

		Case:	Doe v. Mineo et. al.
		Witness Name:	Gerry Rodrigues
		Witness DOB:	
Investigator:	E. Hernández	Witness Contact:	(310) 432-3683
Report Date:	June 3, 2021		gerry@tower26.com

SYNOPSIS

On May 19, 2021, I interviewed Gerry Rodrigues about his experience with open-water swimming and Bryan Mineo. He stated the following:

STATEMENT

By way of background, I've been swimming since 1969. I've been the overall winner in more than 100 open water races. I've been the U.S. and World Masters Champion in pool and open water. I founded Tower 26, a swim coaching and consulting business and was a founding member of the first triathlon club in Los Angeles in 1983. I've been an Expert Coach at Ironman U and U.S. Masters Coach of the Year. I'm the former owner of SWIM Magazine and have been widely published in various trade industry publications. I am also a Co-Founder of the World Open Water Swimming Association.

Bryan (Mineo) came to my attention when his articles started appearing in print and online publications. The content was very familiar, he plagiarized my writings and those of other industry professionals, who I know very well. I started looking into his "qualifications" and "experience" and found other false claims. He claimed to be an athlete at Virginia Tech, physical therapist in Texas and expert open-water swimming coach. A simple investigation into Virginia Tech athletics, the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners and other licensing agencies prove his claims to be false.

The real issue is not just plagiarism or false claims, it's safety. Bryan uses these "qualifications" to boost his resume and attract swimmers to his foundation and coaching services. I'll tell you about the fundamental problem with his methodology. Experienced and licensed professionals will tell you the first rule of open water swimming is proficiency in a pool. A responsible coach will have a swimmer demonstrate a high level of proficiency in the controlled environment of a pool before ever inviting them into the open ocean. Of course, this means that a coach must have an association or partnership that allows him access to a pool. This, of course, costs money. Bryan has no associations with any pools, he invites inexperienced swimmers straight into open water with no evaluation of their skills or abilities.

Training, coaching, mentoring, whatever you chose to call it is a huge responsibility. You are responsible for the people you invite in the ocean. The other area of concern is the year-round schedule. In Southern California, the season starts in May and goes through October. While this may not maximize profits, it takes into account the colder

temperatures and changes in swells, which come with the winter months. Running a year-round training schedule is a risk most of us are not willing to take. We must put safety above everything else. Failure to do so, will inevitably result in tragedy. His practices endanger individual lives and our open water swimming community as a whole.

End of report.