Taos Swim Club Inc. Newsletter

Taos Swim Club Inc. **3/1/2016** [Edition 1, Volume 1]

March Newsletter

Welcome to the Taos Swim Club Inc. A huge Congratulations to Dillon Brown, Isla Chavez, Mathew Cortez, Abigail Garcia, Maddison Gonzales, Angelina Griego, Sierra Griego, Jedrek Jozwiak, Joe Lewis, Marissa Lovato, Sarah Martinez, Maye Montoya, Juan Romo and Trysten Spillar for competing at the 10 & Under NM State Championships! All of our swimmers performed very well. Well done to the entire team that competed. It was fantastic to see such a diverse team of rookies 'first timers' athletes come together for a fun meet. Good luck to all the 11 & Over Swimmers participating at the State Meet this month. Please help the team spread the word on how it is important for everyone to learn how to swim so they can be safe in the water. Your support is very crucial in spreading the awareness for water safety in our community.

"Success is different for everyone. Keep a proper perspective and you do your personal Best"

Five focus areas for continual improvement.

Swimming is a big part of our lives, but it's not the *only* thing we think about. Thoughts about family, work, and what's for dinner can float through our heads as we float through the water. This isn't necessarily a bad thing; swimming is a great way to relieve stress and relax, even while we're working hard. Singing, thinking about to-do lists, and anticipating an upcoming vacation are all

Our Commitment

The Taos Swim Club Inc. is committed to providing an enjoyable swimming experience for swimmers of all ages and abilities, while also providing a challenging and positive teaching and training environment in which swimmers can develop a sense of self-esteem and pride through individual and team achievement.

legitimate things to do as we crank out laps to get a good cardio workout.
But if we really want to *improve* our swimming and get faster, we need to fight the distraction demons and maintain concentration. Here are five focus areas that can maximize the benefit you'll get from each workout you complete.

1. Streamline Focus

The biggest contributor to success in swimming is drag reduction, also known as streamlining. Reducing unnecessary water resistance ensures that the effort we apply is translated into speed. Major streamline considerations include:

- **Length:**

  Longer boats go faster. A straight-arm, turbulence-free catch not only sets you up for an effective pull, but also extends your body's length to take advantage of the long-boat phenomenon.

- **Width:**

  Minimize motion that bends your spine, such as reaching to the side for your breath, or stroking too far outside or across your body. Increasing shoulder flexibility can help narrow your profile.

- **Depth:**

  A good catch also helps minimize your vertical drag profile by providing *balance* in the water so the feet won't go too deep. Proper kick technique, spinal-aligned breathing, and early vertical forearm engagement contribute to minimal-depth posture, as well.

Giving ourselves feedback on these techniques is certainly beneficial, but our kinesthetic perceptions don't always precisely match reality. It's best to get technique verification from a video, a coach, or other observer who knows what to look for.

2. Propulsion Focus

Effectively applying power requires more than just muscular strength. We need to understand and control the tools we use to generate propulsion.

Upper Body

Primary upper-body power comes from the core, the back, the shoulders, and the arms. But the surface that actually creates thrust in the water consists of your hand and forearm operating as a single unit. Critical elements of hand/forearm motion include:

- **The catch:**

  A clean (no bubbles) hand entry ensures contact with the *water*, rather than just air and turbulence.

- **The hand/forearm paddle:**

  A larger hand surface contacts more water—so make sure your hand isn't cupped or forming a claw. Keep your hand in

line with your forearm and not bent up or sideways at the wrist.

- **Early vertical forearm:**

  As you begin your pull, make sure your hand/forearm paddle leads the way, keeping the elbow high.

- **Acceleration to the finish:** Be aware of the entire path your hand takes through the water, and make sure you keep the pressure on to continue accelerating until you finish the stroke and begin the recovery.

Perfect these techniques during drill sets, but also focus on them during work. If you're doing repeat 100s, for example, you could focus on each bullet for one length of each swim.

