

April 5th, 2010 Weekly Update-

Practice Updates:

Schedule updates for the week of April 5th through April 11th:

Regular Practice Schedule for all squads Monday through Friday. On Saturday, April 10th the following schedule changes will take place:

Pre Senior Blue, Pre Senior Black, Age Group Gold, and Age Group Silver will be doing a special combined practice from 8-10am.

Schedule updates for the week of April 12th through April 18th:

Regular Practice Schedule for all squads Monday through Friday. There will be NO Saturday and Sunday practices due to the Forest Grove Meet.

From the USA Swimming website (www.usaswimming.org):

Flawless Finishes



BY KELSEY SAVAGE-HAYS//Correspondent

Of course the start matters, the turnover rate counts, and pace strategy shouldn't be overlooked, but in a head-to-head match, it's the finish that makes or breaks a race. Here are four do's and don'ts from Brian Brown, head coach of Asphalt Green Unified Aquatics, to help you hit the wall first.

Do anticipate. "The wall shouldn't surprise you," says coach Brown. A strong finish needs as much finessing as any other technique, and the best way to practice is by doing short sprints during workouts while memorizing your race-pace stroke count per lap. Work on reaching for the wall every time with a fully-extended arm.

Do Count. For perfect timing, coach Brown emphasizes that the first stroke sets up the last, so starting the breakout stroke with great form means you're more likely to match the stroke count you've practiced, giving you a better idea of where the wall will fall.

Don't breathe! Freestylers should take their last gasp before passing under the flags and then keep their head down until they touch the wall. Butterfliers, coach Brown points out, might end up inhaling between the flags and wall (depending on their natural breathing pattern), but they definitely shouldn't breathe on the finishing stroke.

Do make the last stroke count. Hit the touchpad energetically at the end of each race to stop the device and make your time official.

Don't Peek. "It's a common error for a swimmer who's in the lead to sneak a look at a close contender and end up placing second," says coach Brown. Instead of worrying about the final standings, tuck your head down and aim for the touchpad. Let the scoreboard announce who wins.

From Your Head Coach:

~The HEAT Will Rise~



Senior Gold:

Week one is in the books. Everyone is, or should be, WAY sore. Especially in the legs.... GOOD! The primary focus or goal for the next few weeks will be to build a very strong foundation of leg strength and kicking endurance. Being able to maintain a strong, driving kick in long course is of paramount importance. Make your foundation a good one and let's build a great season on top of it!

We are back to training in our special long course yard pool... it's like seeing an old friend that I didn't know I missed. From the sounds of things it seems that most of you really missed it as well. Long course is MUCH harder and I am excited to have that be part of our daily challenges once again.

Welcome to Ty Gantt, Sam Ellis, Aron Suto, Scott Metzsch, and Bailey Strom to the Senior Gold Squad. I have already been very impressed with their efforts and I am excited about

EVERYTHING they have been bringing to the table daily in workouts. Please make them feel welcome. Their addition to the squad will be invaluable in the coming months.

Devy Gold:

Welcome back from the break! I hope you are all ready for an awesome long course season!

Now that this squad has some established veterans in it's ranks we will be working on upping the level of difficulty within our daily workouts gradually as the season progresses. I have been very impressed with everyone this first week and I think this could turn into our most successful season's of 10 and Under swimming ever based on what I have seen in practice thus far.

Our squad goal for the upcoming week: BE SUPPORTIVE of one another. What can you do to make practice better for your squadmates? What can you say to them? What would make them feel good about what they are doing? How can you help someone to do and be better each day during practice. Work on it all week!

Congrats to swimmers Megan Lockbeam, Ben Cookson, Megan Craig, Dylan Fisher, Mitchell Morrison, Amogh Patki, and McKenna Wilson who have moved on to one of our Age Group programs. From what I hear these athletes are stepping it up in big ways and are even leading lanes and setting new standards for these squads! Way to go guys! I have thoroughly enjoyed coaching all of you and I am very excited that you are representing your old squad be shining in your new one. Keep it up!

