



Think Thank Tuesday: June Edition

Hello NAC families! Last month, we covered the dynamic of each training group. This month, we wanted to bring to light some of the eight factors that the senior coaching staff has identified as keys to success. (These can be found on the TeamUnify site under “Senior Group Resources.”) Since we’re in the midst of the summer season, we wanted to get everyone thinking about the fall. Fall schedules are hectic with sports, the beginning of school, establishing routine, and FALL BREAK. Typically, fall break is over the first weekend of October – which is always the October Open. The October Open is usually our 2nd meet of the season... BUT for the 2018-19 season, it will now be the FIRST meet of the season. Taking a break from training in October AND missing the meet can lead to stagnant swims in the latter part of the season. WHY you ask? Let’s look at three of our eight factors for improvement that are pertinent to this month’s topic.

1st: Aerobic development. Aerobic development is the cornerstone for the entire season. This is a time where we build back up their training base and reset the season with A LOT of kicking, drilling, and technique swimming. The focus is to make changes from the prior season, expand their endurance and efficiency, and continue to form good habits. This is a good time to get their strength up!

2nd: Racing Development. After swimmers are back in the water for a bit, feeling good, and getting stronger, we throw in some FAST swimming. As you may notice, practice swimming and race swimming are very different. Racing allows coaches to see their swimmers in a competitive environment in order to see what new habits were formed and what still needs work. For a younger swimmer, that might be holding streamlines off the dive and turn. For older swimmers, that might be a certain stroke rate or kicking out 15 meters underwater on each turn. Each race is just as important as the next and coaches use races as teachable moments for each swimmer. Moving forward, each swimmer can use their own experience and advice from their coaches to make changes in their training with the goal of higher performance in mind.

3rd: Practice attendance. The more you practice, the better you will become. Consistency in practice is part of every sport. When you think about scheduling vacations, keep in mind the short course training cycles. Taking a break in October after being back in the water for only 6 weeks can (and likely will) negatively impact the a swimmer’s performance as late as December. Being inconsistent can lead to injury and severe frustration from the swimmer. Missing several days at a time is not a part of the season plan.

Depending on when breaks are taken, swimmers can miss a lot of important aerobic and racing development work. Obviously, things like injury and illness are sometimes unavoidable, but the most consistent athletes typically perform the best on race day! These keys to success are important to each athletes’ long-term success within our program and beyond. Thanks for reading! We’ll be back with more next month.

