

Swimmers:

What is going on with all of you??? I am double/triple booked every day and still not caught up !! Thank you. I love it . The enthusiasm is better than ever. We have kids at EVERY champ meet in at least 2 states. We have ranked triathletes tearing up the pools. It is like a rebirth of swimming. Every pool and every league is FULL - to capacity. And you thought you were the only one with a good idea on 01 Jan!!

I have lots of ideas this month (probably because I have coached 3 months worth of swimmers in 4 weeks!), so sit back and get ready.....

My overall theme for this month - **NAKED SWIMMING !!!!!** OK, now I do have your attention....

The idea is to reconnect your self DIRECTLY to the water. You all know I am a big fan of training tools. I have recommended particular products on several occasions over the years. For a time, we are going to take a minimalist approach. The main reason is - I am seeing too many of you using them as a crutch, not an aid. This is bad. The idea crystallized for me a few weeks back when I met a local super tough guy - full distance IronMan. He showed up to swim, jumped in the pool, slipped on his flippers...and went full out down the pool a few times until he totally crashed and burned. It was not fun to watch - for me anyway. I then tuned in to what some of you have told me, the questions I am asked, and opened my eyes more to OTHER people while I am swimming... The theme repeats - using tools too often and as a crutch. I am NOT always right. I try to be your guide... Let me relate what our US Olympic team does in practice to help guide all of us through this important time of year:

The first thing the coaches do is unplug every clock in the room. "You think THESE guys aren't competitive ? ! ? !" " For goodness sake, they will race each other to see who puts there goggles on first !" Even the Olympic coaches understand that each member of the elite team HAS A LIFE. They don't always show up "in the mood". The first few minutes are light. They are ALLOWED to play and get reacquainted with being in the water and horizontal. After 5 - 15 minutes of that , they are gently moved into some drills - STILL NO CLOCK. As I have told you over and over again - if you rush a drill or do it for time - you will do it wrong. You missed the point. ***Did you know our current group of Olympians swim LESS than they did in my day? OOOO, now I got your attention? They swim LESS, but are far more focused. Drills are for perfection, not for the clock. Drills segway into full stroke swimming - again, not for speed, for solid technique. Once everyone is on the page, the wind up begins. SETS. HARD. DRIVING. COMPETITIVE. Far less than 50% of the fly and breast is done in full stroke swimming....the vast majority is done in drill form: one arm, kick only, arms only, on your side, upside down, etc... The coaches do not want anyone hurt. Stay conditioned. Have perfect form. Get aggressive when you need to. Back off. The cool down is focused stroke counting and LONG reach swimming at an easy pace. I made a rule for myself 3 years ago that my cool down is some extremely lazy IMs and enough freestyle to return to my absolute best SPL for at least ONE length of the pool. (I can hit 14 strokes in a meter pool while I am fresh, 13 in a yard pool). As we tire, we get tight and short.... This must be reversed BEFORE we leave to reset BOTH the physical AND mental aspects of the game.

I know some of you do not do drills because you "don't need them". OK, Michael Phelps and I still need them, but you don't have to....good luck! See you in London?

Some of you start on the red line. OK, you will get FASTER after that? Maybe when my old diesel engine warms up, we can race....? You in?

Some of you swim ONLY with a pool buoy or flippers... See the bold type above and see WHO you really are ! A wetsuit is not an excuse to swim OK in a long course race, it is an advantage to a tuned swimmer.

Don't NEED a wetsuit, wear it to your advantage - to get faster (not to finish).

I love swimming because it is a lifelong sport. Refocus your goals this month. Swim naked! FEEL the water. Love what you do.

I am hear if you need me...

Here is a video of some of the old boys gettin' 'er dun:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENDX_e7aRg

Phelps, C Jones, and Coach demonstrating technique

Next time I see you, I just got in some great new O2 SWIMMING stuff to say thank you for your time in my Endless Pool Studio - remind me !!!
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