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PCAT RAMBLER

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2009-10 Season Review, Accolades & Championship Time

By Head Coach Mike Werner

This may not be the year for frozen water (snow) in Park City, but the best water (the pool) is amazing. It is the time where excitement fills the air and fast swimming occurs at the pool. The high school team finished out the season with amazing results and filled the pool with hopes and dreams of success and great swims for PCAT. So far this year, we have 16 swimmers attending the Utah Sr. Championships this month, 11 kids qualified for the Far Westerns in April, 3 swimmers qualified for Sectionals and 9 swimmers qualified for the Western Zone Championships in August. And we haven't yet mentioned the 13 swimmers qualified for JO's. All in all, a pretty successful season... considering we are still developing our programs and rebuilding the age group program. In my eyes though, every season is a rebuilding season because there are always move-ups in workout groups, moving into new age groups and new challenges

along the way. But as I am always fond of saying, the best is yet to come.

I am very proud of the success that we have made this season and the improvements that we have seen. Not only are we swimming well in meets, but we are getting faster and stronger in practice. It is always exciting watch kids transform into athletes and grow and progress. And my favorite time of the year is now. Swimmers are excited to be here, they are training well and excited about swimming! When these crucial elements are in effective, that's when things really pick up.

Championship time is all about the small stuff. The swimmers are constantly being nagged, I mean re-enforcing, about the basics: streamline, fast underwaters, building into the walls, following breathing patterns, etc. The past several months have been about building up endurance and training specificity. We have worked at being able to hold pace and learn to

swim strokes with race mentality/assertiveness. Now it is the time to fine tune the little things and add another dimension to the swimming. For the record, we talk about the little things all season long, but now we thrive on making everything count and being our best.

With that being said, it is so very important to make sure that everyone is getting to as many practices as possible and hitting the last few meets. Please stay current with the calendar and website of what is happening with the team. And don't forget that the coaches are always here to answer your questions.



A Few Things to Consider When Preparing for a Major Competition.

By Coach Eyreka

Championship races are won or lost by fractions of a second. The athletes who win at major competitions will be those who have prepared to do the little things well under pressure by practicing to do them well in training.

Under pressure, you will do what you've learned to do in training and will fall back upon your training habits.

If you have allowed yourself to cruise through training sessions without an uncompromising attention to detail in your technique and skills, these bad habits will fail you under competition pressures. **Tactically Prepared**

Tactics play a crucial role in swimming successfully at a major competition. There are many swimmers competing at a major competition who you and your coach may not know. There are other swimmers who you've never raced against. Therefore, it is likely you will face a completely new and wide range of tactical situations.

Here are some tactical issues to consider:

- * Do you have a race plan?

- * Are you able to stick to your race plan regardless of what the opposition is doing?

- * Have you learned to change gears (speed) when needed?

- * If things don't go according to plan, are you able to adapt to any situation and to deal with difficulties? **Physically Prepared**

The physical preparation in your training should be more challenging and demanding than the physical demands of your competition.

Another critical aspect of the physical preparation is the taper. There are three key principles: Maintain frequency of training; Maintain hard work throughout the taper; and significantly decrease training volume. **Mentally Prepared**

Without doubt, the mental aspect of achieving a successful result at a major competition is crucial. Many swimmers, coaches, clubs and parents build up a national competition to something it is not. This increases

the pressure and emotion, and in this environment it is difficult for even the best physically prepared swimmer to achieve his or her goals.

Enjoy the Experience

Confidence at and enjoyment of the championship environment comes from knowing you have had a total and thorough preparation. You should go to the championships...

- * Knowing you have prepared to the best of your ability;

- * Knowing the competition environment and actual challenges it presents;

- * Knowing yourself;

- * Knowing your opposition;

- * Knowing the event; and

- * Knowing you can overcome any obstacle or difficulty presented to you.

Then you can relax and enjoy the experience.

How to Prepare for Championships

By Coach John

Last article I wrote on preparing for “The BIG Race.” This newsletter, I want to take a step back from the race and focus on the 2-3 weeks preceding the championship meet. To be a champion, it is all about attitude in and out of the water. Of course, practice is very important to prepare for a championship meet, but what often is forgotten is what happens away from the pool before the meet.

