

Orinda



Aquatics



Junior Group Handbook



"Prepare the child for the path, not the path for the child."

unknown

Introduction

The **Junior Group Handbook** is a comprehensive product of five decades of experience at all levels of the sport. It is designed to not only help younger swimmers navigate their (age-group) years in the Junior Group, in preparation for senior swimming and beyond, but to thrive and excel as athletes, teammates, and leaders.

There is an introduction and then four sections which are all key to personal, athletic, and swimming development: character, technique, training, and competition. In each section there are also worksheets that I ask the kids think about and fill out. There is a “new swimmer” information sheet at the end that I would like the new swimmers to fill out, which includes a personal statement about them.

As the information suggests, these four areas must be navigated and addressed in a mature and disciplined manner with a long-term perspective to all. In sum:

- Character sets the stage for team leadership, respect, and contribution or service. This focus helps kids in challenging social situations and mitigates the development of an ego or separation from the greater good (the team). It helps kids anchor themselves in personal and athletic values, and thus *creates* the culture of the team (see Senior Letters).
- Technique is the true key to development and is without question the foundation of everything in the Junior Group. Kids must learn balance, timing, and distance-per-stroke at this age. There will be many years to train at a high level. Kids must make this their daily priority.
- Training at this level is more about efficiency and understanding, with a focus on movement through the water *and* underwater. Our training focus will always be efficiency-based, and the more swimmers commit to this, the more it will serve them later. Harder workouts, or “racing” teammates, do not necessarily support technical development.
- Competition is one of the most challenging concepts to get younger swimmers to understand and accept. They are so used to “racing” in rec swimming that it becomes more a report card than *the lesson itself*. Meets, for the most part are simply an evaluation of development and must be taken in context with the situation, the season, the focus, etc. Having each race define one’s happiness in the sport is a destructive process. Years from now, no race or meet will be material. If a swimmer is doing well, it will have been from technique and training, and if not, it certainly won’t matter.

Swimmers should review this often (as should parents), as much of the information will be reviewed the weekly meetings. Donnie

This manual should help with:

- **Developing balanced strokes, a mature race orientation, and a team-first focus**
 - **Transitioning successfully to the senior group**
 - **Reaching your potential as an athlete and swimmer**
 - **Realizing your potential as a high-character athlete, leader, and role model**
 - **Ensuring a long and fulfilling career that extends well into collegiate swimming**
- **Yes, it all starts here!**

Team Vision (reminder, and your role)

- **To be the best small club in USA Swimming**
- **To create the best culture in youth sports**
- **To create a travel model based in integrity**

To “change the dialogue” in youth sports

Note: Please fill out the Swimmer Information sheet in the back of the handbook.

Four Things That/Can Define You



Integrity (one cookie)



Effort embraced (40x100?)



Attitude (in adversity)



Team support (selfless)



Sections (general areas)

1. **Summary**
2. **Character/Leadership**
3. **Technique**
4. **Training**
5. **Competition**
6. **Time/Schedules (emailed)**

"Champions do not become champions when they win an event, but in the hours, weeks, months, and years they spend preparing. The victorious performance itself is merely the demonstration of their *championship character*, on a daily basis" T. Alan Armstrong

DILBERT | Scott Adams



You've got to stay focused AND know where you're going.

It's a LONG Journey

5-12 years!



You need to make sure you “pack” the right things and keep your focus on the ultimate destination. Your “bags should be packed with”:

- ✓ **Work ethic**
- ✓ **Positive attitude**
- ✓ **Love of the sport**
- ✓ **Team commitment**
- ✓ **Good technique/UW's**
- ✓ **Great academics**
- ✓ **Impeccable character**



I know that is a lot of “luggage” (and you don’t want to “under-pack”), but you’ll need it where you’re going!

The Orinda Aquatics Junior Group

Orinda Aquatics takes great pride in its development of age-group swimmers. With the large presence of summer-league swimming, Orinda Aquatics has maintained a junior group (pre-high school) of approximately sixty swimmers. Given this number, Orinda Aquatics has been highly competitive in meets such as JO's and Far Westerns and has seen a number of these swimmers develop to the Sectional and Futures level within the group. The focus on this group is three-fold; stroke development/balance in the water, efficient training, and leadership. Yardage is kept at a moderate level with the emphasis on distance-per-stroke and efficiency. Swimmers learn stroke counts and stroke rates and develop speed under water. Additionally, the group has weekly meetings to discuss life skills, leadership, and values as they relate to young adults and athletes. The groups also have dry land two to three times per week,

Structure of the Age-Group program at Orinda Aquatics

Orinda Aquatics Junior Group consists of swimmers between the age of 8 and 14 (8th grade). The Junior Group is divided into three groups – Junior 1, Junior 2 and Junior 3, depending on age/grade, training ability, time standards, attendance, and maturity. The training schedule is the same for all groups (with some slight adjustments).

Junior 1 – Kati McDermott

Kati has experience coaching at all levels of swimming from learn-to-swim and age-group to high school and senior swimming. She has been responsible for All-Star teams in PacSwim and has coached the NCS Championship Carondelet Swim Team. Kati developed a swim school and clinic for competitive swimmers while coaching in San Ramon, and she is currently the Camp Director at Stanford Campus Recreation Association, coaching the recreational swim team and teaching lessons to swimmers of all ages. Kati is passionate about the sport of swimming and is excited to be a part of Orinda Aquatics.

The main focus of the group is to develop efficiency within all four strokes, with proper technique and distance-per-stroke. By introducing the value of character and integrity, we aim to teach our athletes the importance of learning how to train and compete within a healthy, positive, and competitive environment. The Junior 1 group is offered five practices per week, with the recommendation of attending at least 3 -4 to obtain consistency and proper development.

Junior 2 - Matt Ehrenberger

Matt has a thirty-year history of developing top OMPA, County, and year-round swimmers. He has had consistent success at all levels with a methodology based on structured stroke development and

controlled training. Marc, as well, has a long history of impressive age-group development with County swimmers and our younger year-round group. Marc runs our Fall Program and has had an outstanding understanding of youth development. Both Matt and Marc have remarkable deck presence and swimmer rapport. See bios.

Swimmers on this level are self-motivated and train with the emphasis of improving technique, distance-per-stroke, and developing pacing and race strategies. The group prepares for the 200 of each stroke, 400 IM and 500 Free and look towards Far Western qualifying times. The Junior 2 group is offering six practices per week and swimmers attending the groups should attend at least four practices per week for proper development.

Junior 3 - Donnie Heidary

Donnie is a 45-year veteran of coaching. He has achieved great success in rec swimming at Meadow, in high school at Miramonte, and as a Co-Founder of Orinda Aquatics. He is on the board of directors of the World Swimming Coaches Association, was former board President of the American Swimming Coaches Association, served on the USA Swimming board, and oversees Club Development for Pacific Swimming. He speaks nationally and internationally on age-group development and character/culture in youth. He is very adept at developing efficient swimmers in a healthy manner which prepares them for senior and collegiate success.

The Orinda Aquatics Junior 3 group consists of swimmers who are fully committed, motivated and competitive at the Far Western level and beyond. The group emphasis is on fine tuning technique, improving stroke balance, pacing and race strategies. The group prepares for Senior level training and is aiming towards Sectional to Futures qualifying times. The Junior 3 group offers seven practices per week (1 AM practice - optional) and swimmers in this group are expected to attend 5-6 practices a week.

With regard to Orinda Aquatics in general, as it relates to the Junior Group and long-term perspective the team has, 90% of our graduating high school student-athletes continue to swim at the collegiate level. Beyond this, the team has seen forty-six graduates become collegiate team captains at some of the finest academic institutions (and swim programs) in the country. This philosophy and intent begins in the Junior Group, with a leadership orientation and a training philosophy that is built around a long-term training and a broad competitive development that encourages healthy repetition, training and learning in team-oriented environment. Due to our commitment to the development process, and "the better the person, the better the team, the better the athlete" philosophy, "burn-out" is virtually non-existent at Orinda Aquatics.

Communication

- ✓ **Emails – regularly team updates**
- ✓ **Text – TBD**

Swimmer Meetings

- ✓ **TBD – on deck or via Zoom**
 - **Swimming – technique/training**
 - **Character/leadership**
 - **Teambuilding**

The swimmer's role with the coach

(primary communicator)

- **Communicate (any questions, concerns, issues, pain, etc.)**
 - **Ask for feedback/evaluation regularly**
 - **Be open to honest evaluation/constructive criticism**
(can be inflection point or end a career) - “If you shoot the messenger, he/she may stop coming.”
-

Contact Info (email preferred)

Donnie Heidary	Don@orindaaquatics.org	510-410-7946
Matt Ehrenberger	Matt2coach@comcast.net	
Kati McDermott	Katiswim44@gmail.com	415-730-4658

Keys to Group/Athlete Development

1. Character/Maturity/Personal Growth

- a. Positive attitude – always (no complaining)
- b. High character life (GOOD DECISIONS/CHOICES)
- c. Leadership-oriented/~~good~~ GREAT teammate (help/care)
- d. Good family teammate

2. Technical Development

- a. Balance/distance-per-stroke, stroke timing and breathing
- b. All stroke/all event development
- c. Underwater development (technique/speed/endurance)
- d. “Deliberate” training/focus

3. Training Development

- a. Understand training principles and purpose (energy systems/set focus)
- b. Training discipline – stroke counts, kick counts, stroke rates, breathe every third (free), race UW, legality
- c. Develop racing through training – efficiently and effectively
- d. Have equipment and use effectively

4. Meet maturity

- a. Process-driven goal setting/long-term oriented
- b. Meet discipline – on time, attire, WU/WD, check-in, team area, etc.
- c. Learn race strategy (pace, leg drive, UW, stroke rate, walls, breathing)
- d. Swim and develop ALL strokes and distances (including the 400 IM)

Swimmer

Evaluation (by coach)

1. Attendance
2. Effort (and focus)
3. Technique (and focus)
4. Personal maturity
5. Team commitment (support)
6. Meet commitment (and process)
7. Dryland



Evaluation

☒ OUTSTANDING

☐ Excellent

☐ Very Good

☐ Average

☐ Below Average

gg54962267 GoGraph.com

Safe Sport

NOTE: PLEASE review (swimmer and parent) the Safe Sport section on the website

From You:

Absolutely no -

- Disrespect
- Bad language/attitude
- Intimidation
- Bullying, etc., ... *Ever (see OA Behavior Policy)*

For you:

Have a list of five “go-to” people to reach out to if you ever feel uncomfortable, threatened, manipulated, etc. These should include parents, a coach, a friend, a teammate, the Safe Sport rep, or our Athlete rep.

They are (list them):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

“Character is what you are in the dark.” unknown

2. Character

- ✓ **What matters in LIFE**
- ✓ **What matters in sports**
- ✓ **Life skills, values, choices**
- ✓ **Leadership/Role Model**



“Integrity has no need of rules”

Albert Camus

What really matters here



MUST learn to be a leader/role model/mentor



MUST be a ~~good~~ great teammate

**“The common man asks what’s in it for me.
The enlightened man asks, how can I help.”
unknown**

Personal Growth/Leadership

Build a vision of who you want to be...



As an athlete/As a person

A rock pile ceases to be a rock pile the moment a single man contemplates it, bearing within him the image of a cathedral.

- Antoine de Saint-Exupery

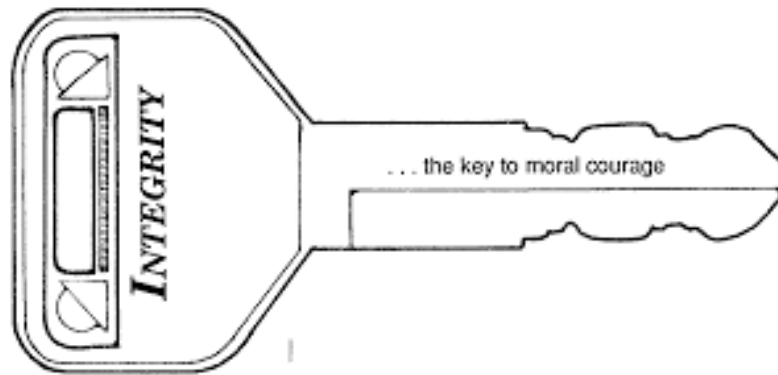
The/A/OUR Perpetual Leadership Model

Seniors mandated to, and seeking to lead



Juniors learning to, and aspiring to lead in the future

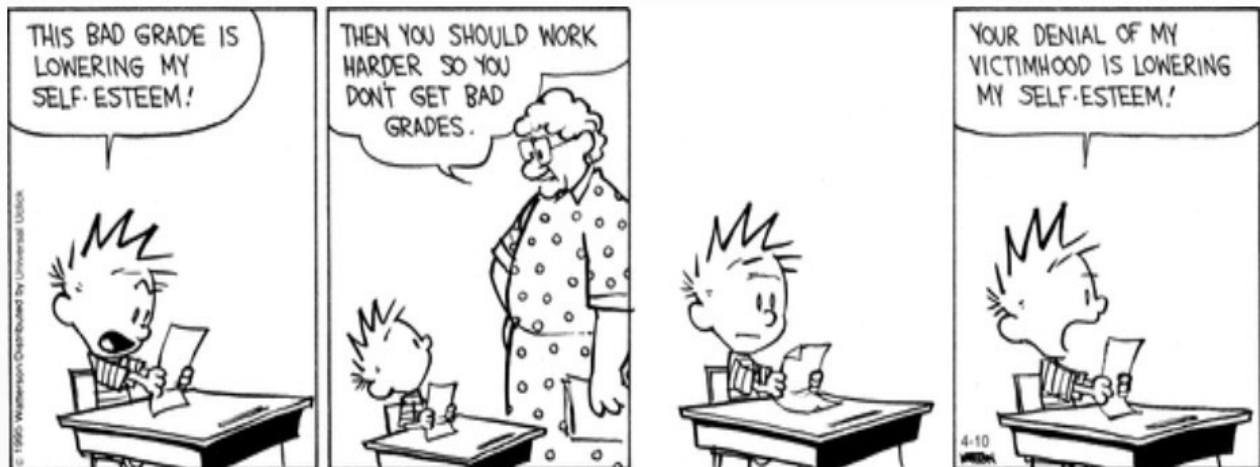
Sandwiched in between are the teams' mission, core values, and integrity-driven choices (personally and athletically)



Don't play the victim. Be accountable – for everything.

