Hollywood. And in doing that, it was essentially, it was writing profile pieces on athletes. I had an insider's point of view on the lifestyle and a very quick understanding. So, it was very, very satisfying and I got to see Michael Phelps. I got to go to the Games and I got to see him make history, which was very exciting and very satisfying. After that was over, I wasn't making as much money as I was in Hollywood but I was a lot happier. And my wife was happy that I was happy, so she was very supportive of it. That's evolved over time and it's evolved because social media has evolved and to supplement income we took to the video production and created a commercial production arm, Gold Medal Media, which produces online commercials, web commercials for Swim Outlet, Fitter and Faster Tour, anybody and everybody. Are you a journalist? Are you going to be a journalist?

RD: Most likely, hopefully when I graduate.

MS: Yeah, I think that they're the smartest people in the world because they're curious. They're always researching and they're always looking for answers. That's what's so exciting about journalism to me, an extension of that there are all these skill sets to being a journalist in this day and age. It used to be, you'd show up if you were in media, television with a sound guy, with a camera man, somebody in the truck and the talent stood up there and did it and there was a producer. Now you show up, and you know, the reporter sets their phone out, they do a capture over a phone and sometimes they're alone. Then you have to be able to edit it, you have to be able to work with your own sound, your own audio. You have to have all of these skills, that you, you know you're a one-

man team or a one-woman team. I find that fascinating. I think that's the future you're looking at. I really love journalists, they're history makers.

RD: Definitely. If you just want to briefly explain your own background in swimming. I know what it is but just so other people reading the thesis are aware.

MS: I'm a two-time Olympic gold medalist. I won in the 200 Butterfly in 1992. I swam butterfly on the Medley Relay and I got a gold medal for that and I got a bronze medal in the 4 x 200 Freestyle Relay. And in 1988 I went to my first Olympics, the other one was '92, and I lost in my first one. That was very devastating, so I felt very fortunate to be able to come back and win in the second time around. Is that enough or do you need more?

RD: That's good. Specifically now relating to Twitter, why did you decide to get on Twitter? How did you make the decision?

MS: Let me preface it by saying this, I'm almost-basically you have could have called me a Luddite a few years ago. I was terrible, I was forced into it because everybody uses email, or they're texting. I'm old, I'm 43, I'm old-school. A lot of young kids today don't want to make a phone call and they'll try and communicate by text. So, I'm slow to these things. My wife suggested Twitter as a way to increase our audience and I used it based on that and I liked it because it was, because I think it goes well with certain personalities. If you like people, if you love people and you want answers, Twitter you can get them fast. Facebook, you can get it fast. I think Twitter now is getting, information travels very quickly. That's very appealing because swimming is such a small niche, if you can get a message out, you can get it out quickly.

RD: On average, if you had to guess, how much time a day do you spend on Twitter? Like tweeting or reading tweets?

MS: 20 minutes, maybe. I spend an hour a day on Facebook. An hour on Facebook, 15 minutes to 20 minutes on Twitter at the most.

RD: Do you have a Facebook fan page as well?

MS: I do.

RD: I've interviewed 7 other people and I've found that some people are using Facebook fan pages more often than they are using Twitter. That was not something I knew going in, it's kind of interesting.

MS: Here's the thing, the fan page, let me go to the fan page right now. The fan page is at 59,531 and it increases a thousand every five days.

RD: Okay.

MS: And what I like about it is, I like finding people from all over the world. You can be in Argentina but you still speak the language of swimming, you still have the same experience and I find that fascinating. What's interesting is that you can comment back and forth, you can go to their page, you can see their profile, you can see their friends and you can see their comments. You can immediately take the conversation to a private email. An email can be very long, so somebody can ask a question or give you some information and you can have serious communication back and forth. It's almost teleconference. So, I find that it's a much more powerful tool and you connect and you build. We use it aggressively because we've made great friends and because we've built business over Facebook. It just feels a lot more intimate to me.

RD: Okay. As far as the information that you tweet, did you find that you are doing original reporting? Is it commentary? Are you kind of just posting headlines?

MS: I do one of a few things. If I'm at a pool and I have practice I'll document that practice. If I do an interesting workout every so often, on my lunch break, if I was able to get 3,200 yards on my lunch break, and I did it in this creative way. I'll share that information and that's information that people seem to like. People seem to respond to that. If I'm at a swimming competition, I know if another fantastic swim happening, maybe a young kid or an age grouper. If I get that time, I enjoy pushing that out there. Fourteen year old, you know, Jane Doe swam a state record time. I like doing that. So, I'm going to NCAAs in a couple weeks, you know, I'll tweet out interesting times. I do that. And then I tweet out pictures of my cat.

RD: I interviewed Mike Gustafson about two weeks ago and he writes about his cat a lot on Twitter as well, so you have that in common.

MS: I have two cats and you know, you love them.

RD: As far as the Missouri Grand Prix is concerned, so for the 8 people that I'm interviewing I collected all the tweets that they posted over those 3 or 4 days, just in general, not just tweets about the Grand Prix. And you only posted one tweet that could be about the Grand Prix; it was of course about Matt Grevers' engagement. If you had to guess, how many tweets do you think that you posted that weekend?

MS: I am posting, I don't know if this helps with the thesis at all, I normally post the results of the Grand Prix competitions. I haven't now because I am entirely focused on the website and launching the website. And it's been, on the average weekend now, I'll just post the races. Normally I would post 4 or 5 times per night, this person won, this person won, great swim. So, you know, 4 or 5 times over three nights of finals. And sometimes I'm just not that good about getting the information out that fast and somebody else is and they're doing it better, I'll retweet them.

RD: Okay.

MS: If somebody's doing it faster and more efficiently, I'll just retweet, retweet and retweet.

RD: So, that weekend you posted 6 tweets, you had the one about the Matt Grevers' engagement. You had, there was an article about Lance Armstrong and the Iron Man triathlon, you had posted about Maclin Davis' fast swim because there were a lot of high school meets going on that weekend, like high school championships and a couple things about swimmers from other countries, not necessarily about the Grand Prix. One of the things I noticed when I looked through, it was only 6 tweets so it's hard to make inferences but you didn't use it for interpersonal communication, which some people use it a lot for that I've interviewed. Like you weren't sending messages to people or do you think you use it that way usually? Or is that not something you do on Twitter?

MS: I did, from last summer on back I did but I have less so because I've been more focused on the website. The reason why is just that I can't, I don't have the time to do it. I will once the website is up and going. So, in a sense I jump on Twitter and do just enough to really stay engaged as best I can. It's sorta like, "I'm here, I haven't run away." That's the message. The message is, "I'm not dead." I used to tweet a lot. I used to communicate with everybody a lot. And I wish I could tell you what I was doing but I can't.

RD: Oh, no worries. But you do think it's a good tool for interpersonal communication?

MS: I do if you're-if you have a specific niche like swimming that you love and you share that and appreciate it with a lot of people. It's perfect, it's perfect-it really is. So, you know-it's swimming and it's cats and my daughter.

