



Off The Blocks



Off-season Swimming Training *By G. John Mullen*

Good Luck

National Championship

Swimmers

August is here and it's time to take some time off and recharge your batteries. PVS had another outstanding year of swimming and many new volunteers were certified this season to be Officials. Thank You! Enjoy the rest of the summer and your time away from the pool.

Go PVS!

Bill Marlin

PVS General Chair

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Freestyle Arm Recovery	2
USAS Guidelines for Concussion Management	2
The Secret to achieving that all important cut	3
Good Reads—Links	3
Off Season Swim training (continued from page 1)	4

SANTA CLARA, California, August 14. OFF-SEASON swimming training is often not discussed in the swimming community. Unfortunately, this is a valuable period where various improvements are possible. Moreover, some people need something to fill the extra 2 – 6 hour void left by not swimming.

Too often overworked swimmers will lounge around, play World of War Craft and eat McGriddles until the break is over, feeling like a blob the next time they hit the pool. I remember during my off-season days, I'd run around the house with the soccer ball as instructed by my parents and older sibling. This chaotic routine distracted me from torturing my dog and family.

Whether you've chowing on McGriddles, playing video games, or injuring family

members, the off-season is an opportunity for improvement; luckily there are many avenues for improvement. For a successful off-season, consider these areas for improvement and you'll find the transition to the pool much easier:

1. Fix your Body: Grueling swim seasons leave many swimmers physically, emotionally, and psychologically scarred. The off-season is the perfect opportunity to improve any of these realms. **Solution:** If you have a bum shoulder, find some help don't sit around hoping the problem will solve itself. Ignoring an injury does not fix your body, get some help and prepare your body for the next season!
2. Get your Mind Right: If you are psychologically exhausted, take a break from the sport, people, and community involved in

swimming. The mind plays a large role in swimming success, so be mentally prepared for the upcoming season is a prerequisite for a successful season. **Solution:** If you are getting scared at the blocks, consider some [Mental Toughness Training](#) or seeing a sports psychologist.

3. Maintain Feel: I know what you're thinking, getting back to the pool is the last thing you want to think about. In swimming, the principle of specificity applies making all other forms of training inferior to swimming. This is due to the high neural involvement in the sport as proper training develops motor program during the season.

(Continued on page 4)





The classic high elbow stroke

FREESTYLE RECOVERY: SWING FORWARD, RELAXED AND WIDE By Russel Mark

The freestyle arm recovery should be a controlled and relaxed throw of the hand, whether you want to have a classic high elbow recovery or a recovery that is more open (see both in the video below).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIYoWVm63Bo>

The freestyle arm recovery is the most visually recognizable motion in swimming, and is therefore one of the aspects that is most often coached. The recovery itself doesn't create forward movement, but a good recovery is important because it largely determines where your hands enter the water and provides incredible support for the motion of the arm that is pulling underwater.

1. Throw the hand forward into the entry so that it enters in line with the shoulder. The hand and arm extends in line with the shoulder as well.

2. The recovery should be relaxed. Not a stiff, rigid, mechanical movement. Let the hand and wrist lead the way.

1. To be relaxed and forward, the recovery should swing wide. The hand should always be wider than the elbow. Watch the video below of elite 200 freestylers. You will see how wide their hands are, and how the hands shoot forward with the fingertips and hands leading the motion soon after the hand exits the water. Fingertip drag zipper drill (with the thumb dragging along the side of the body) has been a common way to teach a high elbow recovery. With the video, you can see that it does not reflect what the recovery position actually looks like. In addition, the narrow hand forces the shoulder into a stressful, possible injury-risk position because the upper arm (from shoulder to

elbow) is in an unnatural position behind the plane of the back.

Some swimmers and coaches have been choosing to have a more open recovery, with the hand swinging higher in the air. This does not require more rotation, but rather just allowing the hand more freedom to swing freely. Just let it fly. This recovery (and ensuing entry) can be more dynamic because it can be less restrictive and rigid, but the focus should still be on rotating forward (not down)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQGYakT-Qbo>

“Even if you’re on the right track, you’ll get run over if you just sit there.”

- Will Rogers

USA SWIMMING ISSUES GUIDELINES FOR CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

USA Swimming acknowledges the growing concern around concussions and in an effort to take a proactive position regarding concussion management and ensuring the safety of our membership, has developed a [Consensus Statement on Concussion Management](#) with guidelines around the identification and management of concussions at the club and

LSC level, as well as during competitions

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) define concussion as “a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a blow to

the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be mild bump or blow to the head can be serious”. It is important that our participants, parents, coaches, volunteers, and staff are aware of the seriousness of head injuries at any level. [Read More...](#)

THE SECRET TO ACHIEVING THAT ALL-IMPORTANT CUT

By Dr. Alan Goldberg COMPETITIVEDGE.COM

THE PROBLEM

I was talking to a swimmer just this morning who shared with me a familiar, incredibly frustrating story. She was very close to her Olympics Trials cut for the last Olympics and hoping to make the team to represent her country. Everyone around her – her teammates, coach, parents and even this athlete herself – were convinced she'd qualify. This was because she was easily doing the time in practice.

