

		Case:	Doe v. Mineo et. al.
		Witness Name:	Conness Miller
		Witness DOB:	on file
Investigator:	E. Hernández	Witness Contact:	(650) 863-6312
Report Date:	June 3, 2021		

SYNOPSIS

On June 3, 2021, I interviewed Conness Miller about her experience with One with the Ocean (OWO) in San Diego. She stated the following:

STATEMENT

I started open water swimming in Half Moon Bay just over seven years ago in Half Moon Bay. While living in Santa Barbara, I joined a small group of experienced swimmers. During my time there, one of the girls (Marcie Kjoller) drowned, she was a very experienced swimmer. Thankfully I was not there that day, but I attended her funeral. It demonstrates that no matter how experienced you are, we have to be on full alert when in the water. Everyone should have a swim buddy. Ideally, every swimmer should have a buddy before their shoes ever come off.

I started swimming with OWO in January of 2020. The very first time I swam with them I met Bryan. He said hello and said I should stay towards the rear of the group until I got more comfortable. That was it, no questions about my experience, no evaluation. It was a large group at Moonlight Beach, about 50-70 swimmers showed up at that time. It became clear that it was more of a you're on your own thing. Bryan and other coaches would paddle on boards, but they spent most time facing at talking to each other.

I stopped going around March of 2020 due to the lack of COVID-19 protocols. Around August I started going again. In September, during an Odyssey swim, I noticed an older man towards the back that was having a visibly hard time. I abandoned my workout to swim with him. While by his side, I kept looking up at Bryan so I could get his attention. He never looked back. He was paddling next to Antony, talking the whole time. I left the beach feeling disappointed. This is his group. He should be paying attention to the swimmers, making sure every person is accounted for.

He seems to place competitiveness above safety. He runs this drill called The Odyssey. It's where he paddles in the front of the group, drawing the faster swimmers to the front before changing directions. In one turn, the swimmer in front will find himself in the middle of the pack. I get the utility of the training technique, but it's an accident waiting to happen. The whole point to open water swimming is for each person to have the space they need to complete their strokes. A large group of swimmers suddenly changing direction on a leader's whim leads to confusion and people running into each other. It takes just a few seconds for a person to get punched or kicked and slip under the water.

After the experience with the abandoned swimmer, I gave it one last try. This time I stayed in the back to see if Bryan or Antony were keeping watch over the group. I saw more of the same. A lot of chatting and joling between two guys up in the front. No one in the middle or rear to keep an eye on the swimmers. So, I left and I haven't gone back. I found a smaller group who swims in La Jolla. When I saw what Gabriella posted on social media, I reached out to her to let her know she did the right thing. Bryan is going to get someone killed.

End of statement