

# December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Weekly Update-

## *Practice Updates:*

### Schedule updates for week of December 7<sup>th</sup> through December 13<sup>th</sup>:

Regular Practice Schedule on Monday and Tuesday for ALL squads.

## **Wednesday, December 9<sup>th</sup>:**

Devy Gold will practice from 3:45-5:30pm

PS Black will practice from 4-6:15pm

Senior Gold will practice WITH Senior Silver from 5:45-8:15pm

All other squads will practice on Regular Schedule.

## **Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup>:**

Devy Gold will practice from 3:45-5:30pm

PS Black will practice from 4-6:15pm

Senior Gold will practice WITH Senior Silver from 5:45-8:15pm

All other squads will practice on Regular Schedule.

## **Friday, December 11<sup>th</sup>:**

PS Blue and AG Gold will practice Together from 4-6:15pm

Senior Silver, Senior Gold, and PS Black will practice together from 5:30-7:45pm.

All other squads will practice on Regular Schedule.

## **Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup>:**

Senior Silver and Senior Gold will practice Together from 7-10am.

All other Squads: **NO PRACTICE.**

**Schedule updates for week of December 14<sup>th</sup> through December 20<sup>th</sup>:**

Regular Practice Schedule All Week.

There will be an optional "Distance Day" morning practice on Thursday, December 17<sup>th</sup> for any High school age athlete in Senior Silver / Gold that wishes to focus on some more aerobic conditioning. Practice time TBA.

There will be a Sunday Power workout on December 20<sup>th</sup> from 3-4:30pm for Senior Silver and Senior Gold.

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***From the USA Swimming Website (www.usaswimming.org):***

Justine Mueller: Embracing Change (12/4/2009)



BY MIKE WATKINS//Correspondent

While she's not completely sold on his presidency so far, Justine Mueller recognizes Barack Obama has overcome many obstacles and created his own path during his first year in office.

As someone she considers influential in her life, Mueller is willing to forgive some of his shortfalls in order to appreciate the attempts he's making to create change and make improvements.

"If I had to grade him (so far), I'd give him a 6 (out of 10)," said Mueller, a University of Michigan All-American who now trains at SwimMAC in North Carolina. "He has not come through on some of his promises, but I do like that he is trying to push our country in a new direction because I think we could use a major change.

"I'm really just impressed with his willingness to overcome obstacles and go against the grain. I could have named several other people (as influential), like Betty Friedan or Jean Kilbourne, who both share these same qualities. They are all people who won't back down, and I respect that, even if they may be wrong."

Standing up and not backing down is a quality Mueller shares with these charismatic people -- especially when it comes to swimming. She has capitalized upon her fierce competitive nature ever since she took her first swimming lessons as a second-grader in Monroe, Mich.

"I love stepping up on the blocks and racing, whether it is in practice or in a meet," Mueller said. "For a while, I lost that need for competition, and I think it might be due to how fast I went from

being no one to being top 10 at NCAAs and top 24 at Trials in 2004. My freshman year of high school, I had no state meet cuts, and less than four years later, I was swimming at Olympic Trials next to Katie Hoff, Amanda Beard and Tara Kirk. That's quite a culture shock."

Once she made it past her immediate intimidation, Mueller capitalized on her opportunity and has been riding that wave ever since. While she did experience a bit of a setback as a college junior – when life's distractions got the best of her – she is swimming the best times of her life and is enjoying swimming and the thrill of competition like never before.

Training at SwimMAC with heralded coach David Marsh has been a big reason for her resurgence.

"Since I've been here, I am getting my competitive force back, and it has been really fun," Mueller said. "Before I came to MAC, there was one thing I knew I had to let go of, and I made sure to do so before I stepped foot on the pool deck. I always thought that I knew what was the best training for me, and it interfered with my college career.

"I promised myself after the U.S. Open in 2008 that I would let go of all notions I had about training and give someone the opportunity to coach me. It was really hard the first couple of weeks because I had to make so many stroke changes, and I was just very overwhelmed by how different training was. I eventually got over it, and became very coachable. It's still something I struggle with, but I'm learning to deal with what is given to me."

Mueller cites her commitment to strength training along with changes in coaching and technique as big reasons she went from fifth in the 200 IM and ninth in the 400 IM at last year's U.S. Open to winning titles in both at this year's Open. She admitted she's never been stronger than she is right now, nor has she ever been as aerobically fit.

Those performances, both personal-best times, came just a couple of weeks after top 8 finishes in the 200 breaststroke (8th) and 200 IM (7th) at World Championship Trials in July.