RD: Yes, your daughter. Of course. Is there anything you won't post on Twitter? Is there anything you won't retweet?

MS: I don't retweet anything that's um, my rules of social media, is someone does anything against a swim mother you pounce and attack them.

RD: Okay.

MS: If someone is doing anything mean or harsh I usually go on the defensive. I don't tweet about-I try not to tweet about religion because it upsets people. It's a personal matter and no one would probably appreciate the way I think, being that I'm an agnostic. So, I stay away from religion. It's very focused on the niche, pretty fluffy stuff. The only thing serious we share is swimming information. I don't like people who are nasty and mean. In swimming there is a sense of decorum because of the swimming world and I like that, so if people do anything negative I try to pounce on them. I am a big proponent of, if you're feeling down, if you're feeling depressed, that's fine too. See, I think people should share that if they're feeling down and depressed because sometimes people need to know you just can't be happy all of the time. Because normally the answer is that you need to go to swim practice. You need to get out and see friends.

RD: Definitely. Who do you think your audience is on Twitter and who do you write your tweets for?

MS: I think it's anybody who swam, or is swimming but it's mostly folks who are in the sport. I think you see, I think this is consistent in the world. You see what you want to see in life and you see what you want to see on Twitter. And when I scan through tweets I find swim moms because I think they are sacred. I think that swim moms, moms are the foundation, not only moms but what I know from research moms are the ones who take the kids to practice. There's a much higher proportion of mothers than fathers, I don't mean it that way but it's just a term. But I think they are the foundation of the sport, they really care about the sport, so when I see the tweets they jump out at me and I try to respond to all of them.

RD: Okay. As far as using Twitter in your job, do you think it has made your job easier or harder?

MS: No, in many ways I didn't, I probably would have been a seasonal worker. Olympians, if you're a gold medalist you have a seasonal work schedule. For 3 years you do your career and then after that you, you might take some time off or you moonlight and you play Olympian. Twitter has sort of made an industry for focusing on more than gold medals and having any sort of knowledge about the sport. So, in a sense it helps create, it helps create job opportunities. And expand that time. I don't know if I'm saying this directly but I think you understand what I mean. Do you have to take my quote directly? Do you need me to be a little more clear?

RD: No it's fine. I'm going to put a transcript of this in the appendices of my thesis but I'll basically be using quotes and general information from all of the interviews to kind of see the similarities and differences between the 8 people I interview.

MS: Okay. I'll sum it up this way. I think the economy is bad, I think a lot of people have worked jobs that they don't like. I think they'd like to do the things that made them happy when they were young. Twitter, Facebook, social media as a whole, it enables me to continue to do something that I really enjoy. It has buoyed the business and given it legs, so that I can do that. There is no doubt that the impact is enormous. I don't think I would work consistently in this market, in this industry, meaning the Olympic media world if it wasn't for Twitter.

RD: Okay. I have about four more questions; three of them are about the Matt Grevers' engagement because that of course became the big story of the Missouri Grand Prix. So, the first one is-why did you tweet about the Matt Grevers' proposal and do you think that it is newsworthy?

MS: I think that in the swimming world it is, what the race was, what the time was, who won and it's the personalities behind them because we connect to people on an emotional level. If you know Matt Grevers, it's hard not to like that guy. He's lovable. To know

what was going on with him, it was just a, it was a sweet moment. So yeah, I think it was absolutely fair game. I think it was absolutely newsworthy; it was huge news in swimming. And apparently it was news beyond swimming. So, to me it was absolutely news. I think swimming is more infotainment, if you know that word.

RD: Yes.

MS: It's a lot less news, it's more entertainment. That's wildly entertaining and very positive.

RD: Okay, this is kind of a similar but yes that proposal went viral and had a huge Youtube page. It was on the NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams, etc. So, why do you think that is the biggest moment of the meet versus maybe some stars that were there or some fast swimming?

MS: Because swimming is only important to people who are passionate about the sport, who know the sport. It's like another language, if you don't speak it, it's hard to understand it. But marriage proposals are universal, period.

RD: As far as, that was a very tweeted moment as well and as far as that, how do you-or what do you think that says about what people like to share on Twitter? Or what people like to read on Twitter?

MS: I think people want to be inspired. I think first people want to find answers. Second, I think they want to have their own voice and third I think they want to be inspired or entertained.

RD: So, this is my final question. What role in the upcoming Olympic Trials and the Olympics do you think Twitter is going to have?

MS: I think that it is going to be the first news source for I think people who can't sit there and watch the events. I think it is going to be first position news over network, over New York Times, over everything. People are going to get their news on Twitter. Here's an example, I'm going to Olympic Trials but I can't be at every single session, so literally I will have my iPhone in front of me and I'll be looking at the results. Because the results will be instantaneous. And I'm going to be getting 50 different opinions on why Natalie Coughlin is, you know, seated first in the 100 Backstroke and somebody else is seated second. I'm going to get 50 different points of view. Yeah, it's going to be first news decision.

RD: Okay, well those are all of the questions. Do you have any questions for me? Do you need to know any information about my research?

MS: No, I mean it's pretty clear that you're very, very focused. Just based on your questions alone I know where you're going and what you are doing. It's really interesting and I wish you the best of luck.

Mike Gustafson-Interview Transcript 2/23/12

RD: I'll start by asking you kind of what your job is and who you work for? I know you're kind of a freelancer.

MG: Yeah, I'm an independent contractor and I do a variety of things with that, blogs and articles and videos. Not just writing. A lot of multimedia stuff. My primary company that I do a lot of my work with is USA Swimming. With them specifically, I write three articles a week. I write one article about, we follow the journeys of non-mainstream Olympic Trial qualifiers and just listen to their stories, what they're going through. Those are on Mondays. On Wednesdays I do a diversity article, or something somewhat related to diversity and on Thursdays it's a little bit more freeform, I write something called "The Buzz," which is a column that's supposed to be about National teamers, although today I some liberties with that. Those three things have evolved from what I used to do at Swim Network before Swim Network merged with USA Swimming. I was writing three articles a week for Swim Network and I guess the number just stuck or what have you and I transitioned into writing 3 articles a week for USA Swimming. Then I do, I produce a series called "Outside the Pool" for AT&T and that's actually through USA Swimming too but it's distributed exclusively on AT&T's website platforms. Those are just 5-minute videos. The first year we did it, it was these athletes in their homes, the second year we did it and that was just a few videos, the second year we did it was a more complete thing where they could discuss their favorite swimming moments with personal anecdotes outside of the pool to try and give fans an ability to get to know them. And then this year we're concentrating on training techniques and technique advice that these pros have for amateur swimmers who might want some tips. They're training up to the Olympic Trials and beyond. Those are the swimming related things that I do. Pretty much. I also occasionally blog outside of those two venues but not frequent enough to be of any importance.

RD: Okay, I used to watch "Chlorination," so I remember you from that.

