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# Israel Swimming Association: a vision towards success

FINA Communications Department

The Israel Swimming Association has entered a new era and has been deploying additional resources to reach success with the ambitious mission to win an Olympic medal at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

The path will be long and challenging but the national Federation is committed towards aquatic sports and has been

demonstrating this new vision in Eilat, the city on the Red Sea currently hosting the FINA World Junior Open Water

Swimming Championships [1].



*ISA Chairman Simon Davidson*

More precisely, the Association has appointed a new Head Coach, Luka Gabrilo, a former international swimmer from Switzerland. Gabrilo took over as National Team Coach in September 2017 and progress are already being noticed.

“David Marsh suggested me to take on the position when I lived and worked in the USA with him. Seeing the potential and the organisation here in Israel I decided to take this opportunity and I think this was the right choice. I can already appreciate the progress and it is a very interesting journey.”, said Gabrilo who was on site to supervise and support the Israeli team in Eilat.

“The country is dramatically developing in terms of sport and it is great to feel part of this process.”, he continued.

“I started to get involved a bit more with the open water team this year only. I am the head of the national centre where the team is training and I am also the head coach of the Association. This year we really understood that we need to have more synergy between our swimming and open water swimming teams because they need more technical training and training in the traditional pool as well. And at the same time, the traditional swimming pool swimmers have to understand that there is a huge opportunity for them to branch off to open water swimming. This is definitely one of my goals this year, to bring more athletes into open water. This is going to be the biggest task!”



Developing on the current situation, Gabrilo added:

“At the moment we have maybe 6 swimmers who are specialised in open water but I want to increase the interest for this discipline because we have some amazing kids and a very successful season behind us. I am particularly targeting the girls with special projects tailored towards them. The sport culture in Israel in general has to improve”

“We want to bring open water in Israel and really create awareness around this discipline. The competition in Eilat is a testimony of these efforts. There are already plenty of amateur open water competitions across the country but we need to centralise and professionalise all of this.”



*ISA Head Coach Luka Gabrilo*

Assessing the team present in Eilat and the names that stood out, Gabrilo said:

“Our boy Orr Horev Levy did really well yesterday in the 5km. He managed to rank fourth which was impressive. I only saw him swimming twice so when I heard he was fourth I was really impressed. It was an amazing surprise and very encouraging. Of course, the conditions in Eilat are perfect, no waves, flat and warm water.”

“The two boys swimming the 10km, Ido Gal and Yonatan Sharon Rosin, are pretty good too. But the competition calendar has been packed this season and as you know in swimming you have to train every day so it makes the logistic very complex.”

Born and raised in an aquatic family with an Olympian swimmer for mother and an Olympian water polo player for father, Gabrilo previously coached the Swiss national team and then moved to the United States, working with David Marsh, an Olympic head coach in the U.S.

