

ATHLETES

HEALTH & FITNESS

ATHLETE'S VOICE

Allison Schmitt, Four-Time Olympian and Ten-Time Olympic Medalist, on Using Orreco to Improve Nutrition, Recovery and Training



Schmitt spoke with SportTechie about Orreco, a sports performance company that analyzes athlete blood tests to recommend recovery and training programs.

By Joe Lemire
September 26, 2022



Allison Schmitt is one of only seven American swimmers to compete in four Olympics, having competed in the Beijing, London, Rio and Tokyo Games. A freestyle specialist, she won 10 medals—four gold, three silver, three bronze—including five podium finishes in 2012. In London, she set Olympic and American records while winning gold in the 200 free and contributed to a world record in the 4x100-meter relay.

Born in Pittsburgh and raised outside Detroit, Schmitt later starred on the University of Georgia swimming team where she was a four-time individual champion and leader in helping the Bulldogs win the 2013 NCAA national title.

Schmitt initially retired after the Rio Olympics in 2016, at which point she began pursuing a master's degree in social work at Arizona State. She reduced to a part-time load when she began swimming again in 2018 and now is on track to graduate in May. Schmitt recently joined the Female Athlete team at **Orreco** and is an ambassador for its **FitrWoman** campaign.

On her medical history ...

I was diagnosed anemic in 2010, and the only really cure for that, I was told, was on an IUD so that I would bleed less. That's all I knew, and I was on an IUD for eight years. I came off of that into the end of 2018. I just wanted to see how my body reacted. The myth is that the only thing we really know about female health is that our body changes every seven years. So I figured that maybe my hormones have changed, and I wouldn't bleed as much.

That was my thought process. Coming off of birth control essentially was—I mean, I didn't know what exactly an IUD was—my only question was, 'I want kids some day. Is this going to stop me from having kids?' They were like, 'No, as soon as stop, you can have kids.' I didn't really realize the severity of the synthetic hormones and what it does to your body. So when I came off it, my body was adjusting to it for quite a few months because of the synthetic progesterone was being produced for those eight years, and now all of a sudden, my body's trying to produce it.

On using Orreco's platform...

I didn't really know what was going on with my body, which is when I got connected with the USA Swimming director of sports medicine, Keenan Robinson. He connected me with Dr. Georgie, and I have been working with her ever since. I was very involved. I talked with Georgie almost daily. I would be on mostly weekly calls with the whole team. It was like a *team*. We would talk just to check in, make sure everything's going right.

For what was needed, we would have blood work. So going towards Olympic trials, from probably October of 2020 through May of 2021, I was going through a lot of health things, and they helped me through that. And by the end, when I was actually into full training again, I was getting blood tests every Monday to check on my cortisol levels to see how it was in response to training.

On applying her Orreco results to training...

We had a plan of nutrition, recovery and training. But on Mondays if that number came back extremely low, I would have to adjust the training for that day or for that week. That was a different type of challenge, I guess for my coach, Bob Bowman, in just adjusting that based on what the scientific numbers are. I love that about Orreco: everything is proven and scientific-based, and it's not just opinion.

We needed that change because of my performance at a time. I wasn't able to finish practices. I wasn't able to do practices at the level that I needed to do them at. The whole Orreco team helped us through that process. And, I mean, it was kind of like hands up in the air. Bob and I don't know any information on the female health side, so teach us what we can [learn] and what's going to be beneficial. It ended up working—all of us working together—and results started improving. From where I was in March and April to where I was in Tokyo was a drastic difference, and I don't think that we could have got there without the help.

On training men versus women...

I come from a mostly male training environment, and my mentality, which in that environment has gotten me a lot of success in sport, is, 'Okay, put your head down, push through, you can get through it.' But I think just now learning the difference between pushing through something, and getting the right help in this situation, is a big difference, but also the difference between men and women.

Why are we training females like males? And why is all the research on males when females and males are different people? How our bodies are made up is completely different. It's critical to treat your body how it's made up, understanding that [females] can use those hormones and the differences to their advantages, and they can be more powerful than what they already are.

On pairing training with monthly cycles...

We look at it as four phases in a female athlete, and yes, there's different modalities that are ideal for them. But, at the end of the day, yes, we have our goals that we want to accomplish and adjusting to your needs and your period is not asking for less work. I'm still putting the same amount of work in, I just need to be more conscious and educated on ways that I can perform better. So whether that be nutrition, whether that be more recovery, whether that be more warm up—whatever that is for that day, I as an athlete have to be educated in that. But also, from a coach standpoint and pushing their athletes, I think there's a lot of times where athletes are hard enough on their selves as it is. And they're gonna want to do better week after week.

On other wellness monitoring...

I did use **Sleeprate** which [paired with] a disc under my bed. And when it first came out, I used **Whoop**. And then I started using it again at the end of my career. And still today I use those modalities just because it's interesting to me to see how much our bodies can adjust, and even seeing between the different phases, the quality of sleep I have. It kind of affects my performance, not only in athletics, but in your everyday human interactions.

On now working for Orreco...

I'm very passionate about getting that education out just because I feel like I learned so much about it. And if I'm learning this—I'm a 30-year-old female and am just learning about my body—how many other females are going through the exact same thing? If we can get this information out to kids at a younger age, in high school and college, there's a lot of obstacles that they will be able to avoid throughout their career and hopefully have a more successful career.

