

Mesa Aquatics Club

NEWSLETTER

May 1, 2022

Long Course 2022 Season Kick-Off!



Long Course 2022!

The Long course season is upon us. We kicked it off last week with our Black vs Red inter-squad meet. The intersquad meet is an important part of our season as it allows a baseline for where athletes are with skills and times as well as allows many of our newer swimmers to obtain times for long course events. Congratulations to all of our swimmers on some great efforts and a shout out to the Black team for scoring the most points and winning the Gold Cap award.

We have two more MAC hosted meets this summer. Our hope is to have all of our MAC swimmers enter both the Speedo Invite, over Memorial Day and the Narwhal Invite, June 17-19. In addition to our MAC hosted meets we are also competing in the Mayflower Meet in Oro Valley, May 13-14. The timing of these meets fits our training schedule well; allowing time to refine skills and speed in between each meet. Our Championship season will include: Senior State, June 30-July 3 (at Chandler High) , Regional Championships July 8-10 (location TBD), Age Group State July 14-17 and the All-American Meet in Dallas, TX, July 20-23.

Next New Family Orientation

Our next new family orientation is on Tuesday, May 3rd. Here is the zoom meeting information:

Meg Zajdzinski is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: MAC New Family Orientation
Time: May 3, 2022 07:30 PM Arizona

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86596145396?pwd=OGpnZEFIQ21yY2dqODRyYk1taWgyZz09>

Meeting ID: 865 9614 5396
Passcode: 025194

Kino Discovery

By Coach Trey

Kino Discovery group has been working hard on all of the strokes, but we have been focused on having a tight streamline every time we push off the wall. Streamlines are a fundamental skill that we are building into a habit. Discovery group has also been learning about the MAC way and have weekly goals to encourage honoring the team, themselves and the process.

Our weekly goals have included keeping our hands to ourselves, bringing all of the necessary equipment, and this week's goal is to be extra kind.

Kino Voyager group has been building the foundations of good Technique with every stroke and further developing skills such as streamlines, flipturns and dives. Voyager group sets weekly goals to encourage the MAC way. Our goals have included coming to practice prepared and on time, following directions the first time and always trying their personal best.

Skyline Discovery

By Coach Shawna

Dynamite Discovery!

This group is so spectacular and does an amazing job every day. When the season began this group was not 100% legal, however by the end of the season everyone was 100% legal!! This is such an incredible demonstration of what Discovery is all about--showing up, listening, applying the skills, and having fun while doing it. One of my goals is for Discovery to be the best-looking group, if they have the proper stroke technique the speed will come. We also learn the "why" of swimming, why do we streamline, why do we breathe with a sneaky breath. If swimmers know why they are doing certain drills/skills that knowledge will stay with them their entire career. As swimmers progressed throughout the season there were times they were taken out of their comfort zone and pushed a little further than they thought they could go, asked to make their swims "spicy." This improved their confidence, which caused them to want to be better in all areas in the water. Watching swimmers begin to take ownership of their swimming brings a smile to my face and lets me know we are doing something right. Great job Discovery!

Kino Explorer

By Coach Nichol

Explorer swimmers at KINO spent the first few weeks of the season creating the simple habit of leaving the wall in a streamline, underwater, with 4 dolphin kicks and 2 strokes before a breath. I'm not going to lie, this has been our group goal twice over the last season with not much success. Admittedly, it's 4 skills in one, but it's clutch! If you leave every wall this way, you have developed a FAST HABIT!! So it's worth the time to make this "the thing" that we just do. It's a baseline for fast swimming. So it feels like a slow work in progress sometimes... but sometimes slow is FAST and fast is slow. We don't need yardage of speed on top of bad habits because we don't want to reinforce skills that are not fast. We are increasing our yardage now and have enjoyed the speed that is already present from working on those streamlines.

Our discussions about honoring the MAC way have led to some enjoyable conversations "What makes a good lane leader?" Or "What qualities does a great team have?" We get to decide the atmosphere we swim in, so we may as well pay attention

to these details. They matter. No one likes to go to work in a bad work environment... including 10 year olds.

