

ASCA NEWSLETTER

American Swimming Coaches Association Leadership • Education • Certification NOVEMBER 2020 EDITION | ISSUE 10

Together...Apart



By Charlie Griffiths
Head Coach, Claremont-Mudd-Scripps
Swimming & Diving

Early March 2020 seems like a distant moment in time, but it is a memory that remains sharp. The Claremont-Mudd-Scripps Athenas and Stags were coming off an excellent conference meet, highlighted by breakthrough swims, clutch dives, varsity records, and a pair of SCIAC team titles. We celebrated a close-knit team that achieved more as a whole than would have been predicted from the sum of our parts. Eighteen CMS swimmers and divers eagerly trained for the upcoming NCAA D-III Championship meet with the squads targeting top 10 finishes. We monitored the growing coronavirus concerns, but that never stalled the team's enthusiasm or meet prep. Slowly, then suddenly, the world locked down.

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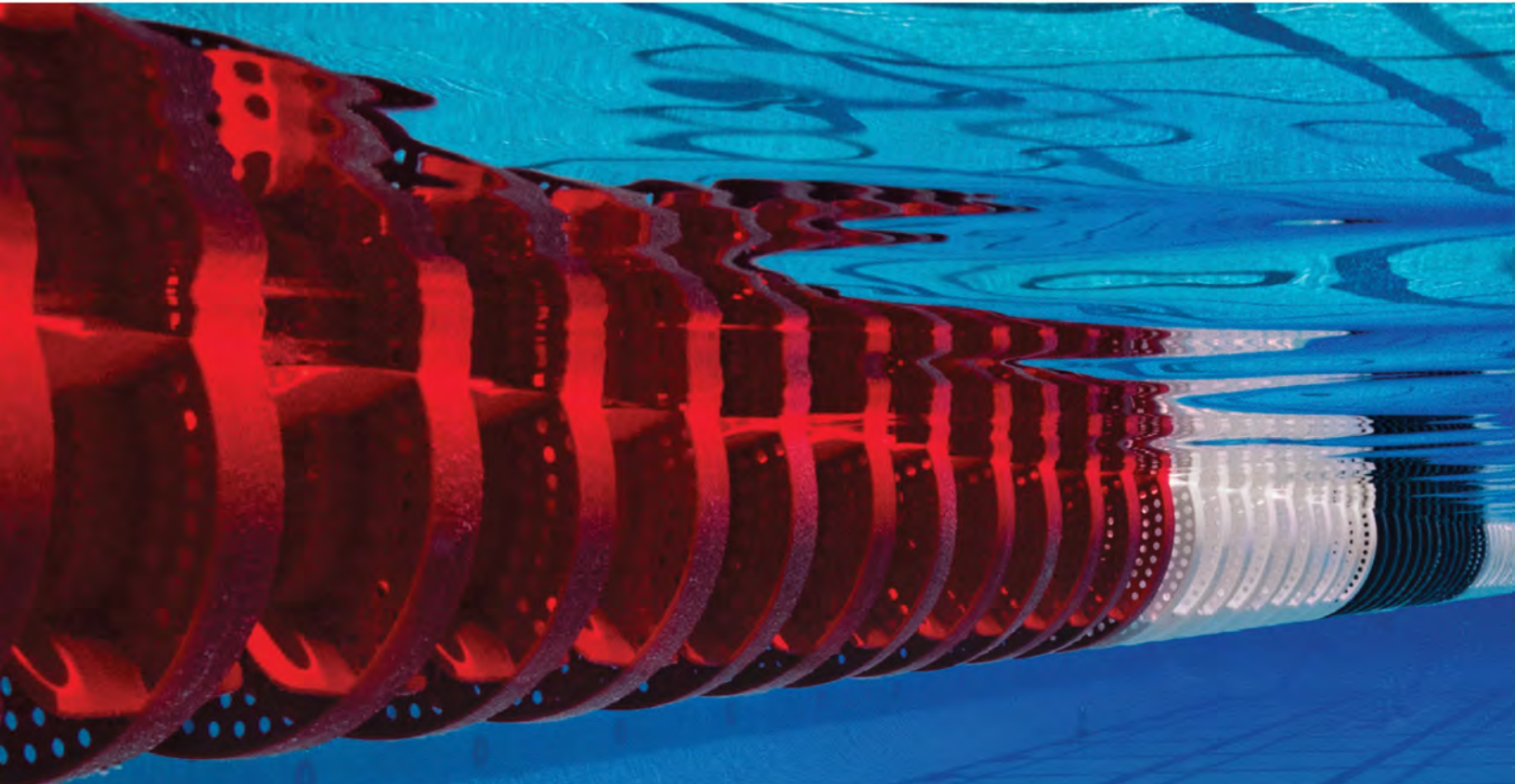
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Together...Apart