Calvin and Hobbes by Bill Watterson

April 10, 2015



“If you step in a puddle, don’t blame the puddle.”
unknown



The bar has been raised for academics and for athletics...



***but what about for integrity,
character, morality, compassion,
attitude, humility, selflessness?***

**Be as dedicated and committed
here as in other areas of your life.**

Peer Pressure

It should exist!

The pressure to:

- Act with integrity
- Be respectful
- Look out for others
- Follow all rules
- Be grateful
- Be humble

What is
Positive Peer
Pressure?



Orinda Aquatics

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**“When he took the time to help the man
up the mountain, lo, he scaled it himself.”**

Tibetan Proverb

Three OA “THEME” Articles

1. Resilience (embraced work – to never complain) – The Butterfly

2. Compassion (**selfless** teammate) – The (better) Apple

3. The Uncommon Professional (daily **discipline**/professionalism)



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Meade

The Butterfly

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly
One day a small opening appeared
He watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to
squeeze its body through the tiny hole
Then it stopped as if it could go no further
So the man decided to help the butterfly
He took a pair of scissors and snipped the remaining bits of cocoon
The butterfly emerged easily but it had a swollen body and
shriveled wings
The man continued to watch it expecting that at any minute the
wings would enlarge and expand enough to support the body.
Neither happened
In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around
It was never able to fly

*What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand:
The restricting cocoon and the struggle required the butterfly to get
through the opening was a way of forcing fluid from the body into the
wings so that it would be ready for flight once that was achieved.
**Sometimes, struggles are exactly what we need in our lives. Going
through life without obstacles would cripple us. We will not be as
strong as we could have been and we would never learn to fly.***

What Stella offered went beyond fair trade

More Than I Bargained For

By Jean Bell Mosley, Cape Girardeau, Missouri

It was an ordinary school day, I was in the fifth grade. Children like me who didn't live close enough to go home for lunch brought their paper-wrapped meals and gathered under the shade of a tree.

Such lunches usually consisted of a sandwich, hard-boiled egg, cookie and a piece of fruit. Bartering prevailed. If a schoolmate's sandwich or cookie appeared to be more appetizing than your own, you tried to negotiate a trade. I always tried to trade something I didn't want anyway – a mashed-bean sandwich or an overripe banana. It never occurred to me to trade a slice of Mama's Old Kentucky walnut cake for my schoolmate's offering of a boring-looking molasses cookie, even though I could see longing in the barterer's eyes.

Sometimes Mama put two pieces of fruit in my lunch package, one to be eaten at morning recess if I was hungry. Quite often, though, I saved that piece of fruit as my bargaining chip to trade for a sugary doughnut or apple pie. Unabashedly, I always examined the looks and quality of my fruit to see which piece was the best and then offered my classmate the poorer, less-attractive piece. I felt no pangs of selfishness. It was just good trading sense.

That autumn day after the lunch-bringers had eaten their food, disposed of the wrappings and dispersed to various parts of the playground, I lingered under the shade of a maple tree, watching monarch butterflies drifting lazily southward. I was still hungry and Mama had put no fruit in my lunch that day. I saw my classmate Stella Downing coming up a path. She was returning from her home, one of the lucky ones who lived near the school. The sunshine glistened on Stella's black curly hair

Her blue dress matched the color of her eyes. She had something in each hand. When she drew closer I saw she was holding two apples. Stella noticed my interest and asked, "Want one?" "Yes," I replied, simply and truly. "But I've already eaten," I added, to indicate I had nothing to trade. Stella held up the two apples, much as I would have done to appraise my trading fruit. One was perfectly shaped, red and shiny, stem intact. No flaws. The other one was smaller, slightly shriveled and dented on one side.

Without hesitation, Stella handed *me* the perfect apple. I held it for a minute, waiting for her to realize her mistake. But when she started to eat the flawed one, I began to eat mine, casting puzzled but appreciative glances in her direction. Stella had no closer bond with me than any of our other schoolmates. But it had taken her no time at all to decide which apple she would give to me. I realized she would have made the generous gesture with others as well. Evidently, it was her nature to give away the best.

Sitting there eating our apples, we laughed as a softball from a nearby game rolled between us. To me, at that moment, it seemed the moving ball was marking a dividing line between Stella and me. I was the shriveled one, she the perfect. When I finished the apple, overcome with admiration for Stella and shame at my own bargaining practices, I could barely stammer a thank-you.

But the thanks I give today is for that **defining moment** when I began to refine my bargaining powers. **Now I attempt to cross over that imaginary line in the grass to join with the Stellas of this world who always give their best – and in doing so conduct their lives in a way that makes others wish to do better with their own.**

The Uncommon Professional

I went to the dark end of the inventory shelves, pressed my forehead against the wall and indulged myself in a few moments of quiet despair. Was this the way it would be for the rest of my career? Here I was, two years out of school, working at yet another mindless, low-pay, dead-end job. Up to this point, I had avoided the question by just not thinking about it, but now, for some reason, the awful possibility had come crashing down on me. The thought sucked every bit of energy from my body. I clocked out sick, went home to bed, pulled the covers over my head, and tried to forget about tomorrow and all the tomorrows that would follow. By morning I was a little more composed, but no less depressed. Listlessly, I went back to work and resumed my hopeless drudgery.

There were several new guys on the job that morning - temporary workers even lower on the totem pole than I was. One of them caught my eye. He was older than the others, and wearing a uniform. The company didn't issue uniforms, in fact, the company didn't care what you wore as long as you showed up. But this guy was dressed in smartly pressed tan pants and a work shirt, complete with his name, Jim, embroidered on the pocket. I guess he supplied himself with the uniform. I watched him all that day and the rest of the days he worked with us. He was always early. He worked at a steady, focused, efficient pace. He was friendly to everyone he worked with, but rarely talked while he was working. He took the designated breaks at midmorning and afternoon with everyone else, but unlike many others, he never lingered past the allotted time.

Sometimes people would be a little careless about cleaning up after they ate. Jim's place at the table was spotless, and, of course, he was always back on the line exactly on time. He wasn't just different; he was outstanding – admirable, inspirational! He was the kind of worker managers dream of. Despite that, the other workers liked him too. He didn't try to show anybody up. He did everything that was asked of him. He didn't gossip or complain or argue. ***He just did the job - common labor - with more personal dignity than I had believed was possible with this kind of work. His attitude and every action proclaimed that he was a professional. Labor might be common; he wasn't.***

When the temporary work was finished, Jim left for another job, but the impression he made on me didn't. Even though I had never talked to him, he turned my head completely around. I did the best I could to follow his example. I started setting my own standards. I worked like a businessman fulfilling a contract, just the way Jim had done. To my great surprise, the managers noticed my new productivity and promoted me. A few years later, I promoted myself to a better-paying job with a different company. And so it went. Eventually, many companies and many years later, I started a business of my own. Whatever success I've had has been the result of hard work and good luck, but I think the biggest part of my "luck" was the lessons I learned from Jim so long ago. ***Respect doesn't come from the kind of work you do; it comes from the way you do the work.***

by Kenneth L. Shipley, from Chicken Soup for the Soul at Work

Happy People Have Good Relationships

Another way to stay happy is to nurture our relationships. People who have good relationships are said to be happier and more content in their lives than people who don't. Good support networks are essential to feeling capable of dealing with problems and issues and getting through to the other end. Good company can lift us up and positive people can encourage us to reach our potential. Make sure that your relationships are with people who are a **positive influence on your life** and not with people who drag you down.

One Way to Be Happier

Talk less, and when you do talk have noble conversation.

When you hang out with your friends and loved ones, learn to love the spaces in the conversation. Listen more to their tone as they share rather than thinking about how you are going to respond. Pay attention to what happens to your energy when you talk less, and how much happier you feel as you conserve more energy. Plus, you will love the simple intimacy of your relationships as you increase presence and heart-centered listening, freeing yourself of complications and unwanted dramas. PS: This is hard to do on a phone.

“People with great minds talk about possibilities. People with average minds talk about things. People with small minds talk about other people.” Eleanor Roosevelt



I love everything
about the topic Character
First - I can't imagine
living any other way.

From an OA senior swimmer

“The influence of putting “Character First” and the work of the Orinda Aquatics is among the most important work being done by any swim coaches in the world today. When it comes to creating value for our customers of all levels of swim skill, this is IT!

John Leonard, Executive Director of The American Swimming Coaches Association

ALWAYS
STAY
humble
AND
kind



**“If serving is beneath you,
leadership is beyond you.” unknown**



"My, my, my! You dogs excel at servant leadership."

Your attitude toward anything...



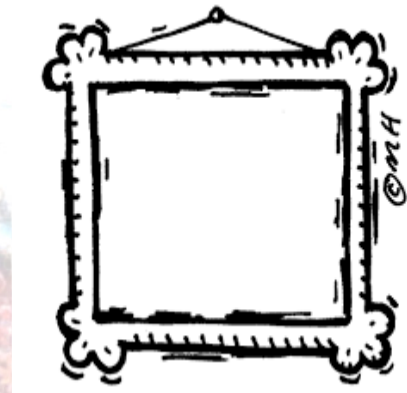
Is your attitude toward everything

“Those who complain the most, accomplish the least.” Robert Tew

Notes on complaining –

These characteristics frame most reactions and attitudes

- Resilient or weak
- Selfless or selfish
- Giver or taker
- Patient or impatient
- Respectful or disrespectful
- Long-term vs. short-term oriented
- Growing or stagnant



Why do people complain?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

“A complaining tongue reveals an ungrateful heart.”

William Arthur Ward

Complaining – the reality

- Serves no purpose (i.e., doesn't help)
- Adds no value
- Weakens your opportunity to grow
- Is unattractive
- Ultimately creates a belief system AND a self-image
- Risk loss of respect from staff, friends, and teammates



Quote: “No one wants to hear you complain, not even people who..._____” unknown (hint: love you)



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List your Common Complaints (and reversals)

1. Example: I complain about being tired a lot, but I should know that being POSITIVE and RESILIENT when tired is probably the best thing for me to develop as an athlete. I will welcome the opportunity!

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

“Champions never complain, they are too busy growing through the challenges.” John Wooden

(a few) Quotes

“Loving people live in a loving world. Hostile people live in a hostile world. Same world.”
unknown

“People who want the most approval get the least and the people who need approval the least get the most.” unknown

“Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise ...” Proverbs 13:20

“Respect yourself enough to walk away from anything that no longer serves you, grows you, or makes you happy.” Robert Tew

“It's not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are.” unknown

“A wise man does in the beginning, what a foolish man does in the end.” unknown

“I've learned that everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you're climbing it.” unknown

“There's a difference between interest and commitment. When you're interested in doing something, you do it only when circumstance permit. When you're committed to something, you accept no excuses, only results.” unknown

We do not attract what we want, but what we are.

James Lane Allen

When the higher flows into the lower, it transforms the nature of the
lower into that of the higher.

Meister Eckhart

Florida State receiver Travis Rudolph brightened up the day of a boy with autism, so much so he made the boy's mother cry.

Rudolph and some other Seminoles were visiting a middle school Tuesday afternoon when Rudolph noticed a boy eating his lunch alone. Rudolph decided he would give the boy company and join him for lunch with a couple slices of pizza. The boy's mother, Leah Paske, found out about the gesture, and was incredibly moved.

Paske wrote a lengthy Facebook post describing the encounter, which she said brought her to tears: Here is the full text of Paske's post:



Several times lately I have tried to remember my time in middle school, did I like all my teachers, do I even remember them? Did I have many friends? Did I sit with anyone at lunch? Just how mean were kids really? I remember one kid on the bus called me "Tammy Fay Baker" bc I started awkwardly wearing eye liner in the sixth grade, I remember being tough and calling him a silly name back, but when he couldn't see me anymore I cried. I do remember middle school being scary, and hard.

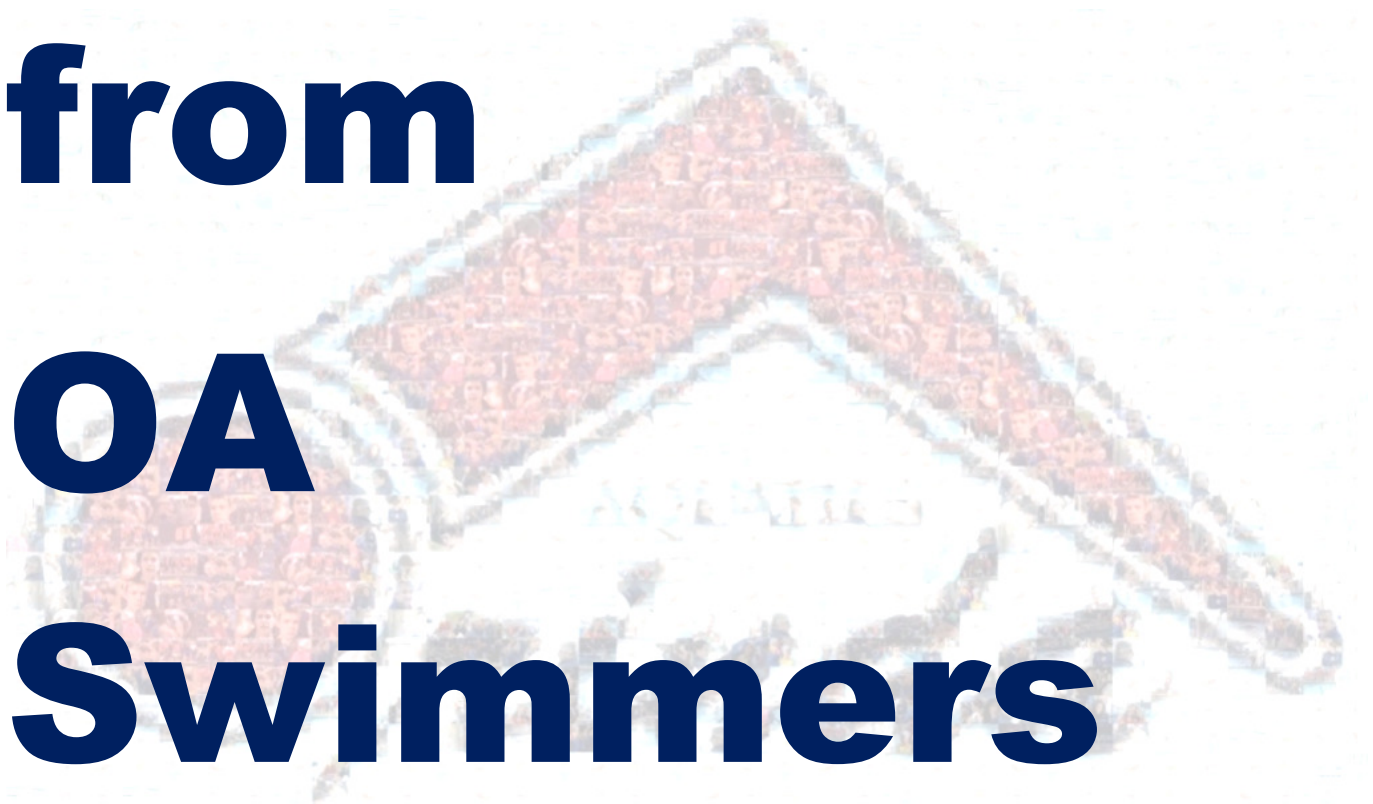
Now that I have a child starting middle school, I have feelings of anxiety for him, and they can be overwhelming if I let them. Sometimes I'm grateful for his autism. That may sound like a terrible thing to say, but in some ways I think, I hope, it shields him. He doesn't seem to notice when people stare at him when he flaps his hands. He doesn't seem to notice that he doesn't get invited to birthday parties anymore.

