



PCAT RAMBLER

PARK CITY AQUATIC TEAM

OCTOBER 06, 2009

Volume 1 PG. 1

Special points of interest:

- Focusing During Practice.
- Why are swim meets important?
- What to Bring to a Meet.
- Rebuilding.
- Drilling and Technique.
- Uncomfortable Equals Growth.
- Nutrition Corner

Focusing During Practice.

By Coach John Harvey

Do you really have to use your brain during practice? The answer to this question should obviously be YES! Even though some practices may seem long and not so fun, it is these times that we need to focus the most. Practice is the time we learn strokes, build muscle and endurance, and teach our bodies the exact positions we need to be in order to swim FAST. The way we practice is the way we will swim in meets. If we drill well, our strokes will be good. If we swim fast, we have a better ability to swim fast.

I always try to teach swimmers to "actively swim." At first, they always ask, "What do you mean coach? I am swimming so I am active." This isn't the point of swimming. Just going up and down the pool for two hours straight swimming 10,000 yards isn't enough to be an elite swimmer. To be better, each swimmer needs to constantly be analyzing his or her own stroke, asking questions to themselves such as: "What position is my body in? Do I have straight arms every stroke? Am I bending my elbows on my pull? Am I

rotating enough? Are my hips up? How is my kick? Where is my head? Was that as fast as I possibly could have gone?" By asking these types of questions every length of the pool, it keeps every swimmer actively engaged in practice. In turn, practices then seem more fun, shorter, and most important, strokes become better which makes them faster.

Everyone always loves to get a best time. They don't however just happen overnight. They come from hours of practice, always changing and working hard every day. Even the best swimmers in the world are always finding better ways they can swim to get faster. They are great examples. If they are the best, how much more do we need to change our strokes and the way we practice?

As members of the PCAT team, we strive to be the best we can be. We take pride that we can swim fast and have good strokes while doing so. When we focus on "actively swim" during practice, we can and will achieve this goal.

Why are swim meets important?

By Coach Eyreka Smith

There are many reasons that swim meets are important and here are a few of them. They instill a sense of "team" and commitment. Swim meets allow swimmers to see all their hard work in practice pay off. And they give swimmers an opportunity to set goals and achieve them. All of these are lifelong skills your swimmer will use over and over again.

In Pre-Cat, swimmers are given the building blocks to progress and become better swimmers and their success can become limitless. However without attending swim meets and becoming an active team member they are limiting their success.

I found an article while researching ideas for this topic that I would like to share. It's from a 16 year old swimmer that defied the odds and competed despite suffering 3rd degree burns on his back, arms and hands, a two week coma, and he'd been told that competing would be out of the question. "I've never missed a swim meet, when I was younger, it was fun and stuff, but now that I'm older, I know how important it is. If you commit to a team, you can't back out."

After reading this hopefully you are thinking about attending your first swim meet.

Drilling & Technique: Stage 1 of the PCAT Season Plan

By Coach Serena Reynolds

Hello everyone and welcome to the 2009-2010 Short course swim season. I hope that everyone had a great break and is looking forward to this season as much as I am. We have just been getting back into the swing of things at PCAT and we have many new faces including a new coach and I want to say welcome to all of them. We are extremely glad to have you join our team. As we are getting back into things you may have noticed that there been lots of drilling and stroke work going on. At PCAT, we take the first four weeks of practice and spend a week on each of the strokes. We add in lots of kicking and body position drills, as well as proper push-offs, turns and starts. We really like to start the seasons off with this because we feel it helps the kids get back into swimming. In addition, the more we can work on developing strokes and good practice habits at the beginning of the season the more it will pay off later in the season when it really counts. Most of our attention in practice is currently on proper swimming not fast swimming. As soon as we get through the fourth week of drilling the real fun will start.

With the upcoming of our first few swim meets we are really working on bettering the strokes and developing more efficient swimming mechanisms. At this point in the season we are not looking for fast times or even best times. We are watching to see if the kids are focusing on the swimming techniques we are developing in practice. As coaches we realize that this is sometimes hard for both swimmers and parents. We ask that as parents you be supportive and encouraging of your swimmer. If a swimmer feels like they should be swimming faster just remind them that as a team we have not really even began the major training and they should focus on the little things that will make them better in the end. Meets should be a fun and rewarding part of swimming and worrying over times is not what PCAT is about. Times and results are by-products of proper technique and attention to detail in practice. We want the swimmers to have fun and enjoy our sport.

