

ASCA Coaches' Clinic April 15, 2012, Orinda, CA

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Critical Components of Competitive Swimming:

Recovery, Entry, Catch and Distance Per Stroke ... and other stuff

"The physical world is your ultimate guru."

Important considerations of stroke development:

- What you as a coach know
 - Can you recognize the stroke flaw
 - Do you know how to change it
 - Can you identify **the real cause** of the problem
- How you communicate the problem and the process of change
 - Help the swimmer understand ...
 - The flaw and how it feels – video if necessary
 - What it feels like to do it correctly – the difference
 - Why it will be ultimately better in the long run
 - How long it will take to change – be conservative
 - How much improvement can happen with the "new stroke"
 - What your commitment is ... only if
 - What their commitment **MUST** be
- How receptive is the swimmer to making the change
 - Do they have a sincere desire to improve
 - Will they make a long-term commitment – it could be years
- How consistently will you reinforce it
 - **Daily at a minimum**
 - Specifically in:
 - Warm Up
 - easy Post Warm Up sets
 - **Main sets when tired**
 - *Example: You work on something one day. The next day in warm up, without reminding them, you watch to see if they are working on it. If yes, very good. If no, not good.*

The Physical Process Of Stroke Change

A swimmer's bad stroke is a result of physical (natural) tendencies and bad habits, usually formed over years. Changing bad habits may take days, weeks, months or years. To make long-term changes, the following steps are necessary:

The swimmer needs to...

- 1) execute the change with easy swimming over a long period of time
 - 2) then be able to maintain the change at a faster speed
 - 3) be able to maintain the change while swimming fatigued, in other words, if they can't do it tired, they will never do it in competition.
- 👍 then the racing will take care of itself.

Poor Head Position as the cause of common stroke flaws.

Poor Head Position leads to Stroke Flaw causes Stroke Problem

An example for each stroke.

Freestyle

Problem	Stroke Flaw	Head Position Cause
Poor rotation on the right side	Right arm crosses under body	Chin moves to left on left arm pull
Conclusion	You may not be able to fix the stroke balance and pull until head position is corrected. To be clear, all three are a problem, but the head position may need to be dealt with first.	
Drills	Kick hands at side rotate. Catch Up breathe every 3 rd focus on moving chin to the rolling shoulder. A snorkel is also a very good tool to use with these drills.	
Example	Currently working with two swimmers on the high school team who have this flaw. Once fixed, I believe they can improve dramatically.	

Backstroke

Problem	Stroke Flaw	Head Position Cause
Left arm slips water, is shallow and carries bubbles	Right shoulder sits flat, doesn't rotate	Chin slides to the right shoulder on right arm finish
Conclusion	Can't fix stroke balance and pull until head position is corrected.	
Drills	Kick with hands at side and rotate chin to shoulder; Lift Drop, One Arm	
Example	This was the biggest problem with Sven Campbell's Backstroke a year and a half ago. Fixing his head position allowed him to balance his stroke, rotate more, hold more water with his left arm and increase his stroke rate. He improved his 200 meter Back from 2:09 to 2:04.3 to make the Olympic Trials time. (video)	

Breaststroke

Problem	Stroke Flaw	Head Position Cause
No extension and glide	Elbows slide back and the pull is under body	Chin tucks the on pull which causes the hands to come under the body and then the head rolls up on the extension & outswEEP
Conclusion	Can't fix stroke balance and pull until the head position is corrected.	
Drills	Pull with Free Kick – hold at extension, sweep out and hesitate, breathe on the insweep . Same drill and hesitate under chin.	

Butterfly

Problem	Stroke Flaw	Head Position Cause
Poor hip roll and no extension. Stroke breaks down badly when tired	Recovery is high in back and then short in front. At the entry, the hands slide out wide and back as the hips roll	Chin tucks on pull then rises at the entry when the body should be rolling
Conclusion	Can't fix stroke balance which includes the timing, rhythm, stroke length and catch until the head movement and timing of the breath is corrected.	
Drills	Fly arms with Free kick drag thumbs, breathe every other stroke. Do this drill slowly and relaxed. Also, can use a snorkel.	
Comment	I have done this with many swimmers of the years at all levels. It has taken months and in some cases years. I would only pursue this with a swimmer who has potential in Fly i.e. hold water well and/or has a natural Fly kick.	

Poor Recovery as the cause of common stroke flaws.

Poor Recovery leads to Stroke Flaw causes Stroke Problem

An example for each stroke.

Freestyle

Problem	Stroke Flaw	Poor Recovery is the Cause
Slips water on catch.	Hand slides up and out on the entry.	The hand leads the recovery, getting ahead of or higher than the elbow
Conclusion	The direction and momentum of the recovery absolutely impacts the entry and catch. Momentum sideways causes a swing across the face and momentum up then down does not allow the hand to extend in front of the shoulder and at the proper depth for a strong catch.	
Drills	Catch Up Thumb Lead Drag (CUTLD); 5-Point Catch Up, Any Freestyle Swim or Drill with Fingertip Drag	
Example	A fast Senior Group swimmer's right arm catch was wide and his elbow dropped. The problem was that his recovery swung wide. His hand crossed his face the slid outside his shoulder. We worked on his catch by fixing his recovery.	

Backstroke

Problem	Stroke Flaw	Poor Recovery is the Cause
Pull slides out wide and shallow	Hand enters behind head	Recovery is wide and the momentum forces the arm behind the head on the entry.
Conclusion	The recovery, above the thigh and shoulder (in line) needs to be fixed first.	
Drills	Kick with hands at side and rotate chin to shoulder; Lift Drop, One Arm.	
Example	Many young swimmers want to move their arms fast (high stroke rate) and cannot think about a slow, controlled recovery. But they must be taught to slow down and be aware of how their arm exits the water.	