MG: Chlorination was great. Chlorination was a lot of fun. There's not anything fun like that anymore. It was a one-time deal I guess. It was tons of fun to do those. It was tough but it was fun, you know, we were sleeping on a lot of floors and a lot of couches. We did an 8-month trip around the country, which was living inside of our cars.

RD: Wow.

MG: Yeah, it was, it was fun.

RD: I was always a big fan of Gary Hall, Jr. and I would try and explain his personality to my friends that weren't involved in swimming and I could never get it right. But the Gary Hall, Jr. episode of Chlorination, I showed it to a couple of people and then they liked him just from that episode.

MG: We didn't, I mean I didn't really know, Chris had no idea who he was because he didn't know anything about swimming. I knew him, just what everyone saw. All that stuff, he was so funny on camera and all of it was totally impromptu. He was great. I mean, I'm surprised he's not doing more in front of the camera because he's so quick, you know, I couldn't keep up with him and Chris, they just bantered back and forth for the majority of the time and I was off to the side recording. It was a lot of fun. They were very friendly too; they took us out to a bar and showed us around. It was great. You know, he had a good life-I think he's in Seattle now.

RD: Oh really? Interesting.

MG: Yeah, totally night and day from where he was in the Florida Keys. Totally different.

RD: Yeah, I enjoyed that show, so I'm glad that I could say that. How long have you been a swimming journalist and how did you get into the work?

MG: I not want to be a stickler but I'm not a swimming journalist. I didn't go to journalism school and I'm not a kind of journalist. I feel like, you know, I think there is a distinction between bloggers and journalists now. The term blogger I think is a little more biased, a little bit less objective. Like Jason over at Swimming World, those guys are objective. I can be biased because I'm very opinionated and my role with USA Swimming has sort of evolved because some of the objectives that they have aren't necessarily the same objectives that I have. I just, my job is just to make swimming accessible to kids and to fans of swimming. And to be an advocate for the sport. I write a lot of human-interest stories, I try not to criticize anybody these days because what purpose is it going serve? USA Swimming can't criticize their own swimmers. There's nobody just kind of being a cheerleader for swimming right now in the sport and I guess my role has kind of evolved from what I used to do. And that's how we used to approach on Chlorination, like we just wanted to show how awesome things were. We weren't the investigative; you know we weren't the investigative team. You know, we weren't going to the Race Club and talking to Gary like, "What about the doping world?" We just wanted to be swimming advocates. I guess I'm just a blogger and swimming advocate. I forgot the second part of your question.

RD: I was asking if you had studied journalism but you said you didn't, so...

MG: No, I didn't no. I went to film school at Northwestern University and I majored in RT and F, which is Radio, Television and Film. And I was also in a creative writing program that picked 10 kids for a 2-year intensive study on creative writing for the

media. So, specifically like screenplays, television pilots and things like that. So, my whole central focus coming out of college was not being any sort of a journalist. And it's still not. I still don't, I mean because I'm not objective. Like going to your point, about the Missouri Grand Prix, like when that happened I knew I had to write about it and I knew I had to be the first one to write about it because Matt Grevers is a personal friend of mine. I swam with him and I trained with him and he helped me out a lot with Chlorination and I knew I could talk to him and sort of get whatever story he wanted to tell. He could trust me that I would tell, what he wanted to tell in the way he wanted to tell it. Whereas I think they were a little bit wary with all of the media hype that was sort of coming off of them with this proposal. I mean we can get into that later or we can get into now. It's been a really fascinating thing. I mean I've really followed up with it. So, I'm glad you're writing your thesis on it. It's fascinating to me.

RD: Yeah, actually I do have a few specific questions and I can ask them in a few minutes but I was at the meet and I obviously saw the proposal live and it went on Twitter right away because I was curious if it was going to blow up and it did. And then, I think I knew that it was a much bigger story than the meet itself when I saw that it was on the NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams.

MG: That, yeah well I think that NBC has, they're plugged into anything Olympic right? And so they were the ones that pushed it and I think it sort of, when it went, when Brian Williams picked that up, I know Yahoo! News did something with that too. If you get on the NBC Nightly News, you know, that's a big deal and other media watches the Nightly News because they succinctly summarize everything in ½ a hour or 22 minutes or whatever they do. Yeah, that's definitely when it blew up. I think Yahoo! News and that at least that's what I judge just reading. I got, I mean you might have done this too but because he's such a personal friend of mine and because I wanted to write about it I was sort of keeping track of what the, how much it would explode and take off through social networking and I was kind of checking their Facebook walls because on their Facebook walls is where I got updates of which media entity was covering it next. Somebody would write on Matt Grevers' Facebook wall, "Just saw you on Yahoo! News" Somebody else would write, "Just saw you on NBC Nightly News!" Somebody else would post a video of a snapshot of them on MSNBC or Fox Sports Net and so you could, Matt Grevers' fan page, it's really fascinating, Matt Grevers' fan page became the central hub for the story because it was like the central gathering hub of all the various media stories and entries and from there you could just branch out and click on what people were talking about. I just looked at their Facebook page to keep track of it and the Youtube views but those are hard to keep track of, they weren't really updated in real time. I don't know how Youtube aggregates their view counts but it wasn't, it just like explodes. You know, it lags a little bit. You can see it lagging. Facebook was much more real time.

RD: Yeah, Youtube I think I checked once and it was at 75,000 and then the next day it was at 400,000 and then it was over a million a couple of hours later it seemed like.

MG: In my experience, it's the same as yours. I went to bed one night knowing that I was going to write about it, it was 70 some odd thousand, USA Swimming tweeted that it was 74,000 or something. And then I woke up the next day and it was a million. All of that was aggregating before, it was all cumulating before but how you can judge the Youtube views in real time is that you can see the likes and dislikes increase in real time. But their view count, for whatever reason, doesn't, it shows up in spurts. I didn't, this was the first time I realized that that happened because I was checking every ½ and hour basically, or every hour. That's sort of what I gathered.

RD: I'll ask you the specific questions in a few minutes but what is your personal background with swimming?

MG: I swam, how deep? Do you just want the nuts and bolts? I swam at Northwestern for four years. I was a co-captain my senior year, so I swam competitively like my whole life. I graduated in 2005 and stopped swimming at the Big 10 meet; I scored 4 points at the Big 10 meet. That was my goal, to score 4 points before I graduated. I did it in my second to last race. So, that was a lot of fun. And after that just swimming on my own, occasionally to stay in shape and not look like such a fat ass all the time. No Master's Swimming or anything like that and then in 2007, in May of 2007. I'll just get into the journalistic part of it, I was working as an assistant on a TV show called "The Class."

RD: Okay, yes I remember.

MG: I started writing weekly, I was going stir crazy, I had cabin fever because I wasn't doing anything creative and I started writing a weekly article on this blog called Time Finals, which is run by Scott Goldblatt and Scott Goldblatt I credit with giving me a start because I sent him a really strange email and he wrote back and said he'd pay me like \$25 per article.

RD: Okay.

