SST NEWS

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**Lessons Learned at the 2015 National Junior Team Camp**

**By Katie Arnold, USA Swimming High Performance Consultant**

Three weeks ago, we hosted our annual National Junior Team Camp here at the OTC in Colorado Springs, and with more than 80 athletes in attendance, this year’s camp was our largest to date. Maintaining a focus on our “Awareness and Achievement” theme, we tried to expose these athletes to new ideas and experiences that they could then incorporate into their own personal journeys to success.

Reflecting back, the concepts below popped up frequently during the different presentations and activities, and are what I consider the main takeaways from camp. The common thread for these concepts is that neither is swimming-specific and each one can be applied to many different facets of life.

**Small Changes Make a Big Difference**: Making huge changes can often seem difficult and overwhelming, and many people quickly become discouraged and give up. The key here is to break down the desired result into small, manageable pieces. If you want to improve your dive, start with your set up on the block, then move on to the arm-pull initiation before refining the entry and underwater transition. If you want to have more consistent training, focus on improving your nutrition and recovery in order to allow you to train harder.

**Try Something New**: A common pitfall of early success is that many people get stuck in the mindset that whatever got them to that point is what they have to continue to do. I’ve heard countless coaches and athletes use the old cliché “if it isn’t broken, don’t fix it.” Unfortunately, this mentality can place a ceiling on overall performance. Our best athletes are those who are willing to get outside their comfort zones and try new things. Whether you are incorporating a new style of dryland training, changing your stroke technique, or trying a new recovery tool, the important thing is to be willing to try new things and then have the patience to see them through.



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**RELAY FOR LIFE**

Relay for Life is a nationwide event to support cancer research, as well as celebrate those who have beaten cancer and remember those who have not. This is a great community event and a fun team bonding atmosphere. We have created a Relay for Life team and we hope to see everyone get involved. To join our team, please visit this link:

<http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR?fr_id=66060&pg=team&team_id=1839923>

 The event is held on June 5th at the West Valley High School track. Opening ceremony begins at 6:00pm and everyone will walk a few laps to kick things off. After the opening ceremony, teams divide themselves into “walking groups”. We will likely split up our team into two hour sessions, depending on the size of our relay team. We will have someone walking at all times from 6:00pm to 6:00am the following morning.

 There will be music, games, and many fun activities to take advantage of. When you are not walking, you can hang out at our team tent, play soccer, listen to music, or just socialize. As long as we have someone walking, we are fulfilling our relay obligation.

 The initial plan is to have our younger swimmers take the early sessions, while our older swimmers take the later sessions. Of course, you are welcome to stay as long as you wish, but we will break our team into two hour walking groups (depending on relay team size).

 Please join our Relay for Life team today so we can start the logistical planning. When you join our team, you can also make a donation toward cancer research. If you are unable to attend the event, you can still make a donation to this great cause. We have set our donation goal at $500. Thank you for supporting the Stingrays, our community, and cancer research!

**SWIM-A-THON AND ELECTION RECAP**

 Our 2015 Swim-a-Thon was a huge success! We had 42 swimmers completing laps and having fun. Nearly all of our swimmers reached their lap goal, and everyone enjoyed playing and eating. We would like to thank the parents who helped count laps, cook pancakes, motivate our swimmers, and much more. There is still a week left to get your donations in, and we are confident we will reach our $15,000 goal once the last dollar is counted. If you have donations that have not been turned in, please bring them to practice by Friday, May 22nd. We will then announce the Top Dollar, Top Roster, and Top Location award winners during our 2015 Annual Awards Banquet. Thank you again for your effort and support in making the Stingrays even better!

