

PIEDMONT SWIM TEAM
MONTHLY COACHES NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2024

THE FLIPTURN

by Coach Rob , this Months' Editor-in-Chief

Swim practice is for pushing limits so that you can exceed them on race day

What's the point of swim practice?

This sentiment is a common one, especially on days when we're tired, don't love the main set, or feel like we are a million chlorinated miles away from our goals in the pool.

But each day you hit the pool, the goal is to push limits so that you can exceed them on race day. Because in the water, each day, for better or worse, you are building a performance.

At the 2012 London Olympics, Katie Ledecky was battling with Team Great Britain's world record holder, Rebecca Adlington, in the 800m freestyle.

The 15-year-old upstart Ledecky versus the heavily favored hometown Adlington.

At the 600m mark, Ledecky turned, just 200m separating her from gold.

A year after London, she recalled what went through her mind as she flipped at the turn:

"I have 200 left. I've done plenty of 200s in my life. Just treat it like that. Get to the wall. That was my motivation."

And this is the real magic of swim practice.

Of doing those challenging threshold sets, of pushing yourself to the limit in training regularly (and sometimes, it feels like, beyond).

To make the extraordinary normal, so that you can perform with consistency and confidence on race day.

Reprinted from "Swim Coaches Idea Exchange"

"It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are"

- by EE Cummings

Birthdays (March & April)

A Bennett	S Bill	O Blandford	L Bowman
E Braun	E Byun	O Cassidy	P Chang
A Chiriliuc	Q Cook	T Decanay	E Fletcher
C Garrigues	L Gerard	A Goodman	T Harrison
E Hatch	G Jiang	I Jones	B Kennedy
Marco Kan	Matthew Kan	Z Kondracki	H Leonard
I Liang	AL Geltmeyer	A Lunde	J Oesterer
E Medhaker	S Olsen	E Pfister	N Porter
B Presley	D Radzik	V Sohn	J Souza
N Whittle	A Williams	A Wolff	C Zhang



Zach's Attack

By **Coach Zach**

This month I wanted to let everyone know we see how well you all have been doing! Speaking with the other coaches I hear many compliments to the commitment and progress all of you have made. As we approach the end of the school year and the weather starts to warm up, I would like to keep our momentum going. The first and most important thing all of you need to focus on right now is finishing the school year strong, then we can have a great summer! As we all know summer is a great, if not the best, time for swimming.

As a team we have had some impressive races recently and we have some exciting meets coming up, including long course meets. Personally, I've always liked the summer long course season. The weather is nice and the meets tend to be more social. Competing in long course meets can even help you during the short course season. During a long course race you test your endurance, less walls, less underwaters, and more swimming. Right now is the time to start thinking about how your endurance affects your races and if that is a skill you need to improve. If you find yourself feeling extra winded at the end of a race, consider how that may affect a short course race as well. We don't have a lot of opportunities this year to compete in a 50-meter pool so take advantage and have fun! I look forward to watching everyone compete soon.

"Development is an endurance exercise with incremental improvements."

- by Sri Mulyani Indrawati

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THIS MONTH'S TOP STORIES

Blue Group

By **Coach Adrien**

Summer is just around the corner. We have several more chances to race this season, but I encourage you all to keep July 5th through 7th available for your swimmer to participate in our RESL meet. That will be a highlight of the whole season, where your swimmer can showcase their improvement and experience a more fun, intense team environment.

Since our last newsletter, we've had too many great practice and meet performances to celebrate here in detail. However, I'd like to catch up on the evolution of the group over the last few months. We've been slowly formalizing the practice environment for a long time. Building on our standards from the fall for things like listening, sharing, and taking care of



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our practice space, I'm giving them more responsibility and autonomy. I want to ratchet up engagement and performance without relying on punishment. We started with free ball game time at ECCL for early swimmers to incentivize coming a little earlier. Some days, we have rounds of 'cap races' to see who can get ready the fastest—it pays off when you're running late and need to get your cap on in a few seconds! Swimmers are attaching their own name tags to our lane board when they walk in. They're playing and socializing more before practice, but also getting better at flipping the switch into a ready state. They know when 'The Final Countdown' starts playing, well...that doesn't even need an explanation!