MG: So, I started writing \$25 an article for Time Finals and I tried more in those articles, it was so exciting at the time to see something that you wrote in print. I mean I don't know how much you've published being a journalism student but like it's so thrilling the first time. I guess now that everyone has a blog, 2007 was sort of a little before the blog craze. It was so fun to read comments and to do that, so I really spent a lot of time on them, on those articles. Six months later, it merged or it changed to Swim Network. It was a joint venture by Wasserman Media Group and USA Swimming where Wasserman Media Group, I forget the percentage break downs of ownership and contributions but it was a joint venture with Wasserman Media Group, which is a sports agency out of Los Angeles and USA Swimming. And they wanted to start, you know, just more entertainment based sort of website, the hub for the fans, something that still doesn't exist in the swimming community today because they merged it with USA Swimming. And Time Finals became Swim Network, so all the writers and all the bloggers on Time Finals got merged over to Swim Network, which is great because there was more money and there was, and it was before the Michael Phelps 2008 Olympics. And everyone was really

excited and Flo Swimming started and just, just stop me if you're unfamiliar with any of these or you want further explanations because I know I'm just rambling here.

RD: No, it's fine. Just go on.

MG: Flo Swimming started roughly the same time Swim Network started and for the first time, like swim fans got to see video interviews with their favorite swimmers and swim races and read blogs and make message comments. And it was a really exciting time in the sport of swimming because it was something that had never happened before, like you'd have to go on, you know, NBC at 2 p.m. every other year for an hour to see any sort of swim coverage. There was no swim coverage, besides Swimming World, which did a great job and continues to do a great job but outside of that there were no swim entities, no one traveling around the country to get swim interviews or anything like that. This was all new and other sports experienced this too, wrestling and track. It was all exploding. So from there I lost my job at a different TV show called "Gossip Girl," I was working at "Gossip Girl" and the writers' strike hit in October and November of 2007 and I was out of a job and so Swim Network was starting, I was out of a job, so I pitched to Scott Goldblatt a buddy buddy road trip, 6 months around the country, culminating at the Olympic Trials where a swim fan and someone who didn't know anything about swimming would just go around America and just kind of cover swimming. And I pitched it like, "If I can get this guy" this roommate, this real life roommate of mine and he had a job, he was employed, he didn't really want to leave the life. But I was like, "If I can convince this guy that swimming is awesome, then we can convince anybody." That was the central point, if we can convince this guy to actually enjoy the sport of swimming, we should be able to convince anybody. And I thought that was a really fun way to try and tap into the mainstream market. I was introducing the sport and Chris brought a lot of really great things to the table, things that I wouldn't think about as a person involved with swimming. He just had a different perspective about meets and training and teams and that was a lot of fun. And then that culminated at the Olympic Trials and so we went around the country for 6 months or so, we did, we ended up doing 40, 41 videos that were 5 minutes on average and they were uploaded to Swim Network and on iTunes, half of them are on iTunes and then after the Olympic Trials I moved back to Los Angeles, we both, we still had an apartment in Los Angeles that we were subletting, so we moved back and started writing, started working on each of our own stuff and then I decided that LA wasn't the place for me and in that Fall I moved back to Michigan and took a sabbatical from the sport for awhile to pursue some other things. Boy and then I moved to New York and I started coaching swimming.

RD: Okay.

MG: And teaching swim lessons for a company called Imagine Swimming out of New York and Casey Barrett runs Imagine Swimming, he was actually the editor of Swim Network for a little while. So, I knew him from Swim Network and he gave me a job coaching and teaching swimming and I re-approached Swim Network to do some more articles and that turned into some videos, that turned into a bigger contract to do tons of

meet coverage and go to Grand Prix and National Championships, which turned into what I have now, which is the three articles a week, occasional meet coverage and these AT&T videos.

RD: When did you personally, I looked it up and it says that you started tweeting on December 9th, 2009. So, why did you decide to start tweeting? Was that...

MG: I can't remember how much I tweeted about swimming and continue to tweet about swimming. I've been trying to do a better job but I know people out there, because I'm an independent contractor, so my entire sole focus is not swimming.

RD: Well, I created a data sheet for each person that I'm interviewing based on the tweets that they posted that weekend.

MG: Okay.

RD: So, if you had to guess, how many tweets do you think you posted between February 10 and 13?

MG: This is when the Matt Grevers stuff was going on?

RD: Yes, the Matt Grevers' proposal was on February 11 and I kept collecting tweets through the 13. So, I collected a total of 248 tweets between 8 people that I'm interviewing.

MG: So, you're asking how many tweets I probably did? What do you mean? Does a response qualify as a tweet? Does a retweet qualify as a tweet? What qualifies as a tweet?

RD: I collected all of those. I can just tell you cause you had one of the lowest, obviously it was a weekend, so you tweeted 5 times over about 3 or 4 days.

MG: Okay.

RD: I had, Swimming World is obviously more of kind of a news site, so they tweet you know 50 times over the weekend.

MG: Yeah.

RD: But, um, do you think that there was any pattern in the time of day that you were tweeting that weekend? Or in general do you tweet at like certain times of day?

MG: Yeah, I usually-well if I tweet I usually try and tweet in the morning or right about noon if an article comes out. Sometimes I retweet a compliment if somebody compliments and article.

RD: Okay.

MG: Or if you know, if I knew Swimming World put up my article about Matt and Annie and so I retweeted that. So, that probably occurred in the afternoon. I really don't want to tweet later at night; I know I probably did because I was at a swimming function that Saturday night.

RD: Yes.

MG: I was at a different swimming function, so which technically qualified as work. And so I probably tweeted then. But I don't like tweeting at night because when you tweet at night but it's like you're, the whole concept of Twitter is to, as far as if you're in the media is to create a dialog with people who follow you and to also share things that you've produced with people that want to track things that you're interested in as well. So, I don't want to do that at night right before I'm going to bed, like I like to watch TV, I like to eat my dinner and relax. Like I don't want to shout into the mysterious Internet my little opinions and jokes and stupid things. And then have to worry about the response if I tweet something stupid or if somebody doesn't agree with something I wrote in an article that I tweeted. I don't want to worry about any of those responses before I go to bed. I don't want to feel the need to check Twitter before I go to bed and when I tweet something I always feel the need to check Twitter, like the hour or two after I tweet because that's when people are going to respond to you. I don't like to do that at night, so I usually do it in the morning or afternoon.

RD: So, your 5 tweets. One was about the Missy Franklin story about not giving up swimming in college or high school for sponsorships. You retweeted the New York Times article. You had two tweets about your cats.

MG: That sounds about right.

RD: One you responded to someone about your cat and another thing, you linked to an article about The Atlantic and said something about your cat.

MG: The sad thing is, I know exactly what article and what you're referring to.

RD: You had a tweet about the Gold Medal Dining event that you went to on Saturday night, the Garrett Weber-Gale one and you had a tweet that was, you know, a congrats to Matt Grevers and then you linked to the Youtube video. So those were pretty much your tweets within the time frame that I was collecting.

MG: Okay.

RD: Obviously, zero of them were about the Grand Prix besides the Matt Grevers' proposal. So, was that just because you weren't covering the meet? Or...