Lower Body

Once we master the art of keeping the legs within our streamline profile, we can focus on applying them effectively.

- **Kick cadence:**

  Our "kicks per stroke" tempo may depend on the distance and stroke being swum, as well as our individual body geometry. But it pays to be aware of it at all times, and to make adjustments when necessary.

- **Launch power:** The starting blocks and walls are where our legs do the majority of the work, including the push-off, the underwater kick, and the establishment of rhythm into the breakout stroke. Gain an advantage by emphasizing these techniques during every single start and turn you perform during your practice.

Your legs give you plenty of feedback. For example, if you feel pressure on the outsides of your thighs, you might be "fishtailing" out of alignment. (The solution is usually a smoother breathing motion.) If you feel unexpected leg fatigue, you might want to emphasize your exhalation. If there's no thrust from the legs, it might help to work on ankle flexibility during dryland practice.

3. Turn Focus

In addition to push-off thrust and underwater kick focus on turns, we'll also benefit from paying attention to the following:

- **Legality:** Always practice two-hand touches on breaststroke and butterfly, continuous motion for the last stroke into a backstroke turn, only one dolphin kick on breaststroke turns, etc.

- **Quickness:** In the middle of a long workout, it's tempting to get lazy on turns. But the only way to ensure snappy turns in a race is to make them snappy in practice.

- **Streamline:**

  If you normally swim circles, make sure you somehow find time to practice "down the middle" turns so you won't revert to slow circle turns in a meet. Get hands together in streamline position before you push off, execute core-driven kicks, and find that sweet spot for the breakout with the best compromise between underwater speed and "held my breath too long" fatigue. To be able to stay underwater longer off the wall, you have to *practice* staying underwater longer off the wall.

Practicing good technique on turns will help us be more consistent with good starts when we practice them, as well.

4. Spatial Focus

Swimming with others in the lane causes us to unconsciously develop collision-avoidance stroke adaptations, including lifting the head to look forward, altering recovery to avoid swimmers in the next lane, and dropping the elbow on backstroke to avoid walls or lane mates, etc. It's important to look for opportunities to correct these adaptations so they don't become habits. Whenever you have open water, take that opportunity to move toward the middle of the lane and perform your entire stroke without spatial compromise.

- When you lead the lane, you'll probably have open water for the first length.

- When you follow in the lane, you may have open water for the last length of the swim.

- When the set is one-length swims (e.g. 25s), you should be able to go right down the middle.

If those situations aren't available, ask your coach for more "free space" work sets or find other times to swim when there aren't crowds.

5. Recovery Focus

Recovery is an essential part of training. But it's more than merely resting between workouts; it also includes what you do *between swims within a workout*. Active recovery techniques include:

- Standing up rather than crouching at the end of a swim to allow the diaphragm to fully process air through the lungs

- Stretching shoulders, arms, legs, and neck

- Swimming at an easy effort level while concentrating on breathing and proper form.

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"Breakfasts high in protein for kids"

A breakfast high in protein - like eggs - keeps children fuller longer than cereal or oatmeal, causing them to eat fewer calories at lunch, says a new study.

"It is really important that we identify certain types of food that can help children feel full and also moderate caloric intake, especially in children who are prone to excess weight gain," said lead researcher Tanja Kral, associate professor at the University Of Pennsylvania School Of Nursing in the US.

The study, published in the journal Eating Behaviors, also found that the effects of a protein-rich meal do not last throughout the day. It only impacts a mid-day meal.

The study recruited forty, eight to 10-year-old children to consume one of three, 350-calorie breakfasts (eggs, oatmeal, or cereal), then play games with research staff and then eat lunch once a week for three consecutive weeks.

On each occasion, every participant had to eat their entire breakfast, but could eat as much or as little lunch as desired.

According to the research, after consuming the egg breakfast (scrambled eggs, whole wheat toast, diced peaches, and one percent milk) children reduced their energy intake at lunch by seventy calories - roughly equivalent to one small chocolate-chip cookie.