And he doesn't seem to mind if he eats lunch alone. It's one of my daily questions for him. Was there a time today you felt sad? Who did you eat lunch with today? Sometimes the answer is a classmate, but most days it's nobody. Those are the days I feel sad for him, but he doesn't seem to mind. He is a super sweet child, who always has a smile and hug for everyone he meets.

A friend of mine sent this beautiful picture to me today and when I saw it with the caption "Travis Rudolph is eating lunch with your son" I replied "who is that?" He said "FSU football player", then I had tears streaming down my face. Travis Rudolph, a wide receiver at Florida State, and several other FSU players visited my sons school today. I'm not sure what exactly made this incredibly kind man share a lunch table with my son, but I'm happy to say that it will not soon be forgotten. This is one day I didn't have to worry if my sweet boy ate lunch alone, because he sat across from someone who is a hero in many eyes. Travis Rudolph thank you so much, you made this momma exceedingly happy, and have made us fans for life!

Rudolph said he himself teared up when reading Paske's post. Whatever Rudolph does on the field this season won't be as important as what he did Tuesday.

Letters from OA Swimmers



Also see the website for the history of graduating senior letters



Inspiration – “Team Expectations”

by Peter Varellas, Orinda Aquatics, Stanford, US Olympic Team

Expectations are a big deal on a team: the expectation to succeed, the expectation to improve, the expectation to learn, grow, have fun, and form friendships. Each individual surely has their own expectations for what they want to get out of their experience with a team. The fallacy however, is that expectations are static. Many do not see that the norms, ambiance, and general sentiment of a team is constantly being reformed and reevaluated some call it a tradition but tradition carries with it the illusion of permanence. In my opinion it is the function of the coach to monitor and influence the general atmosphere of the team. In many cases, as you know, the coach(es) will extend a great deal of this responsibility to some to the athletes themselves in the form of captains, leaders, or upperclassmen. Orinda Aquatics is no exception.

When I joined the team as a sophomore, the leaders of the team were immediately apparent. They set the tone and expectations for the team. I was fortunate enough to have a high quality group of leaders that, in addition to the coaching staff, taught me not only how to swim fast, but how to be a good person, and in turn how to be an effective leader as I became an upperclassman. I found that swimmers spend so much time together in the pool that it was quite natural to also spend a great deal of time together away from practice. Many of my friends were in fact swimmers. For me, high school social situations never included alcohol. Not only did I not drink, but alcohol was not even present when my friends and I would hang out. The question is, why?

Why, indeed? Is it just coincidence that I never had the desire to drink and that my teammates felt the same way? I doubt it. I feel that my own actions were strongly influenced by that same group of leaders that I spoke of earlier. Whether you realize it or not, there is a definite attitude toward alcohol on any sports team. A personal choice is no longer merely personal when it affects the atmosphere of the team. “Peer pressure” may seem old and outdated, but trust me it is still at large. The actions of friends, teammates, and leaders, serve though to create the expectations of what a social situation entails. In a team environment, a norm is developed that can often be directly attributed to the actions of its older members. A team is supposed to be comprised of individuals who are brought together by certain commonalities. Don’t make one of them be alcohol.

Moral of the story: You are constantly reshaping the expectations and general atmosphere of the team. Be sure that you understand how your actions relate to others.

A final note: Listen to your parental and coaches. These are the people who not only care about you most but also have the knowledge of experience. These two force combine to create your greatest assets as young people. The most important choices I have made in my life have been based largely on the advice of my parents and coaches.

Letter of Recommendation for Poppy Carlig to: Stanford University Admissions Office:

I have known Poppy Carlig since she was nine years old and have had the pleasure of working closely with her over the past nine+ years as her swim coach. I coached her primarily during the summers as a member of Sleepy Hollow.

Of the thousands of athletes I have coached, Poppy Carlig is one of the most special and possibly the most unique. While Poppy is a good athlete and a very hard worker, it is her character and personality that make her special. One example that I would like to share with you will clearly demonstrate this. And while this happened when she was nine, she still has the same ingenuity, discipline and innocence as she did back then. And I seriously ask you, what nine-year-old would do it.

When Poppy was eight, she swam on neighboring team and the next season wanted to join our team in Pinole. However, that next summer my coaching staff and I moved to Sleepy Hollow, which is a private swim and tennis club situated in a wealthy area of Orinda, California. Poppy lived in Richmond and desperately wanted to swim for our staff but when we moved from Pinole to Sleepy Hollow it was very much out of her reach financially. Her parents were divorced, and both were of very limited means.

While Poppy and her mom spoke with me about coming to Sleepy Hollow, there was no getting around the reality that it was too expensive. We could have pursued a scholarship but Poppy did not want to do that.

Then I got a call from Poppy and her mom and they asked me to meet them at the club to discuss a plan that would allow them to join the club. At our meeting Poppy handed me a letter **she wrote** stating that she was going to collect aluminum cans and bottles to raise money to join the club and was asking people for support. I have never seen a nine-year old so determined and creative. What I would learn is that it was typical of her personality. She had no ego about collecting cans to join a rich club. It was simply what she needed to do. I have kept the letter to this day and have retyped it for you below.

Hi it's Poppy,

I want to know if you can save aluminum cans, plastic and glass bottles with a redemption value, and glass beer bottles for me? I'm saving them because I'm trying to get \$2,500 dollars (sic) to get a membership card for Sleepy Hollow (sic) Swim and Tennis team. My grandpa said he will match whatever money I get, and my Mom is helping me gather and recycle. The reason I want a membership card is because that will put me on the swim team. The reason why I want to be on the team is because Matt and Ronny (sic) are the best coshis (sic) in the bay area. I hope you can help me. If you can, thank you!!!

From Poppy - P.S. If you can help, call me to let me know and for arrangements (sic) for us to pick it up. I have until April to get my money.

Needless to say, Poppy did raise the money and has been an outstanding member of Sleepy Hollow ever since. I hope you consider Poppy for your outstanding university. I know the academic standards of applicants are at the highest level, but I also know you take into account other factors that even more than academics, make up who and what a person really is. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me at (925) 939-7966.

Ron Heidary

Note: Poppy graduated from Stanford with a major in biology. She went on to dental school. After graduating, she travelled to China to help families in poorer areas who had no access to dental care. She now has her own practice in the bay area.

Collin English, Johns Hopkins

There was a moment, four years ago, that I have always remembered. It was one of my first Saturday morning practices as a senior swimmer, and under the grim grey sky, I had a conversation with my coach. There are few things about that conversation that I remember, other than a discussion on those spectacular swimmers that had come before me. In my memory it is clear as crystal, the moment when he turned to leave and said as an ending remark: **"You have big shoes to fill"**. I have tried to fill those shoes ever since.

There was a moment, four years ago, that I have always remembered. It was under the burning sun of a summer practice that he pulled me aside. Into my hands he put the workout from that day, and, before he walked away, told me to read the quote on the bottom. With slight confusion I looked down: ***"Only the mediocre are always at their best"***. I have struggled to not be mediocre ever since.

To the mindset of a headstrong freshman, these were comments and quotes that were meant to facilitate my athleticism. It was my dream to one day to be as fast as the others, and it was my goal to push my body beyond the point of mediocrity. I wanted to be stronger and faster; I wanted to be the best. But as my four years passed, my mind mellowed and became less headstrong, my athletic dreams were not achieved and I began to question, and in this new situation I began to understand what my coaches had really meant.

Those before me had been more than fast swimmers; they had been uncompromisingly dedicated, loyal, humorous, a friend, and a mentor. They had been more than an athlete; they were dedicated, kind, and the pinnacle of leadership. **It is true that mediocrity can be found in athletics, but it is even truer that it can be found in character.**

So to my coaches and to my fellow teammates, thank you for making me a better swimmer, but I thank you more for the lessons that will last me beyond the short limits of my swimming career; whether it be the work ethic that comes from finishing a threshold set, the discipline that comes from waking up early for morning practice, the social skills necessary to be positive that early, or the ability to accept defeat and better myself from it.

I am not the one to judge whether I have filled someone's shoes, and I am not the one to decide whether I have somehow escaped the bounds of mediocrity. But there is one thing I have firmly determined: that **this team has made me a better person**, and as I depart after four years, I cannot help but feel grateful.



Colleen O'Brien, Hamilton College (OA Inspirational Award Winner)

I'm not eloquent enough to adequately articulate what you all have meant to me in my journey over the past several years. But just for the sake of being cliché, I'll say it anyway: You have made me who I am today.

Anyone who has experienced the rollercoaster ride that is high school can tell you that it's not exactly a walk in the park. It's not just the late nights, unsympathetic teachers, apathetic classmates, and multitude of extracurricular activities; it's the fact that you have to decide who you are in the process. **You have to decide what you believe in, what you stand for, and what your role is in the Big Picture.** None of these dilemmas are avoidable, and none are easily resolved. When faced with these forks in my journey, I would have been left floundering without the firm base this team has become in my life.

At every crossroads I struggled with, I fell back on what I learned here. I would remember how many people believed in and supported me, and remember the **high character athlete and person I dreamed of becoming.** *Suddenly, my path would become clear.*

I continue to be inspired each and every day by the spirit of this team. It manifests itself in the smallest, most beautiful details; a warm smile, a hug, a veteran swimmer patiently explaining a drill to a newcomer, a simple "How are you doing?". **I walk away from every practice reinvigorated and motivated to become a better person.**

As I open the next chapter of my life, I know I will continue to rely on all that this team has helped me learn about myself and **what it means to be an athlete and a teammate.** I hope to use this knowledge to go forward and **inspire someone else** in the way you all have inspired me. To each and every member of this team I have ever known, from those who were seniors when I joined to those I just had the privilege of meeting this year: thank you for everything, I love you and will miss you dearly.



Example of Athlete AND Leader

Sean Haufler, Yale University

When I was a freshman, I looked up to Kris Kao. I strove to emulate Kris; he was a beast in workout and the nicest guy you could ever meet. Kris drove me to morning workouts my entire freshman year. During the summer, Kris scheduled for us to meet in Orinda at 5:20 for the 6 o'clock workout because he "liked to be early". Every day, for two and a half months, Kris would drive me to the pool and then we would wait in his car for practice to start for about 25 minutes. Neither of us mentioned changing our meeting time so we could glean another few minutes of sleep.

Rather, we bonded. We talked about swimming, baseball, and life in general, developing a legitimate friendship. On days when I didn't have a ride home after practice, Kris offered to drive 15 minutes out of his way to bring me home. When I thanked him for his kindness, he brushed me off. He'd say, "I'm happy to do it", or "Don't worry about it". I respected Kris's humility, but I still wanted to return the favor to him. Kris was just too generous, and I didn't know how to repay him.

"Just make sure when you're a senior, you pass it on." That statement stuck with me to this day. For the next three years, whenever someone on the team needed a suit for practice, they could have mine. When someone needed a ride, they got one. I was repaying Kris.

Kris Kao's attitude epitomizes the strength of character possessed by the entire Orinda Aquatics swim team. He put the team's interests ahead of his own. His unselfishness was, and continues to be, contagious. There is no freshman hazing on Orinda Aquatics, nor are parent chaperones needed on travel trips. The coaches are confident that every swimmer will "do the right thing".

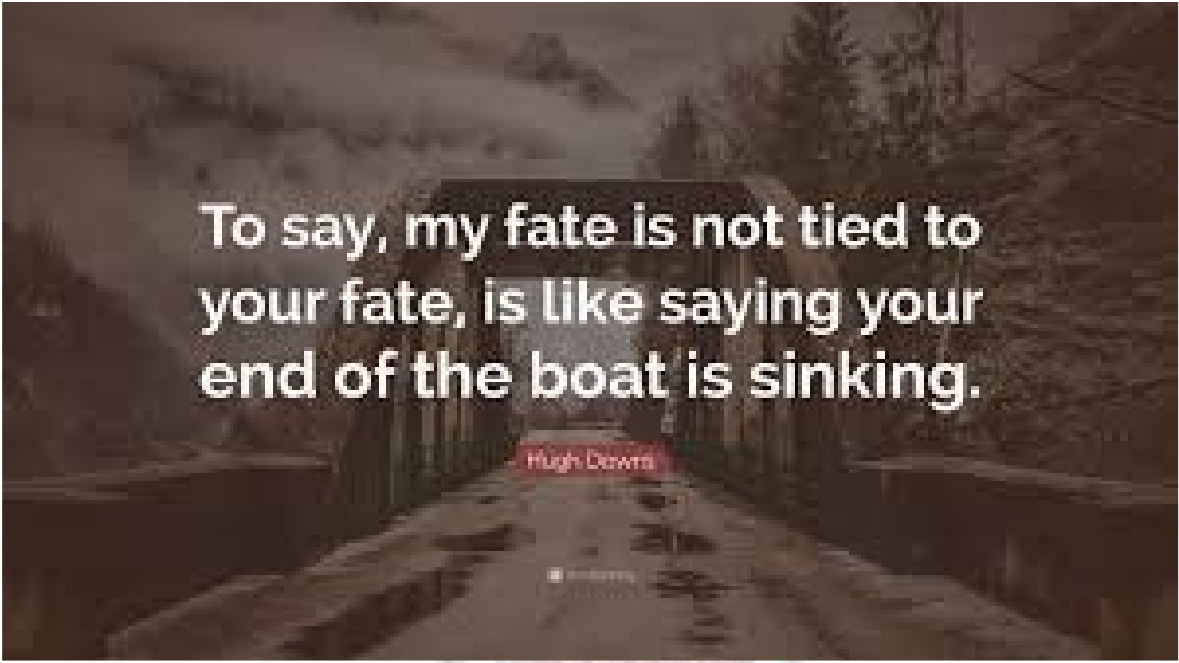
Appreciate your parents



They do so much for you and provide you with incredible opportunities – social, athletic, academic, and life experience opportunities. They will love and support you your whole life. Please consider the time, energy, cost and sacrifice that your parents must give to support your athletic career. They are not obligated to do it or, for that matter, anything.