MG: Yeah, yeah and I think I told you that when you first contacted me. That I wasn't going to be that invested, in at least a Twitter presence on the Grand Prix. Because yeah, if I cover it it's not really my job and I certainly checked in on the results but, you know, I wasn't there covering it live so, I don't know, it's just the weekend so. To me Twitter, it still feels a little bit like work and I think if I wasn't, and I know this kind of contradicts because I'm tweeting about my cat but even when I'm tweeting about my cat, as stupid and as weird as that sounds, like there are swimming fans out there that I have that sort of more personal relationship with. So, gosh how can I phrase this, if I tweet something that is non-swimming specific, I feel like it still correlates with my job, which is just to be a writer. Anything I guess that you tweet falls underneath that umbrella but I don't just write about swimming. I'm writing a novel now and I've written a few screenplays and short films and I guess anything that you put on Twitter is technically writing. And it's technically your job. But no I didn't tweet about the Missouri Grand Prix because I wasn't there and because I was going to the other swimming function and it wasn't, you know there was no expectation to do it. I didn't really see anything that interesting to tweet out to be perfectly honest and I wasn't checking Twitter as compulsively as some other people were after the engagement. I heard about the engagement through an associate of mine who was checking Twitter.

RD: Okay.

MG: He told me about it. So, that's how I found out. I found out through my friend who was also at the event was checking his phone and he told me Matt Grevers just got engaged, And he told me through Twitter but I don't think I checked up on anything that night about it on Twitter at least. I was only on Facebook. I know Jason messaged me, and I think he posted on my Facebook that night that Grevers got engaged. So, I found out exclusively through social networking that at the event, even though I wasn't even there and even though I wasn't even invested in the Missouri Grand Prix.

RD: Okay, well this is all good information because we're just trying to look at why or why didn't people post about the Grand Prix. And if they did what was it about? Obviously at this point the proposal was the main thing that people were writing about. Um, as far as the stuff that you do tweet, what do you think the content is usually? Are you doing links to your stories? Are you doing original reporting?

MG: No. Lately, I think the last maybe month, 2 months, 3-month period maybe more links to articles and swimming based stuff. Before that probably, not that. There's such an expectation that if you tweet primarily about one specific thing, you run the risk of forever branding yourself as that thing. So, if I were to only tweet about swimming the expectation of the people who follow me now and the people who follow me in the future, it's almost like they get offended if you tweet about anything else but swimming. And I never wanted it to get to that point but I almost feel like it has and I've sort of kind of started to accept it a little bit. I'm trying to fight it with some tweets about my cat and what's going on in non-swimming specific things. People have this expectation of Twitter that if you are a writer for this entity and you also have a personal Twitter, that your

personal Twitter is part of that entity. Like that I represent USA Swimming on my personal Twitter account because I occasionally write for USA Swimming, which is not the case. In other aspects of sports coverage that is the case. A lot of ESPN writers, their personal Twitter accounts are solely for sports coverage. And because I'm an independent contractor I never wanted it to become solely about swimming. I wanted it to become more about just, just anything. You know.

RD: So, as far as your audience on Twitter. Who do you think your audience is on Twitter? Are you writing your tweets for anyone specifically?

MG: I'm sure my audience is like 90 percent swim fans.

RD: Okay.

MG: Which is great but again, if I tweet something that isn't swimming specific I notice that I lose followers. Which is interesting because you'd think, well then just tweet about swimming but I don't, but as a writer I'm not only writing about swimming as part of my job. So, I don't think I should tweet only about swimming. The swimming thing right now are the things that get the most publicized that I do. So, that brings in more followers than anything else. I would guess, 90 to 95 percent of the people who follow me are somewhat related to the world of swimming.

RD: Okay. Do you find yourself interacting with your followers a lot on Twitter? Like with @ statements or retweeting?

MG: No, not really. The people I interact with are usually friends of mine. But it's rare. You know, sometimes I'll send messages. No, I don't think I do interact with a whole lot of other people.

RD: Do you think Twitter has made your job easier or harder and how so?

MG: I guess it depends on the definition of what my job is. So, if my job is a quote unquote swimming advocate, if I'm not-because clearly I've quoted myself as not interacting with people who tweet me, then that probably looks, then I'm probably not doing as good of a job as I should. At the same time, I can't spend; I can't spend a ton of mental energy responding to tweets. Like I said, I'll check it an hour or two after I tweet something and then that's it. I don't want to check it at night. And I don't go back to respond to stuff a couple of days later, if somebody writes something to me. Has it helped my job? I think it's helped my job in the fact, I don't think I've done anything on Twitter to bring in, to create a dialogue to see some audience, which I guess I should do a better job at. I do think it does a good job in terms of getting out the occasional article I sometimes tweet once a season. And that's just from my own insecurities because I don't think I write anything that great worth tweeting about. I actually feel that the tweets I write about my cat are better than the articles I write sometimes.

RD: Okay.

MG: As sick and weird as that sounds. I think it's a confidence thing. You know, if you're really confident in something that you wrote, you'll tweet it out. That's been helpful because a lot of the people that follow me are swimming fans and they'll share it. But I just don't feel like I've written a whole lot of things that are worthy of really, really, really just kind of shouting out there. I've been trying to do a better job of, the last; I mean I've tweeted like 4 or 5 articles in the last few months. I've been trying to do a better job with that but it all comes down to, yeah.

RD: What kind of role or place do you think Twitter holds in the world of swimming?

MG: That's a really interesting question. The PR side of me wants to say, Twitter brings together super star athletes and their audiences and creates a dialogue and things like that. But I think that the super star swimmers that do tweet have to be really cognizant of what they do tweet.

RD: Okay.

MG: I think they have to be very careful what they tweet because, I've always said this, Twitter is like a, for these athletes Twitter is like a press conference. I know that Twitter gives fans somewhat of a view inside their lives but a lot of the swimmers that tweet, I don't think they tweet anything that's very interesting or remarkable, or, a lot of it's just what I do, tweeting about my cat. Stupid, stupid, stupid stuff. And maybe that's just the curse of Twitter; it's just like self-importance thing. I'm not sure exactly. I don't think that Twitter, I don't think that our athletes are using Twitter to the best of their capabilities. Some of them do engage in dialogues and they retweet, you know "Good luck" to swimmers who are wanting to be wished good luck for the meet and that's all well and fine but what is it really? It's just, it's just- you're not meeting these people face to face. If Twitter can bring in kids to meet them at Grand Prix. If somebody tweets, "Hey, come meet me at a Grand Prix" and that actually brings in kids then I think it's doing a great job. But I think there is so much worry on the part of athletes to tweet the right things, to tweet PC, politically correct things, tweet and uphold this image of, then they fairly and unfairly help you. It's much more PR than actual real conversation and dialogue.

RD: Okay. Do you think that Twitter is going to hold like a bigger role with the upcoming Olympic Trials and the Olympics? Because Twitter was kind of being used in 2008 but barely.