Congrats also to swimmers Anton Goswitz, Ethan Heasley, Aiden Kemper, Elsie Pagel, and Max Woodbury to their recent move to our squad. They have been doing quite well and I am excited to watch them progress as the season continues.

From Coach Mark:

Senior Silver: It's been a good first week. It looks like everyone is eager to get back into the swing of things. My challenge of the week is for you guys to CHALLENGE each other in everything that you are doing. I think that we have a few people in the group who will do this regardless. Let's have an entire squad doing this on a regular basis.

This week, I'd like to point out the efforts of Megan L in the Honorable Mention column. She has come back, after the break with a whole new outlook, since we took that bulkhead out of the pool. It's fun to watch her swimming at the front of the lane and swimming even faster than she did when we had a wall in the middle of the pool. Good stuff!

Pre-Senior Blue: First week back has been solid. We need to get back to remembering what it was like to have more people per lane, when we switch to the long course pool...like it was all of the last few years. My challenge for you guys, this week, is to have you thinking of ways to encourage EVERYONE in our squad routinely. Constantly find ways to encourage those swimming in front of you, behind you, and beside you. Be as INCLUSIVE as possible, and that will help us grow together faster.

I have been really impressed with what Logan F has set out to do this season. He deserves the Honorable Mention this week, not because he is leading the majority of what we are doing (because he is), but because he is still taking the time to do things RIGHT before trying to do things FAST. Keep working on it!

Age Group Silver: I'm really excited about what I am seeing from this crew, this week. We have some move-ups from a lot of different squads. Old AGS swimmers remember to make the new people feel at home...we want them to get better and help the team! New AGS swimmers remember that you belong in this group...we want you to race the returning AGS swimmers, so don't be afraid to challenge them.

The Honorable Mention for this group could be doled out to many individuals, who have started off so hot. I will only give it to one, however. Let's let it fall on Ian M, this week. He is soaking up the more difficult training, and doing things right. I can see his confidence growing with every practice!

From Coach Caitlin:

Novice White

Our group is so small now! We'll probably get some new swimmers soon. In the meantime, you still need to listen at practice. That means staying on the wall with your head above the water when Tara and I are talking. Patrick did a great job listening last week! We've been using fins a lot lately, working on freestyle and fly. Beau, Patrick, Sundari, and Marcus had nice long freestyle armstrokes. Chloe and Logan had really strong kicks. I've been having you practice breathing every 3 strokes. Breathing every 3 strokes forces you to breathe to both the right side and the left side. And it helps keep your body balanced so you stay in a straight line. The more you practice it the easier it will get!

Novice Blue

Since you had a week off for spring break, we'll start off with easy drills and shorter distances for the first 2 weeks. We've been doing a lot of work on freestyle breathing and flipturns. I want you to breathe every 3 strokes, keep your head down low when you breathe, and kick during each breath. That will help keep you body balanced (no wiggling!) and you'll stay in a straight line. Shivani, Kimberly, Ivy, Jewelz, Aneesh, Semi, and Shreya had great breathing last week. For flipturns, I saw a lot of improvement last week! We'll keep working on them so you can do them at the next meet. Kimberly, Wyatt, Shreya, Alys, and Ivy had the best flipturns! Besides freestyle breathing and flipturns, you've also been working on breaststroke kick. We tried the kick using a pull buoy! The buoy forced you to keep your thighs and knees close together. Eliot, Madison, Alys, and Kimberly did a very good job on their kicking.

Novice Black

We had some swimmers move up, so right now the group is small. It's so quiet! Really nice job listening last week. We'll probably get some new swimmers soon. Since you had a week off for spring break, we'll start off with easy drills and shorter distances for the first 2 weeks. We've been doing a lot of work on freestyle breathing and flipturns. I want you to breathe every 3 strokes, keep your head down low when you breathe, and kick during each breath. That will help keep you body balanced (no wiggling!) and you'll stay in a straight line. Brianna, Kirsten, Madison, Kyle, and Kyra had the best breathing last week! For flipturns, I saw a lot of improvement! We'll keep working on them so you can do them at the next meet. Jaslena, Akash, and Carson are all working hard on their flipturns. Besides freestyle breathing and flipturns, you've also been working on breaststroke kick. We tried the kick using a pull buoy! The buoy forced you to keep your thighs and knees close together. Kyle, Madison, and Jaslena did a very good job on their kicking.

