

NASA Coach's Corner

September 2021

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Welcome Back

From Coach Hembree

Welcome back!!! I hope that everyone is having a good start to the school year. It is hard to believe that we are starting the 30th year of NASA this season. The coaching staff and the NASA board of directors have been working over the past few weeks in preparation for the upcoming season and we are looking to make it as successful season as possible.

Wouldn't be the start of a new season if we didn't talk about COVID-19 and how that looks to affect our season. With that said things do look pretty positive. At this point we will continue with Middlebury Schools current plan, returned to "normal" until we can't. Which means we will be as normal as possible until the school board or higher entity makes a decision that forces us to change. We will continue to ask for your patience as in the past year we all know this can change at a moment's notice and we just ask your flexibility if we do have to make adjustments. Also please keep in mind because we do use Middlebury Community School's facilities we must follow whatever procedures they impose. This would include if spectators are allowed at meets, the wearing of masks, etc. With that said it looks to be back to business as normal, for now.

I am planning to continue the coach's corners again, on a monthly basis, as we have received a lot of positive feedback on this communication method. Each month you will see the following; write ups from each lead coach on what is going on in their group, important dates for the month, Swimmers of the month, Safe Sport/MAAPP information, and a parent education section. Please take the time to read over these each month.

I am excited to see our athletes grow this season not only as swimmers but a people. We have the potential at all levels to do some great things this year. Year 30 looks to be a great one!

Age Group Happenings

From Coach Dan

Hello Parents and Swimmers!

After such a fun and exciting season this summer, it was nice to come up with all the new goals for this next season. The anticipation has really been building as we await the arrival of the Elementary swimmers back to the pool! The coaches have really missed their energy. The middle school groups are starting out really strong, pairing full participation in filling leadership goals with an incredible work effort and toughness. I for one am very excited to get the ball rolling on what looks like is going to be an incredibly fun season.

We have a few new meets on the calendar that will help us out in the process of achieving our season goals. The intra-squad meet has been replaced, with a new dual meet with PAC in its place. This should be a lot of fun as it will be scored out, giving each participating swimmer a chance to earn points for their team in the beginning of the season.

Each swimmer on our team is worth a tremendous amount. Their individual choices and attitudes will shape how strong NASA will become. Swimmers, this season will be full of difficult choices, wonderful opportunities, and the glory of knowing we have achieved or progressed towards our goals. The NASA TEAM this season is a huge mashup of every individual's smallest decisions and efforts to do their best for each other. We start this season with an incredible amount of opportunities, and we should feel prepared to capture these small moments and make the most out of them. We as a coaching staff are looking forward to helping and assisting your every need!

-Coach Dan

From Coach Aaliyah

For Blue Group this season I'm excited to see how much they improve! Last season we had crazy amounts of time drops and overall technique improvements. A few goals we have this season is to continue working on our stroke and our endurance, and also getting as many athletes to championship meets as possible. I'm looking forward to seeing how well this season goes!

-Coach Aaliyah

From Coach Emma & Coach Shelly

We are really looking forward to getting started with the season for Elementary Blue group! It is always exciting to welcome new and returning swimmers and get back into the swing of things in the water and out! This season we will be focusing on lots of total body movement and adding some more dryland in than just Saturday morning like we have in the past, so please come to practice with tennis shoes on if at all possible. We have a lot of fun things planned to keep things interesting and to keep learning and improving, and we can't wait for next week! See you soon - don't forget your water bottles!

-Coach Emma & Coach Shelly



Important Dates

- 1st - Returning Members Meeting.
- 7th - New Members Meeting. 6:30p NHS Auditorium
- 7th - First day for El. Gold
- 8th - First day for El. Blue
- 7-10th - New Member Tryouts
- 13th - First day for new members
- 24th - Last Day to Officially register.

Registration Information

From Coach Hembree

We will once again this season be using the online registration platform through the team website. In an effort to make sure we have a digital trail, and to cut down on paper usage, all of the forms will again be part of the registration process. These forms include the Terms and Conditions and the Medical release. As you work through the registration process you will be asked to agree to each of these prior to the completion of your registration. A few important items to note with this process. First with the medical release it will be extremely important that you keep all of your medical information including, Physician's Name, Physician's Phone Number, Allergies, and Insurance information up to date in your account information. If this information is ever needed by a member of the coaching staff we will only be able to access it through your account information. **Registration is Open now and will close on the 24th at midnight.** As always if you have any questions about the registration process please feel free to reach out to myself or Tabby Bratt (Business Manager).