cont. from cover

Our colleges extended Spring Break and then transitioned to virtual learning for the rest of the semester. Students hastily moved off campus. The NCAA called off our national meet and then canceled spring sports seasons. It left us all with the question:

What's next?

As coaches, we emphasize that within every crisis is an opportunity. We had to rethink what we do. After the initial scramble to ensure that everyone made it home safely or found alternate housing for the final months of the semester the goal became making the most of our virtual reality.

I think the most important thing that we did, and probably the most important thing that all of the coaches in our larger community did was to be proactive and available. To connect. We checked in with our team members through texts, e-mails and surveys. We had Zoom meetings. Lots of Zoom meetings. We zoomed as an entire athletic department, we zoomed individually, we zoomed by class year, we zoomed with parents, we zoomed as a full team, and we zoomed in breakout rooms. We talked, we answered questions, we commiserated, we highlighted good news, we played games, and we strategized for the future.

After the initial shock of a truncated semester, it became apparent that coronavirus concerns would last. State and Los Angeles County regulations have kept The Claremont Colleges' campuses closed through 2020. We await word on whether in-person classes and athletic activities can resume in January.

As a coach and faculty member it remains important to provide value to our colleges regardless of whether we're able to practice and compete. Of course, the primary connection is with current students, but we had to think beyond that as well.

Our swimming and diving team felt that it was important to honor the 2019-20 season, so we arranged a virtual team banquet. The CMS Sports Information department created fun graphics to add to a PowerPoint slide show, but the key to the banquet was promoting community. Rather than coaches announcing all of the awards, team members celebrated each other. We invited guest speakers, highlighted by Iris Cummings Critchell, emerita professor of aeronautics at Harvey Mudd College, member of the 1936 USA Olympic swimming team, and namesake to our women's team's Most Inspirational Award. It proved to be an energizing banquet.

Alumni Weekend is another annual Spring highlight that appeared lost, so we promoted a virtual Reunion that brought together CMS swimmers and divers living around the globe.

The Claremont McKenna College, Harvey Mudd College, and Scripps College offices of admission transitioned to virtual recruiting and our team did as well. This meant more electronic communication, but also more creative formats for information sessions and insights into campus life and our program. The digital efforts have been so successful that the current first-year class quickly earned the reputation as being among the closest in history, even before the first day of classes.

Team members and coaches engaged in campus-wide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts, emphasizing the importance of open conversations and tangible actions during unsettled times.

CMS team members and coaches joined with the CMS Sports Medicine staff and CMC/HMC/SCR dean of students offices to create a Mental Health Taskforce to educate students about available campus resources, as well as provide tips on how to approach daily challenges and mental health emergencies.

The Claremont McKenna College Office of Development & External Relations faced questions about how to fundraise in a chaotic environment. CMS Athletics assisted by redoubling outreach efforts leading to a record number of athletic alumni donors and donations during the annual 1946 Challenge.

Community service continues to be a focus, like leading KidsZone virtual after-school programming for local children.

Of course, regular check-ins, meetings, and virtual social events continue with the team. Some team members are at home, taking online classes from their bedrooms and training with their local club teams, while other swimmers and divers created their own college pods by living together in small groups from Massachusetts to Kansas to California to Hawaii. Some dreams have been deferred but not forgotten, and I'm inspired by seeing our Stags and Athenas thrive in imperfect conditions.