We also held our annual board of director elections during the Swim-a-Thon. Thank you to those who cast their vote and let their voices be heard. Our goal is to provide a team, and board, that meets your wishes. We would like to congratulate the following election winners and welcome them to the Stingray Swim Team Board of Directors:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Position** | **Election Winner** |
| President | Ehren Schachle |
| Vice President | Laurie Keyes |
| Treasurer | Joel Johnson |
| Secretary | Gina Hrinko |
| Member at Large | Ann Marie White |
| Member at Large | Rachel Luzzader |
| Member at Large | Joanna Fox |

**2015 ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET**

 Our 2015 Annual Stingray Awards Banquet will be held on Wednesday, May 27th from 6:00pm – 8:00pm. We will be in the Multipurpose Room at Monroe Catholic High School. Please park in the back near the gym on Betty Street. This celebration will be catered by Taco King and is $10 for adults, $5 for children over six years old, and FREE for Stingray swimmers! No need to bring cash or checks, we will bill your account to make things easier on everyone.

 The banquet is for all Stingray swimmers and everyone will be recognized for their outstanding season. Come have fun with your teammates, eat great food and get recognized for all your hard work this year! Dress is casual and there will be a season-recap video that everyone will love.

Please RSVP wheter you’re coming or not to Ann Marie White (amwhite@acsalaska.net or call/text her at 907-450-9173). Thank you and see you there!

**SUMMER SWIMMING**

 Summer is a great time to relax and enjoy Alaska. After many months of cold and snow, it sure is fun to get outdoors and play. Summer is also a great time to take advantage of your swim training! You can take all that extra energy and put it in the water, swimming harder (and smarter) than you’ve ever done! It’s a great time to work on your technique and perfect that turn you’ve been working on. Does anything feel better on a warm summer day than jumping into the cold pool, getting great exercise and working toward your goals?

 Whatever your summer plans look like, we will be here training hard and helping our swimmers succeed. We hope to see everyone at the pool this summer; having fun and improving each day. If you are going to be gone for any length of time, please inform your coach. Thank you.

**SWIMMERS OF THE MONTH IN APRIL**

To be selected as the Swimmers of the Month, athletes must show their dedication to our team through their hard work, attendance, desire to improve, teamwork, and ability to listen to instruction. We are proud to look back at the April Stingray Swimmers of the Month.

 **Abby Birkholz**

**** Abby has been a long time Stingray, and is now taking advantage of her training in the Junior Group. She recently made the move to the Patty Pool and has been thriving in the colder water. She attended 93% of her workouts in April and improved her speed and technique. She competed in six events at the Alaska Junior Olympic Championships and posted all best times. She placed in the top eight in all of her events, finishing with two silver medals, one 4th place, two 6th place, and one 8th place. She was our third highest point scorer of the meet with 86 points. She also set a new team record in the 100 back. Congratulations Abby on being the April Stingray Swimmer of the Month!

**Madison Hrinko**

Madison is also a long time Stingray and a leader in the Junior Group. She attended 100% of her workouts in April and put in the training needed for a great taper. She has improved her technique, work ethic, and speed; all which led to a great championship meet. She was our second highest point scorer at the Alaska Junior Olympic Championships with 94 points, competing in seven events and posting five best times. She placed in the top eight in all of her events, including one bronze medal, one 4th place, two 5th place, one 6th place, and two 8th place finishes. She also set a new team record in the 500 free and 100 free. Congratulations Madison on being the April Stingray Swimmer of the Month!

**MAY AT A GLANCE**

* May 7 – Madison Hrinko’s Birthday
* **May 12 – SST Board of Directors Meeting**
	+ Open to all members
	+ Time: 6:30-8:00pm
	+ Location: Madden Real Estate
* May 13 – Logan Fox’s Birthday
* May 16 – Rachel Birkholz’s Birthday
* May 22 – NO PRACTICE (Memorial Day Weekend)
* May 25 – NO PRACTICE (Memorial Day)
* **May 27 – Annual Awards Banquet**
	+ Open to all Stingray Swimmers
	+ Time: 6:00pm – 8:00pm
	+ Location: Monroe High School
* May 31 – Justine Lovely’s Birthday

**SST 2014-2015 Remaining Meet Schedule**

Midnight Sun Invite

June 26-28

Prelim/Final Meet

Hamme Pool

AK Swimming Summer Championships

July 24-26

Prelim/Final Meet

Hamme Pool