



THIS ISSUE

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GREAT START OF THE 2023-24 SEASON

The NCSA swimmers are off to an impressive start this season, having already taken part in events like the Halloween Howler at the Seton pool, the Saskatoon Goldfins Invitational, and the KSC Invitational. Several athletes have shown remarkable progress, solidifying their positions in the upcoming Spring provincials.

As we look ahead to December, a busy month awaits with four swim meets on the horizon. Notably, the weekend of December 9-10 will feature three simultaneous meets, showcasing our swimmers in MNP, Cochrane, and Winnipeg. The following weekend, the upper groups will compete in Edmonton, effectively closing out the month. The Holiday Break from December 22 to January 7 will offer a much-needed breather after this intense period.

In the interim, it's vital for all swimmers to maintain focus on their training as they gear up for the peak December meets. Prioritizing health is essential for peak performance—getting sufficient sleep, consuming nutritious foods, taking supplements/vitamins, and dressing appropriately for cold weather when leaving the pool.

Let's wrap up this training cycle on a high note and excel in December. In the upcoming section, Coach Adam has some valuable advice to share, timely for swimmers feeling the pressure to perform at the next meet.



“I LOVE WATCHING YOU PLAY”

Before I was Coach Adam, I was Swim Parent Adam. In truth, I was the Other Swim Parent. My wife carried a heavier load. But, I was a driver, a collector of bottles, and an embarrassingly enthusiastic spectator at every meet.

I had been a competitive swimmer and wanted to help my daughter, Abby, in any way I could. I was on guard to avoid the most common mistakes. I didn't try to coach her. I didn't try to put any pressure on her. I tried to let her process the highs and lows, understanding how important that would be in the years ahead.

I tried. I also cheated. On the car ride home, I would ask questions like: “what feedback did your coach give you?” or “have you been working on getting your head down in fly?” or “is your coach working with you on breaststroke?”. Abby would clam up. The headphones would go in her ears. It was always an uncomfortable end to a great day.



Then I read an article. I think it was referred to me by NCSA. It was entitled, “*I love to watch you play*”. The writer encouraged parents to give that feedback, and no more. I was attracted to it. That's how I felt and what I wanted her to know more than anything else.

The next meet, I tried it out. I can't remember if it was a good meet or a bad one. She climbed in the car and I told her, “Kid, I love to watch you swim”. Now, the earphones still went in but there was also a poorly hidden smile. From that meet forward, it was the only feedback I would give on her swimming. Abby is now an adult, and she has told me how much she appreciated it.

If you want to give it a try, I recommend watching a TED Talk by John O'Sullivan. He does a better job explaining the research and rationale behind this simple phrase ([tap here](#)).

Coach Adam

Calgary DEV and L4 coach

OUTLINE

John O'Sullivan's TED Talk titled "I Love Watching You Play" focuses on the relationship between parents and their children in the context of youth sports. O'Sullivan, an advocate for positive and supportive sports environments, discusses the often high-pressure and overly competitive nature of youth sports and how this can negatively impact children's enjoyment and development.

He emphasizes the importance of parents' roles in creating a positive sporting experience for their children.

Instead of focusing on winning or performance,

O'Sullivan encourages parents to support their children's efforts, learning, and enjoyment of the game.

He suggests that saying "I love watching you play" to a child after a game, regardless of the outcome, can have a profound positive effect on the child's sports experience.

O'Sullivan's talk is a call to parents and coaches to reconsider their approach to youth sports, advocating for a more child-centered,

encouraging, and enjoyable sports culture. His message aims to shift the focus from

winning at all costs to fostering a love of the game and developing life skills through sports.



