

10&U April/May Newsletter

DeckPast:

Spring is upon us, NCA! With extended, sunnier days, the atmosphere at practices has lifted. Swimmers come to practices every day with a renewed spirit and motivation to get better. NCA swimmers have already attended several long course meets, including the IVDA meet, and the SBA A/B Meet. We are looking forward to hosting our very own long course meets May 18-20.

A huge thank you to all our NCA parents and volunteers who helped us host April's NCA All Ages C Meet. Swimming at our home pool is a huge gift & advantage, specifically for our 10&U swimmers who attended their first USA Swimming meet ever! Out of 104 NCA attendees, 10&U swimmers made up for 44 of the total athletes. We are looking forward to seeing more and more kids attend their first meets, be it Green Meets or C Meets; swim meets are where kids love of swimming truly blossoms.

Views from the Deck (Practice Reports):

5 day with Coach Eva & Coach Sierra:

Welcome to long course season NCA! Your 5 day swimmers have been hard at work preparing for their first LCM meets of the season, with a big chunk attending their first LCM meets ever! A vital part of swimming long course is an understanding of how to be efficient with each stroke & turn. We have turned our focus to "short axis strokes" this month- butterfly and breaststroke. As coaches, we emphasize swimming long and strong versus rushing and swimming "fast". We have many drills that we use to teach your 10&U swimmers how to break down each part of the strokes and then piece them back together as efficiently & effectively as possible. You may hear cue words such as "early breathing", "shoot and glide", "two kicks per stroke", "wide arm recovery" and "finish your kick". All of these remind swimmers to focus on certain aspects of their strokes in order to produce the best final product.

We have continued to talk about our value wheel on a daily basis, focusing on one core value per week. For example, recently we honed in on teamwork. We encourage kids to come into practice each day armed with great attitude, effort and focus (AEF, another value). With these in their arsenal, their AEF becomes infectious, touching everyone around them, most importantly their peers & teammates.

3 day with Coach Neily:

Our focus has been on breaststroke and the underwater pullout. As a short axis stroke, breaststroke has no body rotation like freestyle and backstroke (long axis strokes). Instead the arms move in unison and not in reciprocating fashion. Instead, all the major muscles groups are being recruited but in a different synchrony than the long axis strokes. Because the timing of breaststroke is so sensitive we do more drills than actual swimming. We practice many breaststroke drills working on a strong kick, perfect streamlining and mastering the timing or riding the wave.

The number one mistake we see that young swimmers make is their tendency to pull too deep and wide. They are getting their elbows all the way back against the body which creates massive resistance

in the recovery phase. This in turn slows them down to the point where their stroke speed plummets. The goal is to figure out a way to make their stroke circumference smaller so that their elbows never come behind the shoulders. The best breaststrokers keep both their center of gravity and stroke speed consistent. It looks like they are riding a wave.

When we teach underwater pullouts, we try to get swimmers to think that they are opening a hole in the water, grabbing the sides of that hole and trying to pull their body through it as hard as you can to create as much acceleration as you can. Then build on that acceleration from opening the hole and pull your body through by maintaining speed in the bullet position (or shoulder shrug). The final stage is working on bringing the arms back above the head in a body-shadowing manner so to not push but rather slide against the water. This is the trickiest part of the pullout because it is the only part of any stroke at any time you are completely working against the water.

San Marcos with Coach Danielle:

Spring Break has come and gone, and most kids are *LOOKING FORWARD* to summer break starting in 6 weeks. At swim practice, we've had a strong focus on the "short axis" strokes of Fly and Brst this past month.

Speaking of looking forward, while it's fun to do that for summertime activities, but in swimming, we should focus on **not looking forward**, especially while gliding on breaststroke and recovering our arms on butterfly.

In the 9 & under group, our favorite drill for Fly is "4 kicks, 1 pull". It's helping our swimmers learn to breathe early during the underwater pull, and to have their heads down when the arms recover over the water. A very common mistake is to breathe at the wrong time. The hips should be high during the recovery, and as soon as the head is lifted to breathe, the hips sink! This kind of breath timing is **not** "illegal" per USA Swimming rules, but rather it is inefficient and makes butterfly harder than it should be!

In the 12 & under group, we love the "R-L-T" Fly drill (also known as 1 right, 1 left, 1 together). This drill helps with breathing early, and breathing on a "2 up, 1 down" cycle. We've also been working on the timing of the breath on breaststroke in both groups. Our favorite drill this month is "10 Flutter kick Brst" which helps the kids have a nice, early breath during the out-sweep/in-sweep portion of the pull. It also aids in getting the arms to "shoot forward" quickly after the breath is complete.