Breaststroke

Problem	Stroke Flaw	Poor Recovery is the Cause
Elbows drop on catch. No glide.	Hands slide up (rise) on extension/glide	Hands recovering higher than the elbows which cause a down and up extension with the hands rising as the swimmer glides and sweeps out.
Conclusion	Forearms should be parallel to the water during the recovery to create balance in front which will allow for better leverage on the outswEEP and catch.	
Drills	Pull with a flutter kick and pause on the insweep under chin. If hands are high and elbows have dropped the swimmer will sink.	
Comment	Again, young Breaststrokers want to hurry their stroke but they need to swim more long glide Breaststroke and be patient. Counting strokes per lap is a good way to achieve better distance per stroke.	

Butterfly

Problem	Stroke Flaw	Poor Recovery is the Cause
Poor hip roll and no extension, slips water when tired. Breath is late.	Two possible problems. 1) The recovery is high in back and then short in front. 2) The hands recover too fast ahead of body roll.	The hands finish the stroke and recover high, above the body line and then get ahead of the rhythm and timing of the stroke.
Conclusion	All the problems in front, the entry, extension, catch and timing, are caused by the poor recovery.	
Drills	Arms with Free kick drag thumbs – can breathe every other stroke or use a snorkel.	
Example	Generally, this problem and the head position problem are two reasons why many Butterflies are (relatively) fast in the 25 or 50 but break down badly in the 100.	

General Comments

Win the Walls

- 👉 Teach your kids to have pride in winning the walls. My opinion is that you need to destroy your competition on the walls and uw because most kids won't train it.

Streamlines

Streamline off ALL walls - EVERY lap. How many kids in your group do this off every wall. You must make it happen.

Underwater

Set either a number of Fly kicks uw or a number of black lines to reach. For example:

- **Fly and Back** - 6 Fly Kicks or 3-4 black lines uw depending on the set.
 - **Breaststroke Pull Downs** - 4 black lines as follows: glide past 2, then pull & kick to glide past 3, then recover and kick to approach 4.
 - **Free** - 2 Fly Kicks then breakout. The first person I started doing this with was Kim Vandenberg 14 years ago.
- 👉 To perfect both streamlines and underwater speed, it takes weeks and months of constant conditioning. My comment to the kids is, it's not about knowing how to do it, it is about training it.

Hold swimmers accountable for all of the parameters of the sets. Examples:

- **Simple set:** 10x50 Free @ :50 with specific instructions:
 - breathe odd lap every 3rd, even lap every 4th
 - 2 Fly kicks off each wall
 - hold stroke count - 14 for example
 - work on a specific technique
 - **Complicated Set:** 8x(75 Free Fast + 25 ez)
 - For the 75 – build each lap to 100%
 - Hold stroke count each lap
 - Breathe every 4th on 3rd lap
 - 3 Fly kicks off all walls and do not breathe on the breakout stroke
- 👉 Where it gets hard
- Building speed and holding the stroke count – no gliding it
 - Holding breathing pattern
 - Descending 25 splits i.e. 14.6, 14.5, 14.1, more common is 14.2, 14.4, 14.9

Hold swimmers accountable in training.

- Fly - breathing pattern ex breathe every other stroke or 2 up, 1 down
- Freestyle - breathing pattern - breathe every 3rd or 4th
- Freestyle – training with a stroke count that is optimal for each swimmer
- Backstroke uw transition to the surface- 6 Fly Kicks, Flutter Kick, 2nd breakout stroke before the face breaks the surface
- Breaststroke - hold stroke count on set - ex 6 strokes per lap – no matter what!

Coaching Tips For Free & Back

- Freestyle - stand at the end of the lane to watch swimmers swim toward you. Watch their head position/movement, entry, and pull pattern – crossing under body.
- Backstroke - watch swimmers come toward you to see the entry and pull. It is best to film so kids can see if they are behind their head – because they never believe you.

Helpful Freestyle Drills

- For Freestyle
 - Long Arm Dog Paddle. This is a good but difficult drill. It brings out all flaws the swimmer has in their regular stroke ... head movement, poor rotation, crossing under the body.
 - Catch Up Thumb Lead Drag (CUTLD). This is an outstanding drill that helps fix the problem of the high and/or wide recovery or a recovery in which the hand gets ahead of the elbow.

Workout Ideas To Help Stroke Development

- 👉 **Daily Coach Communication** is very important. You should stop kids constantly either at the end of the lap or in the middle of the pool. Sometimes stop them twice in the same lap to make a point.
- 👉 **One Minute Meetings**: Get kids out of the water and have “mini meetings” during workout. You can do this during warm up or a main set. Ask them questions like ...
 - how does your stroke feel?
 - what are you working on?
 - can you tell if you are doing ...?
 - does it feel better or worse?
- 👉 Swimmers should **work on their stroke ALL THE TIME**: warm up, drills, easy swims, main sets, even warm down.
- 👉 **Create doable sets** to allow swimmers to work on their technique during main sets. It would be more productive to give the kids an extra 5 seconds rest on an interval and demand good technique. If you make intervals so tight that they have to struggle to get to the wall for the next send off, it would be unreasonable to expect perfect technique.

Big Picture Coaching Thoughts

Please Consider the Short-Term Success vs Long-Term Development

- **Summer League** is ... Sprinting, Racing, Winning, Kids get medals, Parents are happy, Coach gets bonus.
- **High School and Year-Round** is swimming 100s, 200, 400 IM, 500 & 1,000 Free. Success at this level is dependent more on stroke efficiency and distance per stroke.
- **Freestyle as an example:**
 - **Summer League**
 - Emphasis is high stroke rate, no distance per stroke, very little efficiency
 - No breathing efficiency—breath timing is not learned even through 15-18
 - Year-Round
 - Efficiency is critical
 - Distance per stroke is the key to long term improvement
 - Swimmers breathe almost every stroke so efficiency on the breath is critical
 - An example
 - Sprinter slips under body on breath – not an issue in 50s
 - In the 100 & 200, will breathe almost every stroke – now it's an issue
 - Butterfly is exactly the same problem.