They do it because they love you.

Treat them as such (maybe the greatest sign of character).



To say, my fate is not tied to
your fate, is like saying your
end of the boat is sinking.

Hugh Downs

We are ALL connected

email from a college coach

“... your kids consistently seem to improve in college, and they are so well prepared. I have read articles on your team, how you are able to travel with no chaperones, and about the quality of your training and technique, and just being familiar with the program. What a class organization it is. I think our programs are similar in what we think is important.

Thanks again.”



Orinda Aquatics Policy on Behavior

The Policy and Philosophy of Orinda Aquatics will be viewed in three areas:

- *The mission and guiding principles of Orinda Aquatics*
- *Strict protection of the Orinda Aquatics environment*
- *Inappropriate behavior outside of Orinda Aquatics, including the use of drugs or alcohol*

1 – The Philosophical Backdrop and Mission of Orinda Aquatics

First, and foremost, it is imperative that all members of Orinda Aquatics, swimmers and parents, fully understand and embrace the team's mission and values. The culture and athletic foundation of Orinda Aquatics is based on a high-character athletic process coupled with an integrity-driven lifestyle. Our core values will be centered on integrity, work ethic, humility, compassion, mutual respect, and team support. This "character-based" philosophy encompasses all aspects of behavior, attitude, and interaction. There is no divorcing the swimmer or athlete from the person or teammate. Beyond creating a positive character-based environment, it is the objective of Orinda Aquatics to be a safe-haven for young adults who choose to walk a socially responsible path. We want to lead the way in this regard and show that it is possible to maintain a positive, healthy, drug and alcohol-free environment for young adults. While certain activities may be commonplace in society or acceptable locally, we will not tolerate any activity that compromises the integrity of an individual, our team, or the organization as a whole.

2 – The "Protection" of Orinda Aquatics

Our philosophy should translate into a positive, healthy, and productive environment that supports all members and protects the environment and culture. Behavioral expectations will encompass every aspect of this program from training, competition and travel, to activities and general personal interaction. Members will be expected to act with the utmost integrity at all times. This is the reason that Orinda Aquatics does not travel with chaperones. As stated above, any action or activity that compromises the integrity of Orinda Aquatics will not be tolerated. Examples would be inappropriate language, improper attire, lack of team support, negativity/apathy, and tardiness, being disrespectful to anyone, or clearly engaging in activity that is inappropriate or illegal. Even the smallest infractions will be addressed, and the coaches will be the ones who evaluate and address behavioral issues.

3 – Behavior "Outside" of Orinda Aquatics

While we do not have the desire or intention to monitor or evaluate behavior outside of Orinda Aquatics, we will be steadfast in our effort to protect this team and its culture. Any action or activity that would be unbecoming of a high-character athlete or representative of the ideals of this program will be addressed, regardless of the circumstance or location. Anything that translates into dialogue, focus, or rumor within the team or the community will become a team issue, and therefore will be addressed. With regard to the use of drugs or alcohol outside of Orinda Aquatics, those who engage in such activities, do so in direct contradiction to everything this team stands for. These actions betray the trust and commitment of the coaches and swimmers, and they jeopardize the organizational foundation and reputation. Additionally, any collegiate swimmer who engages in the use of drugs or alcohol with members of the Orinda Aquatics senior group (high school swimmers) will be excused from the team, as this is not the leadership or mentorship we are looking for from older swimmers. Orinda Aquatics will not need "proof" of such activity to investigate and take action.

Response to inappropriate actions, or the suspicion of such actions, either within the context of an Orinda Aquatics activity or outside, will be addressed by the staff with the team member involved. If necessary, a meeting will be held with the member's parents and or the Board of Directors. If it is clear that the ideals and philosophies of Orinda Aquatics are not aligned with those of the athlete, we will ask the member/family to leave the team. Finally, the coaching staff of Orinda Aquatics reserves the right to dismiss any member for actions or attitudes that are counter to the team's mission and ideals.

In SUM...

**“Root” or ground
yourself in iron-clad
(*black and white*)
values of:**

- ✓ **Integrity**
- ✓ **Humility**
- ✓ **Gratitude**
- ✓ **Selflessness**



Do not follow the crowd, the pressure, or anyone who doesn't support you to be a “high-character athlete” (and student)

Value (Qualities) System

Please list values that are important to you and then rate how they are represented in your life... and what you need to do to be a “10”. See examples.

	Value	Rate 1-10	How is it implemented in your life	What do you need to do?
Ex	Good teammate	5	I'm generally nice but I don't help out enough, and I don't get to know new swimmers because I am shy	Be the first to volunteer and introduce myself when someone joins
EX	Integrity	6	I don't always tell the truth when I might get in trouble.	ALWAYS be completely honest no matter the consequences.
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				



Character Checklist

Ask your coach, parent, sibling, friend for *HONEST* feedback

	Area	Rate 1-10	Note	Do ASAP
1	Generally (very) positive			
2	ALWAYS humble – no ego/(selfless)			
3	NO complaining			
4	NEVER lie OR use bad language			
5	Good OA teammate (helps...a lot)			
6	Good family teammate (helps... a lot – and then some more)			
7	Good sibling			
8	Good values (see list)			
9	Live values			
10	Reach out to new swimmers (AND kids at school)			
*	Bonus – no or limited/healthy social media or “screen time”			

Total Score: *(Goal is 100!)*

Character Questions



Can you list three poor character examples that you see (in school)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Can you list three good character examples that you see (among peers)?

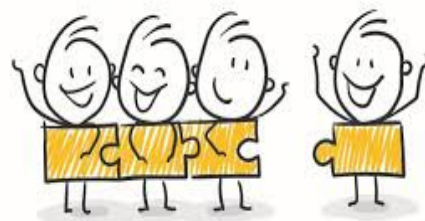
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Can you describe what peer pressures you feel at school?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Good (Caring) Teammate Quiz

How soon can you name all of the Junior Group swimmers – with a personal comment?



Name	Note	Name	Note
1.		26.	
2.		27.	
3.		28.	
4.		29.	
5.		30.	
6.		31.	
7.		32.	
8.		33.	
9.		34.	
10.		35.	
11.		36.	
12.		37.	
13.		38.	
14.		39.	
15.		40.	
16.		41.	
17.		42.	
18.		43.	
19.		44.	
20.		45.	
21.		46.	
22.		47.	
23.		48.	
24.		49.	
25.		50.	

3. Technique

- ✓ **Philosophy**
- ✓ **Mindset (“Deliberate”)**
- ✓ **Balance**
- ✓ **Timing**
- ✓ **Distance-per- Stroke**



FOCUS

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Coaching/Training Philosophy - “Technically” Speaking

A “hard” workout is not necessarily the best workout. *This is one of the biggest myths in swimming.* We focus more on changing strokes and developing good habits (for long-term development). This cannot be accomplished if swimmers are too fatigued to concentrate.

Therefore, the majority of our preparation involves quality 25 and 50 yard repeats and longer “controlled” swimming. The ultimate goal is to create strokes that allow more efficient training in the Senior Group, and ultimately in competition.

We believe that the development of an efficient stroke is the easiest way to improve. We have extensive experience in stroke development as it relates to age-group and senior swimming. We have seen that if swimmers do just the basic things well, they can perform measurably better.

YOUR STROKE MUST CONTINUE TO IMPROVE AND BECOME MORE EFFICIENT IF YOU WANT TO HAVE SUCCESS AT HIGHER LEVELS. The question really is not how fast you are now, ***but how fast you can ultimately be with the stroke you have.***



Keys to technical development

- ✓ **Know key drills (balance & rhythm/timing)**
- ✓ **Know/hold stroke counts**
- ✓ **Know/work kick counts (race underwater)**
- ✓ **Know/work pull-down distance**
- ✓ **Get better (really good) underwater**
- ✓ **Breathe every 3rd stroke in free (for balance)**
- ✓ **ONLY legal turns**
- ✓ **Ask the coach for feedback regularly**



Basic vision of each stroke



Catch-up (hold), relaxed low recovery (sail), LOW breath, balance, lead arm



Vertical exit, head set, clean entry



Head in line, eyes on water, forearms sliding through surface



Low breath, relaxed low recovery, thumbs down

See Drill Sheets Below



Orinda Aquatics Freestyle Drill Progression/Stroke Development



Progressions for kick, scull and drill

Two foundational drills

"Build the stroke" - one each

Variations/equipment, language/terms, measure regularly, skills to develop, individual stroke keys (three)

Two Base Drills to Master (balance & rhythm)

1) 2 to 6 stroke - 5 point CU w/ strong kick (fins rec)

2) One Arm - Right/Left variations (show shoulder)

Base stroke - length, balance, extension, rotation, controlled recovery

Focus on rhythm/timing. Rotate in/out, ahead of entry/catch

"Kick" Progression

- 1 UW Streamline - rigid, foot speed, "bullet"
- 2 HU Streamline - hyperextend, up-kick, core
- 3 Side Kick - eyes & palm down
- 4 Log Roll (rotation) - arms at side, 10 kicks
- 5 Vert Kick - work kick both ways (can drop)

Scull/"Feel" Progression (can use pads)

- 1 Front Scull ("figure 8's"/reach, feel entry, head up)
- 2 Shoulder Scull ("wipers"/in sweep) face down
- 3 Hip Scull (finish/exit) face down (figure 8's)
- 4 Side Kick Scull - work catch/finish (figure 8's)
- 5 Full-Pull Scull (rotate) face down. UW recovery

"Stroke" Progression

- 1 CU - fingertip or thumb drag (elbow high)
- 2 2 (fins) to 6 stroke - 5 point CU w/ strong kick
- 3 5-Count Freeze (shark fin/shake) quick switch
- 4 Right/Left variations ("show" shoulder)
- 5 1-2-3 Strokes/slide on side - 10 kicks

"Build Legs" Progression

- 1 Glue feet/drag-NO kick, feel roll (hold body line)
- 2 HU Free/dolphin kick (2 beat feel-bounce entry)
- 3 Free - 2 Beat Kick (one kick per opposite catch)
- 4 Free - 6 Beat Kick (hold kick through breath)
- 5 Free - "HAMMER down" kick (high white water)

"Build Stroke" Progression (one from each)

- 1 Side Kick (body position) or log roll
- 2 Full Pull Scull or scull combo (series)
- 3 One Arm combination (timing)
- 4 5 or 10 Count - lift/switch, slide on side
- 5 Catch-up with stroke count and strong legs

Measure (stroke discipline)

- 1 Turn speed (hand to feet) and Turn Master
- 2 Kick counts UW (for race and training)
- 3 Kick speed and endurance (timed/track)
- 4 Stroke count at 2-3 speeds (EN1/EN2/EN3)
- 5 Breathing patterns/discipline in WO & in race

Variations (for technique or training)



Fists/anti-paddles/regular paddles
 Snorkel - focus on timing, catch, rotation
 Parachute/ankle weights - for resistance
 Cordz (resistance & speed)/Turn Master
 Pull Buoy between ankles (core/line) or thighs
 Tennis Ball or stick (hold for CU - balance)
 Train with stroke counts - 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, etc.
 Train at Stroke Rates (Tempo Trainer) DPS/pace
 Vary breathing (Rt/3rd/Lt/all)

Skill Development for All Ages

Leave wall: drop on side/slip hand over ear (on 4 & 9)
 Push side to front - carry speed (tight/rigid streamline)
 Have fly kick count UW. Flutter kick through breakout.
 No breath on first stroke off all walls
 Learn 2-beat and 6-beat kick (see above)
 Breathe LOW and EARLY on both sides for balance in WO
 Stay in CU type stroke (for most swimming for balance)
 Turns - tight, spin fast, heels to suit, scull back to SL/exit on bk
 Finish - on side at extension (without breathing)

Philosophy, Language, Stroke Keys, Queues

Philosophy	Progressive Learning - Drill the Drill, Build the Stroke PERFECT practice makes perfect, take PRIDE in technique, "swim for judges", penny in piggy bank (get rich!) MAINTAIN STROKE DISCIPLINE (must know and commit to)
Language	Effortless swimming, ride the glide, work from the core out, DPS is key
Body	Relaxed/set head, good lines (top/side), lean on chest, eyes down Trunk/core rotation (slide on side/skate) balance, rotate in to catch - rotate out for finish/exit (torque) Synch stroke and breath with body rotation
Stroke	Relaxed low hand recovery (out of pocket), train track entry. Slip hand into hole in water. No bubbles, reach/press OVER the barrel, anchor elbow, rotate past the catch, increase hand speed Elbow - high and to the sky on recovery - high and to the side on catch
Breath	Through extension (1 arm SL), EARLY, LOW, QUICK, prior to catch, keep low goggle in water
Kick	Relaxed, narrow, straight, 2 beat OR 6 beat (DO NOT CROSS), kick at surface (through breath)
Str Count	Know stroke rates & stroke count (per lap) at 3 speeds - EN1 aerobic, EN2 endurance, 100 or 200+ pace



Orinda Aquatics Backstroke Drill Progression/Stroke Development



Progressions for kick, scull and drill

Two foundational drills

"Build the stroke" - one each

Variations/equipment, language/terms, measure regularly, skills to develop, individual stroke keys (three)

Two Base Drills to Master (balance & rhythm)

1) Double-Arm Backstroke (lift, rotate, slice, arm wrestle)

2) One-Arm (Right/Left) variations ("show" shoulder)

Sets up recovery line (exit), entry line, shallow catch (keep face dry)

Focus is on rhythm, timing, set head - rotate in and out - entry/catch

"Kick" Progression

- 1 UW Dolphin Kick (rigid SL, good body line, speed)
- 2 Streamline Kick - good body position (boil water)
- 3 SIDE Kick - keep palm down
- 4 Log Roll (balance/10 kicks) arms at side
- 5 Vertical Kick (same as free) can drop down/rise

"Feel" Progression

- 1 Side Scull (catch/exit) "figure 8's", 1-Arm SL
- 2 Head First Hip Scull (feel finish) - NO kick
- 3 Feet First - arms above the head (feel entry)
- 4 Scull Catch (lean on hand - opposite arm up)
- 5 "V-Sit Scull - head up/feet up. Hand speed.