The 2-3 weeks before a championship meet is an exciting time. Practices become more focused on making your stroke feel good and getting a little more rest than normal. During this time, there is a lot of pressure put on making every turn, push-off, streamline, break-out stroke and length of the pool count. This period is called taper. During the taper phase of the season, it is expected to swim all out with intervals being a little longer. This conditioning method is meant to fine tune muscle to be ready to swim fast, as well as help the swimmer have more energy to finish races fast. In club swimming, a swimmer can swim 8 events, and if they qualify for the final or consolation heat, they can swim those events twice in the same day. This can make for a grueling 3-4 days of competition if the swimmer is not paying attention

to what they are doing in the pool, as well as away from the pool.

The question now is, “What can I do away from the pool to help me stay fast and strong at the championship meet?” As I mentioned earlier, during the taper phase, a swimmer will feel like they have more energy and they tend to bounce off the walls a little more. Instead of wasting all this energy building up in your body, it is very important to save that energy for those 8 events. Swim fast and hard in practice, but rest during your spare time.

Another important thing that you need to think about is getting a lot of regular sleep. Staying up late at night, getting little sleep, and then waking up early for school isn’t going to help your taper. Everyone knows that if you aren’t getting a lot of sleep, you are tired, and when you are tired, you aren’t able to function as well. So when possible, you need to go to bed early at the same time everyday and wake up early. This helps your body know when you are going to bed so that it can go into a deeper, more restful sleep.

It is also very important to watch what you eat. Although McDonalds, Wendy’s, Taco Bell, Arby’s and pizza are

fast and sometimes tastes good, it is better to eat more healthy. In previous newsletters, it has been mentioned what are great foods to eat. However, just as a reminder, lots of carbohydrates, moderate amounts of protein, and minimal sweets and junk food is highly recommended.

After all of these steps are taken, the last and sometimes most important thing you need to do to prepare for a championship meet, is to prepare your mind. It is ok to be nervous for a big meet or race. Everyone feels nervous to some extent before hand, but it is how you react to it that makes the difference. If you let the nerves get to you and take over, you will be a mess, but if you accept the feelings as a normal part of your body’s preparation, then everything will be ok. Also be confident. Don’t think the C word, or think negative thoughts like you think you will do badly. Instead know that you will swim fast, and that you will do great. Finally, have fun and enjoy the ride. All the work put in before the championship meet is in the past, so just let your hard work and effort shine during your races.

When all these things are done, and if they are done 150%, then your championship meet should be fun and everything you were hoping for and more.

End of Season Training

By Coach Serena Reynolds

HELLO PCAT-

CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT IT IS FEBRUARY ALREADY? IT'S AMAZING HOW TIME FLIES WHEN WE ARE HAVING SO MUCH FUN. TO PUT THE SEASON INTO A BIT MORE PROSPECTIVE I WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT WE HAVE A LITTLE LESS THAN FOUR WEEKS LEFT UNTIL OUR BIG END OF SEASON MEETS. THIS IS IN ACTUALITY, NOT A WHOLE LOT OF TIME LEFT.

WE HAVE BEEN TRAINING AND RACING VERY WELL DURING THE SEASON AND ARE NOW ENTERING A VERY CRITICAL TRAINING POINT. FROM THIS POINT ON EVERY DRY-LAND TRAINING, EVERY PRACTICE, EVERY MEET IS IMPORTANT FOR THE SUCCESS THAT WE AS COACHES KNOW IS POSSIBLE AT JO'S AND BC FINALE. EVERY TRAINING SESSIONS COMING UP IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS IS IMPORTANT, AND WE HOPE THAT EVERY SWIMMER WILL MAKE THE EFFORT TO BE COMING THREE TIMES A WEEK MINIMUM. PRACTICES WILL BEGIN TO INCLUDE MUCH MORE ONE ON ONE STROKE CRITIQUES AND A LARGER FOCUS ON STARTS AND TURNS. OF COURSE WE HAVE BEEN INCLUDING THESE ITEMS THROUGHOUT THE SEASON, BUT NOW IS THE TIME TO REALLY NAIL DOWN THE LITTLE THINGS. THIS WILL HELP US TO GET ADDITIONAL TIME DROPS FOR OUR SEASON FINALE.