Swimmer of the Month

From the Coaching Staff

Beginning with September (posted in October) each group will start recognizing a Swimmer of the month. This particular individual will be honored, for their use of the NASA core values:

- **Selflessness** - Putting others and the team's need before oneself.
- **Merit** - What are you doing right now to better yourself, the team, and those around you?
- **Toughness** - The ability to push through and face challenges.
- **Leadership** - Setting the example through actions and words.
- **Constant Improvement** - Always looking for a ways to be better every day.



Selected swimmer's will receive a Team cap that says "Swimmer of the Month", so all are aware of their outstanding achievement, and a write up in the newsletter by their coach.

Safe Sport Corner

From the Coaching Staff

There have been many changes and updates to the required MAAPP (Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies) by the US Center for Safe Sport. You can find these polices in the NASA Team Handbook. As a reminder all families must sign the MAAPP Agreement each year. This agreement will be sent out soon, please make sure it is signed (by all in the family - Parent/Guardians, Athletes) and returned by the 24th. Each month the coaching staff will include a safe sport scenario, or a reminder of a NASA Safe Sport Policy, to be discussed with your swimmer. The goal of these scenarios is to create proper dialogue and to teach our athletes how to properly respond in different situations. For the month of September please make sure to review the NASA Safe Sport/MAAPP policies that are included in the handbook.



Technology Corner

TritonWear

NASA is on the forefront when it comes to the use of technology in our training as a way to find continued improvement for our athletes. For the past few years we have been using a system called TritonWear with our middle school gold and high school athletes. The TritonWear system is a small device that is worn by the athlete as they swim. This device then records different metrics including what stroke is being swam, stroke counts, breathing counts, stroke rate, push off power, and efficiency among many other metrics. This information is then transmitted in real time to TVs around the pool so athletes are able to make adjustments in training based on their data. Athletes are also able to log into their own accounts and see and compare from their workouts. The use of this data has given our athletes a better understanding of what they are doing in the pool and what they need to do to go faster. If you are interested in taking advantage of this technology with your athlete (MS gold and Up) then please reach out to your group coach ASAP.



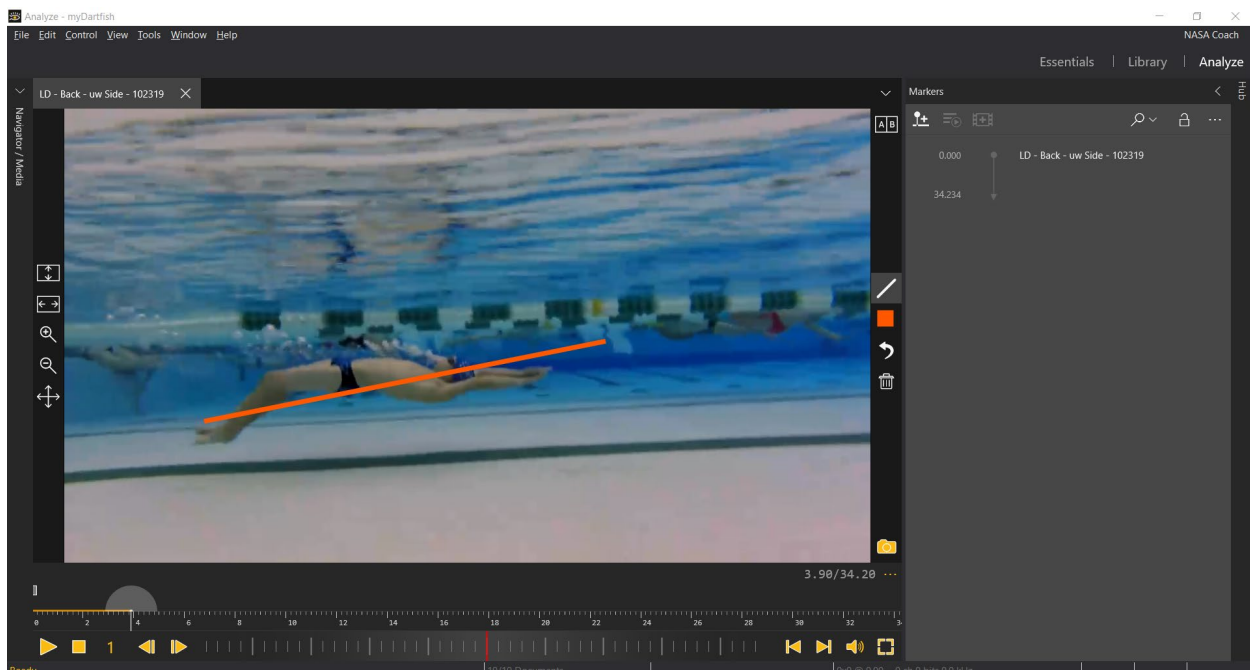
TritonWear Generation 2 Unit

DartFish

The NASA coaching staff will again be using the DartFish video analysis software at practices and meets to record and analyze the swimmers stroke. This software allows the coaching staff to breakdown and analyze all parts of a swimmers stroke above and below the water and will provide swimmers visual insight on what is going on in their strokes while allowing coaches a better all around view of what the swimmer is doing.