"The first six months I was here, I had no job, so I worked out all the time," said Mueller, who finished 12th in the 200 IM at last year's Olympic Trials. "And for a while, I was commuting about an hour each way, and had nothing to do between practices so I would hang out at the pool and train. It gave me a great base for what I can do now, and what I will have time for in the future."

Coaching has also proven to be a motivating force for Mueller. She first coached her sophomore year of high school and was immediately hooked.

She continues to coach while training, and when her competitive career is over – a career which has placed her on the 2009-2010 U.S. National Team based on her wins at the U.S. Open – she is definitely interested in pursuing coaching as a career.

"I have never gone to a National meet and been that successful, and I walked out of the IUPUI (Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis) pool with the feeling that I was on top of the

world," Mueller said. "There are not a lot of people out there who make it this far in swimming, so to be one of the top fraction of a percent is really cool. The best part about knowing you are one of the top 6 in the country, which, because U.S. swimming is so fast in relation to most of the world, means you probably rank in the top 20 in the world."

Up next for Mueller are next summer's World Championship Trials and beyond that, the 2012 Olympic Trials, where she intends to continue to be a competitive force.

"I work full-time, and try to get in some coaching, so David (Marsh) has me focus on my out-of-the-water strength," said Mueller, who earned her degree in business. "It's nice that he is so flexible, and now that I am settling into my routine, I am finding more time to get it all in."

"I figure, though, that if I can manage the stress of my life now, nothing will stop me at Trials in 2012. The hardest part will be over, and when I step up on the blocks, I will be thinking how much easier 4.5 minutes is than the training I had to do to get there."

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## **From Your Head Coach:**

### **~~The HEAT Will Rise~~**

#### ***To the Membership:***

I thought it valid, and important, to share with the entire team the various lessons of failure and success we as a team encountered this past weekend at the Oregon Senior Open.

As a coach I of course don't like failure, quite the opposite actually, but bottomline there is never a better opportunity to learn and embrace change when failure emerges. I am a firm believer that in order to succeed one must be willing to endure a failure or two. Yet in order to go from failure to success, one must be willing to evaluate what brought about that failure and take the steps necessary to correct the flaws.

This weekend I feel the group of athletes in attendance at the Senior Open in Corvallis shared a resounding success in the form of team support, cooperation, and spirit... but we unfortunately failed in this regard, ***at first***, before we really went on to shine brightly.

The Senior Open began Friday morning and the swimmers went into the preliminaries knowing what the game plan was... simply to be aggressive and make a statement that we were there to swim, and swim FAST. And so they did. Coach Mark and I both had an unbelievably high amount of fun with the collective group and their willingness and eagerness to attack their heats, and race to win. We had huge swims all around, and countless swimmers "step up" and make a final when they were not "expected" to do so. As coaches, Mark and I left the pool deck eager for the Finals to begin.

The finals however, that first night, did not go exactly how Mark and I were expecting. Most of our swimmers seemed detached, tired, and not into the meet going on around them... and the results were the exact opposite of what we saw in the morning. We seemed to have picked up 30 new athletes to replace the ones we had in the morning. Attitude, involvement, and desire were all completely different; and support for one another, was basically nonexistent.

A learning opportunity became blatantly apparent. After a long team meeting following Friday's finals, we as a coaching staff felt we had gotten through to them. We pointed out their flaws of simply swimming for themselves vs. swimming for, and the supporting of, their team and teammates. Would the lesson be learned? Time would tell.

That evening, following the meeting, swimmers Anthon T, Kelsey R, Tara M, and Kevin R accompanied me to the Dollar Tree where I set them loose to find various cheer gear for Saturday's final session. It was my intention to literally look and act like a completely different team the next time finals descended upon us.

Saturday's preliminaries went much as the same as Friday's: The squad as a whole was on fire. Many individuals made the push into the final session, and as Mark put it: "the kids played swimming." It was fun, and they were a force to be reckoned with.

The team that showed up for finals Saturday evening however, was NOT the same team that swam in the preliminaries... They were an even **better** one. When a HEAT swimmer's name was announced the swimmers EXPLODED. People **knew** when we had swimmers in the pool, and they knew it often. People knew the HEAT was there because no matter where you looked you saw athletes with Santa Hat's, Army Hat's, Robot Helmet's, noise makers, pom pom's, and of course, the athlete's decked out in HEAT blue.

