

Dryland Training 2017

Starting hopefully October 2nd we will be integrating our all new dryland training program. This program is derived from the Vern Gambetta GAIN system. Vern is the former head track coach of the University of California Berkeley, on to a consultant for USA Track and Field, and currently the owner of the GAIN Network. Since 2009 he has been heavily involved in the swimming world by working with Carmel Swim Club, Dynamo Swim Club, Sarasota YMCA Sharks, Fort Collins Area, Mason Manta Rays, among others. Of the top 20 team in the country, 8 are currently on the GAIN system and account for the last 8 team titles at USA Swimming Junior Nationals. On top of the team results, the athletes in GAIN programs accounted for a staggering 30% of the athletes that competed at the 2016 Junior PanPacs for Team USA.

This system will be a very large overhaul, and will involve a tremendous amount of learning and adjustment from all parties involved.

Other than the obvious raw performance aspect of the new dryland program, we are also excited because this program should work to help the swimmers become better athletes, and fill in for the obvious lack of proper physical education. Once we get over the curve, athletes should start to become bombproof, shoulders that are extremely strong, lower backs that are stable, and knees that can support athletes.

1) Warm-up to Swim

For every single workout prior to getting in we will be doing 10-15 minutes of dryland. This will also carry over to meets. We will be taking this time to warm-up muscles, cardiovascular system, and to start to “bomb-proof” athletes joints with some basic stabilization. Athletes will be using new pieces of equipment regularly and doing something different almost daily until we have taught all the movements that are part of warm-up to swim.

2) Strength Training

This program is focused on creating athletes that move well, through the entire range of motion, very quickly and very explosively. Squats will go to parallel, lunges are knees to ground, push-ups are chest to deck, and pull-ups are lockout to over the bar. This is going to take years before it becomes “easy” for athletes to do. We want athletes to leave the program with all the necessary skills to be prepared to move into the weight room with a College Strength Coach. To realistically get there, we have to start all the way back with 8 year olds. From teaching the Blue group, transitioning the Bronze group to training, adding resistance to the Gold group, and finally increasing intensity with the Senior Elite group, your athlete should be well prepared for the next steps.

3) Movements

The movements are simple, but will be combined as the athlete’s age. Movements are also expected to be done with a very high intensity, and with very little rest. Pull-ups and push-ups will eventually progress to being done on rings, which will force more stability in the shoulder joint without having to

force very high numbers. Movements that start out being done with holding a kickboard will progress to being done with medicine balls and then to dumbbells. Once again, teach first and intensity later.

4) Bands

One of the first things the athletes will notice is the volume of rubber bands that we are going to be using at practice. Mini-Band walks are part of nearly everyday's routine, Shoulder Cords for scapular strength will be done regularly, and Banded Stretches will be added once the athletes get old enough to need it. We know the kids are going to be mesmerized by these at first, but they will quickly become part of their daily routine. In the long run, we hope they become part of their regular meet warm-up.

5) Culture

The goal is to ultimately turn this into part of who we are. We understand this is going to take time, Carmel told us it took almost 5 full years for it to just be who they are, but we know this is the right decision to add to the process. This program isn't just a swimming thing, it is a life thing. We want the athletes to be well rounded, and adding more skills to learn, more skills to master, and more things to be proud of is only going to help.

5) Effort, Attitude, and Behavior

This is going to be a big adjustment. Most importantly, there is going to be a ton of equipment, toys, and general movement during these drylands. Athletes who don't want to be there, or aren't willing to do things properly, will not be tolerated. If there is going to be a serious injury, it is going to happen in dryland due to improper behavior. The most important thing we need you to express to your athletes is that any horseplay, inattention, or general lack of effort will not be tolerated. Unlike swimming, due to the nature of safety this will be an immediate removal from practice.