Summarizing The Stroke Development Coaching Philosophy

- 👉 **The process of stroke development establishes a long-term relationship between the swimmer and coach with MUTUAL responsibility.**

If you start this relationship, see it through. Do not give up if it is not working. Talk to your swimmers every day. Make them know that you will do whatever it takes, for however long it takes, to see these changes through.

- 👉 **You need to know and you need to let your swimmers know that THERE ARE NO GUARANTEES in swimming. You cannot and should not guarantee success.**

All you can do is promise your commitment and your belief that what you both are doing it right – NO MORE. I have heard coaches make outlandish promises to young swimmers. The one who suffers is the kid who feels he failed and/or let the coach and his parents down by not reaching those “unattainable” times.

- 👉 **Communicate with the parents your philosophy about stroke development and long term success versus short-term speed.**

It is your responsibility to get the parents to understand, agree with and support your philosophy. Educate them. Make them intelligent swim parents.

Concepts to help the
coach and swimmer
develop a long term,
committed and mutually
supportive relationship.

**Try to be right all the time,
or as much as possible.**

**Only speak of what you are sure
about.**

Follow through aggressively.

Honor your commitments.

**Right or Wrong – their perception of
you has to be that you know what
you are talking about and they
should trust you unconditionally.**

**Building that credibility and trust is
very important.**

***Never* sacrifice respect for
friendship.**

Coach Your “Favorites” Aggressively

Of the “non-favorites”,

- the kids who care will realize they need to be better to earn your attention.
- the kids who don't care, won't care.

The point is to make it obvious that the kids who do the right things (in swimming and life) will get the most attention.

It has nothing to do with times or your personal likes and dislikes.

Talk to the kids constantly to build a positive, trusting, mutually committed, relationship.

Have visionary discussions:

- I think you could swim at ? college if you ...
- I believe you are an x level swimmer if you are willing to ...
- I think your best event will ultimately be ? and I would like to train you for it.
 - This is why (specifically).
 - This is how we are going to do it.
 - This is the time frame for development.
 - This is the improvement you are capable of.

Have technique improvement discussions:

- I want you to work on these things ... because I believe it will get you to the ? level:
 - Free-lengthen stroke, more efficient distance per stroke
 - Specifically how – explain changes to be made
 - Stroke count per lap, ex.
 - 12 in moderate sets
 - 13 in threshold sets
 - 14 in speed sets
 - Underwater speed
 - Improve technique (kick width and/or speed)
 - Black lines underwater
 - Match up and race ?

Have personal growth discussions:

- I recognize how your are being better at ... and I appreciate it.
- You have grown so much in these areas ... and I am proud of you.
- I need you to be a leader on this team. This is what I would like to help me with ...

Giveth and Taketh Away

Create value for your swimmers. Build a strong relationship. Create some kind of legitimate need.

Then make it conditional.

“For me to continue to support you, I need to you to...

- Be at practice every day**
- Train with more focus**
- Be a leader all the time**
- Be positive in the locker room**
- Make impeccable social choices**

If they don't, you need to be willing to let them go (cut the cord).

“Character is a by-product; it is produced in the great manufacture of daily duty.” *Woodrow Wilson*

Samples of
drill progression,
goal sheets,
swimmer reviews
and assessments.

(note: the goal sheets
and reviews are only
for serious, committed
swimmers).

ORINDA AQUATICS - GENERAL STROKE AND DRILL GUIDELINES			
FREESTYLE	BACKSTROKE	BREASTSTROKE	BUTTERFLY
<i>Stroke Emphasis</i>	<i>Stroke Emphasis</i>	<i>Stroke Emphasis</i>	<i>Stroke Emphasis</i>
⇒ Start with body position and balance .	Start with body position and balance .	Start with body position and balance (short axis stroke)	Start with body position and balance (short axis stroke)
⇒ Horizontal Balance - head, shoulders & hips in a horizontal line	Horizontal Balance -head relaxed, chest high, thighs near the surface	General stroke emphasis - the stroke should be aggressive	body position w/o kick - learn to swim with proper timing & rhythm
⇒ Rotation-General : long axis stroke aggressive rotation to 45 degrees - check angle of shoulders and hips.	Rotation-General : long axis stroke, aggressive rotation to 45 d - check angle of shoulders and hips.	Finish every stroke cycle: palms flat, thumbs touching, face down, hips high and feet together.	Rhythm - at entry extension lean on chest feel hips rise-at catch pull hips through hands-drive hips down
⇒ Rotation - Breath : face recovers and hips rotate before hand enters water	Rotation at Entry -little finger entry to deep catch (8-18") as opposite shoulder rolls out of water to chin	Kick - look at width and speed of kick - heels recover quickly and narrow - think foot speed	Timing - is critical - develop timing through body roll - incorporate kicks into balanced stroke
⇒ Rotation - Finish : hips rotate ahead of the hands finish.	Rotation at Recovery - hips rotate and shoulder leads recovery.	Breath -forward (in line w shoulders) drive forehead down aggressively	Entry - palms slightly pitched out enter just outside of shoulders
⇒ Recovery - low and relaxed in a forward motion - hand below elbow	Rotation at Finish - hips rotate ahead (out of the way) of finish	Pull OutswEEP - thumbs rotate down, hand near surface.	Catch - a quick, slightly down and out pitch of the hands
⇒ Entry - to a deep, smooth water catch below shoulder	Recovery Arm - straight arm w thumb lead above thigh and eye.	Pull Catch - elbow flex at "corners" and near surface-thumbs lead-blade	Finish - accelerate hands past hips - slice hands out.
⇒ Catch - below the shoulder with elbow flex and fingertips pressing.	Catch : below the shoulder with elbow flex.	Pull InswEEP -thumbs lead-elbows drive to side - watch hand pitch	Kick 1 Beat - work for distance - sync with body roll
⇒ Kick - tight and narrow - roll w body - watch width of kick thru roll.	Kick - tight and narrow - roll w body - watch width of kick thru roll.	Recovery - forearms horizontal - thumbs lead at surface very fast	Kick 2 Beat - for power-kick hands in / kick hands out - work upkick
		Body Roll - lean on chest at extension, drive hips on catch	
Progression	Progression	Progression	Progression
⇒ horizontal body position	horizontal body position	horizontal body position	body roll with kick
⇒ horizontal body position w kick	horizontal body position w kick	horizontal body position w kick	one arm drill for body roll
⇒ body roll w good balance & kick	body roll w good balance & kick	kick technique and foot speed	arm stroke technique with body roll
⇒ armstroke recovery in balance	armstroke recovery in balance	pull with proper technique & timing	kick timing
⇒ full stroke w body rotation & timing	full stroke w body rotation & timing	body roll (chest / hips)	kick power - 2 beat
⇒ full speed stroke in balance	full speed stroke in balance	full aggressive stroke	
Drills	Drills	Drills	Drills
⇒ kick: hands at side rotating body	kick: hands at side rotating body	kick: hands at side kick (narrow)	kick: hands at side rolling
⇒ kick: kick on side & switch	kick: one arm up on side & switch	kick: streamline 3 kicks & breathe	kick: streamline on back
⇒ swim: one arm (alt arms & breath)	swim: lift drop recovery w good roll	kick: on back hands at side hips up	kick: on side or stomach streamline
⇒ swim: catch up or 5 count	swim: one arm w good roll	kick: bicycle kick (head up scull)	pull: pull no splash lean on chest
⇒ swim: recovery freeze or drag	swim: sky bottom for rotation	kick: with pull buoy hands at side	swim: one arm hand at side
⇒ swim: head up free	swim: fist, no splash, or Tennis B	pull: pull free kick or dolphin kick	swim: with fist
⇒ swim: feel the water drills-Tennis B	swim: spin drill	pull: with fins for hand speed	swim: breathe every stroke