One of the swimmers remarked after dropping 5 seconds from his preliminary swim: "Hearing my teammates cheer for me, and seeing them all there supporting me and yelling my name, I wasn't going to let them down, and there was no way I was going to let the guy next to me beat me." Where we had once failed to capitalize, the swimmers made up for it in a resounding and hopefully a paradigm shifting way.

At the end of the Friday finals session the team sat in 5<sup>th</sup> place. Not at all where we could have, nor should have been. However, after the team's change in attitude and approach to the finals, after the Sunday 1650 session the team had battled its way from behind to take 2<sup>nd</sup> place overall in the team competition... Far and away our team's highest finish ever at the Oregon Senior Open.

Congrats to all of the athletes in attendance on their great performances. More importantly however, congrats on being a group who fell down, got up, dusted themselves off, and came back stronger and better than before. It is far too often the case these days, that once an individual falls, that individual just want to stay down. Keep on going against the grain.

More specific individual results in an upcoming update.

## **From Coach Mark:**

For the parents: To who is your swimmer accountable?

When swimmers are just beginning, they usually start swimming because Mom or Dad think that it's a good idea. The parents figure out the schedule and figure out how to fit it in around other activities and the parent's own busy lives. The swimmer is pretty much accountable to Mom and Dad, because they are doing the sport under Mom and Dad's will. As swimmers progress in the sport, Mom and Dad may go out of their way to express their goals for the swimmer and initiate expectations on the swimmer's performances. The feeling behind this action may be that the parents feel that if they aren't pushing hard enough that the swimmer will never be as good as they could be.

Swimmers are truly making some progress, when they are able (or allowed) to transfer that accountability away from Mom and Dad and give it to the coach. The swimmers try to meet the guidelines set by the coach and look to the coach to set personal goals, expectations, and race strategies. Some coaches like this approach, because they are now in deeper control of the swimmer's success and failure. The coach expects unquestioning trust and the swimmer gives it freely in exchange for his or her accountability in the sport.

The pinnacle of swimming accountability happens when a swimmer truly realizes that he or she is only accountable to only one person: him or herself. The swimmer takes hold of the reigns and sets personal goals and practice expectations. The swimmer is able to determine whether or not his or her efforts are getting the results that he or she expects. The swimmer is independent to decide his or her commitment, involvement, and competitive pursuits and follows that up with their own level of dedication in the sport.

We have swimmers in every level of our program who are in each tier of this hierarchy. However, it is the hope and dream of this coaching staff that we follow this model: swimmer driven, coach assisted, and parent supported.

When swimmers go into (and through) the higher levels of our program accountable to Mom and Dad, their feelings of success are completely determined by what Mom and Dad thinks. They are pushed to practice by Mom and Dad, and thus can only be vindicated by the results that Mom and Dad think they should be achieving. This isn't real life and there is very little growth in this. Swimmers typically end up having very little personal connection with the sport and it just ends up being something they do for their parents.

When swimmers go into (and through) our higher levels accountable to Coach, their feelings of success are completely determined by accomplishing goals that the coach thinks that they should be able to achieve. This is greater on the hierarchy, in that now a trained professional is setting up the goals and expectations based upon the progression that has been set down for that athlete.

However, from this perspective, the swimmers don't LEARN how build on true success because it belongs to the coach...likewise, they don't LEARN how to cope and learn from failure because, essentially, it belongs to the coach. The swimmer swims well when the coach is able to say or do something magical for the swimmer. The swimmer fails when the coach can't seem to say or do that magical thing in a particular instance. Don't get me wrong, coaches can make a difference, but when it comes down to it, there is only one person doing the real work in each practice and each event...and that's the swimmer.

When swimmers are accountable to themselves, they LEARN to function on their own! They start to believe in their own abilities because they are doing the work because they WANT IT! They make their own goals and work with the coach to determine the best way to make those dreams come true. They share their commitment with their parents, so that their parents can help support their dreams. The dream is centered around the athlete and the coach and parent are merely role players to make it all come true. The swimmers are more confident, well adapted, and able to handle obstacles outside swimming that come their way, because they have LEARNED to face them before.

Parents, you need to find out what your swimmer wants to happen with their swimming. Sit down and ask them about what they enjoy and where they might see this going. Then ask him or her, "Do you want that because you think that's what I want? Do want that because you think that's what your coach wants? Do want that because YOU REALLY WANT IT?" Then ask him or her, "How do you think that I can help you get that?" If you feel like you need to be holding the steering wheel for your swimmer to be the best he or she can be...you might be surprised at what happens when you and your swimmer try to have a mature conversation about involvement in this sport. If you want some help with this one...LET ME KNOW! I am all about the long term learning...it's so much more important to me than the short term success.