We are super thankful to have Coach Jonah on deck with us. He is great at helping us learn to hold ourselves accountable. He also has great stroke feedback and cares about work ethic. We are so lucky to have him!!

Shout out to our very positive, hard working group! They love to have group goals, play games together and dig in and work hard. It's so great to be part of this MAC family!

Skyline Explorer

By Coach Maggie

As one of the coaches for our Explorer Group, I find the importance of hard work, team culture, and having FUN to be the main values I want to instill on the swimmers. This season we are taking an increased focus to our finishes, dives, protocol sets and complete warm downs. These tools not only help create stronger, more efficient swimmers, but it also aids in teaching them how to be aware of their bodies and how they feel.

Goals are also a huge focus we are making this season. As swimmers grow and progress through our program, they continually set and reset goals. As coaches, it is our job to teach them how!

I am so excited to see what this season holds! GO MAC!!!

Skyline Voyager

By Coach Maggie

Voyager group is the MOST diverse group in our program. We have swimmers that want to get a workout and have fun and swimmers who want to make Regional and State cuts! We HONOR all of these swimmers no matter why they swim.

This season, we want to have them be successful! Be a kind teammate, work hard, have friends and have FUN!

We are very technique and kick driven while also teaching how fundamental movements and drills help our swimming.

We will focus heavily on our goals and why they are important while also learning what it is to be a competitive year round swimmer.

I am pleased to be able to work with this particular group and see what they can accomplish! GO MAC!!

Kino Challenger

By Coach Nichol

Challenger Kino swimmers are getting down and dirty with some yards that increased drastically last week. We had a slow, but very fun start to the season. We really enjoyed showing off our team, friends, and talents to our friends and even had a few join the team!! After some skills and drills we cranked it into gear to prepare for this first intersquad meet. The greatest benefit of the intersquad meet was an opportunity to jump into those IMX events so that we can get a head start on getting all of our prerequisite events in to qualify for that meet. We will keep working towards that goal as a group.

Things that are working for us: As a group, we are amazing at cranking out the hard work. We know who to chase and how to get into that groove and this is the VERY BEST GIFT a group can offer one another. Race mentality and momentum is strong and we will all be better for it!

Things we can improve: In cranking out the work mode, we don't want to lose any of our fast habits. These fast habits are things that we worked on very slowly, in great detail, with frequency, as to develop habits that would make us fast if we hold on to consistently delivering those habits even when tempo is increased and fatigue sets in. Hold on to the fundamentals!!

Group goal: Find the good in our teammates. As we get to know each other better, it's easy to chip away at the mistakes of others that seem so obvious to us, but this also chips away at our team unity and motivation. So the group goal: cheer on the good in

others and work on the things that I can fix for myself. We are looking forward to training with purpose and motivation!

Skyline Challenger

By Coach Angela

What a season! I can't believe it's already over! March was tons of fun for these challenger kids. Coming into our championship meets we were all about "race rehearsal". We practiced pacing and race strategy until we were blue in the face – some of us literally. The drills and hard work we have been doing all season long were able to aid us in our championship season. Challenger swimmers worked their fannies off in test sets, timed 30 minutes swims, non-stop fast kicking, and IM work every chance we got. Oh but don't worry – we had our fair share of fun too doing paper rock scissors relays, sharks and minnows, cannon ball contests, swimming trivia, hot chocolate evenings as a group, 3-man relays, partner dryland workouts, GA GA BALL, etc. The season came to an end with nearly ALL best times for everyone in every event! WOW! I am so happy for everyone and their amazing hard work and swims! What's next?! HELLOOOOOOO long course season! We kicked off the start of this season with our red vs. black intrasquad meet. Black team won again! Huge shout out to our swimmers that competed in their FIRST 400 IM, 400 freestyle, and 200s of all the strokes! *CLAPPING* Now we look forward to this next season and reaching some new goals and aspirations. I am looking forward to coaching and getting to know these swimmers even better over the summer! GO MAC!