While we often seek silos when managing the daily schedule of double-workouts, student counseling, teaching classes, attending meets, etc., the COVID crisis provides the opportunity to branch out and team with others to help your community. It is a profoundly strange feeling to forge through October and November without students on campus or training in person with the team. The virtual world isn't what we'd choose. We're still together, though, even if we're apart. We're striving to make the most of the situation by providing value to our campus community and remaining connected and sharp. Our short-term future may appear unsettled, but we know that our long-term experience will be awesome...for our colleges, our team, and our sport. ■

NEW ASCA Online Content Highlights

- ▶ **New Member Benefit! The ASCA Talks Library is now FREE to all Full ASCA Members!**
- ▶ **Weekly Workouts from Coaches Braden Holloway, Jack Folcarelli, Sean Piper, Doug Wharam, and Matt Sanspree**
- ▶ **Navigating Restrictions and Running Swim Meets with Paris Jacobs, Kevin Milak, and John Bradley**



We want to hear from you!

ASCA has embarked on an initiative to obtain content related to swim coaching that can be shared with our membership. The goal of this initiative is to provide relevant content from coaches to coaches.

We are looking for 3 types of content:

1. Video Submissions
2. Written Submissions
3. Workout Submissions

For more information on submitting your ideas click [here](#).



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High School SWIMMING COLUMN

BY DANA ABBOTT, NISCA PAST-PRESIDENT

The pandemic has turned the world of swimming and other sports upside-down and inside-out by governmental policies and restrictions imposed on users of health clubs, sports clubs, public and private school facilities, and almost everywhere else one can imagine. Individuals used to swimming laps solo at a Y or rec center have resorted to alternate means of getting pool time when facilities had to shut their doors, turning to open water swimming in lakes, oceans, and rivers, getting time in an Endless Pool or similar type of standalone current-generating pool (also referred to as aquatic treadmills), or even tethering themselves with surgical or other type of stretch cords or tubing to swim in place in everything from a large hot tub to typical in-ground or above-ground backyard pools. These individual swimmers are nothing if not creative.

But what works well for a single swimmer doesn't help a team of 10 to 40 or more swimmers on a high school team. For a school team with over 100 swimmers on combined freshman, JV, and varsity teams, including both genders, the difficulty to train in the water is sometimes insurmountable, and programs have gone to all dryland or even postponing or suspending their programs. Limits on the number of swimmers per lane has led to reduced in-water training time per session and increased the time spent on dryland and strength training, or simply cutting back on the number of training sessions.

Fortunately, as the weeks and months went on since last March, restrictions have been lessened to one degree or another, and many schools have been allowed to resume training, but new health protocol policies have left their mark, and with daily health conditions in flux many programs are just taking it "one day at a time." Just as USA Swimming protocols on in-pool distancing have been initiated and expanded, so, too, have policies in the

high schools, but they vary state to state, and also between school districts and counties in the same state.

This column will normally be showcasing various high school programs which are "getting the job done" or doing something interesting or of an exceptional nature, but in this first column, we wanted to take a look at how situations and rules and seasons have been modified in a few select states. The states are those with fall/winter programs and include TX, MS, IL, NY, and OH. (Not all changes have been listed due to space limitations.)

Conditions that appeared common across the states were in the areas of participant distancing during training and meet warmups, often following recommendations/mandates similar to USA Swimming, but ultimately regulated by state or county health departments or other governmental bodies in the individual states. In dual meets teams were to be seated on opposite sides of the pool, and each team would swim in the half of the lanes on their side of the pool, "just like in the old days." Participants were instructed to arrive already dressed in their uniforms/swimsuits, so no dressing or changing in the locker rooms would be necessary; locker rooms used for restroom purposes only. Many areas are limiting spectators or not allowing spectators at all.

A secondary problem faced by many schools was that institutional owners of the facilities normally rented for championship competitions (college, high school, Y, recreation centers) were often reluctant or refused to rent to outside users out of considerations of liability and risk associated with the pandemic and possible spreading of Covid infection. This limited/reduced availability of suitable venues complicated or prevented hosting of some meets by the customary providers of these sites.