ADOPTING A GROWTH MINDSET

As parents of a young swimmer, you play a pivotal role in fostering a growth mindset that can greatly benefit your child's swimming journey. Here are some key principles and tips to support your child's growth mindset in a more concise version:

1. **Value Effort:** Emphasize that improvement comes from hard work and consistent practice.
2. **Praise Effort:** When your child faces challenges in swimming, focus on praising their effort and perseverance. Celebrate their commitment to learning and growing, rather than just their wins or losses.
3. **Embrace Resilience:** Teach your child that setbacks and failures are part of the learning process. Help them see these moments as opportunities to learn and improve, not as reasons to feel discouraged.
4. **Set Achievable Goals:** Collaborate with your child to set realistic and specific swimming goals. This helps maintain motivation and provides a clear path for progress.
5. **Encourage Self-Care:** Highlight the importance of physical and mental well-being. Proper nutrition, adequate sleep, and stress management contribute to better performance and a growth mindset.
6. **Model Positivity:** Demonstrate a positive attitude and growth mindset in your own life. Your child learns from your example, so show resilience and a willingness to learn from your own mistakes.
7. **Offer Support:** Be emotionally supportive. Listen to your child's concerns, offer guidance, and assure them that seeking help when needed is perfectly acceptable.
8. **Celebrate Progress:** Acknowledge small achievements and milestones. Recognize the improvements your child makes, even if they haven't reached their ultimate goals yet.
9. **Maintain Perspective:** Remind your child that swimming is just one part of their life, and their worth isn't solely tied to their performance in the pool. Encourage them to enjoy the journey and have fun.
10. **Communication:** Foster open and honest communication. Let your child know they can talk to you about their swimming experiences, challenges, and goals without fear of judgment.

Incorporating these principles into your parenting approach can provide vital support for your child's growth mindset, benefiting not only their swimming but also equipping them with valuable life skills for the future.

OUTLINE

Here are valuable growth mindset resources:

1. **Book: "Mindset" by Carol S. Dweck** - Comprehensive exploration by the term's creator.
2. **Course: "Growth Mindset" on Udemy** - Practical guidance for development in various life areas.
3. **Website: Mindset Works (www.mindsetworks.com)** - Offers tools and strategies.
4. **TED Talk: "The Power of Belief" by Carol Dweck** - An engaging introduction to the concept.
5. **Resource: "Brainology" by Khan Academy** - A free program for growth mindset and learning strategies.

These resources, spanning books, courses, websites, talks, and programs, facilitate the exploration and application of growth mindset principles in various life domains.

GROWTH

- M** I CAN LEARN FROM MY MISTAKES
- I** I CAN IMPROVE BY WORKING HARD
- N** I WILL NEVER GIVE UP
- D** I'M DETERMINED TO DO MY BEST
- S** SELF-REFLECTION HELP ME SUCCEED
- E** I CAN OVERCOME CHALLENGES WITH EFFORT
- T** I CAN TRAIN MY BRAIN

TECH SUIT

The coaching staff have identified three peak performance windows in a season: December, March and late June/July. During those months, swimmers are allowed to wear their suits for peak performance. The tech suit is not allowed outside of those periods.

Focusing on the process rather than relying solely on a tech suit is crucial in the world of swimming. While high-tech suits can provide a performance boost, they should complement, not substitute, the fundamental principles of swimming development.

First and foremost, emphasizing the process cultivates a strong foundation of skills and techniques. Swimmers who rely solely on suits may neglect proper stroke mechanics, which can hinder long-term progress. By focusing on the process, athletes build a solid base that serves them well throughout their careers.



Furthermore, the mental aspect is paramount. Relying solely on a suit can create a dependency on external factors for success. This mindset can be detrimental to a swimmer's confidence and resilience when the suit is unavailable or not allowed in competition. In contrast, swimmers who prioritize the process develop mental fortitude, adaptability, and a deeper understanding of their abilities.

Finally, a focus on the process promotes fairness and sportsmanship. Overreliance on technology can lead to an arms race, where success is measured by who has the most advanced suit. Emphasizing the process encourages competition based on individual skill, dedication, and effort.

In conclusion, while tech suits have their place in swimming, they should enhance rather than replace the importance of focusing on the process. Developing strong fundamentals, mental resilience, and a fair competitive environment are all essential aspects of long-term success in the sport.