"Stroke" Progression

- 1 Lift-Check-Drop-Rotate (arm asleep/rotate hand)
- 2 Double-Arm (face dry, clap, check, slice)
- 3 Pull on lane line (helps with hand/elbow)
- 4 One Arm combo (pause mid pull/recovery)
- 5 10-count (lift/switch), or 1-2-3 stroke slide

"Build Stroke" Progression (one from each)

- 1 Kick choice (side or streamline)
- 2 Scull choice (above)
- 3 Double-Arm (balance)
- 4 One Arm (rotation)
- 5 Swim - build stroke rate to race pace

"Stroke Rate" Progression (Tempo Trainer)

- 1 SLOW Motion <30
- 2 Moderate: 30-36
- 3 200 Stroke Rate: 36-42
- 4 100 Stroke Rate: 46-50
- 5 Spin Drill (head up - rev up)

Measure (stroke discipline)

- 1 Turn speed (hand to feet) / Turn Master
- 2 Kick counts and kick rates (tempo) UW
- 3 25 UW kick for time/100 kick for time (15m)
- 4 Start for distance (no kick) glide UW
- 5 Stroke rates at race speed (& stroke counts)

Variations (for technique and training)

Fist, parachute, ankle weights (resistance)
Cordz - resistance/speed
Fins for speed /Turn Master for endurance
Paddles (1 or 2), or anti paddles
Cup, goggles (or iPhone!) on forehead
Vary Stroke Rates/Tempo Trainer
Free to back (hold long axis rhythm/rotation)
Have teammate watch entry (film)

Skill Development for All Ages

Back start (exit/entry) over kickboard or "noodle" (jump)
Back turns (entry, rotation, exit) - LEGALITY (know)
Back finish - build, lunge, legs - DO NOT submerge
Stroke counts for turns (from flags). Check wind at meets.
IM turn - open. Do not pass vertical (eyes stay up)
IM turn - flip. Learn both hands.
Stroke Rates (and counts) for set swimming
Breathing pattern (below)

Philosophy, Language, Stroke Keys, Queues

Philosophy	Progressive Learning - Drill the Drill, Build the Stroke PERFECT practice makes perfect, take PRIDE in technique, "swim for judges", penny in piggy bank (get rich!) MAINTAIN STROKE DISCIPLINE (must know and commit to)
Language	Hold body line (vertical and horizontal)
Body	Relaxed/set head (in a vice), balance iPhone on forehead!, chin up-head back (ears in) Balance, rotate into catch/rotate out for finish/exit Swim side to side (trunk rotation - Russian Twists)
Stroke	Relaxed arm/thumb lead/perpendicular recovery, shoulder brush ear, slice/clean entry "Throw" shoulder into water, enter at 11 & 1/linear pull line/push back Anchor elbow (points to bottom), "arm wrestle" - push, release
Breath	Inhale on entry/exhale on exit of same arm
Kick	From thigh/hip, knees stay below surface (don't break glass), boil water/kick ball BUILD Legs AND UW through race!
Turns	Build into wall/attack, "slip" under surface, spin tight/fast, minimum of five fast kicks (know kick count)
Stroke Rates	Know 100 and 200 stroke rates



Orinda Aquatics Breaststroke Drill Progression/Stroke Development



Progressions for kick, scull and drill

Two foundational drills

"Build the stroke" - one each

Variations/equipment, language/terms, measure regularly, skills to develop, individual stroke keys (three)

Two Base Drills to Master (balance & rhythm)

1) Pull - Flutter Kick (carry speed in streamline)

2) Pull - Dolphin Kick (work rhythm, pace, & speed)

Keys: lock elbows/squeeze head, eyes down on outswEEP

Work ONE dolphin kick (in BT kick timing), LUNGE to SL (set tempo)

"Kick" Progression

- 1 Egg beater or cycle - into alternate Rt/Lt
- 2 UW Knee Down to whip kick (pull buoy opt)
- 3 On Back (1/2 in SL, 1/2 hands under hips)
- 4 On stomach (same) - brth/kick/glide
- 5 Vertical Kick or kick against wall (hold body line)

Scull/"Feel" Progression (can use pads)

- 1 Front Scull ("figure 8's") feel/reach, head up
- 2 Shoulder Scull ("wipers"/in sweep) face down
- 3 Sitting Scull (work catch/anchor) knees up
- 4 Hip Scull (on back-feet first, work catch)
- 5 Pull Downs (UW - fast free kick) - hold line

"Pull" Progression

- 1 Pull Head-Up (fast, compact - fly kick on rec)
- 2 Pull w/ Flutter Kick (10) - work SL/set up catch
- 3 Pull with Dolphin Kick - work short axis (at SR)
- 4 Alt. right/left/2 FULL with FR, FL, or BT kick
- 5 Pull - alt BT/Fly kick to hold rhythm

"Full Stroke" Progression

- 1 Three pulses into full pull. Repeat with kick.
- 2 2 pulls HU/1 kick and glide (long)
- 3 2 kicks UW/1 pull and glide
- 4 1 stroke per black line (4-6 strokes per lap)
- 5 Blend all pulls - HU, flutter, dolphin, swim

"Build Stroke" Progression (one from each)

- 1 Kick on stomach or back (foot speed)
- 2 Scull - figure 8's, wipers, or sitting
- 3 Pull flutter (work SL and catch)
- 4 Pull dolphin (work rhythm/hand speed)
- 5 One pull/two kicks, to long glide, to pace

Measure (stroke discipline)

- 1 Turn speed - time touch to feet
- 2 Measure "both" pull downs for efficiency
- 3 PD for distance AND speed PD's UW 25
- 4 Min stroke counts per lap (then for time)
- 5 Kick time for 100, plus min kicks per lap

Variations



- Fist, parachute - for resistance/feel
- Ankle weights - leg strength
- Cordz for resistance/speed
- Paddles (1 or 2) sculling (or can hold top)
- Fins - carry speed in flutter or dolphin kick
- Tempo Trainer for DPS or pace
- Pull buoy for high hips
- Snorkel for head/neck alignment
- Tennis ball under chin - head position

Skills Development for all ages

- Legal kick - oval not circle (rotate ankle, "grab", push)
- Pull down (fly kick) - from core: compact, power, hold SL
- Pull down (pull) - narrow, finger tips down, hold line/shrug
- Pull down (recovery) - hands close to body, eyes DOWN
- Measure each point of PD: kick, pull, B/O points
- Turn - knees tight, elbow slice, eyes on thumb, drop
- Dive - relaxed/balanced - a little deeper for breaststroke
- Learn stroke counts and stroke rates for 100/200
- Attempt to reduce stroke count swimming at 3 speeds

Philosophy, Language, Stroke Keys, Queues

Philosophy	Progressive Learning - Drill the Drill, Build the Stroke PERFECT practice makes perfect, take PRIDE in technique, "swim for judges", penny in piggy bank (get rich!) MAINTAIN STROKE DISCIPLINE (must know and commit to)
Language	Effortless swimming, ride the glide/work from the core out (SHORT AXIS), swim on the water LINE
Body	Good line, stay LOW to the water, slide hips forward (insweep), lunge body FORWARD on recovery Channel energy forward throughout stroke - not up/down, lean on chest/hips high, slide on ice
Stroke	"open elevator doors" on outswEEP (and look down the shaft!) Slide (sweep out) to corners, "anchor" elbows (KEEP HIGH), pull in circular motion Compact, fast, strong - squeeze and "shrug", thumbs graze surface on recovery, to palms down SL "Slide triangle" forward, "squeeze head" with biceps in streamline - "shoot through tube" (fast)
Breath	Head IN LINE with spine (tennis ball) - eyes on water, STAY LOW, breathe with body on insweep
Kick	Narrow, fast, "sneak" heels up, "grab" water and "squeeze" BACK, "CLAP" feet (as nose touches)
Pull Down	Narrow light bulb , high elbows, fingertips down, hand speed, sneak up, "stair-step"



Orinda Aquatics Butterfly Drill Progression/Stroke Development



Progressions for kick, scull and drill

Two foundational drills

"Build the stroke" - one each

Variations/equipment, language/terms, measure regularly, skills to develop, individual stroke keys (three)

Two Base Drills to Master (balance & rhythm)

1) (Slow) Pull with Flutter Kick

Work exit, relaxed rec, hand placement (no splash), deep catch

"Kick" Progression

- 1 UW Streamline (bullet) - rigid SL/core
- 2 Side - 1 arm SL or arms crossed
- 3 On Back - streamline
- 4 On Back - head up/arms at side (crunches)
- 5 Vertical Kick (can fall under and work up)

"Full Stroke" Progression

- 1 Pulse - 3 pulse to pull/3 pulse to recovery
- 2 Pull Flutter Kick - slow arms/fast feet
- 3 One-Arm Combo (opposite arm in front)
- 4 Stroke-Hips-Float (feel rhythm/roll/extension)
- 5 Down/Up Combo (3 kicks UW/1 or 2 strokes)

"Breathing" Progression (key is to rhythm/efficiency)

- 1 No Breath - swim through water line (low)
- 2 1 Up/1 Down - same
- 3 2 Up/1 Down - hold body line
- 4 Breathe every stroke - hold rhythm
- 5 Race BP/SR - 200 or 100

Variations



Fist for feel/Paddles for strength & DPS
Fins - for speed assistance/technique
Pull Buoy for body position
Snorkel for head/neck stabilization
Cordz for resistance or speed
Turn Master - endurance (Test Sets)
Tempo trainer for speed UW/race tempo
Ankle weights for leg strength
Change breathing to work/hold rhythm

2) One-Arm Fly (opposite arm up/breathe to side)

Key to rhythm - stay squared to bottom, lunge/press, kick out/in

Scull/"Feel" Progression (can use pads)

- 1 Front Scull ("figure 8's") - feel entry, head up
- 2 Shoulder Scull ("wipers"/insweep) face down
- 3 Hip Scull (on stomach) - figure 8's, face down
- 4 Full Pulls (UW rec)-narrow light bulbs/flutter kick
- 5 Sitting Scull (work catch/anchor) knees up

"Build Stroke" Progression (one from each)

- 1 Fly kick on back, side, or UW
- 2 Scull progression: 8's, wipers, hips, full pull
- 3 Single-Arm Combo
- 4 3 Kicks-One Stroke or pull with flutter kick
- 5 Race pace and race breathing

Measure (stroke discipline)

- 1 Turn speed - time touch to feet (chin on water)
- 2 Timed 25 UW fly kick
- 3 UW kick rate (with Tempo Trainer)
- 4 Train with kick count and stroke count
- 5 1x100 Fly - UW 15m all walls (timed)

Skills Development for All Ages

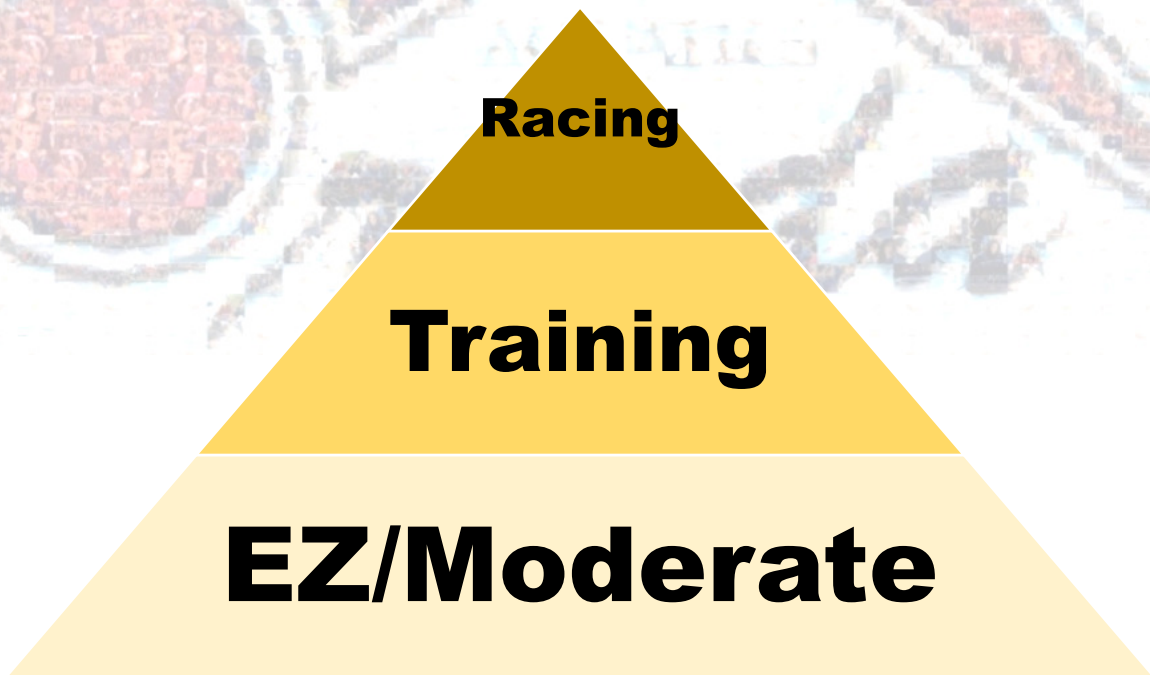
UW Kick - undulation - front stability (from core not knees)
Learn stable hand entry (NO SPASH HANDS) - see drills
Kick timing - kick out/kick in (know kick amplitude)
Legality - always two-hand touches
Learn kick counts for training and racing
Know breathing pattern for training and racing
Breath discipline - no breath on breakout or into finish
Fly to back transition IM turn (same as open turn)

Philosophy, Language, Stroke Keys, Queues

Philosophy	Progressive Learning - Drill the Drill, Build the Stroke PERFECT practice makes perfect, take PRIDE in technique, "swim for judges", penny in piggy bank (get rich!) MAINTAIN STROKE DISCIPLINE (must know and commit to)
Language	Effortless (NO struggle) swimming/work from the core out
Body	Stay low and long, channel effort FORWARD - NOT up/down Swim through the water line (as if being pulled to other end) Work/feel short axis rotation
Stroke	Relaxed low recovery, "throw hands" to end of pool, NO splash hands, "feathers NOT bricks"! "Set" in front of shoulders High elbow catch, show diamond, push through/back, fingertips down, "slice" out, round recovery
Breath	Keep head in line with spine, stay low (tennis ball in chin) "push-breath" (later)
Kick	Work power two-beat kick (kick hands in-kick hands out), have kick count for workout and race
Breathing	Know breathing pattern for 100 and 200 Fly and wall patterns. Have training breathing pattern.