		2010-11 Season				Ratings 1-10 Notes: 10 is "achievable" perfection	
		09	10	11	goal	Current	Improvement
General	Attitude	6	8	9	10	you're doing great	continue to be a leader
	Discipline	5	6	8	10	very good	work harder at stroke changes
	Attendance	9	9	10	10	great	
	Work ethic	5	7	8	10	very good - much better	be more aggressive
	Training Intensity	5	6	8	10	getting better each week	be more aggressive
	Strength	4	5	6	8	still have looks & personality	getting better, very important
	Maturity/Focus	5	6	9	10	MUCH better	
	Receptive to changes	5	6	9	9	still have looks & personality	must embrace changes
	Ability to make changes	5	5	7	8	many things are difficult	work harder at weaknesses
	Challenge Sets Free	20x100 Fr @ 1:10, 14 spl, ave 3; 5x100 Fr @ 1:05 ave 1:00, 14 spl					
Challenge Sets Breast Swim	4x100 @ 1:20 6-7 spl-done, 5x100 @ 1:30, 6-7 spl, 34 SR, ave 1:15; 50s fast 6-7 spl holding :35						
Challenge Sets Breast Kick	50s Kick @ 1:30 ave sub :40, Kick 100 Bt @ 1:18						
Challenge Sets Back	7x100 @ 1:15 ave under 1:10, fast 100s hold 1:07						
Challenge Sets Fly	3x50 Fly @ :35, timed 25 uw with push at 15.0 or better						
Goals General	MUST improve turn speed, power off walls, and uw speed						
Strength	keep doing strength training at least once per week						
Goal Times Breast & IM	200 yd Breast sub 2:20, 200 mtr Breast sub 2:40, 400 yd IM 4:27 (splits 1,9,16,1), 400 Mt IM 5:05						
Goal Times off events	200 yd Fly sub 2:09, 500 Fr 5:05						
Meet Plan Spring	peak for Clovis, train through NCS if possible						
Meet Plan Summer	train hard for summer peak meet, continue with weights aggressively						
Coach Comments	You have matured every year and improved your work ethic						
	You need to work harder on all turns and all uw. Race more in practice, esp walls & uw.						
	You are getting better each weak. Keep challenging yourself on all sets.						
	Do 5 good turns after practice every day.						
I generally think you are doing great and you are an awesome kid - good parenting.							
FREESTYLE		09	10	11	goal	Current	Improvement
Body Position	head Position	4	5	6	10	needs to be lower	
	keep head in line w body	3	5	5	10	needs to be lower	
	hips need to ride higher	5	5	6	10	better with head down	
	breath too high (angled)	2	3	5	10	don't lift head up on breath	bottom goggle in the water
	rotation off breath	3	4	5	10	better when breathing to left	breathe more to the left
Arm Stroke	stay extended on breath	4	4	5	9	poor on right side	better pull on left side breath
	catch w higher elbow	5	5	5	8	better on left side breath	
	finish stroke farther back	4	4	5	8	right hand stops at hip	that is why we alt breathe
	relaxed hand recovery	6	6	6	10	ok	
	kick through breath	4	5	6	10	getting better	
	kick higher and stronger	3	3	4	7	needs to be better	better recently
Training	training w stroke count	6	7	9	10	very good, 14 spl	try 14 spl when sprinting
	training in main sets	3	5	7	10	better, holding better averages	race more in practice
	leg drive when training	3	4	5	8	getting better	needs to improve
	sprinting speed/power	2	3	4	8	weak - this why you don't swim the 50	
	work on technique when tired	4	5	6	10	mostly head position, low breath, breathing pattern	
	swim moderate at SC - 1	5	6	7	10	try more ez swimming at 13 spl	
	consistent breathing pattern	2	3	6	10	more on the left	never 2 in a row on right
	UW Kicks & breakouts	4	5	6	8	ok	
Turns	technique	0	0	2	8	slow roll, legs twist	toooooo slow
	approach	3	4	5	8	dive into turn faster	
	spin	0	0	3	8	slow, to big, legs twist	spin must be tighter
	body position on wall	1	2	3	8	head too deep, below feet hips	hands to far away from head
	streamline off wall	3	4	5	10	ok	
	kicking off wall	3	4	6	8	ok -2 fly kicks are good	
Challenges	keep head down, lower breath	hold stroke count, race more			kick hard, more power		race turns w tighter spin