However, with each meet that went by, she kept missing the cut by a second or so. And with her last chance to qualify, the very same thing happened, only this time she missed the cut by just .3 sec-

onds! Two weeks later, when it no longer counted, she swam her Olympic Trials cut time.

WHY DOES THIS HAPPEN?

If you're like most swimmers, then you can easily relate to this story. How often do you find yourself going faster when it doesn't count than when it does? The key question here is, "WHY, when you desperately want a certain time, does it remain maddeningly just out of your reach, but then, when you no longer need it, it comes loudly knocking on your front door?" Within the answer to this important question lies the secret to you consistently swimming fast when it

counts the most!

The main reason swimmers so often fail to achieve a cut that they really want is because they tend to over-think it before their race and focus on it during the race. This is very different for the swimmer when they're in practice and not pressuring themselves with a certain time, but instead are concentrating on moving through the water, one stroke at a time.

[Read More...](#)

"If you don't stretch your limits, you'll set your limits."

-Rob Gilbert



Good Reads

[Excellence stars in practice: 8 Ways to swim like a Boss from Day 1](#)

[The Struggle is Real: Balancing Swimming and Academics](#)

[5 ways to survive a Challenge swim Set](#)

[Swimming the bay in Barbados Developing into World Class Event](#)

[FINA cancels Junior Open Water World Championships](#)

[MAY, 2016 TENTATIVELY SET FOR RIO SUMMER](#)

[WHY DO I DO BETTER IN PRACTICE THAN AT MEETS?](#)

[WHAT COACHES CAN DO FOR ATHLETES WHO PERFORM IN WORKOUT BUT NOT IN MEETS](#)

[WHY DO ATHLETES I ALWAYS OUT WORK ALWAYS SEEM TO DO BETTER THAN ME?](#)

[2014 DIVERSITY IN AQUATICS CONVENTION INFO.](#)

"Don't cry because it's over.

Smile because it happened.

- Dr. Seuss

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**"I cried because I
had no shoes until
I saw a man who
had no feet."**

- Author unknown



Off-season Swim Training (continued from page 1)

Unfortunately, all this hard work vanishes quickly without a little maintenance work in the pool. This is why everyone feels drastically different in the water after a few days from this chlorination station. Therefore, if you're not busy getting mentally or physically healthy, do some maintenance work in the pool or ocean. Performing maintenance work is important, even if it doesn't feel like you're doing much. Always remember, the best type of training for swimming success is swimming! Don't lose all the hard work you put in during summer.

Solution: Swim for fifteen minutes three times a week for the ideal off-season swimming training.

4. Improve Weak Links: Every swimmer has weak links. Too often swimmers do not have the prerequisite tools of out of the water to properly manipulate their stroke in the water. This makes it essential to find these weak links and set a plan for improvement. Too often swimmers and coaches leave swimming biomechanical errors to incompetence or lack of feel, but often times the swimmer doesn't have the length, strength, or timing of the muscle to do the desired task. **Solution:** Find a rehabilitative specialist to improve these weak links. Make sure not to neglect the weak link, as this is likely your breaking point during races!

5. Improve Body Composition: Drag is the biggest inhibitor of swimming speed. The larger the person, the more drag potential

you'll have in the water. For this reason elite swimmers are typically lean creatures. The off-season is a great time to start any new food habits to improve your body composition for swimming success. Get your food habits on track during the off-season, the easiest time to make these adjustments, not weeks into treacherous training. This does not suggest under eating as many college programs have reported under nutrition in female swimmers, instead having a balanced diet to fuel your body for swimming is essential for success. **Solution:** Find an expert in nutrition and adjust dietary habits to set up a healthy plan for body composition improvements and a successful off-season swimming training period.

6. Improve Athleticism: Biomechanics are tough in swimming. This is why many coaches make a nice side business providing excessive swim lessons. However, barking orders on the pool deck at swimmers who don't know how to coordinate their body is like shoving the block through the circle peg! Therefore, improving athleticism, motor control, and coordination is essential on land to help the swimmer learn how to move their body in the water. If a swimmer knows how to control their body on land, it is likely they can manipulate their strokes in the water, correcting any stroke deviations in the pool and increasing swimming success. **Solution:** Don't waste your money on lessons when you don't have the tools for improvement in the water, learn how to use your body out of the water by

improving athleticism and make quicker stroke corrections in the water. Find a strength and conditioning specialist to formulate a well-balanced dry-land program, focusing on learning a variety of movements and control through these various motions.

7. Increase Relative Strength: Contrary to other sports, the strongest athlete (absolute strength) doesn't win. However, the strongest athlete for their body size (relative strength) is helpful for success. Being strong on land has not been correlated with swimming success, but being able to maximize force production while minimizing drag is essential for swimming success. For example, throw a World's Strongest Men athlete in the pool and it is likely their sink like a rock. Therefore, improving one's relative strength is important for swimming success. **Solution:** Find a strength and conditioning specialist who understands the difference between absolute and relative strength and work on improving strength per size

Summary

Once again, being fresh for the upcoming season is the primary goal of any off-season. However, if you're mentally and physically ready for the next season, try tips 2-7 for a successful off-season.