Our San Marcos group is growing. 1 new swimmer has joined our 9 & under group this month – welcome to the team Hailey. We're happy to have you join us!

Boys & Girls Club with Coach Hannah:

Happy spring from the Boys and Girls Club in Carlsbad Village! We are well underway in our spring session at the BGC and have been working hard on further developing the skills learned this winter. We have many new swimmers in our groups and I am very excited for the progress that the swimmers have made so far.

Currently we are drilling all four strokes and learning about the importance of body balance in the water. I hope to continue using these drills throughout the season to stress the importance of swimming

efficiently. Starting next week we will also be incorporating NCA's mission, vision, and value wheel into our practice schedule every day.

My ultimate goal this session is to increase meet attendance, whether it be a Green Meet or a C Meet. Meets are such an integral part of the learning process as it gives our swimmers the opportunity to show what they know and go out and race. Meets are also a great opportunity for Coach Sophie and I to see what can be improved upon and what we may want to focus on at practices.

And always a huge thank you to our parents for all you do!

#goNCA:

- **Teacher Appreciation Week (5/7-5/11):** Coaches are going to have NCA swimmers write a personal thank you and appreciation note to a Teacher or School Administrator that has helped them develop, build character and learn life lessons. We also will have a NCA Spirit Day at their school, wear green, thank your teachers, and get a picture at school with your teammates. We will offer a prize to those that take the most creative NCA at School picture.
- **Wisdom from Coach Neily:** "Your Swimmer Came With No Manual"
 - We coaches know and understand that parents want the best for their kids and we have the same mindset as well. These mindsets may not always match but I do promise we are committed daily to challenge your swimmers to be accountable and show that they are committed. To pursue daily excellence. Don't be the same be better. Be humble and hungry to be your best. Hold yourself and your team accountable because success is a team effort. Treat everyone with respect and expect everyone to do the same. Become a "come with me" teammate. Be a loyal friend and teammate. The list is ongoing but the messages are clear and stressed daily. It is not only about making your swimmer technically better or teaching them how to train in the pool but also teaching them life lessons. It takes a village to raise kids and we are honored to be a part of their journey.

Our manual includes the primary fact to remember that your swimmers are kids not professionals and to embody patience. This is why we coaches stress technique and fundamentals every day which is far more important than results (best times). Having fun in practice and being creative is what is strived for every day at practice. This what keeps kids coming back and eager to get better. Our goal and challenge is to manage the kids who become more competitive and rise up through the ranks of swimming as well as the kids who may be showing up more for the fun of being on a team. We take the time to really get to know the kids and learn what they want from swimming which can be ever-changing.

Trust in the process. Practice equals process and from there the outcome will take care of itself. Enjoy every moment you have as a teammate. Love your team and the opportunity to be on a team. Share positive contagious energy. Show you are committed. Coming together is the beginning, keeping together is progress and working together is success. That is our vision.

Scheduling for the Month Ahead:

- Stay up to date with all meets via Team Unify or ncaswim.com. Reach out to your coaches directly with any meet sign up questions! All summer meets have now been posted.
- **San Marcos:** *9 & under Developmental group, 12 & under group*
 - Due to low attendance for the past 4 months, Friday practice is cancelled – the last day we’re offering Friday practice for our San Marcos group is Friday, May 4. For the swimmers who swim 3x per week, please choose any 3 days, Monday-Thursday.
 - San Marcos will have combined practices with the Alga Norte group on May 16 & 17. We’ll have to look at summer schedules to see if we can continue these occasional combined practices through the summer. As for practice at Las Posas, we’ll continue with our normally scheduled days and times through the summer.
- Office Hours: Office hours are a chance for your swimmer to get some more individualized instruction on a skill that they may have been struggling with. Office hours are designed in a manner similar to a semi private lesson, with three swimmers working with a coach for 30 minutes. Cost is \$15 per swimmer, and all swimmers who sign up must be approved by their coach. We are encouraging to swimmers to attend one session at a time, meaning they should not be going twice in a row to ensure that everyone gets to attend.
- Summer Schedules: Summer schedules have now been released. Reach out to your lead coaches directly with any questions. If you have any conflicts, please let us know! We are willing and ready to make it work for your swimmer & family.

Let’s have another great month, NCA!

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