

## Drew Johansen's Divers 'Prepared to Challenge the World'

By Pete DiPrimio  
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BLOOMINGTON, Ind. – Drew Johansen deflects. It's what the best coaches do, and you'd better believe this Indiana University veteran is one of the best.

You don't become an Olympic head coach for the third time by fluke.

Johansen has thrived as the Hoosiers' diving coach since 2013. Before that, it was Duke, as well as Illinois State and Florida International. He coached Team USA diving in the 2012 Olympics in London, then Rio in 2016, and will again in Tokyo starting July 23.

What's the secret to his success?

The divers, he says without hesitation.

"I'm here because of their performances."

In London, Johansen's divers won one gold, one silver and two bronze medals, the best showing by the U.S. since 1988 in Seoul. His divers won two silvers and a bronze in Rio.

All that was done against China's diving juggernaut.

He had his divers prepared then. He will again.

"We have a nice mix of experience and medalists, with some of the new talent that will take us through Tokyo and into Paris (site of the 2024 Olympics)," Johansen says via recent Zoom availability. "We're real excited."

Excitement comes from Jessica Parratto and Delaney Schnell in 10-meter platform synchro. They won last month's U.S. Trials in Indianapolis.

Parratto, a former Hoosier standout, is competing in her second Olympics. In Rio she placed seventh in platform synchro and 10th in individual platform. This is Schnell's first Olympics.

"They are poised to challenge anybody in the world," Johansen says.

Excitement also comes from current Hoosier Andrew Capobianco, a junior and a two-time NCAA champ, and former Hoosier Mike Hixon (a silver medalist in 2016). They make up IU's 3-meter platform synchro team.

Johansen says he recognized Capobianco's elite potential, "The first day I met him."

That was nearly a decade ago.

Johansen was coaching at Duke at the time. Capobianco was 12 or 13 years old and attending a Duke camp.

Johansen soon moved to Indiana, and eventually convinced Capobianco to join him.

“It turned out to be the right thing,” Johansen says. “I got to coach here as he came into his prime. It’s a story of perseverance. We were meant to be together.”

A pause.

“We’re feeling good heading into Tokyo,” he adds.

No one feels better than Parratto, who comes from a diving family.

Her father, Mike, is a nationally renowned swim coach who has guided four-time Olympian Jenny Thompson as well as world champion Regan Smith. Her mother, Amy, is a former All-American diver.

Jessica says sharing the family success has been “super special,” especially getting to see her father in action.

“I’ve been along his journey with him, the years of experience he’s had as a coach.”

Previous Olympic experience could give Parratto an edge in Tokyo, especially given the year-long pandemic delay.

“The way I’ve prepared has been different. This has been a grind. You have to expect the unexpected.

“The last few months, I’ve been a lot more confident. I’m ready to go. To know it’s going to happen has been great.

“The first time around, you don’t know what to expect. Now you have that expectation. There’s a little more pressure, but you have more confidence.”