High School SWIMMING COLUMN

Here's a look at some typical state situations:

(Pre-pandemic in italics, pandemic modifications in bold. If numbers, previous/current.)



(via Coach Robert Button, Bay City HS, and uiltexas.org).
District > Region > State

TEXAS

Boys and girls have same seasons. Begins first day of school.

In-season: **No invitationals, only duals or tri-meets. Max of three teams at swim facilities at a given time.**

Can't mix levels (e.g., JV and Var), but can mix genders (B&G at same time).

CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON:

Qualifiers per event advancing from District to Region: *2020-6*, **2021-4**

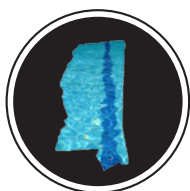
Qualifiers advancing from Region to State: *2020-24*, *2021-16*

Region Prelims and Finals: *2020-separate days (P)relims-Day 1, (F)inals-Day 2*, **2021-one-day meets**

(AM prelims/PM finals)

2020 State Meet: Girls and Boys February 14(P)-15(F)

2021 State Meet: Girls February 19(P)-20(F), Boys February 26(P)-27(F)



(via Coach Missy Kennedy, Gulfport HS, and MHSAA) District > Region > State

MISSISSIPPI

Girls and boys have same competitive season, 8 weeks long (Aug 24-Oct 24). Practice begins Aug 10.

Swimmers can qualify to State via QTs prior to District, but to reduce/control the number of state qualifiers,

2020 QTs were tightened in 50/100 freestyle and 200 free relay.

The single 1-day 2-class Region Meets were changed to **two 1-day 1-class meets** to limit the number of participants at the host facility, the goal being to keep that number below 200 swimmers. If numbers exceeded 200, then swimmer numbers were reduced by eliminating (in this order) [1] relay-only alternates, [2] the slowest swimmers from individual events with the most entries, and [3] swimmers in the individual events with the most entries.

Only 8 relays will advance from Region to State, the top 3 in each Region and the next 2 fastest relays. State would be timed finals only "to help reduce the exposure of the athletes, officials, and spectators. (MHSAA)"



(via Coach Tim Sirois, Highland Park HS, NISCA President-Elect, and IHSA).

ILLINOIS

Girls and boys seasons are separate.

Season length: Girls *2019-14 weeks*, **2020-11 weeks**; Boys *2019/2020-14 weeks*, **2020/2021-13 weeks***.

All dual meets virtual, relays* allowed. (*Add-up relays: 4 events at beginning of meet of 50 back, 50 breast, 50 fly, 50 free; add up times for aggregate relay time.)

State DPH (Dept. of Public Health) restrictions on meet capacity were severe, stated as limited to no more than 50 people TOTAL inside a natatorium, to include participants, timers, officials, coaches, spectators, and media. *Coach Sirois noted for the girls season that without spectators many dual meets lacked energy and enthusiasm and resulted in sub-standard performances compared to pre-pandemic seasons and competitions.*

No State Meet for 2020-21 school year, Sectional (pre-State) was final meet. No relays at Sectional. 4 individual events allowed.

**NOTE: With Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker's Nov 17 announcement that the state will go to Tier 3 mitigations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it appears the winter sports season will not begin as regularly scheduled. According to the IHSA, the winter sports season, which includes boys swimming, is now on temporary pause.*

High School SWIMMING COLUMN

Here's a look at some typical state situations:

(Pre-pandemic in italics, pandemic modifications in bold. If numbers, previous/current.)



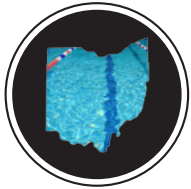
NEW YORK

Girls State Meet canceled, but some leagues or sections are swimming & diving currently, some have postponed until March and April. Both in-person and virtual duals allowed. Wide variations across the state's 11 geographical/administrative sections.

(via Coach Diane Hicks-Hughes, Lansing Central School District, NISCA President, Girls State Swimming Coordinator, NYSPHSAA)

Hicks-Hughes: "NY State Health Dept. has set tough guidelines to do practices. Every county seems to interpret differently, the wide variations in application of the guidelines is very frustrating. We need the State Health Dept to have one interpretation and implement it across all counties and sections."