MG: Yeah, I don't. Was it used in 2008? I don't remember it being used in 2008 but I'll take your word for it. I certainly didn't tweet in 2008, like you said December 2009, a year and a half later. Um, I think it will be a double-edged sword. I think Twitter will allow some fans that aren't there the luxury of feeling back stage and feeling connected to the event. I think with some of the hash tags it will be fun. To see pictures of people tweeting live from the event. But certainly at the Olympics I'm not going to be on Twitter.

RD: Okay.

MG: Because NBC is tape delaying the broadcast?

RD: Yes.

MG: I don't want to know what happens real time; I want to see it on TV. So, I'm going to be on a Twitter blackout. I don't even really know, boy I haven't thought about this. I hadn't thought about this until you said this because it would be better, especially if I'm writing about it, it would be better. It would be great to interact on Twitter because there is going to be so much attention on the events. But at the same time as a swim fan, I don't want to know what happens before I see it. Do you know what I mean?

RD: Yes.

MG: Oh man. It's going to be a double-edged sword. I don't know what I'm going to do.

RD: They originally, I went to the Vancouver Olympics and they originally promoted the Vancouver Olympics as the first social media Olympics but then there was like an issue of the IOC saying, "Should we allow athletes to tweet during the actual competition or is that going to be a problem as far as broadcast and stuff?" Well, now they've decided that they can tweet if they'd like, so definitely I think that that ties back into my original thesis. I was going to try and do something pertaining to how the audience is now competing with the journalists when it comes to breaking news because audience people sitting there can break news on Twitter before someone can say it live on the air.

MG: Yeah.

RD: So, it's going to be interesting but yeah I am curious to see what happens.

MG: Well, that's such a good question. I don't know what I am going to do. And I think this underscores how unfortunate it is that these Olympics can't be broadcast live. I think if they were broadcast live, I would be, I would have 5 different entities open on Twitter because I think that it would be a lot of fun to watch what was happening on TV, to see, I'm not going to be there at the Olympics. I don't even know if I am going to be contracted to write about it. If I am, if I am supposed to write about it-it would be tons of fun to be on Twitter because it's the pinnacle of our sport and there's going to be journalists there tweeting pictures and quotes and things that you cannot see on television. But because it's tape delayed and because I'm such a die-hard swimming fan, I want to experience the unbridled moments of watching it. It's like if somebody ruined the end of a movie. Somebody ruined the end of "Lord of the Rings" for me and I was so mad for so long because I had invested time into watching Lord of the Rings and then someone just blatantly tells me what happens at the end. It ruined the movie for me. I didn't want that to happen with swimming and the Olympics because, first and foremost I'm a swim fan, so I think that's going to take precedence over, certainly over Twitter and stuff like that. I watch the events as they unfold and then write about them. I'm not going

to compile live tweets as they take place in London, and then write an article and then watch them on TV. I wouldn't do that.

RD: Will you be covering Trials? Live there?

MG: I haven't heard.

RD: Okay.

MG: I haven't heard anything. I haven't had a meeting or reached out and asked. I have no idea. That kind of underscores Twitter in the first place. Honestly, USA Swimming could let me know tomorrow that I'm not going to write about swimming anymore and then I'm left with this Twitter following that's 90 percent swimming that expects me to write about swimming. And so all of the effort that you've put into Twitter. Some people say that there is no effort, but there is. You've got to tweet and you've got to be cognizant of what you're tweeting. It's effort. All that would go to waste if all of a sudden USA Swimming said we don't want you to write for us anymore. So, I'm sort of trying to protect myself as well by not being that quote unquote swimming guy and being more of just a media personality person that likes to write about things happening around the world. Different subjects.

RD: As far as the Matt Grevers' engagement is concerned, what do you think makes that story newsworthy?

MG: It was romantic. It was great. It was romantic. People, it was romantic and it was unexpected. Swimming is such a cut and dry sport; it's strictly by the numbers. There are few surprises that happen in swimming. Sometimes a big surprise can happen at the Olympic Trials but even then it's not totally a surprise, you never, going back to this Jeremy Lin thing, I don't think we'll ever see anything like that in the sport of swimming unless somebody had a massive taper from a junior college and makes the Olympic Team. We would never have that in swimming because swimming is such an expected sport, nobody would come out of such a low profile area and blow the world away with an unbelievable swim. It, swimming doesn't quite work like that. And so, Matt Grevers' proposal was such an unexpected deviation from the norm, right? When you go to a swim meet there's warm ups, and then there's B-Final and A-Final and B-Final and A-Final awards. B-Final, A-Final, B-Final, A-Final awards. He threw this unexpected personality, a little breathe of personality into this meet that's, and I wrote about this in my article I wrote about them. In swimming you don't see their faces, you don't see their reactions, you don't see their emotions, so it's a very easy sport to just envision these swimmers as little robots without any lives outside the pool. And when Matt Grevers proposed to Annie on the podium in front of everybody, at least for me when I saw the video later on Youtube, it just made me realize that swimmers have lives that are going on outside of the pool. It humanizes them. It makes them not these robotic athletes and actual athletes with romances and lives going on. The way that he did it was so unexpected; I don't think that has ever happened at a swim meet before. So, that's why it sort of took off in the

swimming community. Why I think it took off in the mainstream community was a mixture of NBC picking up on this because of their Olympic bias and also it was close to Valentine's Day.

RD: Yeah.

MG: The media was really looking, you know, it's an Olympic year, it's Valentine's Day and you've got an Olympian proposing to his maybe future Olympian fiancée in front of a thousand spectators or however many were there. It's fun. It's a romantic story. And a very human story.

RD: I think the thing that the videos don't show is that; being in the audience the crowd like loved it and was going crazy. People were really excited and it definitely picked up the energy at the meet, so yeah you can't really see that in the videos but I was sitting there and I was like, "Wow, people are loving this right now."

MG: Yeah and I've been to enough swim meets to, that never happened at a swim meet, I've never been to a swim meet where that's happened, I mean have you ever seen a proposal before? Just take that outside of swimming. I mean, have you ever been walking around and turned down a path and seen someone proposing to somebody else? No. I mean probably not. I know I haven't in my own personal life. It's something that they've never seen before and people love to see things that they've never seen before. And it was close to Valentine's Day, I mean it was perfect. Honestly.

RD: Definitely. As far as it being human-interest story and it being the most popular thing about the meet on Twitter. What do you think that kind of says about what people like to retweet on Twitter? Or what people like to talk about on Twitter?

MG: I've always felt that people like to retweet things that make them happy. Happy things go viral. I've always noticed that. You know, when we did our Chlorination videos we tried to, we didn't do this every time but we tried to show somebody laughing or smiling in the beginning of the video. Because that visual makes the video seem happier and more accessible and people like that more. It doesn't surprise me at all that that was the most popular thing because it was an incredibly happy moment in these people's lives. And what made it so popular was Annie's reaction. It was unbridled surprise, it was just amazement. I mean her mouth hit the floor. I mean it was one of the best reactions I've ever seen, not just a proposal, but those sort of reactions go viral. Like Michael Phelps when he won the gold medal by 1/100th of a second and his reaction was so legendary. You know, that went viral. It didn't go viral on Twitter but it definitely went viral on regular old-fashioned media. I think people just like happy things and those are the things that get retweeted.