IN ADDITION, AS THE FINAL MEETS GET CLOSER WE WILL BEGIN A REST AND RECOVERY PERIOD TO ENSURE THAT SWIMMERS ARE READY TO SWIM FAST AND HAVE THE BEST

MEET POSSIBLE. THIS IS ONLY EFFECTIVE HOWEVER IF SWIMMERS ARE COMING ON A REGULAR BASIS. I HIGHLY ENCOURAGE NOT MISSING FRIDAY PRACTICES OR SKIPPING THE PRACTICE RIGHT BEFORE A MEET. THIS IS ACTUALLY SOMETHING THAT IS NOT BENEFICIAL FOR THE SWIMMERS PERFORMANCE. THEY NEED TO BE USED TO SWIMMING ON FRIDAYS AS MOST OF OUR MEETS TAKE PLACE ON FRIDAYS. AND, MISSING PRACTICE THE DAY BEFORE A MEET MEANS MISSING VALUABLE MEET PREP TIME AND DOES NOT HELP THE SWIMMER TO GET USED TO SWIMMING WHEN TIRED.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR THE SWIMMERS TO BE STAYING POSITIVE AND FOCUSED AT THIS POINT IN THE SEASON. WE ASK THAT ALL SWIMMERS TRY TO BE MOTIVATING TO ONE ANOTHER AND KEEP POSITIVE DURING PRACTICE. AS COACHES WE TRY TO BE A POSITIVE FACTOR AND PUSH THE SWIMMERS, ENCOURAGE THEM TO DO BETTER, TO SWIM FASTER, TO DO ONE MORE LAP, BUT IT IS THE INDIVIDUAL, AS WELL AS, THE TEAM AS A WHOLE THAT MAKES THIS POSSIBLE. THE INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM ATTITUDE WILL DETERMINE MUCH OF HOW THE NEXT SEVEN WEEKS WILL GO, AND THE OVERALL OUTCOME OF OUR END OF SEASON.

I WOULD LIKE TO REMIND EVERYONE THAT JO'S AND BC FINALE ARE REQUIRED MEET

FOR ALL SWIMMERS. THESE ARE THE MEETS THAT WE TRAIN ALL SEASON IN ANTICIPATION FOR. THESE MEET WILL BE TAKING PLACE MARCH 17-20 AND 19-20, RESPECTIVELY. BOTH MEETS WILL BE HELD AT THE BOUNTIFUL RECREATION CENTER. PLEASE MAKE ARRANGEMENT TO BE ABLE TO ATTEND THESE MEETS. WITH THIS BEING SAID, I WOULD LIKE TO GO OVER SOME MEET ETIQUETTE FOR THESE MEETS.

FIRST OF ALL, UNLESS TIMING, NO PARENTS, FAMILY OR FRIENDS WILL BE ALLOWED ON DECK. SPECTATORS WILL HAVE TO SIT IN THE SPECTATOR SEATING. THIS IS FOR SEVERAL REASONS INCLUDING; LIMITED DECK SPACE, AND THE NEED FOR SWIMMERS TO BE FOCUSING ON THEIR UPCOMING EVENTS. SECOND, IT IS EXPECTED THAT AT THIS POINT IN THE SEASON, REGARDLESS OF AGE, ALL SWIMMERS ARE ABLE TO GET THEIR HEATS AND LANES, KNOW WHEN THEY ARE SWIMMING, TALK TO COACHES, AND WARM-UP AND COOL-DOWN ON THEIR OWN. THIRD, LOTS OF CHEERING AND TEAM SUPPORT IS REQUIRED. PLEASE CHEER FOR ALL PCAT SWIMMERS AND IF POSSIBLE STAY TILL THE TEAM HAS FINISHED ALL EVENTS. THESE ARE THE ONLY MEETS OF THE SEASON THAT WE ENCOURAGE STICKING AROUND TILL ALL SWIMMERS HAVE FINISHED SWIMMING.

WITH THIS BEING SAID, I KNOW THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WILL BE GREAT. I LOOK FORWARD TO JO'S AND BC FINALE AND KNOW THE TEAM WILL DO AMAZING. IF



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