Moderately active children in the same age range as those who participated in the study generally need between 1,600 and 1,800 calories daily.

The 70-calorie drop at one meal equals about four percent of a child's daily caloric needs.

Eating beyond the caloric threshold, even by a little, can cause excess weight gain and obesity in children, if sustained, the researchers pointed out.

March Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	29 Practice	1 Practice	2 Practice	3 Practice **11 & Over StateMeet**	4 Practice **11 & Over State Meet**	**5** **11 & Over State Meet**
6 **11 & Over State Meet**	7 Practice	8 Practice	9 Practice	10 Practice	11 Practice	12
13	14 Practice	15 Practice	16 Practice	17 Practice	18 Practice	19
20	21 Practice	22 Practice	23 Practice	24 Practice	25 Practice	26 **MEGA SWIM 8am-10am Wet Wild Egg Hunt 1pm – 2 pm**
27	28 Practice	29 Practice	30 Practice	31 Practice	1 Practice	2 Practice
3						

How athletic training affects brain-muscle communication

Muscles are comprised of an intricate system of fibers, sending messages to the brain at every twitch or flexing movement. According to a team of researchers from the University of Kansas, how quickly muscles communicate with the brains' is dependent upon the type of athletic training. The team's findings, published in the Journal of Sports Sciences and Muscle and Nerve, suggest the body may be designed to handle running better than strength training.

In order to figure out the speed of muscle-to-brain communication, researchers first placed electrode sensors on the quadriceps muscles located on the thighs of 15 participants. Five of the participants were endurance runners who ran an average of 61 miles a week, but did not engage in any resistance training; this training is also known as strength or weight training. Another five of the participants were resistance trainers who lifted weights 4 to 8 hours each week and were strong enough to back squat twice their body weight. None of the resistance trainers, however, engaged in any type of aerobic activity, including running, swimming, or cycling. The remaining five participants lived a sedentary lifestyle and did not take part in any physical exercise for at least three years leading up to the study.

Once hooked up to the electrodes, each participant was asked to extend their leg forward and contract their thigh muscle with 40 to 70 percent of force so researchers could see how quickly each person performed in real time. It turned out the runners' muscles fibers were faster to fire communication signals back to the brain than resistance trainers.

"The communication between the brains and their muscles was slightly different than the resistance trainers and sedentary individuals," said the study's lead author Trent Herda, a professor of health, sport, and exercise sciences, in a press release. "This information also suggested that resistance trainers and those who are sedentary were more likely to fatigue sooner, among other things."

Herda went on to explain that these results provide new clues into which exercise the human body is naturally designed to handle. However, the results need to be replicated on a larger scale with participants from a wide variety of athletic backgrounds before researchers can determine the type of training that fosters a speedier

connection between muscle fibers and the brain — running or all aerobic exercise.

This isn't to say that runners who strength train are hindering this connection. In fact, it might be just the opposite: Previous research has shown elite runners who combine lower body strength training with their regular routine improve their maximum running speed by 23.1 percent. And weight trainers who practice speed work for eight weeks can improve both their speed and ability to lift more weight than those who solely rely on weight training.

Muscles use oxygen to work, and by increasing lean muscle mass, the body's ability to use oxygen and burn calories inevitably increases. Based on the growing body of research on how muscles handle exercise, incorporating a balance of running and weight training may yield the greatest benefits for the human body.

The Taos Swim Club Inc. would like to thank all of its sponsors for their support. If you would like to be a sponsor, or know of someone that would, please have them contact us at taostigersharks@hotmail.com or 985-709-6456. As always your donation is tax deductible!

Please visit our website for more Information: **TAOSTIGERSHARKS.COM** and Fallow us on Facebook: **facebook.com/taos.tigersharks**

Thank you for all your help and support. ***GO TIGER SHARKS!***