Technique Evolution

You must work and focus to develop technique (balance and timing) from easy swimming to aggressive/fatigued swimming and then to racing.



Technique Evaluation

(please track and monitor for KEY drills)

Area	Poor	Fair	Good	Really good
Fly				
ANGEL WIND DRILL – light free kick				
Soft hands/NO splash				
Set outside of “kickboard”				
Pull in diamond/fingers pointed down				
Pinky exit/slice out				
RELAXED straight arm recovery/thumbs down				
Low breath				
One arm fly				
Stay on stomach (not side)				
Kick hands “out”/kick hands in/forward				
SAME recovery/entry/pull as above				
Underwater				
Rigid streamline (hide head)				
Kick from core – down AND UP - fast				
Count kicks UW				
Back				
Double-arm drill – straight up				
Face dry/strong kick				
SLOW arms – hesitate at top				
Little finger entry				
Arm wrestle pull				
One-arm back				
Side to side				
ROLL OUT (show shoulder)				
Lift hand above goggle				
ROLL IN (show opposite shoulder)				
Shoulder to chin				
Slice in – arm wrestle/or throw a ball				
BALANCE PHONE ON FOREHEAD				

Breast				
Pull flutter kick				
LOCK OUT streamline – squeeze head				
Lean into out-sweep				
Open ELEVATOR DOORS				
Round corners – “dig out”				
Breathe on IN-SWEEP				
Keep head in-line with spine				
LUNGE into a SL (shoot through tube!)				
Pull Dolphin Kick				
Same pull – work hand speed				
“Slide” hips forward on in-sweep				
Lunge (UPPER BODY) with hands				
Lock out (in SL) as you land				
Free				
Catch-up (free)				
Slow recovery				
Relaxed low hand (shake out at mid)				
Hold “train tracks” in front (see photo)				
High elbow catch in front (finger tips dn)				
Slide on side/”skate on hip”				
One Arm				
Roll out – roll in – hip leads				
“Show” each shoulder				
Breathe early, low, and quick				
Work same catch (high elbow)				
Pull downs				
Lock out (rigid)				
Power kick				
Into NARROW power pull				
Shrug shoulders				
SNEAK hands up (eyes down) and kick into a tight SL (with eyes down)				

Most Common Stroke Mistakes in Age-Group Swimming



Fly



**“crashing” in and down –
THEN sliding out**

Back



**Overreaching (behind head)
– typically sends head side
to side and pull wide**

Breast



**Never gets in a streamline
in front/breathes early and
drops elbows**

Free



**Breathes late, crosses in
front on entry and under
body (no connection)**

4. Training

Keys

Philosophy

Focus

Equipment

Dry Land

Mental



"The only person you should try to be better than, is the person you were yesterday." unknown

ASCA Thought of the Day--Gregg Troy, Ryan Lochte and USA Olympic Coach (World Clinic 2008)



The key features of the development of Ryan Lochte:

- *Moderate age- group training*
- *Gradual increase in training volume and intensity over time*
- *Focus on technique and raising skill level*
- *Very little strength training*
- *Well coached on race strategy*



Keys to Improve/Areas of Development

1) Improve technique/efficiency	It is widely accepted that the fastest way to improve performance is to improve efficiency. Technically, this would be either reducing drag or increasing propulsion. As coaches, we focus first on the fundamentals of balance, timing, body position, pull and recovery lines. From there, stroke development can be as nuanced with hand pitch, elbow position, recovery angle, breathing angle/head position, and on and on. All swimmers should be disciplined with stroke counts, kick counts (under water), and breathing patterns. The key here is to begin with (macro) fundamentals and work into specific details. Swimmers must have a daily focus and commitment to this aspect of their swimming.
2) Improve endurance/effort	Effort becomes the foundation of the athletic process. Swimmers need to train “out of their comfort zone”. The numbers that coach’s say will never lie are heart rate and repeat times. Swimmers must know how hard they are working and what that effort produces. And beyond the effort, a mature and disciplined swimmer must “lock into” all of the technical components, such as stroke, turns, underwater speed, etc. This is when effort is maximized, and technique is established.
3) Improve strength/fitness	This comes in the form of dryland (and of course physical growth and maturity). The OA dryland program, SwimStrong, is designed by world class athletes and trainers in aquatics, with a focus on mobility, flexibility, strength, and injury prevention. The Bridge program also creates a continuum of progression from Junior to Senior groups. Proper execution of each exercise is critical. At the Senior level, they will have a strength component with pull-ups, push-ups, dips, and medicine balls and TRX
4) Improve under water speed/endurance	The fastest a swimmer moves in the water is when they are coming off a wall. Most high level swimmers leverage this phase of the race. Those swimmers who undulate naturally are clearly better at generating under water speed, but it takes consistent effort and focus to effectively develop this part of a race. Remember, a 5,000-yard workout offers 200 opportunities to work on streamlining and under water speed. This <i>has to be</i> a daily priority. NOTE: Underwater speed MUST BE conditioned.
5) Improve turns	There is a natural tendency for swimmers to relax into and through the turn in an attempt to gain some recovery going into the next lap. Mature swimmers know that turns are a critical component of a race which if maximized, create a competitive advantage. The only real way to improve turn technique is through daily repetition in workout.
6) Improve race strategy	Optimizing a race strategy can often lead to better results. A slight adjustment in pace, underwater distance, breathing pattern, leg drive, or stroke rate can easily improve a 100-yard race by a half of a second, and a 200 yard race by well over a second.
7) Improve mindset	While this may be a deeper, non-swimming issue, an athlete's mindset plays a significant role not only in racing but also training. Swimmers should keep swimming (and life) in perspective and not allow anxiety or self-defeating thoughts to impair their performance and general well-being. Relaxation, visualization, and affirmations should be employed by all athletes.
8) Improve coach-swimmer relationship	This is not simply a question of general dialogue, but more an understanding and collaboration between coach and athlete on current tendencies and critical areas for development. Better dialogue can be the glue that holds all of these together. A swimmer must seek this out as the “owner” of their sport and ask for constant feedback.
9) Improve attendance	As mentioned in the introduction, attendance guarantees nothing. An athlete with poor focus, effort, and desire, will most likely drift or regress. But a swimmer committed to all of the above, with excellent attendance, typically continues to develop. There is also the academic/social balance of attending practice or not. We have seen for thirty years that swimmers <i>with</i> excellent attendance are generally better students and in most cases, more grounded socially. They develop a discipline that drives not only their schedule, and their social choices, but their expectations as well.
10) Other – nutrition, sleep, hydration, etc.	These will certainly influence training ability and performance. While they may not be the dominant components of improved performance, they <i>can</i> affect everything, <i>and</i> there is without question a cumulative affect (positive or negative) here. At a minimum, athletes should eat healthy, balanced meals, get eight hours of sleep, and drink a lot of water.

Relationship



It is critical to understand how everything is connected. Therefore, every stroke, effort, turn, etc., affects your performance *and* the team.

Too Fast, Too Young, Dr. Genadijus Sokolovas

Dr. Genadijus Sokolovas, USA Swimming's director of physiology, talks of missed windows of opportunity. He sees peak performances as a 10- to 12-year-old as a work in progress, beginning with preliminary preparation for those under the age of 10 and advancing through basic training (10-12), specialization (13-18), depending on gender and event), and peak performance somewhere around ages 18 to 20 (later for sprinters).

Patience is the key, according to Sokolovas. Rushing through any one of the stages – or skipping one altogether – might push swimmers ahead of their peers for a time, but it won't lead to the ultimate goal of peak performances at full physical maturation.

The stages Sokolovas speaks of begin with the development of fundamental skills, flexibility and general endurance, and progress gradually to higher volumes of training with increased intensity. The concept is for swimmers to hold off on the tougher workouts until they are best equipped to handle them, thereby inducing the highest training value and the most overall improvement.

Very often, Sokolovas says, young swimmers who are ahead of their peer groups are pushed forward in the developmental cycle, with intensive, high-yardage training introduced too early. By the time they are most able physically to handle the higher levels of training stress, they are on the downside of their adaptation cycle. "If they are fast when they are young with a minimum of workload, that's one thing," says Sokolovas, "but if it's because they are 10 and doing 7,000 yards a day, that's something else. In that case, it's not good to be too fast too young."

In a study he authored, Sokolovas compared the swimmers in the best all-time, top-100 times for age groups from 10-and-under through 17-18. Among the 17- and 18-year old's, only 10.3 percent of the girls and 13.2 percent of the boys were listed in any event as 10-and-unders. When compared to the lists of 11 and 12-year-olds, the percentages were 20.3 for the girls and 12.6 for the boys. Not until the 15/16 age group did the percentages become significant – 49.7 for the girls and 53.5 for the boys. As Sokolovas concluded, "Most of the future elite swimmers swim slower than age-group champions, especially at ages until 15-16 years."

"So many want to be successful right now," Sokolovas says. "They don't want to wait. They don't understand that if their bodies have already adapted at age 12 to a high volume of training and intensity, there is little room for them to go. How can they improve?"

Few within the swimming community question Sokolovas' contention that too much too early can lead to too little later on. Susan (O'Brien) Williams swam at the 1980 Olympic Trials as a 14-year-old and did a 1:05 in the 100-meter backstroke. At the Olympic Trials eight years later she did a 1:03. Within that period, she endured three years without improving her time at all.

"I did too much when I was young," she concedes. "From the time I was 12 until I was 14, I was doing nine practices a week. When I was 13, I did three practices a day over the Christmas holidays. Where could I go from there? It was not as if I could go from five practices a week to six or seven. I couldn't do any more."

"So what if you are great when you are swimming against other 10-year-olds?" she adds. "Who has the talent and desire has yet to be determined. It's better to pace yourself. You want to be great later on."

The High-Character Athlete at Workout

Rank 1-5. 1 is very little or never. 5 is near perfect or all the time. Can add a comment.

- _____ Arrives on-time/early
- _____ Arrives with a positive attitude
- _____ Welcomes teammates
- _____ Reaches out to a teammate every day
- _____ Helps set up pool
- _____ Positive in the locker room – ALWAYS
- _____ Early out of the locker room
- _____ Has proper equipment at the beginning of workout
- _____ In the pool right away
- _____ Wears team cap
- _____ Swims warm-up non-stop with focus and concentration
- _____ Leaves wall on time (on intervals)
- _____ Knows repeat times (watches the clock)
- _____ Counts all laps and repeats, AND STROKES
- _____ Doesn't stop until finished or the coach stops you
- _____ Knows each set's objectives
- _____ Swims with focus and purpose, following the set instructions
- _____ Works on technique during difficult sets
- _____ Works on turn technique and speed during sets
- _____ Works on streamline, and UW speed and distance
- _____ Works through challenging sets
- _____ Remains positive during and after challenging sets
- _____ Positive in the locker room after tough workouts (appreciates growth)
- _____ General conversation is mature, intelligent, and positive
- _____ Communicates with coach in a mature manner
- _____ Supports (all) teammates in training
- _____ Helps clean up
- _____ Has gratitude for sport, team, teammates, coaches, challenges, etc.

Energy Systems

It is critical to know the effort for every set and the purpose. General ranges are:



EZ/Moderate



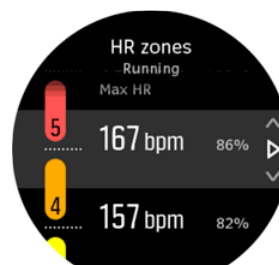
Aggressive



Speed

USA Swimming/General Energy Systems

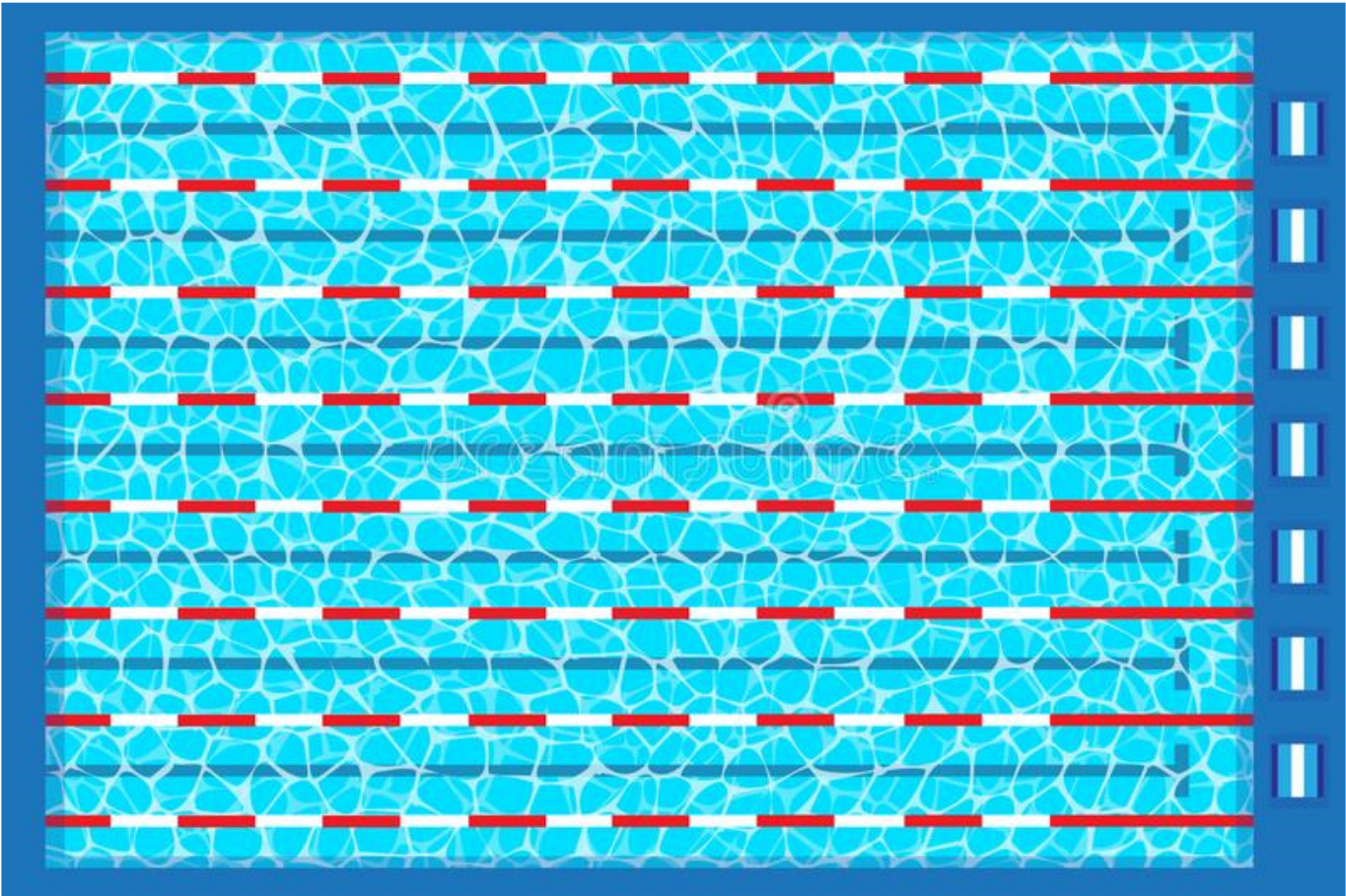
ZONE	TITLE	Set Distance (m)	Set Duration (min)	HR (% of max)	Work : Rest	Sample Set (Advanced Swimmer)
RECOVERY	EASY	Variable	Variable	< 70	N/A	600 Easy Free
EN1	MODERATE	1,000 - 4,000	≥ 15	70 - 80	20 - 30 Seconds Rest	6 x 400s Free @ 10 Seconds Rest
EN2	ENDURANCE	600 - 2,000	10 - 40	80 - 90	15 - 30 Seconds Rest	4 x 300s Free @ 15 Seconds Rest
EN3	THRESHOLD	400 - 1,600	6 - 30	90 - 100	10 - 30 Seconds Rest	4 x 150s Free @ 30 Seconds Rest
SP1	BEST AVERAGE	200 - 600	2 - 15	95 - 100	2:1 - 1:1	6 x 50s Free Race Tempo @ 45 Seconds Rest
SP2	RACE PACE	200 - 600	4 - 12	100	1:2 - 1:4	4 x 50s Free Race Pace @ 90 Seconds Rest
SP3	SPRINT	25 - 100	1 - 2	100	1:3 - 1:4	4 x 25s Free Max Speed @ 60 Seconds Rest



