

Wow, it is November 1, 2010. Where did October go? I believe that the stroke mechanics that we have been working on is paying off. This past weekend it was evident at the Pumpkin Invite in Circleville. Our kids, overall, had the nicest strokes in the pool. Yes, there are still things to work on, but overall, we looked great. Kyle, Lindsey and I have discussed the things we noticed at the meet. We have listed them below:

Positives:

1. Stroke mechanics are good and getting better. More efficient strokes = less strokes taken = faster times.
2. The younger swimmers dives were better. It is an ongoing struggle to teach the perfect start. We will continue to hound the younger kids into realizing that the water is actually soft and will not hurt their head. Once they understand, we will teach them to slice the water as they enter with the smallest hole they can make, the size of their hips. The smaller the hole, the faster they will enter. Of course it is always the goal not to breath directly after the start. That drives the coaches crazy as it leads to slower times. "You just had a breath on the start, you do not need that breath."
3. Many kids swam new events, or swam events they haven't swam in a while. It was fun to watch the older kids bust a 100 IM. (Bust is a term we use to describe going fast. "Go sooooo fast that you bust it.") Trust me, they know it was the last time of the year. Others swam events they wanted to try. New things are always fun.
4. The kids raced! Racing will always equal fast times. We want the kids to learn how to race. Just flat out race! With learning how to race, times will follow. If there is no one to race, race the clock. If there is no clock, visualize someone next to you and win the race. Google, visualize and Brian Goodell. He was the king of visualization. No one could keep up with him in workouts, so he visualized racing and ended up becoming an Olympic Champion in 1976.
5. It seemed like most everyone was having fun. Nothing better than having fun and swimming fast.

What we still need to work on:

1. Of course all of the above. "Perseverance beats genius on all counts."
2. Turns: we still need to work on our turns. Though they are better, it is our goal as a coaching staff to have the fastest turns in the pool. Every time you go into a wall in workout, you should be spinning the turn as fast as you can. We call slow turns "beeflegs." "You have to get your beeflegs over the top!" or "Gotta get those beeflegs on the wall." If you hear me say that, you know what I'm talking about.
3. Legal fly kicks and breaststroke kicking in the younger age groups. We will continue to work on it in workout. Once they get past the point of understanding, they will never again be illegal.
4. Kids gambling with their times. It is a policy of the coaching staff to not gamble with the kid's times. Kids should not be hoping for a monetary reward or some other type of prize for making a certain time. It takes their focus off of the task at hand, that of swimming fast. If they do not make the time agreed upon, they feel defeated and lost. It happened on numerous occasions this past weekend. A swimmer coming to us coaches crying because they didn't make a certain time. **Emphasis needs to be put on racing and having fun.** For some reason, the swimmers were coming up to us with tears because they had bet on their times and lost, even though they had a lifetime best or were very close to having a lifetime best. If the swimmers continue to bet on their times and lose more often than they win, they will begin to hate the sport of swimming. **WE CANNOT HAVE THIS.** Let's stop betting on times and just race.
5. If you don't make a certain time you have made as a goal, so be it. Work hard on your technique during the week and try again next time. There is no faking it in the sport of swimming. **Hard work is the only thing that can lead to fast times.** Race the person next to you in workout and you will become fast.

"The only way to swim fast is to swim fast!"

Swimcerely, Coach Brian