Devy Silver

For the month of April we'll focus on backstroke flipturns, underwater dolphin kicks, and breaststroke. Your backstroke flipturns are already looking good! You want to keep your head back and hips up as you swim into the wall and push off on your back. I'm looking forward to seeing your turns at the Forest Grove meet! Katelyn, Jordyn, Astha, Allyson, Brianna, and Sarah had the best backstroke flipturns. Luke, John, and Emily C. are improving quickly! At the Forest Grove meet I hope to see awesome underwater kicks too. We practice them every day during warmup. You need a tight streamline, use your hips, and blow your air out slowly. Allyson did about 20 meters underwater for 4x25's! Brianna, Amy, Emily N. and Catherine have really tight streamlines. For breaststroke last week, we tried the kick using a pull buoy. The buoy forced you to keep your thighs and knees close together. So your feet had to come out wider than your knees. Bryttney, Jennie, Jasmine, and Emily C. had strong kicks!

We had our first test set of the season! A 200fr kick. It was right after spring break so you were a bit out of shape. And it was a new test set for the swimmers who moved up from Novice. I can't wait to see the results a month from now!

John 5:40

Catherine 4:40

Emily C. 5:44
Amy 6:09
Bryttney 6:26
Katelyn 5:16
Jordyn 6:19
Luke 5:30
Jennie 5:20
Emily N. 5:17
Astha 5:03
Jasmine 4:43
Allyson 5:43
Sarah 4:38
Brianna 4:34

From Coach Kaitlin:

Novice Silver

Welcome to Zamilla! Thank you to those of you that introduced yourself to her this week, I thought everyone did a wonderful job of making her feel welcome into Novice Silver.

During our first couple of weeks back we will be working on very basic things that I feel we need to improve upon from last season. A few of those things being kicking, streamline and dolphin kicks and long arms on back and free. We worked a LOT on streamline dolphin kicks and kicking during our first week back and it looked great. We will continue to work on this throughout the entire long course season and it will definitely help us to become better, faster swimmers. As I said in practice, streamline and dolphin kicks are the easiest part of your race so make sure they are great.

Age Group Gold

Thus far I have been more than impressed with the new Age Group Gold Squad. Everyone that has been coming to practices has been showing me a level of intensity, commitment and dedication that I did not expect. Coming into the long course season I thought we would have some adjusting time since we were creating a squad from three different groups (Age Group Gold, Age Group Silver and Devy Gold) but from day 1 when you jumped into the pool we have formed a squad. Everyone has been getting along and pushing each other to work harder than they have before and this makes me excited to see what the long course season will bring for us.

Theme for week 1 was constant kicking. Everybody got it, everybody did it and did it well. Coach Mark even told me he was impressed with the old Age Group Silver swimmers and that for many of them he has never seen them kick that much. As Julia pointed out, keeping a

constant kick makes you tired more quickly and therefore feel like you are going slower, but in the long run, this will make you faster. A constant kick in freestyle and backstroke are huge and if we make this one little change to our swimming, the times you see in meets and practices will show a huge change. Each practice that you come to and do that constant kick, will get easier and easier. Just stick with it and soon enough you will forget that you are doing a constant kick because it will feel so natural, like it was always a part of your stroke. Only 2 more weeks until the Forest Grove meet so lets keep up the great work and have some time drops there just because we are kicking more!

Devy Gold & Pre-Senior Blue Dryland

Week 1 of the long course season dryland went VERY well! I had great listeners and many people willing to give dryland all that they had. For the first couple of weeks in April we are going to continue to do aerobic things such as running, but regardless of what we do please make sure that you are giving it everything you have just as you would in the pool. I think the majority of you forget how much dryland helps your swimming. It is directly related to your performance in the pool so keep working hard at it so we can have a great long course season in the water.

