

Swimmer still setting records despite heart disease

VIDEO	AUDIO
	---NATS FULL--
Trip Hedrick	"I'm more comfortable in the water than I am on land."
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Jason	Sixty-five-year-old Trip Hedrick was born to swim.
Trip Hedrick	"The water surrounding you, just for me, is just a wonderful sense of security and peace."
Trip Hedrick	"It's like getting a liquid hug, so to speak. And then you go underwater and push off, and you just have this silent calm."
	--NATS FULL--
Jason	A collegiate All-American swimmer turned high school coach and then head men's swimming coach at Iowa State University for 12 years ...
Trip Hedrick	"We had some extremely memorable meets here in this particular pool."
Jason	Hedrick has spent the better part of his life at this pool and many others.
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Trip Hedrick Record-setting Swimmer	"I swim five days a week. I lift two days a week, and then I do an additional cardio workout twice a week."
	----NATS FULL---
Jason	He's one of the top contenders in U.S. Masters Swimming, a competitive organization for various adult age groups.
Trip Hedrick	"The 'fly is something that comes very natural for me, and I've had probably most of my success in the butterfly events."
Jason	Over the span of four decades, Hedrick has set 30

	national records, and an additional nine world records.
Trip Hedrick	"It seems like my body's built for water sports and not land sports."
	---NATS FULL---
Jason	But in 2000 ...
Trip Hedrick	"I was 46."
Jason	... his body was telling him something was wrong.
Trip Hedrick	"I was swimming a typical workout and all of a sudden I had this chest pressure and radiating arm pain. And I kind of talked myself out of it being my heart."
Jason	After it occurred again a few days later, he called his primary care physician and passed an exercise stress test with flying colors. But the symptoms persisted ...
Trip Hedrick	"I got hit with a really cold wind, and had the chest pain and arm pressure."
	---SIREN NATS FULL---
Jason	Eventually taken to the hospital, doctors confirmed ...
Trip Hedrick	"You've had a heart attack, and you have heart disease. And that was really hard to hear."
Jason	He had a 99% blockage ...
Trip Hedrick	"... in my left anterior descending artery, which is the 'widow-maker.'"
Panithaya Chareonthaitawee, M.D. Cardiovascular Disease Mayo Clinic	"But some patients have just very vague symptoms: a sense of unease, maybe just a little bit of sweating but nothing that's traumatic."

Jason	Hedrick would have the first of three stent procedures over the next 15 years to clear his arteries.
Trip Hedrick	"I think I thought I was the healthy one. I had this workout regimen. I thought my exercise would keep those veins unclogged."
Dr. Chareonthaitawee	"We think that genetics play a big role in the development of heart disease."
Dr. Chareonthaitawee	"Sometimes patients do everything that they can. They do everything right and the disease still progresses."
Trip Hedrick	"The competitor in me came out, thinking I can beat this. I can reverse this heart disease, and the fact that I continued to have some issues really bothered me."
Jason	In March 2018, less than a year after setting a world record in the 50-meter butterfly ...
Dr. Chareonthaitawee	"His exercise capacity had come down, and that was enough to get me worried."
Trip Hedrick	"You're going to need bypass surgery."
Dr. Stulak	"You don't usually expect to walk into a room and find a patient who looks more physically fit than the doctor is."
Jason	Despite his appearance, Hedrick's coronary arteries, which feed blood to the heart, were 85% blocked, and would require open-heart surgery.
	----NATS FULL HEART MONITOR----
Dr. Stulak	"Heart surgery is not a cure. We're basically resetting a clock."
John Stulak, M.D. Cardiovascular Surgery Mayo Clinic	"Coronary artery bypass surgery is basically plumbing. Our job is to route blood around the blockages."
Trip Hedrick	"Feeling great."
Jason	Two months after a double bypass ...

Trip Hedrick	Never better.”
Jason	... Hedrick returned to the water.
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Trip Hedrick	“I just told my wife yesterday that my cardiovascular feels great.
Trip Hedrick	“I’m totally locked in.”
Jason	And for his doctors at Mayo Clinic, he gave himself a personal challenge.
Trip Hedrick	“I said: ‘I’m so appreciative of what you’ve done for me. I’m going to promise I’m going to set a world record for you.’”
Dr. Stulak	“I made a promise right back to him that I would be in the audience when he did it.”
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Trip Hedrick	“I want to be the one that tries to defy perceived limitations of what you can do or how fast you can go.”
	---NATS FULL---
Jason	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I’m Jason Howland.