I want to keep the mood light—we're not training for the Olympics (yet)—but increase their capacity to be detail-oriented around the sport. The tone we're setting at the beginning of each day is one of fun and focus, and it's carrying over into their poise and enthusiasm in the water. They're getting better at keeping themselves and their lanemates accountable for leaving on time, knowing the set, and so forth. After most sets, a coach announces the set honors for the most exceptional, focused, or improved swimmer, and they get to wipe off the set from our whiteboard. It's not winning an Oscar, but it's peer recognition that brings visibility to great effort. If you're in lane 1 at ECCL, it's tough to know what's happening in lane 6, but we're all one team. Finally, the improved cohesion has made it possible for us to do some more challenging speed and endurance sets, as well as further refining some core skills through consistent daily exposure in the warm up.

In terms of autonomy, I'm giving Blue swimmers more and more constrained choices, where they need to think creatively and collaboratively to accomplish a goal. Some fun ones we did in the past couple of weeks were social kicking races, three abreast, where each pod had to kick butterfly without leaving anyone behind—and only one person could breathe at a time. The non-verbal communication strategies and trust that developed out of that was empowering and really cool to see, and they had fun doing it. This week, I had them write their first workout. I gave them four variables: repetitions, distance, stroke, and equipment (I selected time intervals for them based on the group's capability). Each variable had four states (2, 4, 6, 8; 25, 50, 100, 200; IM order or butterfly, freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke; swim, kick, pull, or swim with fins). Each variable state had to be used exactly once. Here was the winning workout:

8x25 @ 1:00 IM order swim with fins

6x50 @ 2:30 Backstroke pull

4x100 @ 4:00 Freestyle kick

2x200 @ 8:00 Breaststroke swim

Each lane had time to draft and discuss their proposal before presenting it to the group, and everyone had a voice and veto power. Coach Colby and I selected the most suitable workout that day, but we kept the other ones, because all three were very good, productive practice plans. That whole day, the level of buy-in and pride was off the charts.

On the technical side, I see overall improvement with stagnation on some fronts. We're rehearsing how to avoid DQs for unplanned events (e.g., hitting a lane rope, losing goggles on a dive, missing a wall on a turn.) and refining our command of stroke mechanics. We're



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kicking faster, longer, with better technique than we were a few months ago. However, since we came back from break in January, technical instruction for forward dives (i.e. every stroke except backstroke) took a back seat due to air temperature. We need to devote more time to that now that it's getting warmer. That is a great way to drop a lot of time in short races, avoid unnecessary DQs, and build confidence.



Bronze Group

By **Coach Zoe**

Since January, we have been working on different aspects of stroke technique combined with a little speed work. We broke down each stroke and learned about the key pieces: head position, balance, catch, kick, timing, and the fastest position. Test your memory with this pop quiz:

1. What's one simple way you can change your freestyle catch to prevent crossover?
2. What's the fastest position in breaststroke?
3. In butterfly, when do you start the press into your y-position?
4. Where is your balance point when swimming? In breaststroke and butterfly, you extend both arms simultaneously to tip the seesaw balance forward. In freestyle and backstroke, you still need to tip your balance forward but with only one arm at a time. How do you find your balance on your side? (Hint: there are 3 key pieces and we practice them during kick on side)

(Answers will be provided in the FlipTurn binder at practice)

As we move into our next section of training we are going to continue swimming with smooth precision and balance, but our focus will shift towards a new goal: **going farther and getting tired**. Getting tired?! That sounds hard!!! Here's the thing, it is hard. In fact, it is one of the most challenging things you can achieve as an athlete. Getting to a point where your legs are burning, you're breathing heavy, your body is sore all over, and you STILL keep going is HARD. To do this takes grit, mental toughness, and a willingness to stay in discomfort. But, if you can stay in the discomfort, if you can push through it, you will achieve a feeling called flow. Flow state is also known as being "in the zone". Every championship-level athlete trains and competes "in the zone". This is your opportunity to push your limits and see what you are capable of achieving. When you have electric focus, you move into the sensation of speed instead of thinking about every step, and you are challenged by the set- you will feel like the world disappears and it's just you and the pool and a drive to go, go, go! This feeling is your ultimate goal. This month - you will be challenged, you will be tired, and you will keep going. The more you desire the "getting tired" feeling, the stronger you become both mentally and physically. The stronger you



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become, the faster you will go. Push your limits this month, remind yourself that you are capable of doing hard things, and take every opportunity to challenge yourself.

