**October 16 - Weekly Stroke Tip: Freestyle Drill Options**

Here are some Freestyle Drills you can add to your repertoire:

**Finger Drag Catch Up:** With the recovery arm, draw the elbow toward the shoulder, but don't let the hand completely clear the water. Instead, drag the finger tips through the water has the hand moves forward, until it reaches the extended hand/arm in front.

**What is accomplished?** Dragging the finger tips ensures that the hand is not recovering above the elbow. Ideally, the hand and elbow will reach the shoulder at the same time. By going to a full catch-up in front where the hands actually touch, it helps create a longer stroke and keeps the hands moving  more independent of each other.

**7-Count Scull:** After the hand has entered the water and extended to its catch point, with the other arm relaxed at the side, use an inward and outward scull with the lead hand, beginning with an outward scull. Keep the sculling motion small. On the seventh scull (which  again will be an outward motion), once the hand as moved slightly outside the shoulder line, set the catch.

**What is accomplished?** Swimmers who have a lot of cross over in their stroking arm as it passes underneath their body, often have a tendency to drop the pinky edge of their palm and steer the hand underneath the torso with the fingertips pointing across the body instead of pointing down. An outward 7th scull forces a lead into the catch with the thumb edge of the palm facing down, which can help alleviate a dropped elbow and cross over stroke.

**Advanced 7-Count Scull:** With the same focus as above, time the recovery arm to have the elbow/hand draw o the shoulder shoulder so once the catch is set, hand will pass in front of the head as lead arm pulls back and the recover arm has a hip-driven entry

October 31st **- Weekly Stroke Tip:** **Timing Your Stroke Count to the Wall**

Many swimmers have a knack on the short axis strokes of Butterfly and Breaststroke to not finish your laps with a well-timed wall touch going into turns, during repeat practice sets, or race finishes. Making adjustments in your stroke, especially in the Fly, is a hard thing to pull off mid-stream. If this seems to be a consistent occurrence for you, change what you do coming off one wall to effect the timing of the next. With Butterfly, adding or subtracting one dolphin kick  before your breakout to the surface will effect your stroke count by 1/2  stroke at the end of the lap, since there are two dolphin kicks to every stroke cycle. Practice will help you to determine whether adding or subtracting is better and easier to sustain, especially later in a swim. With Breaststroke, it is a little easier to make 1/2 stroke adjustments heading towards a wall because of the rules pertaining to the stroke, but still not a desirable habit to get into. Change your underwater pull downs off the wall by adding or subtracting a :01 to your glide phases, again effecting your final stroke length to the next wall. If during your Freestyle and Backstroke swims you use a dolphin kick into your breakouts, play with your kick count and see how/what effect to has on your next approach.