Orinda Aquatics – Training Abbreviations

Strokes	
Fr	Freestyle
Bk	Backstroke
Br	Breaststroke
Fly	Butterfly
IM	Individual Medley
Training	
K	Kick
S	Swim
EZ	Recovery-type swimming
DPS	Distance-per-stroke
Mod	Moderate effort (between EZ and threshold)
EN2/Thresh	Threshold effort (i.e., sustained maximum effort)
Max/FAST	Maximum effort
Mix	Mixed energy systems (i.e., changing efforts)
SC	Stroke count (per lap)
SR	Stroke rate (tempo)
KC	Kick count (primarily for fly and back)
UW	Under water
BLUW	Black lines under water
PD	Pull down
BP	Breathing pattern, i.e., every 3rd
Build	Build effort through a swim, round, or set
@	Interval
Roll	Roll through sets or rounds without a break
TEST	Test set or tracking set
Equipment	
Pads	Paddles
SN	Snorkel
TT	Tempo trainer
KB	Kick board
PARA	Parachute
RI	Rest interval (in between repeats)
GMX	GMX Training Devices
WB	Weight Belt
AW	Ankle Weight
TM	Turn Master

Underwater Focus



	Rock star status!	GOAL is ½ WAY <u>ALL</u> WALLS	Getting better	Won't help you develop
--	-------------------	--------------------------------	----------------	------------------------

Mark where your average underwater breakout/distance is for fly, back, and pull downs and try to move it to the middle.

Dry Land



2-3 times/week (in normal sched.)

- **SwimStrong**

- Core work, mobility, flexibility, coordination, injury prevention
- Junior 1, 2, 3 run separately - athlete led

- **Circuits (from Matt's dryland material)**

- **Other – run, jump rope, strength, videos**

- ✓ Wear proper clothing
- ✓ Be quiet and focused
- ✓ Do the exercises correctly – always emphasize proper technique



Academics

- ✓ **You are a STUDENT-ATHLETE**
- ✓ **Athlete “leaders” and role models are outstanding students**
- ✓ **You MUST understand the importance of academics for high school, college admissions, AND college recruiting**



Keys

- ✓ **Value and appreciate academics**
- ✓ **Link academics to athletics, i.e., be a “student-athlete”**
- ✓ **Develop very strict time-management skills and practices**
- ✓ **Be willing to make sacrifices on a regular basis**
- ✓ **Be mature about social media and screen time, video games, etc. These will NOT support your swimming, your academics, or your growth as a person and as a leader**

Equipment Summary



Item	Junior 1	Junior 2	Junior 3
Wet bag	Provided	Provided	Provided
Fins	Required	Required	Required
Kickboard	Required	Required	Required
Paddles	Required	Required	Required
Pull Buoy	Required	Required	Required
Snorkel	Required	Required	Required
Parachute	NA	Required	Required
Tempo Trainer	NA	Check with Matt	Required



Mental Training



Mental Training



Restoic Mental Training

In an effort to support our swimmers from a mental wellness and performance standpoint, Orinda Aquatics is excited to partner with a proven and trusted resource in [Restoic](#).

- Developed in collaboration with leading sport psychologists and Olympic level athletes, Restoic's mental training app is being used by programs across the country to empower their swimmers to increase confidence, decrease anxiety, and optimize performance through your mobile device.
- Additionally, the OA staff will be able to direct the groups through various exercises, such as goal setting or self-talk.
- We feel that this adds another level to help build foundational balance for our athletes.
- We encourage every swimmer to take full advantage of this invaluable resource

We MUST understand it

Think about it as the steering wheel of a car (even though you may not drive yet, you get the point). No matter how nice or fast your car is, how often you wash it or change the oil, you don't want to steer it off the road, OR into a tree! Mental training can be summarized into the following:



RELAXATION



Self-Talk (Affirmations)



Visualization



Reverse negativity

Relaxation

1. Inhale SLOWLY through the nose – 8 counts (deep)
 2. Hold 4 counts
 3. Exhale SLOWLY through the mouth – 8 counts
- Note: as you exhale, say the word “relax” (to yourself), and/or focus on different muscle groups lightening or relaxing
 - Do this often (deliberate practice) so you get proficient at getting into a relaxed state quickly
 - We've talked about cleaning a messy chalkboard (the mind - calm with clarity or frenetic with scribble)

Affirmations (self-talk)

- Create a list of affirmations for various parts of your athletic career and your life
- Affirmations “affirm” what you want and **who you are**.
- Frame them in the present tense and in the positive. Example: “My turns are legal and fast”, NOT, “I try not to get DQ’d and lose the turns.” “I am a great teammate.”
- Connect to sincere emotion – feeling - being

Swimming affirmations should include:

- Motivation
- Training habits
- Technical habits
- Meet practice (habits)
- Racing

Life Affirmations should include:

- Prompt - on time (never late)
- Uncommon professional (do everything right)
- Always positive/NOOOO complaints
- Character-drive (do the right thing)
- Care for/support (all) others

Imagery (visualization)

- Create visualizations (short movies) for various aspects of swimming and life
- Be as vivid and clear and possible (use senses)
- Link emotions (positive and successful)
- Examples: EZ swimming with perfect technique, cheering, winning walls/underwater

Reverse negativity (see complaining earlier)

- Come up with two to three areas where you tend to be negative, self-defeating, or struggle regularly. Create affirmations that reposition those as a positive (“I am...”) and create short movies of you acting in the reverse (positive) and even as a leader.
- When those situations arise, use triggers to engage your affirmations and visualizations
- Trigger: “let’s go”, “rise above”, “be a leader”, “every detail”

Deliberate Practice

Can you focus on these and commit to improve each?

Area	Focus/Objective	Status
Freestyle stroke count – EZ swimming	Goal of 10-12	
Freestyle stroke count – aggressive swimming	Goal of 12-14	
Fly/Back kicks under water (all walls)	Goal 1: 4-5, Goal 2: halfway (use black lines) – Measure by month	
Turn Legality	All legal turns	
Breaststroke pull downs	Try for half swimming EZ And 3.5 to 4 black lines in races	
Breaststroke stroke counts – EZ swimming	Try for 3- 5 strokes EZ swimming	
Breathing pattern in free	Breathe every third at EZ to moderate speeds	
25 underwater fly kick time (know this)	VERY important	
100 free kick time	Get this time as fast as possible	
100 stroke kick time	Get this time a fast as possible	

ALL STROKE DEVELOPMENT



Make a commitment to developing ALL four strokes

- ✓ **Know drills (execute)**
 - ✓ **Focus on all strokes in warm-up**
 - ✓ **Work secondary or off strokes in set "options"**
 - ✓ **Work underwater in all/off stroke**
 - ✓ **Swim the IM (200 or 400) in every meet**
 - ✓ **Make a commitment to your off stroke this year**
 - ✓ **Track you IMX (total point) score**
-

Team Activities



Team breakfast



Rafting - summer



Team “building” - September



Big Buddy Program

Buddies - September



Holiday Party – December

5.Competition

- ✓ **Overview**
- ✓ **Practices**
- ✓ **Times**
- ✓ **Attitude**
- ✓ **Goal Setting**



General Meet Philosophy

- ✓ **Enter all meets**
- ✓ **Swim all strokes/all events (not at each meet)**
- ✓ **Swim 400 IM and Distance free (often)**
- ✓ **Evaluate races by quality and technique and NOT on time**
- ✓ **Be disciplined about protocol (see sheet) – on time, attire, etc.**
- ✓ **Be a good, no, great teammate**
- ✓ **Get to know and support all (especially newer) swimmers**
- ✓ **Communicate with coaches – catch up on everything**
- ✓ **Keep the team area clean**
- ✓ **Help with take-down (if at home)**



Remember 12&Under (no tech suit) rule

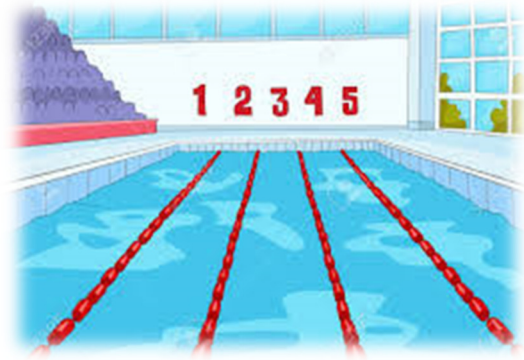
Meet “Cycle” Overview



- There are generally three cycles in a season, averaging four months each (with the month of August typically off)
- Swimmers will peak (rest and shave) for each with variations based on qualifying times*
- Each cycle will have 3-5 meets preceding the peak meet
- The third cycle will lead into the long course season
- Swimmers may shave at intermediate meets to achieve qualifying times
- Non-peak meets should be used as growth and learning experiences, rather than “ends” in and of themselves, analogous to a quiz in school as opposed to a final exam.

-
- ✓ **Cycle 1: Fall/Winter – Peak December JO’s***
 - ✓ **Cycle 2: Winter/Spring – JO’s/Far Westerns***
 - ✓ **Cycle 3: Spring/Summer (Long Course) – JO’s/Far Westerns* (a break in August)**

Race Checklist



	Area	Rate 1-10	Note	Do (to be better)
1	Check in to meet/Get H&L			
2	Mental approach (positive/focused) – above the weather			
3	Check in with coach (2-way dialogue)			
4	Pre-race routine (WU, stretch, music, visualize, affirm)			
5	Race understanding			
6	Acknowledge/thank competitors			
7	Thank timers and officials after race			
8	Warm-down (500-1,000) non-stop			
9	Check in with coach			
10	Constructive review of race (NO negativity - EVER)			
Bonus	Cheer for others swimming before and after			

Total Score: *(Goal is 100!)*

Race Planning/Strategy

RACE STRATEGY - OVERVIEW

- HOW TO ALLOCATE EFFORT/ENERGY?
 - MUCH BETTER TO "BUILD" RACES
- MUST KNOW –
 - UW SPEED/DISTANCE
 - STROKE RATES
 - BREATHING PATTERN
 - LEG DRIVE
 - WALL SPEED



EXAMPLE (GOOD & BAD RACE)

SAME SWIMMER

100 Fly	BAAAAAAD
Lap 1 – UW 15m	
Held breath	
Hurried stroke	
Over kicked	
Dead at 50	Breathing every stroke

SPLITS – 13, 16, 17.5, 19 = 1:05.5

100 Fly	Good
6KUW – ALL Walls	
Brth 1/1	
Lighter legs early	Max kick on last lap
Stayed controlled early	Built into LAST wall
Held brth into finish	

SPLITS – 15, 16.5, 16.5, 16.0 = 1:03.5

The use of any form of stimulants (or caffeine) is strictly prohibited

A Partial List of Things That REALLY Affect a Race

Area	Time affect
Start position	?
Start reaction	?
Start exit line/head position	?
Start entry (angle/position)	?
Streamline position/rigidity	?
Speed under water	?
Timed breakout (at race speed)	?
Body position at breakout	?
Initial race tempo	?
Initial pace	?
Breathing pattern	?
Breathing technique/timing (times the number of breaths)	?
Kick/leg drive – efficiency	?
Kick/leg drive pace	?
Critical technical focus – 1 (times stroke count)	?
Critical technical focus – 2 (times stroke count)	?
General stroke efficiency (DPS)	?
Acceleration into turn (times turns count)	?
Stroke entry into turn (times turn count)	?
Turn speed (times turn count)	?
Turn exit/power (times turn count)	?
Streamline/speed (times turn cont)	?
Breakout (time turn count)	?
When to build into finish	?
Breathing into finish	?
Stroke cycles into finish	?
Race legality – ALL (start, turns, stroke, finish)	?
Proper warm-up (best for racing)	?
Resting (off legs) during meet	?
Proper hydration	?
Proper nutrition	?
Proper sleep	?
Warm-down from previous race	?
Pre-race prep (in water)	?
Pre-race prep (mental)	?
Understanding race strategy	?
General attitude	?
Mental resilience at end of race	?
Physical resilience at end of race	?
Prior (six months to one year) attendance	?
Prior effort (daily)	?
Prior focus - technique	?
Prior attitude	?
Prior support/team commitment	?