“That wall is your mind playing tricks on you. You just need to say ‘One more step, I can do this. I have more in me.’ You’ll be so proud of yourself once you push yourself past your threshold. ”

- Kerry Walsh (the most decorated beach volleyball Olympian of all time)



Silver Group

By **Coach Colby**

What an exciting and busy couple of months. We had two swimmers compete at Age Group Championships, a very rainy meet in Fremont and a Far Westerns finalist.

In March Ben Rebro and Max Schultz participated in Age Group champs. On Friday there was a lot of confusion about heat and lanes as the meet was running very fast but the boys buckled down and finished the day strong. Max finished his 50 free with a small add to his personal best but finished 13th overall Ben was able to drop 2 seconds and finished second overall. Saturday was very exciting with both making finals again and the meet running at a more proper pace. Max ended up dropping 3 seconds in the 50 breast and finished ninth overall and Ben ended up dropping nine seconds in the 100 fly getting him into fifth place overall.

At the end of March we competed in a very rainy meet in Fremont. It was the first time I had ever been to this pool and was excited to compete even with the weather. Saoirse Boyle got to get back to her first full meet after rupturing her eardrum. After taking some time to figure out how to swim with earplugs she came back to the meet with huge successes. She dropped 10 seconds in the 200 IM, 27 seconds in the 100 free and 7.5 seconds in the 100 back finishing in fifth place overall.

Sava Weisfeiler had a big breakout meet in Fremont. After five months of training with silver he was able to continue to drop time like he had while with bronze. He dropped 2.2 in his 50 breast, 10.7 seconds in the 100 free, and 15.4 seconds in the 200 free finishing in third overall.

David Maltz also really impressed at the Fremont meet. His event selection for the weekend was tough but he completed everything with no DQs and a ton of new personal bests. He dropped time in 5/7 events and finished Sunday by swimming the 500 free dropping 63 seconds off his personal best.



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Congrats to all that survived the Fremont meet.

Far westerns was another championship meet at the beginning of April. Ben Rebro was one of three representatives of PST at the very fast Far western championship meet after a rough warm up on Thursday Ben competed in the 100 fly, finished as first alternate and was quickly done for the afternoon but not the day. He ended up coming back to the meet in the afternoon in case he was needed as first alternate unfortunately he did not get a second swim on Thursday but did on Sunday. After another overly compacted warm up Ben swam the 100 IM finishing in 44th well out of finals but his 50 fly was what he was clearly most excited for finishing prelims 15th overall and earning a spot in consolation finals. He only dropped .4 after the long weekend but that was enough to move him up to eleventh overall.

I am so excited for the warmer months, long course meter meets and all the fun sets we are going to swim along the way. Hope you are excited too!

“Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do.”

- by Pele



Gold Group

By **Coach Rob**

As we head into the Long Course season, I am really looking forward to seeing the results of all your hard work. We started off back in March focusing on two things: Technique and Threshold Training. The importance of technique cannot be overstated! The goal is to swim the most efficient strokes as possible. Combine that with steadily increasing our training distances, brought you all to the point where a 5000 to 6000 yard practice was the norm. It is one thing to do that much distance, but we must do it with the best possible technique!

As we slid into April (lots of rain!), we began to focus our efforts on not only swimming well, but swimming FAST with perfect technique. The first sign that things were working was at the CDST meet in Fremont. We started to see more and more speed from everyone. But the most important part was that we were doing it with much better technique and focus! I am really looking forward to the first Long Course meet of the season this weekend in Vallejo!

Lastly, a great little article on training from the Swim Coaches Idea Exchange:

Success in the water requires showing up.

Seems super obvious, but getting your feet across the tiled pool deck and into the water is crucial for building the reps to achieve your goals in the water.

There will be days where getting your butt in the water will feel harder than the main set.



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For the days when the dips in motivation feel stronger than an ocean current, rely on a schedule by using implementation intentions.

Implementation intentions are a planning tool that link existing behaviors with a goal response.

[Thing I am already doing] + [Thing I aspire to do] = Yippee!

Here are some examples:

Each morning when I wake up, I will drink a glass of water and foam roll for ten minutes.

Each day after practice, I will spend 15 minutes stretching and doing bonus core training.

Each Monday and Wednesday, when I get off school, I will put on my dryland gear and head to the gym.

Each time I push off the wall in practice, I will do five dolphin kicks.

Each time the main set starts, I will focus on doing the first repetition to the best of my ability.

You can see the potential with this type of planning!

Implementation intentions have a unique way of normalizing behaviors you want to instill and that will help pave the path towards accomplishing your goals in the water.