### **Senior Silver:**

Great week of swimming. I really like how we prepped for this weekend's meets. Take the time to really think about what you are doing in practice to develop confidence. This weekend is a test run for our successes at State and Sectional level. Be very conscious about what IS and ISN'T going to be helpful in preparing for your season championship meets in the upcoming months.

Honorable Mention this week knocks on Mitchell M's door. He has done an excellent job preparing for this meet. He is really concentrating, when he needs to and thinking about the right things. He is really just letting his mind think about racing, when it needs to and thinking about the right things. I hope that the preparation translates to a happy swimmer, when it comes time to read this update.

### **Pre-Senior Blue:**

I was really impressed with the way you guys literally ATTACKED practice this week. I tried to make it hard, too, but you guys tore it up! What I was most impressed with was watching how

well you guys were doing on sets that DID NOT feature your best strokes or best skills. That's how you improve at this point in the season...work on your weaknesses!

This week's Honorable Mention goes toward a swimmer that I won't be able to see for a while. Hannah A swam like this was going to be her last week of practice for a long time...because it is. I am proud of the efforts that she threw down this week, and I hope that when they come back to the pool at the end of the month, she is ready to start back right where she left off. Come back ready!

### **Age Group Silver:**

We are really starting to hit a good stride with what we are accomplishing at practice on a regular basis. I really want to drive home the point that I don't want you guys to get comfortable doing the same thing all of the time. You have to look at some of the sets or drills that we are repeating and think, "How am I going to make this better/faster than last time?" There is nothing that we do that you are only "bad" or "good" at...it is all stuff that you can improve whether you feel one way or the other.

I would like to present Brandon Hicks with the Honorable Mention, this week. Brandon reserves this honor, not because he bested the group on most of what we did this week, including setting a new group record for the 20 minute swim for distance. It is more of how he is beginning to behave in practice by accepting new challenges and working harder when the objective is less clear. In other words...doing the hard stuff better! Good job!

## **From Coach Caitlin:**

### **Novice White**

Last week we tried out something new - breaststroke armstrokes! Imagine a big bowl of ice cream in front of you. You can only use your hands to eat it. Start with your hands out in front of you, sweep your hands around to scoop up your ice cream, then push your hands back to the front. You need to take a breath with each armstroke. After several days of practicing the kick and armstrokes separately, we'll combine them. Sundari, Semi, Madison, and Aneesh did a nice job with the armstrokes.

### **Novice Blue**

This week to make things fun I'll add in some more dryland exercises during practice. Jumping jacks, pushups, and situps. Jewelz had the best form on all 3 exercises! On her pushups she kept her body straight and brought her chest down to the ground.

To get ready for the LO meet last week we worked on a lot of IM. A lot! On Wednesday I timed your 100IM. I liked your fly armstrokes, but you need to keep your legs together as you swim. Those 2-hand touches on fly and breast are very important too! Here are the results:

Kimberly 2:36

Eliot 2:43

Lexie 3:13  
Ivy 2:32  
Anton 2:23  
Alys 2:51  
Ethan 2:03  
Wyatt 2:42  
Jewelz 3:32  
Kenny 2:22  
Shreya 3:08  
Shivani 3:27  
Brianna 2:22

### **Novice Black**

Your dives are looking better each week! Always keep your streamline tight. For free, I want to see dolphin kicks underwater and no breathing on your first stroke. That means you'll take your first stroke with your face still in the water, and then breath on your second stroke. If you can wait until your third or fourth stroke to breathe that would be amazing! Dylan had great streamline and breath control. And Madison did her first dive off the block!

Last week we practiced a lot of 100IM's. Here are the results from your timed 100IM on Thursday:

John 2:30  
Brianna 2:41  
Ian 2:32  
Jaslena 3:00  
Tristan 2:32  
Dylan 2:35  
Madison 3:02  
Carson 3:36  
Kyra 2:31

### **Devy Silver**

Dryland is going to become more challenging as the winter goes on. I'll continue to watch and correct your form, but we'll do exercises at a faster pace. Less rest, more moving. Dryland makes you a better swimmer. It strengthens your legs, upper body, core, heart, and lungs. You'll feel stronger in the water at practice and meets. Remember your coats, hats, and gloves! Last week you had your 300 free kick test set. Aiden had the fastest time - 7:07! Donovan dropped 40 seconds since September and Jasmine dropped 39 seconds since October. I can't wait to see how much time you drop on your 300 free pull!