	BACKSTROKE	09	10	11	goal	Current	Improvement
Body Position	stroke balance	2	3	4	8	rotate more, keep chin up and head still	
	head position - still on rotation	2	3	4	8	keep chin up, moves to left - touch right shoulder on rotation	
	hips rotate ahead of pull	2	3	4	8	shoulder leads recover	rotate more, sooner
	shoulder leads recovery	2	3	4	8	need much more rotation	
Stroke	recovery - in line, hand angle	3	4	5	8	hands comes out of water a little wide	
	entry position, wrist	3	3	4	8	rotate wrist sooner & firmer, enter wider	
	depth of catch	2	3	4	8	needs to be MUCH deeper, right arm too shallow	
	pull pattern	3	3	4	8	when you enter correctly, your pull is good	
Training	maintain stroke rate	1	2	4	8	getting better	train more at 38 stroke rate
	maintain pull power	2	3	4	8	ok	
	maintain kick during sets	2	3	3	7	needs to be stronger	
	turn speed & uw speed in sets	1	2	3	8	turn speed toooooo slow, break outs toooooo slow	
Turns	leave approach arm in front	3	4	5	8	ok	
	cross arm hold more water	3	4	5	8	ok	
	cross stroke in line and fast	1	2	3	8	cross stroke too slow	
	head diving into turn	2	3	4	8	need to dive head more and spin faster	
	body position on wall	1	1	3	8	not good - head too deep and away from wall	
	fly kick speed uw	3	4	5	8	getting better	
	break out timing & speed	0	0	2	8	break out too slow, need faster break out strokes	
	Challenges	keep chin up & head still	higher stroke rate in training			turn speed, cross stroke	more uw speed and breakout
	BUTTERFLY	09	10	11	goal	Current	Improvement
Body Position	timing of stroke & breath	3	4	5	9	still breathing too early	breathe at finish of stroke
	head position holding breath	4	5	6	9	ok	
	pulse ahead of entry	5	5	6	9	pulse sooner, faster - but shallow	
	head uw at entry	5	5	6	9	ok - not too deep	
	stay extend thru hips	4	4	5	9	right hand slides out and up	
Recovery/	low hands	5	6	7	9	ok	
Entry	back of hand leads	6	6	6	9	ok	
	hands relaxed	6	6	7	9	ok	
Entry	in front of shoulders	4	5	6	9	ok	
	wrists firm, no break or dip	3	4	5	9	right hand slides out	
	stay in front on roll	2	3	4	9	right hand slides up and out	turn it in and drive it deeper
Stroke	catch under shoulders	4	4	5	8	right hand too wide and high	
	catch with high elbows	5	5	6	8	ok	
	lean/pulse into catch	4	4	5	10	body still rising on catch because of early breath	
	breathe later at finish of stroke	3	4	5	10	still breathing too early	
	2nd kick meets hands at exit	3	4	5	10	need to kick later in stroke, early breath causes early kick	
	power of 2nd kick	2	3	4	8	too weak	
	power of 1st kick	2	3	4	8	feet float out of water, kick too shallow	
	Training	stay long in front	5	5	6	9	ok except for right hand
late breath		4	4	5	9	breathing too early	
power kick 2-beat		2	3	4	7	very light	
uw speed power		3	3	5	7	needs to be better ... please	
Turns	technique	2	3	4	8	left hand slides too wide, head not deep enough	
	Speed of turn	1	2	3	8	too slow, first improve technique, then speed	
	body position on wall	2	3	3	8	head needs to be lower, closer to wall, left hand near head	
	streamline off wall	6	6	6	9	ok	
	uw kick power	3	4	5	8	too passive - needs to be faster	improving
Challenges	more kid power	breathe later			faster turns	more uw speed	

	BREASTSTROKE	09	10	11	goal	Current	Improvement
Body Position	streamline	5	5	7	10	generally good but hips drop	
	head position on glide	4	5	6	10	head still rolls up on breath	improving
	hold streamline on glide	5	6	7	10	ok - good stroke count per lap	
	keep hips high on glide	2	3	4	9	need to lean thru outswEEP	getting better recently
Stroke	head down on outswEEP	2	3	4	10	VERY IMPORTANT	getting better recently
	wider outswEEP	1	3	5	10	must press harder and wider	getting better recently
	higher elbows on catch	2	3	4	10	keep elbows near surface	and stay in front MORE
	lead insweep with thumbs	2	3	4	10	don't turn palms in-thumb leads	it will keep your elbows high
	elbows squeeze on insweep	2	2	3	10	hands still lead insweep	squeeze elbows to ribs
	timing of breath on insweep	1	3	4	10	MUST BREATHE LATER	
	keep pull in front	3	4	4	10	MUST STAY IN FRONT MORE	
	insweep hands/elbows position	2	4	5	10	elbows too wide, hands too high (above elbows)	
	dip of hands on recovery	3	4	5	10	hand dip down then up on glide - hips drop	
Training	hold streamline when tired	5	6	7	10	good	
	power pull when tired	2	3	4	9	gets small - scoop w bent wrist	getting better recently
	kick speed/power	2	3	4	8	better but still too slow	fast kick keeps hips higher
	training with stroke count	6	8	9	10	very good, 6-7 spl on most sets	7 spl on fast sets
	turn speed in training	0	2	2	8	not good enough	need to race turns
	pull down in sets	2	3	5	8	working on quicker pull down	race the guys
Turns	technique general	1	2	3	8	see above	
	speed of turn	0	2	2	8	see above	
	body position on wall	0	1	2	8	head too high, left hand wide	
	pull down	2	3	4	10	quicker pull down should help	
	- hold to certain distance	2	3	4	10	3 black lines	
	- power pull & dolphin kick	1	3	2	8	higher elbows on pull, stronger & LATER dolphin kick	
	- hands recover ahead of kick	2	4	3	10	kicking too early on recovery, kick after hands pass eyes	
	- speed thru breakout 1st stroke	1	3	3	10	head rolls up on breakout - losing power on first pull	
Challenges	power pull-high elbows in front	more kick speed			faster turns		better pull downs
Notes on College							
swimming	- work VERY hard to improve EVERY DAY - be better after each workout						
	- I think you are better just in the last 2 weeks. Keep improving your repeat times and race faster people.						
	- have a good shave meet in March						
	- we will think about high school rest/taper						
	- maintain weights and build strength						
academics	- do the best you can with grades and test scores						
	- if you have to miss workout on occasion to study or finish an assignment, it's ok						
college	- I will help you a lot. You are very special and I want to help you make the right/best choice						
	- there will be a balance of academic strength vs swimming quality that we must consider						
	- we should look at the best academic schools and the best swimming schools						
	- you are a MUCH better recruit than your times indicate for the following reasons - I can and will communicate this to coaches						
	- you are a VERY mature, positive, hard working swimmer						
	- you are HIGH CHARACTER athlete, you make very healthy life choices - good values						
	- you will be a VERY positive team member in any program						
	- you are good training swimmer						
	- Free sets (100s @ 1:10 ave 3-4 at 14 strokes per lap, Breaststroke 100s @ 1:25 ave sub 1:20 at 6 strokes per lap						
	- your Breaststroke training at 6 strokes per lap is exceptional						
	- you are not overtrained						
	- you have significant strength improvement ahead of you						
	- you train distance per stroke, which will help you improve as you get stronger						