OUTLINE

Tech suits tend to be pricier, ranging from \$150 to over \$600 due to their advanced materials and performance-enhancing technologies. In contrast, textile suits are more affordable, with prices between \$30 and \$150. The cost gap reflects the specialized materials and tech used in tech suits for compression, drag reduction, and buoyancy. Textile suits, made from traditional swimwear materials, are a cost-effective choice, ideal for swimmers not seeking the added performance benefits of tech suits.



Tech suits are eligible at the following meets:

- PWI - Dec 7-10
- Sandy Ferrs - Dec 8-1
- Comets Holidays - Dec 9-10
- JP Fiset - Dec 14-17
- Swim AB Trials - Mar 1-3
- Swim AB Champs - Mar 7-10
- NCSA Spring Inv - Mar 16-17
- Westerns - Mar 21-24
- Steve Brown - Jun 21-23
- EKI - July 4-7
- Western Finale - Jul 5-7
- Summer Prov. - Jul 25-28
- CJC & Seniors - Jul 24-30



NUTRITION

Proper nutrition is a cornerstone of success for competitive swimmers. Your dietary requirements are influenced by factors like training intensity, age, gender, and personal goals. Here's a concise guide on how much to eat and the importance of post-workout snacks.

1. **Caloric Needs:** You must consume enough calories to sustain your activity level.
2. **Carbohydrates:** Whole grains, fruits, and vegetables are your primary energy source. These provide sustained energy during workouts.
3. **Protein:** Lean protein sources, including chicken, fish, beans, and dairy, are crucial for muscle repair and growth.
4. **Fats:** Healthy fats from sources like avocados, nuts, and olive oil contribute to overall health and energy.
5. **Hydration:** Regular water intake and sports drinks during intense training sessions help maintain proper hydration.

Post-workout snacks are vital for swimmers:

1. **Glycogen Replenishment:** After exercise, your glycogen stores are depleted. Carbohydrate-rich snacks restore these stores, preparing you for the next training session.
2. **Muscle Recovery:** Protein-rich snacks facilitate muscle repair and growth.
3. **Fatigue Reduction:** Post-workout snacks combat fatigue and soreness, enhancing overall performance.
4. **Hydration:** Including fluids in your post-workout snack helps rehydrate your body, replacing fluids lost through sweat.

A post-workout snack could be a banana with peanut butter or a protein smoothie with fruits and yogurt. Customizing your post-workout snack to your specific needs optimizes your performance and recovery as a competitive swimmer.

OUTLINE

THREE RECIPES IDEAS

1. Whole Grain Pasta with Grilled Chicken and Vegetables:

- Cook whole grain pasta.
- Grill chicken breast, seasoned with herbs.
- Sauté a mix of vegetables like bell peppers, broccoli, and spinach.
- Combine the pasta, chicken, and vegetables.
- Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

2. Quinoa Salad with Salmon and Avocado:

- Prepare quinoa as per package instructions.
- Grill a salmon fillet and season with lemon and dill.
- Mix cooked quinoa with diced avocado, cherry tomatoes, and cucumber.
- Top with the grilled salmon.
- Dress with a lemon vinaigrette

3. Protein Smoothie with Banana, Berries, and Greek Yogurt:

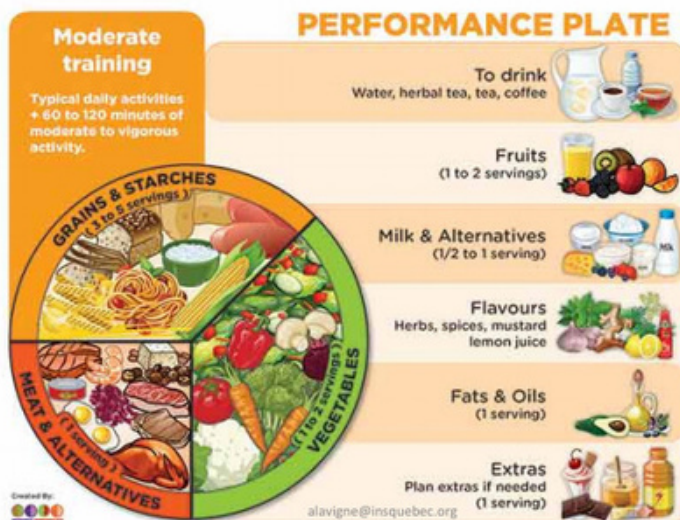
- Blend a banana, a mix of berries (like strawberries and blueberries), and Greek yogurt.
- Add a scoop of protein powder (optional).
- Include a spoonful of peanut or almond butter for healthy fats.
- Add a handful of spinach or kale for extra nutrients.
- Use almond milk or water to reach desired consistency.