RD: Definitely. Well those are all of my interview questions. Is there anything you want to add or comment on?

MG: So, your angle is going to be what people's expectations are on Twitter versus what they actually do?

RD: Well, my thesis has two components because in grad school you're studying qualitative, which is more the human side and quantitative, which is more statistics. So, my quantitative side of research is, I collected all 248 tweets from the 8 people that I'm interviewing and I am going to code them. So in grad school you code them, I picked a bunch of categories and I'm basically going to loosely code them on what the content of the tweet is. So, you know. Is it an advertisement? Is it a link to an article? Is it a commentary about something? To kind of see what people were talking and how much of it was related to the meet. And also, I'll be writing down what time of day the most tweets were posted and on what day, so you can kind of see patterns as far as what tweeting is concerned. And then the qualitative human side is, I'm also interviewing the 8 people whose tweets I collected and going in I was thinking that a lot of people were going to be tweeting about the meet but that turned out to not be the case. Just because the Missouri Grand Prix this year maybe didn't bring as many big athletes to Missouri as it has in the past.

MG: Yeah.

RD: So, there wasn't as much media coverage. A lot of people, journalists, didn't travel to Missouri to cover it. And also there were a lot of other things going on. Missy Franklin's high school championships was the same weekend, Whitney Houston died the same weekend, people were breaking records in other meets, the Matt Grevers' proposal was part of the meet but it was a different type of story. So, it's more kind of what was being tweeted about and why and how they're using Twitter.

MG: Okay.

RD: Some people are usually, I interviewed earlier today the woman who runs the Missouri Grand Prix Twitter and so their Twitter is more of a straight promotional thing. They're you know, posting photos from the meet or they're answering people's questions about the meet. Whereas other people post a lot more commentary. So, it's kind of trying to get at what it is being used for.

MG: Interesting. Is this going to be published somewhere? Are we going to be able to read it?

RD: Yes, the school—we publish it as part of my thesis defense. So, it ends up at the University. I probably have a copy and the University has a copy if people want to read it for future research. And if you're interested, Jason at Swimming World was interested, so I can always send you a copy once it's done. If you'd like to kind of see what other people said.

MG: Yeah, that would be—that would be great.

Rowdy Gaines-Interview Transcript 3/2/12

RD: The first question I had for you, is kind of explain your job and who you work for as far as being a broadcaster?

RG: I work for several different network affiliates. I am probably the most closely affiliated with NBC as they are the network for the Olympic Games and I will be working for them this summer as I call my sixth Olympic Games for them. I started in 1992 and this will be my sixth Games. I also work for ESPN, Universal Sports and the Big 10 Network as well on different swim meets during the year.

RD: How did you get into this line of work and do you have a background in journalism?

RG: Well, my background, it wasn't called journalism, it was called mass communications and telecommunications. I went to school at Auburn and that's what I got my undergraduate degree in. I actually studied to go into directing, my father is a motion picture director and that is what I really wanted to do but swimming and the Olympics kind of took me on a different path. I just started on some really low key meets as an announcer, a PA announcer, and one thing led to another and I've been doing it now for, well I called my first race in 1985, so I guess it's been about 25, 30 years.

RD: Okay, I personally know your background with swimming but if you could kind of explain briefly your personal background.

RG: Sure. I swam in the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. I won three gold medals. I went to school at Auburn University, during my career I think I broke 12 World Records, I'm not exactly sure. I think it's 12. I made the 1980 Olympic Team but the '80 Games did not happen for the United States as they were boycotted, so even though I'm a member of two Olympic teams I only swam in one. That's probably the most important as far as the pedigree goes in swimming.

RD: Great. As far as Twitter is concerned, how and why did you decide to sign up for Twitter?

RG: It was really kind of through my wife. She started it for me; I didn't know anything about it. She started it and kind of took my role at the beginning. There were so many requests for different things ranging from stroke technique to talking about the broadcasts that I was on and the times and everything. She just kind of said to me, I'm not doing this anymore and this was probably, it had to be 4 or 5 years ago. She really started it all off for me, Twitter and Facebook and I just really kind of got into it. I've really gotten more into the Twitter in the last year or so, more so than even the Facebook.

RD: Yeah, I looked it up and that exact Twitter account, it looks like it was started in February of 2009.

RG: There you go, three years ago.

RD: As far as tweeting or reading Twitter per day, how much time a day do you think you spend on it?

RG: That's a good question. I would say on average I probably spend about 20 to 30 minutes a day. On average, I mean some days I spend more and some days I spend less. If I'm at a swim meet and I'm calling a televised swim meet, then I'll spend actually a little more because I'll end up tweeting about the meet and what's happening. If I'm home and it's a non-issue day, then I don't use it very much. I check it every day but I don't necessarily tweet every day. I'm not one of those that tweets that I'm going to go eat lunch at McDonald's, you know I've never been one to tweet about every detail of my life. I definitely tweet when it's important to me, in my travels, people like to know all about the traveling that I do so, I tweet about my travels. My guess is 20 to 30 minutes per day.

RD: As far as the information that you tweet, do you feel like it is mainly commentary or are you doing any original reporting? Where are you getting the information?

RG: A little of both. I try to do original reporting. If I go down on the pool deck and I talk to Michael Phelps and it's just a one on one conversation, unless he tells me it's a private conversation, I'll tweet about that and say "Hey, listen I just talked to Michael" or "Hey, I just talked to Lochte and he said his shoulder's a little sore today" or something like that. Or "He's feeling great in the water, he's going to have a great swim." So, some of it is original reporting, some of it is just reporting on the race itself, reporting on the races and how they happen and why they happen. A lot of the time I will share my feelings on how a meet's going from a team standpoint. You know, college teams are so important, it's all about the team effort, so I tweet about that. But it varies.

RD: As far as the Missouri Grand Prix, I created a little data sheet of the tweets for each person that I am interviewing for my thesis and I collected all the tweets for that weekend, those 3 or 4 days. To kind of see if people were tweeting about the Grand Prix or what else they were tweeting about and I collected all of your tweets and none of them were actually about the Grand Prix but I assume that's probably because you weren't there, right?

RG: Right, correct. I didn't do the television for that Grand Prix and because of that I was at a different swim meet that weekend. I think, wasn't I?

RD: I think it was the Gold Medal Dining event that USA Swimming did.

RG: Yes, yes, yes. I was at a different event that weekend. I couldn't tweet about it because I didn't really know what was going on. No more than anybody else that could follow it online did, so I didn't think any of my information would be pertinent. Reporting on something that people could actually go online and see. Like I said, I don't like to tweet and just get something out there that people aren't informed. It's hard to inform when I'm not there but you're right I didn't tweet about it.

RD: As far as that weekend in general, if you had to kind of guess or estimate, how many tweets do you think that you posted over those 3 or 4 days?