ORINDA AQUATICS SENIOR 4 GROUP - STROKE ANALYSIS AND GOAL TIMES

Rating 1-10

FREE	2007	2008	2009	Working On	Comment
Head Position/Breath	3	5	7	Keep your head lower-press your forehead down. Breathe lower. Do not lift your head to breathe.	It is better on the right. The left side needs more work.
Rotation	4	5	7	Rotate sooner, faster and more, especially after your breath.	Think about rotating on your hip.
Arm Stroke	3	5	7	Right arm: recover lower and closer to your body and enter slightly farther in front. Left arm needs to do the same and enter a little	Think about a relaxed recovery under your elbow.
Catch / Pull	3	5	7	Right hand: pitch your hand slightly out on the first phase of the catch. Left hand: catch deeper.	Keep your elbow high as you start to catch.
Stroke Rate	4	6	7	It is important to keep your stroke long but we will continue to increase your stroke rate. 500 @ 40; 200 @ 42-44, 100 @ 48	You have to get in shape to do this by training at a high stroke rate, but you must count your strokes - 14 is good
Kick	4	6	7	Keep working on a high, constant kick. You have to train with it.	Goal is to maintain it for the 500.
Turns	3	5	6	Dive into the wall, spin tighter, keep your hands tight behind your head when your feet hit the wall. Do not dolphin kick into your	You need to win every turn, in practice and meets. Turn technique AND turn speed.
Underwater	3	5	6	You are getting better. Keep working it.	3 Fly kicks off EVERY wall.
BACK	2007	2008	2009	Working On	Comment
Head/Body Position	5	6	6	Keep your chin a little higher.	It is better.
Rotation	2	5	6	Rotate more aggressively and lead with your shoulder	Rotate more to the left, lead w shoulder
Recovery	2	5	6	Accelerate your hand/thumb (as you finish your pull) above your eye.	Think about hand speed through the finish and the first part of the recovery.
Entry	3	6	6	Enter wider and drive your hand below the surface 12-18 inches.	Do not stop on top of the water.
Catch	3	5	6	Catch deeper and tighter (closer to your body).	Sweep your fingertips toward the sky.
Stroke Rate	2	5	6	200 IM - 40; 400 IM 38; 100 Back 44	BUILD YOUR STROKE RATE INTO THE WALL OF EVERY BACKSTROKE LAP
Kick	4	6	7	Your kick is much better. It will help in the IM.	Get in shape to kick thru the 400 IM.
Underwater	3	5	6	You are getting better. You need to dominate your competition underwater - in all strokes.	Build your kick speed as your approach the surface. Speed thru the breakout.
FLY	2007	2008	2009	Working On	Comment
Rhythm/Timing	2	5	7	Breathe at the finish of the stroke - when your hands are exiting the water. PULSE INTO THE CATCH - DO NOT RISE ON THE CATCH.	Think fast in back, slow in front.
Recovery	3	5	7	Keep your hands low and thumbs down. Enter fully extended.	Enter in front of shoulders fully extended.
Entry	2	4	6	Do not let your wrists break (bend) at the entry.	Keep your wrists firm on entry.
Catch	2	4	6	Catch with firm wrists and high elbows.	You drop your elbows when you get tired.
Pull	2	4	6	Try to keep your elbows high at the beginning of your pull.	Keep your fingertips pressed down.
Kick	2	4	6	Work on a more powerful, 2 beat kick.	More knee bend and a deeper kick.
Stroke Rate	5	5	7	Your stroke rate is fine. Stay long and focus on power and DPS.	Think about swimming 1-count Fly.
Turns	3	5	6	Elbow back tight, hand over the top tight, feet more vertical on the wall	Practice better technique ... always.