Your Race



Let's create YOUR perfect face for 100 and 200 yards of your primary stroke. We will break it down into four parts (25's for 100 and 50's for a 200)

Part one: understanding

Area	First 25/50	Second 25/50	Third 25/50	Fourth 25/50
General effort %				
UW (kick count)				
Breathing Patten				
Stroke Rate (mod/aggr/max)				
Leg Drive (mod/aggr/max)				
Other				

Part two: mental creation

- ✓ Visual each part (clear and vivid – as if real)
- ✓ Affirm each part (in present tense – repeat often)

Part three: training your way to that race

Underwater focus

Unshaven pace focus (must know repeat times)

How and when to “build”

Racing through walls

Forget Setting Goals. Focus on This Instead.

BY [James Clear](#) | December 17, 2013 |

We all have things that we want to achieve in our lives -- getting into the better shape, building a successful business, raising a wonderful family, writing a best-selling book, winning a championship, and so on. And for most of us, the path to those things starts by setting a specific and actionable goal. At least, this is how I approached my life until recently. I would set goals for classes I took, for weights that I wanted to lift in the gym, and for clients I wanted in my business. What I'm starting to realize, however, is that when it comes to actually getting things done and making progress in the areas that are important to you, **there is a much better way to do things.** It all comes down to the difference between **goals and systems.** Let me explain. What's the difference between goals and systems?

- **If you're a swimmer, your goal is a time. Your system is what your team does at practice each day.**
- **If you're a writer, your goal is to write a book. Your system is the writing schedule that you follow each week.**
- **If you're a runner, your goal is to run a marathon. Your system is your training schedule for the month.**

Now for the really interesting question: ***If you completely ignored your goals and focused only on your system, would you still get results?*** For example, if you were a basketball coach and you ignored your goal to win a championship and focused only on what your team does at practice each day, would you still get results? I think you would. Let's talk about three more reasons why you should focus on systems instead of goals.

1. Goals reduce your current happiness.

When you're working toward a goal, you are essentially saying, "I'm not good enough yet, but I will be when I reach my goal." The problem with this mindset is that you're teaching yourself **to always put happiness and success off until the next milestone is achieved. "Once I reach my goal, then I'll be happy. Once I achieve my goal, then I'll be successful."**

SOLUTION: Commit to a process, not a goal.

Choosing a goal puts a huge burden on your shoulders. Can you imagine if I had made it my goal to write two books this year? Just writing that sentence stresses me out. But we do this to ourselves all the time. **We place unnecessary stress on ourselves. Instead, you can focus on the daily process and sticking to your schedule, rather than worrying about the big, life-changing goals.** When you focus on the practice instead of the performance, you can enjoy the present moment and improve at the same time.

2. Goals are strangely at odds with long-term progress.

You might think your goal will keep you motivated over the long-term, but that's not always true. Consider someone training for a half-marathon. Many people will work hard for months, but as soon as they finish the race, they stop training. Their goal was to finish the half-marathon and now that they have completed it, that goal is no longer there to motivate them. When all of your hard work is focused on a particular goal, what is left to push you forward after you achieve it? This can create a type of "yo-yo effect" where people go back and forth from working on a goal to not working on one. This type of cycle makes it difficult to build upon your progress for the long-term. **SOLUTION: Release the need for immediate results.**

3. Goals suggest that you can control things that you have no control over.

You can't predict the future. (I know, shocking.) But every time we set a goal, we try to do it. We try to plan out where we will be and when we will make it there. We try to predict how quickly we can make progress, even though we have no idea what circumstances or situations will arise along the way.

SOLUTION: Build feedback loops.

Feedback loops are important for building good systems because they allow you to keep track of many different pieces without feeling the pressure to predict what is going to happen with everything.

Forget about predicting the future and build a system that can signal when you need to make adjustments.

Fall In Love with Systems - None of this is to say that goals are useless. However, I've found that goals are good for *planning* your progress and systems are good for actually *making* progress. In fact, I think I'm going to officially declare 2014 the "Year of the Sloth" so that everyone will be forced to slow down and make consistent, methodical progress rather than chasing goals for a few weeks and then flaming out. Goals can provide direction and even push you forward in the short-term, but eventually a well-designed system will always win. Having a system is what matters. Committing to the process is what makes the difference.

What is your swimming process now? (a few suggestions)

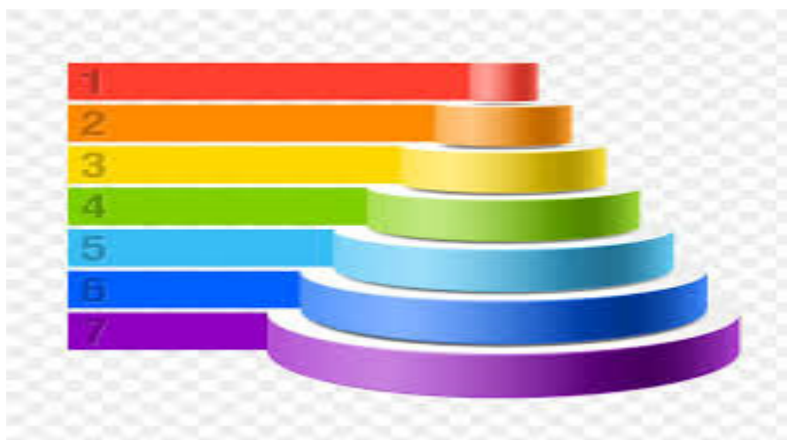
- ✓ Do everything exactly right. Become obsessed with counting repeats, executing drills, etc.
- ✓ Work every wall – EVERY wall. Make it a mission, no lazy, illegal, or poor technique turns OR streamlines.
- ✓ Act everyday as if you were the leader of this team, as if the success and “character” of the team was solely up to you
- ✓ Train like a warrior. Push limits. Inspire and motive others. “If it doesn’t challenge you, it doesn’t change you.”
- ✓ Touch one person with compassion, empathy, and support – EVERY day. Care more. Be a great teammate.

Can this be what consumes you? Your process?

Goal Hierarchy

(again, process-driven)

- **Life – happy/healthy**
- **Value System – good decisions**
- **Good Person – maturity/personal growth**
- **Great Teammate/Great Student**
- **Great Athlete - attendance, focus, effort,**
- **Great Swimmer – mastering stroke details
workout objectives repeats, UW, legality, stroke
counts, etc.**
- **Good race – in ALL phases**
- ***Honest evaluation of goals in relation to
effort/dedication***
- **Times – the last and only “goal” that is not
completely within your control**



“Growth”



NOTE: **age-group** swimmers will improve because of **physical growth**. Do **NOT** let this mask your awareness of whether or not you are **improving as “swimmer”** –

- ✓ **Improved efficiency**
- ✓ **Turn speed/underwater endurance**
- ✓ **Race strategy, etc.**

IMR/IMX PROGRAM

IM Xtreme is a program that allows USA Swimming members to track their times (or coaches to track their team's times) against swimmers across the nation! Just by swimming a specific program of events, you can see where you rank against your teammates, your region and yes, even across the USA!

NOT QUITE IMX READY? TRY THE IMREADY CHALLENGE!

IM Ready is the little brother of IM Xtreme, tailored toward our younger swimmers. Does 200 yards seem a little much? Then start getting "IM Ready" by swimming shorter distances and keeping track of your improvements.

Important Note About IMR and IMX Scores

An IMR or IMX score is only established after a swimmer has swum all of the events required for their age group in a sanctioned meet since the start of the current season; both short and long course seasons start September 1 and end August 31 for IMR/IMX purposes. Additionally, a swimmer must complete all the events in the same course (SCY or LCM) to have a score in that particular course.

IM READY (IMR)

The first step in the IMX Challenge is IM Ready (or IMR). To get "IM Ready," swimmers compete in a IM Ready Logo series of five events at shorter distances. Below, we have listed the line-up by age groups.

9 & Under; 10-year old's: 100 Free, 50 Back, 50 Breast, 50 Fly, 100 IM (SC) or 200 IM (LC)
11-year old's; 12-year old's: 200 Free, 50 Back, 50 Breast, 50 Fly, 100 IM (SC) or 200 IM (LC)
13, 14, 15, 16, 17, & 18-year old's: 200 Free, 100 Back, 100 Breast, 100 Fly, 200 IM

Once you've swum each event at least once at an official meet, you can log-in to your Deck Pass Account, and find out where you rank against all the other swimmers on your club team. You do not need to complete the IM Ready program to participate in the IM Xtreme. It is simply a stepping stone.

IM XTREME (IMX)

Ready to move forward? The next step is IM Xtreme (IMX). The IMX ranking includes a series of five IMX Main Logo black background cropped or six events at longer distances. Once you've completed the IMX program, you can find out where your IMX score ranks nationally, within your zone, within your LSC rank and on your club.

9 & Under; 10-year old's: 200 Free, 100 Back, 100 Breast, 100 Fly, 200 IM
11-year old's; 12-year old's: 400 Free (LC) or 500 Free (SC), 100 Back, 100 Breast, 100 Fly, 200 IM
13, 14, 15, 16, 17, & 18-year old's: 400 Free (LC) or 500 Free (SC), 200 Back, 200 Breast, 200 Fly, 200 IM, 400 IM

How do I score points?

Rankings in the program are based on power points a system developed by USA Swimming. See the Power Points page for more information and to use the Power Point Calculator.

How do I participate?

Participation in the IMR and IMX is easy. USA Swimming automatically scores and calculates results for all athlete members! Swimmers only need to sign up for a Deck Pass Account, then compete in each required event, at a sanctioned meet, at least once in a season.

Swimmers have the option of printing certificates that displays their scores for either IMR or IMX. They can also optionally print their national, zone, LSC and/or club rankings for IMX.

PacSwim Camps



13-14-YEAR-OLD LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CAMP

This camp is for athletes interested in becoming the voice of their sport. The focus will be on developing leadership skills, preparing athletes to engage in club and zone level governance and educating athletes about LSC governance. The voice of the athlete, both as a leader and stakeholder, will be the primary emphasis, encouraging engagement, community action and involvement in various levels of governance. **Camp participants must be 13-14 years of age at the time of the camp and be in 8th or higher grade.**

OLYMPIC TRAINING CENTER DISTANCE CAMP

This year the OTC (Olympic Training Center) camp will be in Colorado Springs, CO. *In order to be considered, athletes must be between 13-18 years old on the first day of the camp. Pacific Swimming will select 24 athletes (12 female/12 male) to attend the camp. Athletes will be selected based on the following criteria, in the following order:*

- 1st Priority: Top 2 Applicants (Male and Female) in the 1500m/1650y Free based on USA Swimming Power Points
- 2nd Priority: Top 2 Applicants (Male and Female) in the 800m/1000y Free based on USA Swimming Power Points
- 3rd Priority: Top 2 Applicants (Male and Female) in the 400m/500y Free based on USA Swimming Power Points
- 4th Priority: Remaining Top 6 Applicants (Male and Female) based on USA Swimming IMX Scores
- 5th Priority: If the 12 roster spots (Male and Female) are not filled based on the above, the remaining spots will be filled by the applicant(s) with the highest USA Swimming Power Point scores in any of the following events: 1500m/1650y Free, 800m/1000y Free, 400m/500y Free, 400 IM, 200 Back, 200 Breast, 200 Fly

10 & UNDER SWIM CAMP

The annual Adam Szmidt Memorial 10 & Under Swim Camp is traditionally held in the Spring. Applications are accepted at the 10 and Under Short Course Championship. Athletes must be ten years old or younger on the day of the camp and must have competed in that year's 10 and Under Short

Course Championship Meet. The athlete must have competed in at least one individual event at the 10 and Under Short Course Championship to qualify for this camp.

ALL-STARS



Every year Pacific Swimming puts together teams for All-Star meets. Each team has varying levels of requirements and restrictions for eligibility. More complete information regarding each of these meets, including applications, will be posted when it is available.

Pacific Coast All-Star Meet

Each January, Pacific Swimming takes up to 32 swimmers to the Pacific Coast All-Star Meet to compete against teams from Oregon, Pacific Northwest, and Southern California. To be eligible, a swimmer must be between the ages of 11-14 and a current member of Pacific Swimming.

Pacific Swimming Zone Challenge

Each March, all five zones (1N, 1S, 2, 3, 4) select up to 64 swimmers, ages 14 & under, to compete in the PC Zone Challenge Meet. To be eligible to participate in this meet a swimmer cannot have competed in either Western Zones, North American Challenge Cup, or Pacific Coast All-Stars. Applications are due in January. Please contact your Zone for more information.

Western Zone All-Star Meet

Pacific Swimming takes up to 72 swimmers to the Western Zone All-Star Meet to compete against teams from Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Generally held in early August, Pacific Swimming athletes ages 14 & under who have met the meet [time standards](#), and have not competed in an individual event at Junior or Senior Nationals, are eligible to apply.

Team Attire Summary

NOTE: Arena Store at Conejo Website

Item	Junior 1	Junior 2	Junior 3
t-shirts (2)	Provided	Provided	Provided
Jacket	Required	Required	Required
Pants	Required	Required	Required
Sweatshirt	Required	Required	Required
Backpack	Required	Required	Required
Parka	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended

Photos
coming

Look for updated **Time Standards on the PacSwim website (pacs swim.org) under Times. They can be used as a guide.**

- ✓ **USA Swimming National Age-Group Times**
- ✓ **JO's**
- ✓ **Far Westerns**
- ✓ **Senior Swimming**



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Schedules (on the website)

- **Workout**
- **Meet**
- **Activities (emailed)**





WHO'S AWESOME?

You're awesome.



Let's do this!



New Swimmer Information

Name:	
Age, grade, school	
Previous team (s), years	
What brought you to Orinda Aquatics?	
What do you like about swimming?	
Biggest struggle, challenge, or frustration	
Favorite swimming experience?	
Do you compete in any other sports?	
Fly time: 50 and 100	
Fly focus	
Back time: 50 and 100	
Back focus	
Breast time: 50 and 100	
Breast focus	
Free time 50 and 100	
Free focus	
IM time 100/200	
Best stroke?	
Worst stroke?	
Favorite sets?	
Any injuries or pains?	
What can we help you with?	

**Can you write briefly about yourself, to help us know you a little better?
(anything is fine) - can include family, interests, likes/dislikes, personality
type, academics, goals, etc.**