I am looking forward to the great season I know it will be. I encourage you throughout the season to keep up with what your swimmer is doing and how they are progressing, to get involved with the upcoming PCAT events and to get to know our ever growing team. Please if at any time you have questions or concerns, we are always available and wanting to talk.

Thanks so much for the support!

What to bring to a meet:

By Coach Eyreka Smith

- Swimsuit
- Team Swim cap
- Goggles (spare pair too)
- 2 towels (or one for each event)
- Parka/Jacket
- Sweatpants and sweatshirt/t-shirt
- Nutritious snacks
- Water bottles
- Permanent markers, highlighters, and pens
- Waterproof sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Blankets and beach chairs to sit on
- Toys or games to keep you occupied between events
- Good attitude ready to do your best in the water and cheering your teammates!

Everyone performs better when they see supporters at the end of their lane!

REBUILDING, A Most Critical Component of Continual Success

By Coach Mike Werner

While the swimmers went on their summer break this year at the conclusion of LC Season, the coaching staff and I put on our thinking caps and started planning on the next season. The upcoming season was going to present a new challenge to us and allow us to get creative and inventive. We were faced with a challenge that I haven't had since joining PCAT in November of 2005. And that challenge....RE-BUILDING.

First and foremost, this is not a bad challenge to have. I believe that it actually shows how far we have come in the almost 4 years that I have been with PCAT. When I first started, most of the current swimmers were not part of our PCAT family, and we were around 45 athletes, between Pre-Cat and PCAT. And HS was in the high 30's if I am not mistaken. Before the conclusion of the LC season, the combined PCAT and Pre-Cat team was over 110 swimmers with a HS team over 50 swimmers.

In August, all of the coaches came to the conclusion that things were going well, but we were going to shift around 20 swimmers from PCAT to HS. And this just kind of shocked us all. My initial thought was of concern. But as I pondered the situation more, I realized that program was finally doing what I hoped it would do. And that is to prepare swimmers for the next phase (not necessarily the next level) of competitive swimming.

There have always been some swimmers ready to move on to the HS team, but not in the numbers that we were seeing the past two years. Upon further thought of the situation, I started looking at how swimming was doing overall at PCAC. And I was very pleased by how far things have come. Our lesson program was flourishing and more importantly, they were moving swimmers up from their ranks into Pre-Cat. Pre-Cat was finally coming around to where we had steady and fantastic coaching and swimmers were moving up to the PCAT team.

I don't even know where to start with the PCAT accomplishments. At my 1st JO's in March 2006 with PCAT, I had 7 swimmers in a handful of events and we were pretty close to the bottom. In 2009 PCAT finished 2nd at JO's in March with multiple state champions and at LC Champs in July, the 14-Unders were 3rd and overall PCAT was 4th, again with multiple state champions and repeat state champions. These were the best results ever! Over my 4 years, I have watched the program grow from the lowest finishes in the state, to a team that is vying to being one of the best in the state, having 4 of the best coaches in the state and the best pool administrator in the state. I am very lucky to have fantastic coaches in Coach Serena, Coach John and Coach Eyreka who share my passion and vision for competitive swimming and believe that Park City has unlimited potential and endless possibilities. Without Todd's administrative support and blessing, my vision of making PCAT one of the best teams in the state (and moving up in the west) would be very short lived. Be sure to thank all of them for their vigilant support of our program.

Back to re-building. Through the growth of all levels of swimming at PCAC, I am very excited about the prospect of developing and recruiting (the good kind) new swimmers to the PCAT family. The swimmers that are currently with PCAT have continually been improving. The new swimmers that are joining the team are coming in more prepared for the team and are excited about Pre-Cat/PCAT. We are evolving into the type of program that I have envisioned and hoped to create in the Park City community. And by no means are we done. We have only just begun to really set things up for future success and bigger/better swimming.

I have challenged each coach to be free thinking and creative to come up with ideas and suggestions to motivate their own swimming groups as well as for the team. As a whole, we are collaborating and striving to make anything possible, while keeping things fun. And I hope that everyone involved in our program will share in that vision!

Uncomfortable Equals Growth

By John Leonard

"Get Comfortable with Being Uncomfortable" is a phrase I like to use to describe the process that we think of as growth. It describes what has to happen in order for athletes, coaches, people in all areas of life, to improve on whatever they wish to improve.