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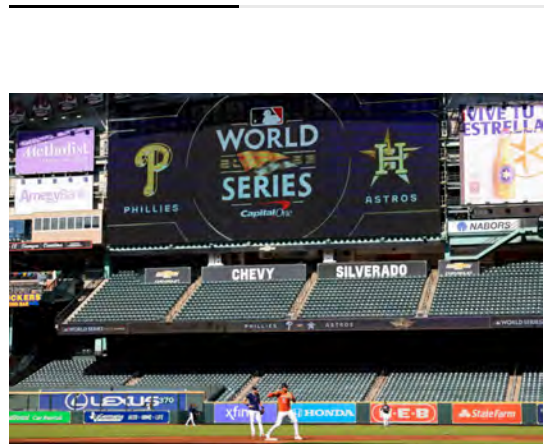
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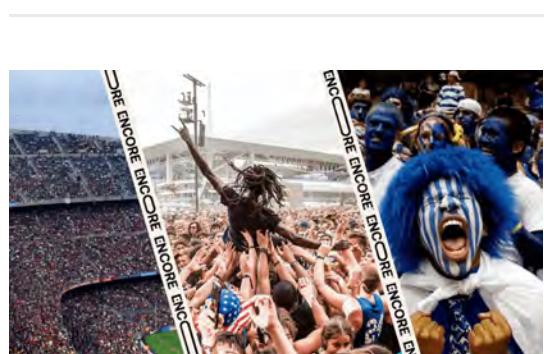
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World Series Will Be Monitored by Federal Agencies to Prevent Unauthorized Drones From Entering the Astros, Phillies Stadiums

According to sources, roughly one-third of Major League Baseball stadiums have technology in place to detect an incoming drone and determine the precise location of the pilot's remote control. But those MLB teams do not have legal clearance to mitigate or intercept any unmanned objects in flight — only the FBI, CIA, Secret Service and DHS do.

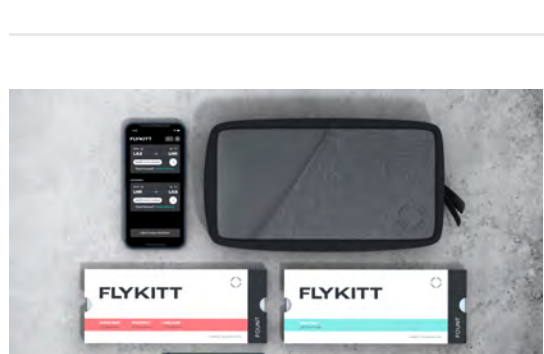
Tom Friend | Nov. 2, 2022



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Encore Is Turning Fandom Into a Digital Asset by Helping Athletes, Teams and Leagues Better Understand Fans With First-Party Data

Encore's Fan ID protocol unlocks experiences, discounts and rewards for fans who share their data with teams, leagues and athletes. The system also helps teams, leagues and athletes make data-driven decisions to better engage their fans.

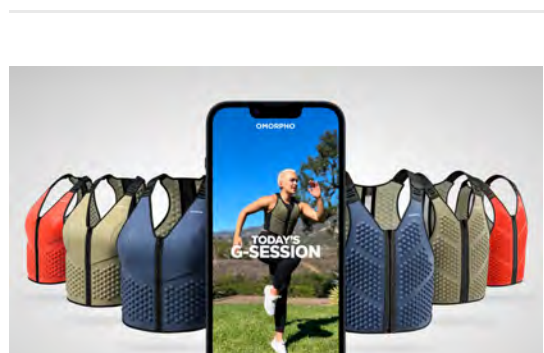
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HEALTH & FITNESS | **SPORTS SCIENCE**
Fount Launches FlyKitt; Inside the AI-Powered System Aimed at Eliminating Jet Lag With Customized Eating and Sleeping Schedules

SportTechie spoke with Fount co-founder and CEO Andrew Herr, a former human performance and biotech strategies lead for the Pentagon, about Fount's newest product. FlyKitt is an app-guided series of dietary supplements and tools such as blue light-blocking glasses that can suppress the underlying inflammation that leads to jet lag.

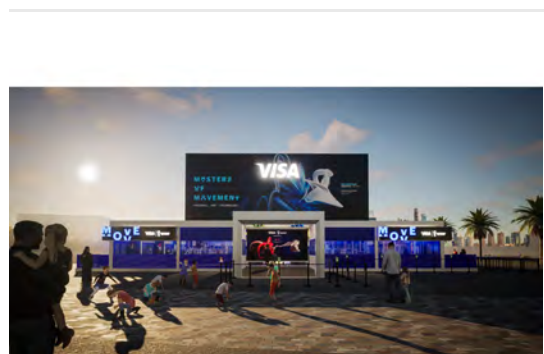
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Omorpho Launches G-Vest+ to Allow Athletes to Connect to an App for On-Demand Workouts, Guides to Using Their Weighted Vest

SportTechie's Tom Friend has more on the latest technological development from Omorpho. The company has updated their micro-weighted vest to include an NFC tag inside. The upgrade is called G-Vest+, and it involves an app with on-demand workouts.

Tom Friend | Nov. 1, 2022



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How Visa and Crypto.com Are Combining Soccer, Art and NFTs to Create Unique Fan Experience Ahead of FIFA World Cup Qatar

SportTechie's Andrew Cohen has more on FIFA World Cup Qatar fan activations from Visa and Crypto.com. As part of the Visa Masters of Movement, fans can visit the on-site indoor LED soccer pitch, create their own NFT artwork based on their playing movements and participate in an auction for five unique NFTs of iconic World Cup goals.

Andrew Cohen | Nov. 1, 2022