“I believe in belief. If you are going to achieve anything, the very first step is to form a strong belief that you can do it, then remind yourself of that constantly”

- Coach Richard Quick



How to Create Strong Habits to Help Your Athletes Achieve Goals Written by Frank L. Smoll

Some athletes, when asked about their current goals, will simply list 'winning.' But ask how they intend to [meet that goal](#) and you'll likely be met with confused silence. Not only does [goal-setting](#) often go overlooked, we also miss teaching students how to meet their goals by putting specific, long-term daily habits in place.

Frank L. Smoll, PhD, a sport psychologist and professor at the University of Washington, regularly finds himself teaching these concepts to university students who are learning about goal-setting for the first time. Here's what he wants you to know to help your athletes create a system of habits to hit their goals.

Teach goal-setting basics

Before explaining habits, you need to first teach your athletes how to set goals, and then how related habits can logically help them achieve those goals. It sounds obvious to adults, but for young children, that cause-and-effect may be harder to comprehend.

"In college, I teach a course on this, but it's foundational and often skipped in younger grades," says Smoll. In order to set young athletes up with a strong foundation of goal-setting, try sharing the concept of [SMART goals](#) and the reasoning behind this strategy.

Consider the ABCs

"Create goals that are Achievable, Believable, and Commit-able," says Smoll. "People often set broad goals - like New Year's resolutions to 'lose weight' - and they rarely work." That's because goal-setting is a process that requires commitment to working on things on a daily basis.

You need to start with a goal that you can believe in, realistically achieve, and are willing to commit to. Then, break down that [goal](#) into action steps. "Find individual steps that are achievable and commit to them," he adds. "Those early wins are going to keep students invested and moving forward."

Not all goals are created equal

"Find something that your athletes want to get from the season. Find something that they will want to achieve, and they will be motivated to start working on those strong habits," explains Smoll.

Their [goals](#) don't have to be sport-specific. Suggest something outside of sport if they're struggling to find something sport-related. Maybe a goal would be to make time to read more books or improve their grade in a class. Smoll adds, "You can find something simple that they want to accomplish, and once they accomplish something small, they'll be even more motivated."

Define those good habits

Once a SMART goal has been identified, sit down with your athletes and list out habits that support that goal and will help the team find success, suggests Smoll.

That can include practice-specific habits like always warming up, as well as healthy lifestyle habits like [eating balanced meals](#), getting in physical activity [beyond practice](#), and practicing smart time management.

Show the importance of specific habits

Often, children won't understand how a habit like [sleeping](#) enough can improve their training. "You have to convince young athletes of the importance of these habits before you can expect them to put them into practice," says Smoll.

For example, more than [40 percent of teens](#) aren't getting adequate amounts of sleep, and inadequate sleep can lead to inattention in school and in games, as well as an increased risk of depression and [anxiety](#) or other [risky behaviors](#). Simply telling a student to 'sleep eight hours each night' isn't as helpful as explaining the benefits versus the risks.

Avoid external rewards

It's tempting to offer extrinsic rewards for a job well done, or for sticking to a healthy habit for a certain amount of time. "But the problem with providing extrinsic rewards for goal achievement is that an athlete will start working for that reward versus that [feeling of accomplishment](#). A dedicated athlete shouldn't need five dollars for a win," says Smoll.

"A lot of parents want to be involved, but they're actually hurting the athlete by providing external motivation. We want athletes to have an internal drive, and if you start introducing extrinsic rewards, that undermines internal motivation."

Chart progress

Repetition [has been shown](#) to be the key to habit formation. "One of the keys to goal-setting is adding in process goals that are measurable, things you can do each day. I have athletes set up a simple performance evaluation system where they can check off if they met that objective for the day," explains Smoll.

That can be things like drinking a certain amount of [water](#), showing up to practice on time, doing a quick yoga or [mindfulness](#) routine each day, or any other healthy habits. "Any simple form of record-keeping is going to be helpful."

Teaching young athletes how to develop strong habits early will set the foundation that will allow them to reach their goals.

Being able to see "those easy early wins - like simply sticking to a small habit - can make it much easier to work towards big goals," says Smoll. "Give a kid something they can do right away, and you create a foundation for moving on to other things. This is a big part of why youth sport is so valuable," Smoll says. "It's a laboratory for life."