

2007 USAS CONVENTION

LMSC WORKSHOP – COACHES

Sept. 26, 2007

Seasonal Planning

- Coaches should plan their various long/short course workouts well in advance (with pay), based on the meets/activities that swimmers will be participating in; i.e., pool/open water events, triathlons, fitness events, strength training, taper, etc.

Triathletes

- It is advisable to have triathletes feel that they are part of the “team.”
- Although coaches can design training drills to accommodate their events, triathletes should also be encouraged to take part in regular competitive swimming exercises and competitions in order to learn new skills (starts, turns, three more strokes) and become cross-trained in the total aquatic experience.
- Coaches must teach triathletes the meaning of the words “taper” and “interval.”

Adult Toys

- Kicking sets, with and without fins, add variety for all swimming groups.
- Types of drills: vertical and wall kicking, two on a kickboard facing each other, monofins, kicking relays, etc.
- Pulling sets, using buoys, boards, or water polo balls while swimming or drilling can add versatility and interest to an otherwise boring workout.
- You can use batons for “catch-up” freestyle and backstroke to add difficulty and confusion to an already frustrated swimmer.
- There are numerous kicking, pulling, and stretch cord options available for swimming “rounds” and other drills for effective and fun conditioning.

Relay Meets and Practices

- Coaches should host Team or LMSC Relay Meets to encourage new competitors and triathletes to try something new without the stress and humiliation of competing individually.
- At practice, coaches should explain the purpose of the various swimming drills and make an effort to speak, at least briefly, with each swimmer.

Breathing Technique

- Most difficulty encountered by new swimmers is learning to breathe properly.
- It is critical that coaches work with these swimmers to help them feel comfortable in the water.
- Swimmers should learn to maintain a natural breathing pattern while swimming by emphasizing their *exhalations*. Skills to help them learn to breathe include bobbing up

and down, proper body position (long axis rolls), correct hip alignment and shoulder movement, maintaining balance, etc.

Swimming Etiquette

- To truly learn how to swim with a group, swimmers must learn the proper technique for circle swimming, passing a swimmer, being passed, when to listen to your coach (always), and when to ignore your coach (never).
- Coaches must closely coordinate and supervise all workouts to ensure that hostilities don't develop between swimmers.
- It is a good idea for coaches to give hand-outs to first-time participants (and all triathletes) that explain proper swimming etiquette and how to use a pace clock.

Recruiting New (not necessarily young) Coaches

- Encourage age group coaches to broaden their horizons and make more money.
- Masters coaches can offer to mentor their swimmers as coaches.
- Continue to enlighten ASCA coaches of the advantages of training Masters swimmers.
- Promote Masters swimming in club and/or LMSC newsletters.
- Participate in the USMS Coaches Mentoring Clinics to help develop an educated and well-rounded base of Masters coaches nationwide.

Promoting Aquatics through Masters Swimming

- Infiltrate LSCs with Masters swimmers who officiate at their meets, serve on their boards, and have kids on their teams.
- Politely request dual-sanctioned meets so age-group parents can see that Masters swimmers are not a threat while swimming with their children.
- Nudge other parents into coming to a Masters practice.
- Goad age-group coaches to get back in the water (they all used to be swimmers) to lose their accumulate fat.
- Once all of the above is accomplished, you will have one big, happy aquatic community.