Devy Gold- A few reminders...on our first day back we talked about listening and respect. Please make sure that if we are in the dryland room we are quiet and being respectful towards anyone else in the dryland room and towards the Physical Therapy people next door. Also don't forget to be listening when I am explaining something instead of talking with your friends so everyone can hear the directions. This week was great in terms of these two things so lets keep it up for the rest of the season!

Pre-Senior Blue- See above Devy Gold comments...this relates to you as well. Your group is a lot bigger than it was during the short course season so it is going to be more important than ever to make sure that you are always listening. We are going to be doing many new things and it is highly important that you are listening to the directions so you know what to do. Along those lines, please make sure that you are changing quickly. We have had several people coming late to dryland and missing the initial instructions. It takes away from the whole groups dryland when I have to take time to explain the directions again, so for those of you that have been coming late please try your best to change quicker. Lastly, please remember to bring your water bottles to dryland. Since we have been doing a lot of running, more of you are getting thirsty and having to leave dryland to get some water. If you are thirsty you are already dehydrated, which is not a good thing, so please please please bring your water bottles with you!

From Coach Matt:

AG Bronze

Welcome back! I hope everyone had a great spring break and is ready for our long course season. Our numbers for our group were low this week but I am sure we will see more people as we get back into our normal schedule. We have three new swimmers to our squad and I hope that our current squad members are making them feel welcome and helping them figure out things they have never done before. Welcome Hannah, Morgan, and Tristan! Remember that we are still swimming inside on Fridays, and that our dryland time will remain the same even though Tuesday to Thursday we practice in the water with AG Silver. Also, our first meet is the Forest Grove meet in about 2 weeks (4/17-4/18) so be ready to swim fast!

I told the squad that because we are now swimming long course, it is extremely important to work every turn on every wall. We have a lot fewer turns during practice now, so it is vital to make the most of the ones you get. (For example...if we do 100s you only have 1 turn now instead of 3). Coach Mark and I split up the group to work on open turns this week and we will continue to try to spend extra time concentrating on them. One benefit of working as 1 group is that there are 2 coaches on the deck that will be working with you, and we can separate into smaller groups when we want to work on a few specific things. Listen to Coach Mark as you would listen to me. I will be helping out AG Silver swimmers as well so take advantage of both coaches!

Take advantage of swimming with AG Silver. It may be a little crowded and intimidating at first, but you can learn from those swimmers who are faster and do things better technically. Don't be afraid to ask the coaches questions. There will be some new things introduced over the next few weeks so be prepared to pay attention and try your best. Keep up the great work!

From Coach Ryan:

Pre-senior Black

Welcome back everyone! I hope your all had a fun and relaxing Spring Break and are just as excited as I am for the upcoming long course season! You might have noticed our group is looking a little different as of Monday. A few swimmers have left and moved up and others have joined the group from other squads. **Congratulations to Tori B., Emily D., Josh G., and Jonathan F.** who have proven themselves in Pre-senior Black and have accepted the challenge Senior Silver has to offer them. **Welcome Abby L., Mikayla F., Maddy E., Lucy R., and Catherine B.!** Abby and Mikayla join us from Age Group Gold, Maddy and Lucy join us from Pre-senior Blue, and Catherine is brand new to the team.

On our first day back, we discussed what sort of things it takes to make the leap from Pre-

senior level swimming to Senior level swimming. I heard a lot of great ideas from swimmers; ideas like coming to practice prepared (both mentally and physically), doing proper underwaters off every wall, getting to dryland on time, etc.- but the number one underlying factor for any of those ideas to work is consistency.

I told them I would be lying if I said being consistent was an easy to do thing in club swimming. There are so many factors everyday that make consistency a challenge. Some days we don't feel like swimming. Some days our head hurts. Some sets just aren't "our" sets. We must understand these challenges are not unique to us. Every single swimmer faces some form of adversity every day, but what DOES make us unique is how we face those adversities. We either fight through them and take a step forward, or we let our challenges overwhelm us and we stay right where we are (or sometimes even take a step back). That's it. Simple as that. There is no easy button.