Try a couple of them in the early days of the goal setting process to get your feet wet and progress to more challenging intentions.

“It always seems impossible until it is done.”

- by Nelson Mandela



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Platinum/Alumni/YRHS Groups

By **Coach Stefan**



During the first week of April, 12 PST swimmers went to St. George, Utah, to compete at the SCY Senior Zone Championships. It was an outstanding, well-organized, and super-fast meet.

Our athletes did phenomenally well despite multiple challenges along the way. Not only did most of us get sick, but we also had injuries to deal with and had to get used to indoor swimming at a slight altitude.



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However, *Abigail, Cynthia, Mizuki, Charlotte, Connor, Cole, Baran, Owen, Evan, Nathan, Jonathan, and Asher* were just amazing both in and out of the water. What made me the happiest was how much the group bonded over the week. It was just so much fun to see everyone cheer each other on both in prelims and

finals and have fun as a group when we were at the hotel. Please remember that bonding experience and keep on building on it!

Our swimmers performances were outstanding, with many new personal best swims. But we must highlight our finalists: *Charlotte, Owen, Asher, and Cole*. They had great prelim swims, dropped time, and ultimately learned to go faster in finals, which is what you want to do!



Other outstanding prelim swims were *Connor's 100 back, Nathan's 500 free, Cynthia's 50 free, and notably Evan's 100 breast*, where he dropped a massive amount of time and got close to the 1' mark.

In between prelims and finals we swam TimeTrials. What a wonderful opportunity for our swimmers to have a second chance for specific events, and *Baran, Jonathan, Mizuki, and Abigail* stood out the most. *Abigail* had an incredible 200 IM and 100 Breast, *Jonathan* dropped a considerable amount of time in his 200 IM, *Mizuki* was really, really ill but still had two great swims, and *Baran* just smashed all of his events during time trials, achieving a bunch of new WEZO cuts.

The relays were probably my highlight from a swimming perspective. They were late at night, and the energy of our swimmers was just out of this world. Both the A and B relays were so much fun to watch, and I cannot wait to do them again.

Overall, I am so proud of everyone who participated, gave it their all, and learned and grew from this experience.

It is now up to the rest of the team to find that internal drive to make changes during practices, work harder, swim with more purpose, and push yourself to the next level so that you will be part of the Championships Team next season or even this summer!

All of you have the potential to get there, so ask the swimmers who went what they had to do, how they got motivated to qualify, and what changes they made in practices to achieve those cuts, and then go for it!

Up and onwards, and let's finish the SCY season with a bang at the upcoming high school meets and RESL meet in the summer!

“Practice isn't the thing you do once you're good. It's the thing you do that makes you good.”

- Malcolm Gladwell



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Captain's Corner

By Josie Oesterer

I've reiterated it time and again: swimming is a tough sport. From the early mornings to the late-night practices in dim lighting, to the daunting sets and nerve-wracking races that leave you feeling drained - swimming can be a real challenge. But amidst the struggles, there's room to develop a deep appreciation for it.

Admittedly, this season, I've experienced some burnout and struggled to find the motivation to give my all. Last season, achieving my long-term goal of qualifying for sectional, and with senioritis kicking in this year, my commitment to practice hasn't been at its peak. As a goal-oriented individual, the absence of a significant objective has become an excuse to avoid pushing myself.

Recently, I attended Far Westerns for just one day to compete in the 200-yard backstroke. Setting low expectations, I ended up adding 7 seconds to my time (haha). While the outcome wasn't remarkable, the experience was incredibly memorable.

Before diving, I realized it would likely be one of my last short course 200 back races with PST, which brought a wave of nostalgia. So, I made a conscious decision to savor every moment. Here are some vivid memories from the race:

- Gazing up at the overcast, drizzly sky
- Taking the first breath of crisp air after 11 fly kicks on the first length
- Wondering if I had passed the 15-yard mark and was disqualified
- Feeling the gradual numbness creeping into my legs
- Peeking at other racers in their sleek tech suits during each underwater phase
- Navigating a slightly off-course fifth flip-turn
- Experiencing the burning sensation in my lungs after pushing off the last two turns.

All these things may seem small in regard to the large picture - but it is what makes the sport so great. Working meticulously over how large and how much pressure to place into each underwater fly kick. Learning not to count my strokes into the wall because I've done thousands of backstroke flip turns that I can tell just by seeing the flags. Rotating 5 degrees less and catching higher just to lower the bobbing motion I often have in backstroke. Embracing the numbness because I can only reach this point after working extremely hard.