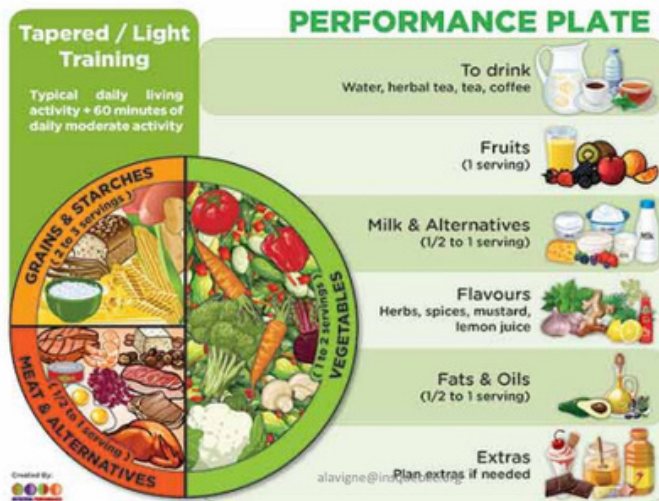
High volume phase (>4h)



Moderate training day (2h/day)



Light training day/taper/weight management



NCSA COMMUNITY

The swimmers are not the only ones hard at work. Parents and coaches often operate under the radar, this section is to acknowledge our unsung heroes.

Santa Clause Parade Committee - Get ready for the Airdrie Santa Claus Parade! Join us on December 2nd, 2023, at 5:00 PM. The dedicated NCSA Santa Claus Parade Committee has been working hard to create a remarkable float that promises to be the highlight of the parade. We're thrilled to invite all NCSA & NCSS swimmers and their families to this enchanting event.

What to expect:

- Spectacular floats: marvel at the creativity and effort of our team.
- Community spirit: a perfect opportunity for swimmers, families, and friends to bond.
- Festive fun: an evening brimming with holiday cheer, dazzling lights, and joyful moments.

This parade is more than a festive gathering; it's a celebration of hard work, community spirit, and holiday traditions. Let's come together to support the NCSA Committee and make this a memorable night. Exciting details will be shared soon. We can't wait to light up Airdrie with warmth and festive cheer. Join us in making this parade a memorable and joyous occasion!

Professional Development Update for NCSA Coaching Staff - We are pleased to announce that our coaching staff is actively engaged in advanced professional development to further enhance their expertise. Currently, the team is participating in a leadership course focused on refining their skills, with the objective of continually elevating the service we provide to our NCSA community.

In addition, we are delighted to share that Coaches Linda and Adam recently attended the Swim AB breaststroke camp. They have returned with a wealth of knowledge, which will be invaluable to our training programs.

Moreover, we are proud to report that last week, Coach Alexx was honored with a selection by the Canadian Swimming Coaches Association to join the Leadership Cohort. This prestigious opportunity will enable him to expand his proficiency in emotional intelligence, a critical aspect of effective coaching.

We commend our coaches for their unwavering commitment to professional growth and their dedication to bringing the highest level of knowledge and professionalism to our team. Their efforts are a testament to our collective dedication to excellence in coaching and athlete development within the NCSA.

DREAM IT! TRAIN IT! LIVE IT!

OUTLINE

