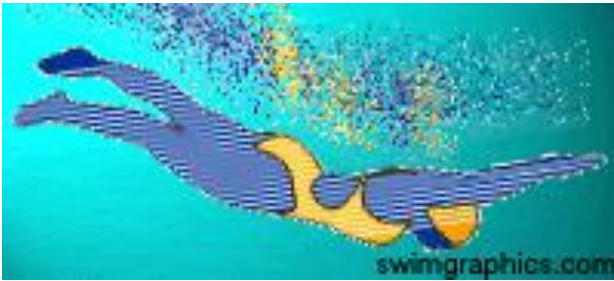


TIP OF THE MONTH:

EVEN BETTER UNDERWATERS

By Coach Tony Ackerson

We are constantly preaching better under waters during practice and meets, and the results usually show. I know that when I'm watching a race unfold, and an SHS or SA swimmer goes into the last turn even with a swimmer from another team, I always feel confident that our swimmer will come off the wall with an advantage. This month, I want to share with everyone a little secret of sorts that I've spoken with some of you about in the past. It absolutely will improve your turns noticeably within less than three months.



Here's what you do:

Every day, in warm up as well as recovery swims in between hard sets, make a concerted effort to have THE longest under waters off every wall. Actually COMPETE with your teammates and the people in your lane to "show off" your underwater skill. For example, when you and your buddy in the lane next to you are going into a turn during warm up, make every effort to

have your feet touch the wall simultaneously, then absolutely EXPLODE off the wall. While kicking hard, hold the streamline until your friend takes his/her first stroke, and then you take yours. The first two pulls should be big, strong pulls through the surface, and then you can return to slow, easy swimming. Now, if your buddy takes that turn in the relaxed way that most people do turns during warm up, you will likely take a minimum of one body length out of your friend on that one turn.

All right, so you're reading this and you're thinking, "Why go to all this trouble? It's only warm up!"

Well, there are several good things that will happen. First, you will begin to subconsciously work ALL of your turns more efficiently during practice, and you will be much more aware of how you fare off every wall. You'll become keenly aware of which teammates have good walls, and which ones have great walls.

Secondly, your confidence in your turns will skyrocket, and you will see your times drop correspondingly. You'll begin to see that the gaps that used to be opened up against you on starts aren't as great anymore.

Finally, and this may even be the most important part, you will develop a reputation within the team or group as having unbelievable turns. And the psychological impact here can be devastating during races. People that expect to win races sometimes do, but people that expect to lose races nearly always lose. The same thing holds true with turns. When you go into the last turn of a race with an opponent that you believe is invincible, you will almost certainly lose.

So, start improving those under waters today, and check out the results by J.O.'s/Senior Champs? and Area 2's.