Kino Senior 2

By Coach Jack

Long Course Swimming - The What, Why and How.

What is Long Course? Well it means swimming the length rather than the width at both of our Mesa pools, Kino and Skyline. Long Course is 50 meter swimming, that's 165 feet until you get any break at all, even if that's just a turn. Speaking of turns, while they're still an important part of most races, in long course, they are few and far between. In the 50 races you get none, it's just a straight shoot down the pool from start to finish, in the 100 free you get 1 turn compared to 3 when swimming yards and we all tend to get a bit

of rest after the turn. Frustrating to some is the 400 meter free where you don't even get a counter, that's because in Long Course it's only 7 turns, the same number you would get in a 200 yard race short course, so even though it's a tough race they figure you can still count the eight lengths yourself.

Why does long course seem so hard? Because it is, it challenges swimmers in a different way, many more strokes in a row. Let's explain!

If you swim the 50 free in short course, it's generally 10-12 strokes first length, then a turn and 15-18 more to finish. If you have good underwaters the stroke count is even less. The race feels short and you can generally put a lot of power into each stroke. When you swim 50 meter in long course the best swimmers in the world use at least 30 strokes and that's only if they have full 15 meter underwaters, for anyone else it's much more, maybe 40 to 50 strokes. It's much more difficult to maintain your power for that many strokes and most swimmers show about a 2 second fade from the first 25 to the finishing 25. Long Course also really favors swimmers with strong kicks. If your kick tends to run down after 20 seconds or so, you'll feel the effect even over a 50 and it gets worse as you go up in distance. There's a math problem here too; short course is 75 feet, but you don't have to swim all of it, with a good dive or turn you take away the first 5 yards and then the last couple are initiating the turn, so even in a 25 yard pool you swim about 18 yards or 54 feet, the rest is start and turn. In Long Course the pool is 165 feet and even if you glide off the wall or get a great start there's a lot of pool left to navigate, using the same 5 yards off a start and 2 yards into a turn, there's still 144 feet left to go. Start to see the math problem, 144 to 54 is not twice as long, it's closer to three times, and swimmers have to prepare for that large difference. It's also why swimmers will notice sore shoulders in the first few practices because the workload is very different, lots more strokes, getting tired in the middle of a length, and sometimes even skipping underwaters because they are already tired, whether that's physically or mentally, usually it's both.

Why do we do it? Well long course has been the summer distance in the US for the better part of 100 years, most towns had a summer long course pool, and switch to short course in winter when they go indoors. The Olympics, US Nationals, World Championships and even some summer league swimming back east have always been in long course. Prior to about 30 years ago the main pools in each part of the Valley were long course, examples Scottsdale Civic Center replaced by Cactus Pool in the 80's, Tempe McClintock still in use after 50 years and several remodels, old and new

Kino and now Skyline in Mesa, Glendale Community College still in use, and the oldest Phoenix pools including Encanto, Washington and Sunnyslope all still going strong far beyond their years. It's always been seen as the true test of swimming, and it generally feels that way. If you want to make a splash in swimming outside of the high school or NCAA ranks it's going to be in a long course pool.

How do you get better at it? Well some would tell you just to train more, and that certainly helps, but there's more to it than that. To be truly effective in long course swimming you need to maximize the underwater skills you have and maybe even modify them a little, You get fewer opportunities to blast off a wall, so it's important to use your kicks in smart and effective ways. Relax more off the walls and focus on the right rhythm and distance of your kicks and you make the pool a bit more manageable. The best swimmers also will not waste strokes and will work on their efficiency and possibly even lengthen their stroke when training and competing in long course, Lastly we get back to kicks, if you can't kick consistently or at least modify your kicks for the race you are swimming, it's almost a certainty that you will fatigue and maybe fail. You see more stroke DQ's in long course when technique breaks down and there's no kick to carry you. Think about kicking for the time of your intended race, example if your expected time in a 200 meter race is in the 2:40 to 3 minute range and you haven't done any kick sets of that time duration you may not be properly prepared. If you do many kick sets that are 50s or 100s you are probably pretty good at that distance, but what about time? If you've never done strong kicks for 3 minutes and your race is likely to take that long, it might not be a pretty result.