ORINDA AQUATICS SENIOR 4 GROUP - STROKE ANALYSIS AND GOAL TIMES

Underwater	3	6	7	You are getting better. Keep working it. You need to dominate your competition underwater - in all strokes.	Build your kick speed as your approach the surface. Speed thru the breakout.
BREAST	2007	2008	2009	Working On	Comment
Streamline	3	4	5	Lock your elbows in front during the glide.	Especially your right arm.
Pull - outsweep	3	4	5	Sweep out wider, especially with your left hand.	Not too wide though.
Pull - insweep	2	4	5	Lead the insweep with your thumbs , not your palms.	Keep your hands in front of your chin.
Breath/Head Position	4	5	6	Breathe a little later and lower and get your head down aggressively.	Slam your forehead into the water ahead of your kick.
Kick	3	4	5	Kick a little later but faster, and push your hips.	Your hips can drive your stroke.
Pull Down	2	4	5	Pull narrower - especially with your right hand. Bring your hands up sooner and faster.	Approach the surface with speed.
Turns	3	5	6	Elbow back tight, hand over the top tight, feet more vertical on the wall	Practice better technique ... always.
	68	115	144		
GOALS	2007	2008	2009	Need To Do	Meet
100 Yd Free	54+	53+	52+	Improve kick power, stroke rate, turns and uw.	NCS, Relay or Walk On Meet
200 Yd Free	1:57+	1:54+	1:51+	Improve kick power, stroke rate, turns and uw.	NCS or Walk On Meet
500 Yd Free	5:16+	5:09	5:00	Improve kick power, turns, pull and stroke rate.	Walk On Meet
200 Yd IM	2:12	2:09	2:08	Improve uw speed, turns speed, Backstroke SR, Breaststroke SR	NCS
400 Yd IM	4:39+	4:29+	4:26	Improve uw speed, turns speed, Backstroke SR, Breaststroke SR	Walk On Meet
100 Yd Back	1:02+	59+	56	Improve turns, uw speed, kick power and SR.	Walk On Meet
100 Yd Fly	1:01+	59+	58+	Improve kick power, turns, uw and entry/catch.	Walk On Meet
	2007	2008	2009		
Attendance	9	10	10	Excellent. I appreciate your parents commitment to your swimming, as I am sure you do.	
Training (work ethic)	9	9.5	9.5	You are outstanding. I would like you to be even more aggressive in terms of racing - esp UW.	
Training (underwater)	6	9	9.5	It is MUCH better. But it needs to improve ... A LOT, and SOON.	
Focus / Maturity	9	10	10	I love your maturity as an athlete and your commitment to swimming.	
Dryland	8	9.5	9.5	Very good. Try to be even more intense. You need to be stronger.	
	41	48	48.5		
GENERAL	You are a special young person. You represent everything I want in a serious swimmer, and everything this team needs.				
GOAL SETS	Free: 20x100 @ 1:10 w 14 spl. Back: 20x100 @ 1:25. IM: 20x100 IM @ 1:20. 5x200 IM @ 4:00 best ave. 10x400 IM; Fly 4x50 @ :35. 20x50 Bt @ :45				

Steven: Develop specific areas to continue improvement in Breast and IM								
	Ratings 1-10 Notes: 1) 10 is "achievable" perfection, 2) Scale is in the context of a "World Class" swimmer							
	<i>Note: IM is the development all strokes individually both technically and in training (develop the parts and the whole will improve)</i>							
	Freestyle		Backstroke		Butterfly		Breaststroke	
Body Position	Head Position-too high-relax it	5	Head/Body Position		Timing of stroke & breath	4	Keep head down on glide	4
	- Keep head in line w body	5	- chin moves to left	4	- pulse ahead of entry	4	- lean on chest	6
	- Hips need to ride higher	6	- left should sit low	4	- head uw at entry	5	- keep hips high on glide	6
	- breath too high (angled)	5	- rotate sooner ahead of pull	4	- stay extend thru hips	4	Maintain tight streamline	5
	- Rotate more to left off br	5						
Stroke	Stay extended on breath	6	Right hand catch too shallow	4	Catch under shoulders	4	Head down on outswEEP	5
	- Catch w higher elbow	5	catch sooner both arms	4	Lean/pulse into catch	5	Wider outswEEP	6
	- Finish stroke farther back	5	develop stronger, deeper pull	5	Breathe later at finish of stroke	3	Higher elbows on catch	4
	Relaxed hand recovery	3	Train at 40 SR w max pull	5	2nd kick meets hands at exit	2	Lead insweep with thumbs	4
	Kick through breath	7	Train at 44 stroke rate	6	More power w 2nd kick	3	Keep pull in front	4
	Kick higher and stronger	7					No dip of hands on recovery	3
Training	Train at 12-13 SPL to lengthen	6	Must train w three objectives		Must train w three objectives		Hold streamline when tired	4
	Work on technique when tired	5	1) better stroke balance	5	1) better timing on breath	4	Focus on power pull when tired	5
	Swim moderate at 10-11 SPL	6	2) build SR w/o losing DPS	5	2) develop power 2 bt kick	3	Train at 5 spl w 40 SR	6
	Consistent breathing pattern	6	3) develop uw speed	5	3) develop uw conditioning	5		
	Improve UW & breakouts	8						
Turns	Technique	8	Leave approach arm in front	5	Technique is good	7	Technique general	7
	Approach	6	Cross arm hold more water	5	Speed of turn	5	Speed of turn	5
	Spin fast	8	Don't roll head up-roll too slow	5	Work SL off wall	7	Pull down	5
	Tighter streamline off wall	8	Bigger dolphin kicks-push hips	4	Work SL kicks UW	5	- hold to 2 1/2 bl	5
	Work kicks to maintain speed	8	Improve speed UW	6			- power pull & dolphin kick	4
							- hands recover ahead of kick	4
							- speed thru breakout	5
Challenges	Must improve recovery to improve catch and pull		Must slow SR to improve rotation & catch		Feel timing of and develop power 2-bt kick		Train hard but be perfectly efficient	
General	Work ethic	10						
	Maturity/Focus	10						
	Recepted to changes	10						
	Ability to make changes	10						

Sven Campbell Assessment

To give you an idea, following are some things I am working on with Sven:

Backstroke

- Turn
 - Approach stroke speed – maintain speed on cross stroke, especially to the left
 - Balanced on both pulls into the wall – holding maximum water to maintain speed
 - Submerging into turn – not rolling head up
 - Learning how to be long into the turn and maintain speed and legality
 - Balanced roll to create maximum power off wall – don't throw feet ahead of hips
- Underwater speed
 - Power off wall – from balanced turn
 - Power & speed on dolphin kicks
 - Build kick speed from bigger to tighter and faster
 - Transition to flutter kicks
 - Time breakout strokes to maintain speed through the surface
 - Condition ALL of the above when tired – very important
- Stroke Balance
 - Head position higher
 - Head still – slides to right
 - Right shoulder sits low on recovery
 - Right hand slows at side on recovery
 - Working on riding higher in the water to create less resistance
- Pull
 - Finding the proper depth of the catch
 - Too deep loses leverage and slows stroke rate
 - Too shallow doesn't create enough power
 - **Right now he is his good.** In the summer he was too shallow.
- Stroke Rate
 - **Stroke technique is balanced and very good right now.**
 - His stroke rate had to be a little slower to work on everything
 - I would like to gradually increase his stroke rate without losing technique or power

Freestyle

- How can we get faster in the 100 meter Free?
 - Dive - Improve dive reaction, entry and underwater speed
 - Turn - Improve turn technique, power off wall and underwater speed
 - Stroke – improve right arm catch when fatigued on 2nd lap
 - Train more breathing every 4th
- Stroke balance
 - Head position lower – in line with body
 - Hips ride higher – somewhat depended on head position
 - Rotate more with left shoulder – sits too low after breath
- Arm Stroke
 - Recover with more forward, relaxed hand
 - Work on high elbow catch with both arms
 - Right arm
 - Enters short and across his face when tired
 - Causes hand to slide out and up and elbow to drop
 - Elbow is below hand
 - Loses water on pull and breaks down even more
 - Enter slightly wider and farther over the water to get a better catch
 - Breathe every 4th stroke to help stay longer and more balanced

Quote

&

Stories

Quote

“This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being a force in nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.

I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community, and as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die. For the harder I work, the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to the next generation.”

George Bernard Shaw

One at A Time

from Chicken Soup For The Soul

A friend of ours was walking down a deserted Mexican beach at sunset. As he walked along, he began to see another man in the distance. As he grew nearer, he noticed that the local native kept leaning down, picking something up and throwing it out into the water. Time and time he kept hurling things out into the ocean.

As our friend approached even closer, he noticed that the man was picking up starfish that had been washed up on the beach and, one at a time, he was throwing them back into the water.

Our friend was puzzled. He approached the man and said, "Good evening, friend. I was wondering what you are doing."

"I'm throwing these starfish back into the ocean. You see, it's low tide right now and all of these starfish have washed up onto the shore. If I don't throw them back into the sea, they'll die up here from lack of oxygen."

"I understand," my friend replied, "but there must be thousands of starfish on this beach. You can't possibly get to all of them. There are simply too many. And don't you realize this is probably happening on hundreds of beaches all up and down this coast. Can't you see that you can't possibly make a difference?"

The local native smiled, bent down and picked up yet another starfish, and as he threw it back into the sea, he replied, "Made a difference to that one!"

Whom Do You Love?

John Blanchard stood up from the bench, straightened his Army uniform, and studied the crowd of people making their way through Grand Central Station. He looked for the girl whose heart he knew, but whose face he didn't, the girl with the rose. His interest in her had begun thirteen months before in a Florida library. Taking a book off the shelf he found himself intrigued, not with the words of the book, but with the notes penciled in the margin. The soft handwriting reflected a thoughtful soul and insightful mind.

In the front of the book, he discovered the previous owner's name, Miss Hollis Maynell. With time and effort he located her address. She lived in New York City. He wrote her a letter introducing himself and inviting her to correspond. The next day he was shipped overseas for service in World War II. During the next year and one-month the two grew to know each other through the mail. Each letter was a seed falling on a fertile heart. A Romance was budding. Blanchard requested a photograph, but she refused. She felt that if he really cared, it wouldn't matter what she looked like.

When the day finally came for him to return from Europe, they scheduled their first meeting - 7:00 PM at the Grand Central Station in New York. "You'll recognize me," she wrote, "by the red rose I'll be wearing on my lapel." So at 7:00 he was in the station looking for a girl whose heart he loved, but whose face he'd never seen.

I'll let Mr. Blanchard tell you what happened:

A young woman was coming toward me, her figure long and slim. Her blonde hair lay back in curls from her delicate ears; her eyes were blue as flowers. Her lips and chin had a gentle firmness, and in her pale green suit she was like springtime come alive. I started toward her, entirely forgetting to notice that she was not wearing a rose. As I moved, a small, provocative smile curved her lips. "Going my way, sailor?" she murmured. Almost uncontrollably I made one step closer to her, and then I saw Hollis Maynell. She was standing almost directly behind the girl.

A woman well past 40, she had graying hair tucked under a worn hat. She was more than plump, her thick-ankled feet thrust into low-heeled shoes. The girl in the green suit was walking quickly away. I felt as though I was split in two, so keen was my desire to follow her, and yet so deep was my longing for the woman whose spirit had truly companioned me and upheld my own. And there she stood. Her pale, plump face was gentle and sensible; her gray eyes had a warm and kindly twinkle. I did not hesitate. My fingers gripped the small worn blue leather copy of the book that was to identify me to her.

This would not be love, but it would be something precious, something perhaps even better than love, a friendship for which I had been and must ever be grateful. I squared my shoulders and saluted and held out the book to the woman, even though while I spoke I felt choked by the bitterness of my disappointment. "I'm Lieutenant John Blanchard, and you must be Miss Maynell. I am so glad you could meet me; may I take you to dinner?"

The woman's face broadened into a tolerant smile. "I don't know what this is about, son," she answered, "but the young lady in the green suit who just went by, she begged me to wear this rose on my coat. And she said if you were to ask me out to dinner, I should go and tell you that she is waiting for you in the big restaurant across the street. She said it was some kind of test!"

It's not difficult to understand and admire Miss Maynell's wisdom. The true nature of a heart is seen in its response to the unattractive.

Houssaye wrote: "Tell me whom you love and I will tell you who you are."