## **From Coach Kaitlin:**

### **Novice Silver**

A reminder/notice...high school dual meets start next week. The only day that this will affect our practice will be on Thursdays. We will either swim in the small part of the deep end by the diving board or swim outside. More than likely we will warm up inside and then move outside at 3:15. Please be prepared for this change. The air will be cold outside but the water is not (the pool is heated).

We had a good week of practices last week. We did a lot more swimming than we have in the past and most people responded to it well. We also had 2 test sets last week, and one of them we had to do twice. Please make sure when we do the test sets that you are giving everything you have into that one set. The longest we do is a 100 and that is really not very long. Also make sure that you are racing people. We took some practice time to talk about racing a few weeks ago and everyone said that they understood so please don't forget this factor. We need to practice racing in practice so we racing in the meets will be something we are used to!

### **Age Group Gold**

We only have one week left until our big December meet! We have talked about this meet in the past as being one of our main focus meets and now it is upon us. This will be a great opportunity to achieve some state or sectional qualifying times. Please start preparing yourself mentally to achieve those times and I will continue to prepare you in the pool. This week we will be doing some more racing in practice...racing yourself and others. I am really excited about this meet and I hope that you all are as well. Get plenty of sleep this week and eat well and drink plenty of fluids so we can have a great meet this weekend!

As a side note...if you are not going to be at practice, please let me know. A few of you have been good about telling me, but I have had a lot of people missing practice and I do not know the reasons. You can email, call or text me if you will not be there, but please just let me know. This applies to both dryland and swimming. If you are missing dryland, you can just tell me the reason, but either way let me know if you will not be there.

## **From Coach Matt:**

### **AG Bronze**

First off, I feel like we need to take care of a few issues before they get too far out of control. I hate having to “punish” our squad for things, but sometimes that is the only way we can get things done. This frustrates me beyond belief. I have reminded our swimmers everyday to do flipturns and not push off the bottom, and frankly by now I shouldn't have to. It makes me upset when I ask the squad to do a 300IM and I have to count many, many, MANY instances of people standing on the bottom. Also, after making it clear to the squad that this is unacceptable, we come back the next day and don't do flipturns on a 100 free for time. I am not expecting anything unreasonable; the thing that makes me upset is not doing basic things because they are a little bit harder. Please do not be lazy! Swimmers – you know what you are supposed to do but you are constantly choosing not to do it. I understand the occasional forgetfulness or having to stop for a reason (got kicked, need to fix goggles, choked on water, etc), but don't just jump off the bottom for no reason.

I was also disappointed with the behavior in dryland. I am only able to do dryland with our squad on Fridays, and I hope that you had an “off” night and don’t behave that way with Ryan. 5 MINUTES – that is how long you have to get ready for dryland...it is a team rule and needs to be followed, no excuses. Stop with the complaining. It makes your other squad members who want to be there have a horrible time and affects our whole workout. If you don’t want to be there Ryan and I will gladly send you home early. Lastly, take your dryland work seriously. When a coach asks you to do something, listen while they are talking and do what they say. Joking around with your friends is completely fine, but when you waste half the time thinking you are being funny by doing things incorrectly, that is when it becomes a problem. Work hard in dryland and use it to help you get for fit and become a better athlete.

Please do not take this the wrong way. My reason for bringing this up this way is because it needs to be fixed, and quickly. I want us to have a great end to the season and that is coming up faster than we think. It is something that will greatly benefit us to work on, and it extremely important for the improvement of our squad. Also, for those swimmers who have been giving 100% in practice every day and not necessarily doing the things mentioned above, keep up the great work! We are a team and that is why the whole squad is treated the same way and I can’t just make the people who were doing things wrong take the heat for it. If you know you are doing this correctly, be role models for the other swimmers around you!

## **From Coach Ryan:**

### **Pre-senior Black**

We have a big meet this weekend in Lake Oswego. We're reaching the midpoint of this short course season, so now is the time to focus in on those A and B times, and to get out there and *race*! Several of you have raised your concerns to me about some new events you haven't swam before in meets. Please understand I'm not entering you in these events as an act of punishment; on the contrary, these events are critical to your evolution as a competitive swimmer. We can distance ourselves from mediocrity by not staying content with the races we're comfortable with. Each new challenge accepted is taking another step towards greatness and greatness is something that should not be feared. If you were not capable of greatness, I would not present these challenges to you, so please, *embrace* these opportunities!

Best of luck to everyone this weekend, GO HEAT!