The best swimmers in the world have the best kicks, usually practiced over years and not months, but there's another secret, they may actually use a different kick for long course races, either a longer cycle or an intermittent kick designed for a particular swim. Katie Ledecky in her long races kicks continuously in one direction and then relaxes and surge kicks on the way back, mixing in a two beat cycle with some faster cycles intermixed. I'm sure this is something both well practiced and familiar to her over years, and don't think she couldn't kick all the way through an 800 or 1500 meter free, I'm sure she's done kick sets of that length, but has probably discovered that kicking that hard diminishes her results, so she has fine tuned her technique and saves her legs for a final push the last 100 or 200 meters. If it works for Katie, it might work for us too!

S2 group highlights - we just swam our first Long Course meet of the season and for half the kids involved, it was their first set of long course swims ever. They did a great

job both in preparing and executing their races. It's a little silly to talk about best times in a course they either haven't swam in a year or never at all, but we try to use reasonable expectations about what might be possible. factoring in experience, training level and which event it is. I have to say nearly all either met or exceeded the expectations we had for them, and it came down to understanding what their goal was: sometimes it was simply completing the race, but for others it was a higher bar, to do the right things in the right order, finish strong and learn valuable lessons as we go forward., That second part was where they succeeded. Most have only had a handful of long course practices, and some of those were during the Christmas holidays, but they did the work needed leading up to the meet, managed their anxieties during, and got some really valuable experience. This sets them all up really well to build their skills, and apply them as we get deeper into the LC season. I'm really looking forward to what they can accomplish over the next few months!

Skyline Senior 2

By Coach Heather

For most of the S2 swimmers, the focus is looking ahead five months to the high school state meet. Where do I want to be then and what do I need to do today to get there? We've set goals and are focusing on the little things that will add up to goal attainment. Now, its just a matter of getting the work done! The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary! Diligence is steady, earnest and energetic effort: devoted and painstaking work and application. What we hope ever to do with ease, we must first learn to do with diligence! In April we've become acquainted with DRAG SOX as we are strengthening our underwaters, committed to "no breath breakouts, and engaging our lats. Our continuing focus will be on DILIGENCE and DISCIPLINE!



But it's not all work for the Skyline S2 group - Paeton Grooms keeps us on the fun track by daily suggestions for games! This is a picture of Paeton catching everyone in a game of Red Light Green Light!



S2 athletes brought friends to the “Swim with Friends” days and we are so glad that two of those friends have joined us full time again! Mikala Storey and Charlotte Condie - welcome back!

Senior 1

By Coach Eric

The senior 1 group is off to a great start to the long course season. The long course season is a whirlwind, it comes and goes so quickly. We only have 12 weeks to get everything done. This season, one of our big focuses is getting better off the walls. We will be doing a lot of work on our underwater fly kicks; it is an integral part of swimming. We have started by doing 10-20 25's of fly kick working on form and strength of the kick. We will continue to work on the fly kicks but increase the intensity and speed of them as the season goes on. The second focus of this season is mind set. I am trying to

increase the speed at which the swimmers go through practice. Get them to feel that it is normal to go at a harder pace. This will give the swimmers a better understanding of stroke count and tempo at a more intense level of swimming.

I have sat down with the swimmers and discussed these two priorities and their goals over the last couple of weeks. I think it is important to understand a few key points that I discussed with all the athletes. First and foremost, I discussed the importance of being at practice. Consistency in training is one of the most important factors in improving. Even missing one practice a week over time can lead to 100,000 yards of training missed. Secondly I discussed the importance of setting goals for themselves. When a swimmer has set goals for their swims it gives us important information to use during our training. For example, if someone wants to go 2:00 in a 200 free it will give us a training time (30 seconds) to aim for, during practice. It is a gauge to determine how we are progressing towards our goals.

The senior 1 group has been doing a great job so far this season and have done an amazing job adjusting to the new paces. I look forward to seeing them progress.