Whether it's your first season trying to master all the turns and strokes, or your eleventh season still trying to increase your fly kick count on the 7th lap of a 200, enjoy the experience of getting to your current position. Every practice, every set, every conversation, every flip turn never happens twice - so love it when it happens.



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Become a Student of Our Sport

By this month's **Editor-in-Chief**

A few interesting articles...

<https://www.usaswimming.org/news/2024/01/06/truesport-10-easy-ways-to-build-resilience-for-yourself-and-your-team>

<https://www.usaswimming.org/news/2023/01/05/five-words-that-will-help-you-reach-your-goals>

“If you are not willing to learn, no one can help you. If you are determined to learn, no one can stop you”

- by Zig Ziglar

Swim Meets

Meets:

Meets through the end of *the 23/24 swim season* are posted on our [website](#).

**new qualifiers*

- 5/11-12:** [C/B/BB LCM Meet](#) (host: SRVA). Meet has closed. 34 PST swimmers were able to register to compete.
- 5/19:** [Montclair Pentathlon](#) (location: Soda Aquatic Center). Meet has closed. 67 PST swimmers were able to register to compete.
- 6/1-2:** **Senior Open (host: Crow)**. All 13&Older swimmers from Gold, Platinum and YRHS should attend. 11-12 year olds with [qualifying times](#) should attend as well.
- 6/21-23:** **Reno Gamble Age Group Meet**. Everyone should attend! More details to come soon.
- 7/5-7:** **RESL Team Competition (location: Mills College)**. **Save the Date!** Your swimmer will have the most amazing time at this insanely fun meet!
- 7/12-14:** **Summer 14&U Age Group Champs (location: Concord)**.
Congratulations to our qualifiers so far: Magnolia S., Allie W., Cynthia W., Connor C., Zafar M., Max S., Ben R.
- 7/20-21:** **Zone 2 SCY Summer Championships (location: Orinda)**. This meet will be in Short Course Yards and is a great end to the season! All swimmers from all groups with B



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times should attend.

7/25-28: Summer Far Western Championships (location: Milpitas)
Congratulations to our qualifiers so far: Charlotte L., Josie O., Owen B., Evan B., Cole C., Connor C., Jonathan D., Nathan J., Zafar M., Ben R., Asher T.

7/30-8/3: Summer LCM Western Zone Championships (location: Clovis, CA)
Congratulations to our qualifiers so far: Abigail J., Charlotte L., Josie O., Sydney O., Mizuki W., Cynthia W., Sonja TG., Owen B., Evan B., Cole C., Connor C., Jonathan D., Nathan J., Asher T.

Championships Qualifiers

* New Qualifiers

Age Group Champs	Senior 2	FW	WEZO	SEC	FUT	J.Nat
Magnolia Stoll	Kaleah Luby	Nathan Judy	Baran Watson	Asher Takazawa		
Max Schultz	Kate Rebro	Ben Rebro	Connor Carnazzo	Cole Carnazzo		
Mizuki Williams	Anna Dixon	Cole Carnazzo	Mizuki Williams	Owen Blanford		
Allie Woo	Samantha White	Owen Blanford	Abigail Jacoby	Josie Oesterer		
Ben Rebro	Taylor Dacanay	Josie Oesterer	Cynthia Wu			
Connor Carnazzo	Abigail Jacoby	Charlotte Livermore	Cole Carnazzo			
Zafar Majid	Josie Oesterer	Evan Byun	Owen Blanford			
Cynthia Wu	Sydney Olson	Zafar Majid	Josie Oesterer			
	Jiselle Souza	Connor Carnazzo	Jonathan Dong			
	Magnolia Stoll	Asher Takazawa	Nathan Judy			
	Mizuki Williams		Sydney Olson			



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Age Group Champs	Senior 2	FW	WEZO	SEC	FUT	J.Nat
	Allie Woo		Charlotte Livermore			
	Cynthia Wu		Sonja Ten Grotenhuis			
	Kate Mikami		Evan Byun			
	Sonja Ten Gortenhuis		Asher Takazawa			
	Charlotte Livermore					
	Cole Carnazzo					
	Owen Blanford					
	Asher Takazawa					
	Connor Carnazzo					
	Evan Byun					
	Quinn Cook					
	Jonathan Dong					
	Nathan Judy					
	Zafar Majid					
	Gabriel Reader					