When we are within our "comfort level" we are confident, happy, and feel relaxed and without anxiety.

Why are we comfortable? Because we know we can handle any challenge that is put to us without much strain, effort or "dis-comfort". We may be totally and completely comfortable sitting at home watching TV or hanging with our friends. But if we are asked to go outside for a 5 mile run the rain, unless we are prepared for it, we are "un-comfortable".

Why? Because we are unsure (anxious) about the result. Will we "poop out" and be unable to finish? Will we be wet, cold, looking pretty awful and have people driving by in cars making fun of us? We react to the unknown by usually visualizing the worst possible scenarios we can imagine with our fertile imaginations.

But the completion of that five mile run the in rain leaves us feeling...what? Perhaps a bit cold, perhaps a bit wet, perhaps with some temporary fatigue, but it also leaves us with a sense of accomplishment, a much stronger self-respect for conquering elements and "handling it", and physically stronger and more capable. Also, about a hour or two later, we'll have more energy than we had before the run. In other words, we're stronger.

In fact, there is no strengthening without testing ourselves and pushing ourselves. This is true not just in physical life, but in intellectual and spiritual life as well. We must learn to move beyond our "comfort zone" to our "un-comfort zone"...in other words, be uncomfortable.

So what does "become comfortable with being uncomfortable" mean? It means that in order to progress or grow, we must challenge ourselves, and accept that discomfort is a stage of growth, and it will lessen with time, and increased competence. Nothing we do is more intimidating than the scenes we imagine about new efforts. The reality is always less awful than the anticipation, and the worst of it is just before we "start". Once underway, the discomfort will lessen appreciably.

If we can focus on being in the "here and now" and keep our mind and body focused on the task at hand, we'll quickly overcome all obstacles in front of us, and become capable, thus creating a new comfort zone for ourselves.

Then, its time to repeat the process, after a decent interval to appreciate the fruits of our effort.

"Get Comfortable with Being Uncomfortable".

Nutrition Corner

By Coach Serena Reynolds

We have had some requests for nutrition ideas so I would like to start with giving some very general ideas on what your swimmer should be eating before and after practice as well as leading up to and during swim meets.

Snacking Before Practice

Every day before practice you can see our swimmers sitting in the pool lobby eating and drinking various things. Often some of the items we see the swimmers consuming are not ideal for workouts. We strongly recommend that our swimmers be eating snacks that are high in carbohydrate (100-400 grams of solid food or 4-8 ounces of liquid) 1-2 hours before practice to have maximum work output. The foods the swimmers need before a practice tend to be low-mid on the glycemic index. Some recommended items fitting in these categories include:

- Macaroni and spaghetti
- Most fruits and fruit juices
- Sweet potatoes, peas, and corn
- Oatmeal
- Milk, ice cream, yogurt, and cheese
- Beans and peanuts
- Avoid candy and other foods high in sugars as well as carbonated drinks!

Snacking After Practice

To replenish stores lost during a workout, swimmers should be snacking after practice perhaps every hour until dinner time. Snacks to be eaten after a workout should be high in carbohydrates (150-300 grams), and

in the high range of the glycemic index. Some recommended items fitting in these categories include:

- Bread, rice, and dry cereals
- Potatoes
- Carrots and bananas
- Honey

Dinner after practice should be a well rounded meal including protein and fat, both of which are necessary for healthy swimmers. In addition, swimmers should be drinking water constantly to stay hydrated before during and after practice.

Pre-Meet and during competition eating

Swimmers need to prepare their bodies well in advance of a meet. Two-three days before a meet we suggest an increase in the amount of carbohydrate in their diet and a slight reduction of the amount of fat and protein they are eating. Meals right before a meet should be small and easy to digest. Toast, muffins, and noodles are good pre-meet foods. Swimmers should eat about 3 hours before a meet with small snacks and drinks after that time. Try to avoid red meats and foods fried in oil. These items take too long to digest. Also, 1-2 hours before the start of a meet avoid foods high in fiber (oats, bran, oatmeal, rice, and barley). Snacks during the meets are very necessary and are the same items that swimmers should be eating before practice. We try to discourage eating within a few minutes of a race, small drinks are encouraged instead.

Please watch our bulletin board and future newsletters for more on nutrition. All information is from *Nutrition for Swimmers* produced by American Swim Coaches Association.