Senior Dryland

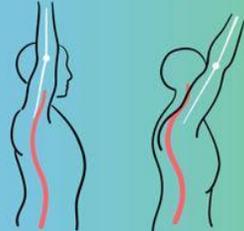
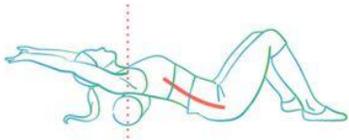
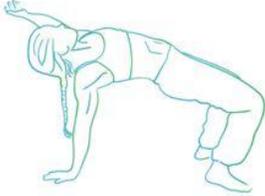
By Coach Bear

During dryland workouts the MAC senior swimmers have been working to develop **athleticism** and **strength**, the two key dryland components to faster swimming. *Better athletes equal better swimmers.* If we just simply swim, we are not going to unlock our full potential. As the new season began we added in a little more aerobic work than usual (ie running, jump ropes, jumping jacks, and everyones favorite..bleachers!) As they returned back to the basics in the water at the start of the season focusing on drill work, we added in that extra bit of aerobic work during dryland to be able to maintain their aerobic capacity when they start ramping it back up in the water.

There are 3 main phases of dryland training we go through during the season. First is the strength phase. We are currently in the strength phase where the primary focus is building strength! A great way to develop a faster kick, increase your distance per stroke, increasing your “Easy Speed”, etc. is to increase your strength. If you take two identical swimmers and the only difference is their strength to mass ratio, for example Swimmer A can only do 2 pull-ups while Swimmer B can do 14 pull-ups... who is going

to get their hand on the wall first? The swimmer with the higher strength to mass ratio. In the strength phase we are focused on 5 areas of building strength. This is through push, pull, squat, hinge, and brace exercises. Our secret to a great dryland program with these MAC seniors is the ratio at which we train those 5 areas. We are doing a 2:1 pull to push and a 2:1 hinge to squat and doing a lot of bracing exercises (core work!). Doing the pull work is going to help them engage their lats as well as increase their distance per stroke as they get stronger and help keep their shoulders healthy!

Extension is key to swimming and these swimmers have been working on their mobility to help lengthen them out in the water and better hit those hyper-streamlines off the walls. They have been stretching and using their foam rollers and lacrosse balls. Below are some stretches and tests every swimmer can do on a daily basis:

<p>There's more than one way to stretch your thoracic spine. When you first start, you want to be gentle and make sure you aren't overcompensating with your lower back. This basic thoracic stretch may be hard for you if your shoulders are tight.</p>  <p>KNEELING BENT ARM CAT</p>	 <p>HEALTHY SPINE KYPHOTIC SPINE</p> <p>Kyphosis also makes a straight overhead reach impossible. If you haven't been able to balance your handstand, your upper thoracic might be your problem. We have an entire course to address thoracic mobility, but here are a few basic movements that will start you out in reversing your hunchback.</p>	 <p>The foam roller puts more pointed pressure on your thoracic. Set it under your scaps and extend your arms overhead (hold the bottom edge of a piece of furniture if needed). You can use your posterior pelvic tilt to avoid arching your lower back. You want the bend to come from the thoracic spine.</p>
 <p>TWISTING BEAR</p> <p>The Twisting Bear is a way for beginners to mobilize into their thoracic through basic movement. Only a bit of extension is necessary, and the athlete can gauge what it possible for them as they balance on their supporting hand. While it's not a squared bridge, it still builds strength into the extension.</p>	 <p>TEST YOUR EXTENSION</p> <p>Stand on an incline (to avoid ankle flexion issues). Hold a dowel overhead with thumbs extended, touching each other. Then squat. Your shoulders should rest over your hips with your chest protruding.</p> <p>If you can easily hold your overhead line through the squat, your thoracic extension is good!</p>	<p>Use a fitness ball to help contour your upper spine. This requires some degree of mobility already be attained, so if it's too hard, use the foam roller method for the first few months to guarantee your bend is in the right part of your spine.</p>  <p>INVERTED CAT</p>