RG: During the swim meet?

RD: Or just that weekend, you were traveling and I know you were in New York.

RG: During that weekend? Oh boy, my guess is probably a dozen maybe.

RD: It was actually, I collected everything, retweets, interpersonal communication and it was actually 30 of those.

RG: Oh my gosh! You're kidding.

RD: Over those 4 days.

RG: Wow.

RD: I collected a total of 249 tweets from the 8 people that I am interviewing, so your 30 were about 12 percent of my total. Probably the biggest pattern I noticed in your tweets that weekend was that 18 of your tweets are what I call interpersonal communication, you were actually talking to people. That was 60 percent of your total, so do you feel that you use Twitter a lot for that or do you feel that it is a good tool for that?

RG: Absolutely. Absolutely and that's something, to be honest with you, that I've only discovered over the last few months. Because I was more of a Facebook person and certainly communicated on Facebook but via Twitter I was ignorant on the tools, on how to communicate. Over the last year or so, I'd say I've tweeted and connected it to my Facebook, so it goes directly to my Facebook. I usually don't send out a direct message on Facebook, I just use Twitter to do that because it's linked to my Facebook. But as far as the communication goes I primarily communicated through Facebook but over the last few months I've really gotten into more communicating through Twitter and my Twitter followers because, let me put it this way. If someone asks me a question, I'd say 90 percent of the time I'll answer them. Unless it's something that I forget. Almost all the time I'll answer the question, if it's a statement, not every time but if it's something that I think is interesting, if it's a compliment or something like that I'll always say thank you.

RD: That's awesome. Do you think there is a time of day that you tweet more often or is it kind of throughout the day?

RG: I think it's throughout the day. I think it's probably more so in the evening, when I'm traveling, especially at swim meets and stuff and different events that I have. My guess is that it's probably throughout the day but leaning more toward the evening.

RD: Yeah, I noticed definitely throughout the day and you, like a lot of people connected to swimming, start tweeting very early in the morning, usually before most other people start tweeting. I think you're on the East Coast too right?

RG: Yes.

RD: So, that shows up pretty early on my Twitter feed.

RG: Some of them are very early because I'll catch an early flight and I'll tell everybody that I'm complaining about catching an early flight, that's for sure.

RD: Let me go down to my next set of questions. How do you choose what you post on Twitter? Are there things that you won't post? Or are there things that you would retweet and things that you wouldn't retweet?

RG: Yeah, I retweet things that I think are interesting, especially if they're stuff about swimming that I didn't know, I'll retweet it. Any kind of tidbits or facts that I think are interesting, any articles that I find really good. You know, there are a couple of writers that I really follow through swimming and I'll retweet that or I'll tweet those articles. I don't think there are too many things that are off limits. Obviously I have a lot of young followers, kids, so I'm not going to tweet anything inappropriate but to be honest with you, I don't really follow anything that's inappropriate I guess. I wouldn't know about any of that stuff anyway.

RD: It looks like from what I've read that you are pretty much posting your own tweets but does anyone kind of read or edit them before you post them or is it just you?

RG: No, it's just me. I don't have anybody that does that.

RD: There are some places or people that do have...

RG: I would assume that some of the more famous people might have, obviously you can see someone like President Obama or people like that in the political world, but no, I don't have that many followers and I'm not that busy that I can't tweet myself.

RD: Who do you think your audience is, like who are your followers? Are they all connected to swimming or do you have kind of a range of people?

RG: I think probably most are connected to the swimming world one way or the other, whether it's in Masters Swimming or USA Swimming or fans of swimming. My guess is probably that more than anything. I've never really gone through all my followers and checked out who they were, although I try and look almost every time when I get new followers. I always click on them and see, you know, who it is. So, I think it's mostly people connected with the swimming world one way or the other.

RD: Since this is kind of the first Olympic Trials and first Olympics where Twitter is going to be a big deal, do you think that you'll be interacting with people a lot because of the Olympics? Or do you think you'll be gaining a lot more followers because of the Olympics?

RG: I hope so. I had a friend I had a bet with that I could get to 10,000 followers before my birthday and of course I lost the bet but I hope so. I think it's a really cool asset; it's a great communication asset that I just now discovered over the last year. I didn't realize how important it was and how cool it was. But I'm hoping because of the summer, because of the Olympic Trials and the Olympics, will bring me more followers.

RD: Do you think Twitter has made your job easier or harder?

RG: Oh, I think it has made it easier because a lot of times people try and find ways to communicate with me via email or even letters or phone calls. And this is so much of an easier platform to communicate with people that you follow, that you've liked in the past or somehow admire. Or just somebody that has a connection to swimming. I think it's a lot easier for me; it's not harder at all. It's not a problem. Once again, I'm not in a situation where I have millions of followers. If I had millions of followers then maybe it would be more tricky to actually communicate with people but for me I'm in a pretty good situation where it's not hard to communicate.

RD: Okay, so the big story the weekend of the Grand Prix was not something swimming related but it was the Matt Grevers' proposal on the medal stand. You didn't tweet about this but a lot of people did, so I was going to ask you, do you think that was a newsworthy story and why?

RG: Did I think it was or wasn't?

RD: Do you think it was?

RG: Oh yeah, it was definitely newsworthy. Once again, I wasn't there, so I usually like to tweet about stuff that I know, that I was there and with that story it got so much buzz and it got so much play on the web that I didn't think I needed to do it because people already knew about it. I'm not really into tweeting stuff that is already out there on so many different platforms, on so many different levels. Unless it's really something near and dear to my heart, I'll retweet again. Or I'll tweet about it or something but with that

story, it was such a great story and it was already out there so much that I didn't think I needed to do it. Plus, once again I wasn't there. I only knew as much as anybody else did.

RD: As far as that kind of being the biggest moment of that meet, why do you think the press kind of latched onto that story? Or why do you think it kind of became bigger than anything else there?

RG: Well, I think it's because it was so unique. It was something that hadn't been done in our sport before. At least in that type of format and at least in this digital age. It might have happened 30 years ago and we just don't know about it because we don't have any video of it. But because I think it was so unique and so heartwarming. It was a feel good story, you know it was something about two really nice people that are in love and the way that it happened was pretty cool, so I think people love feel good stories. It doesn't always have to be war and violence all of the time to attract people.

RD: Yeah. That was a very tweeted story and announcement as well. What do you think that kind of says what people like to use Twitter for? Or what kind of stories are popular on Twitter?

RG: Once again, I think those are the kind of stories that people like. I shouldn't say that on behalf of everybody, those are the kind of stories that I look out for. I mean, if you look at the people I'm following it's usually people in the sports. I love the quoting things, where you can get a nice quote every day. I like mental floss, it's unique, it's different, they have really interesting little stories. Because there's so much information out there, they're looking for something that is unique, that's different, that makes you feel good.

RD: Well those are all my questions. Do you have anything you want to ask me or do you have any questions about my thesis?

RG: No, I just want to wish you good luck. I know you're going to do great and you're very diligent and I wish you much success.