The boys' 16-week season is scheduled to end March 5-6, but that is now "subject to change."



OHIO

Girls and boys have same season. Oct 30-Feb 27. Season length unchanged from previous years.

Meets allowed: Virtual, in-person duals and multi-team, invitationals all allowed, swimmer load and number of teams allowed as determined by host and local health departments.

Boys and girls separated by session at State Meet.

Number of swimmers per lane as per NFHS guidelines but must be authorized by county DPH.

***"Spectator limit shall be lesser of 300 spectators or 15% of fixed seating capacity."* - OHSAA**

****As stated at the beginning, future High School sections of the ASCA Newsletter will be devoted to "telling your story", sharing news and commentary and showcasing and highlighting programs that are "getting the job done." If you'd like to share -your- story, contact the ASCA office!*

(via R.J. Van Almen, OHSAA Director of Officiating Development for Swimming, and OHSAA)

Coaches,

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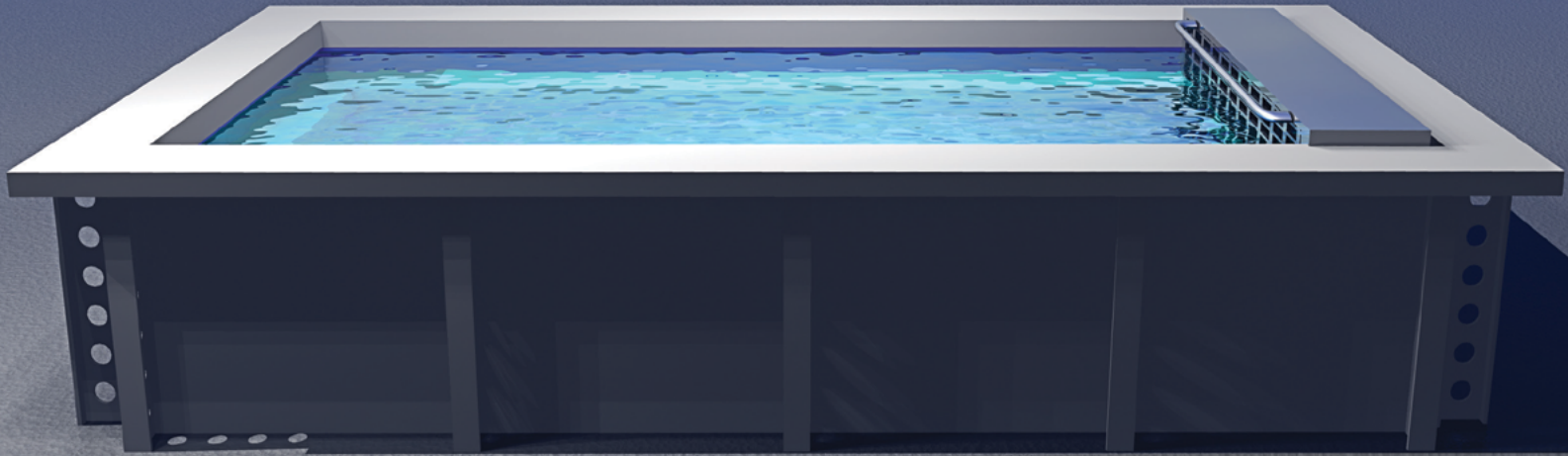
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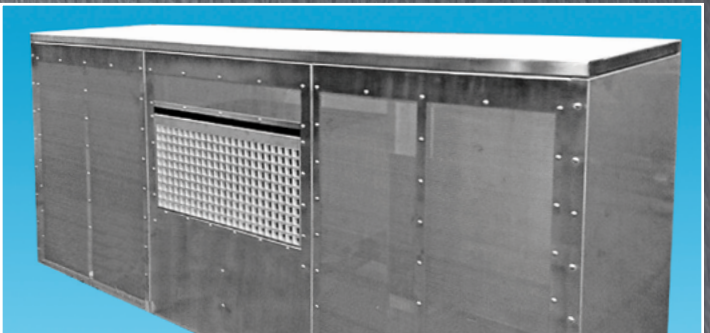
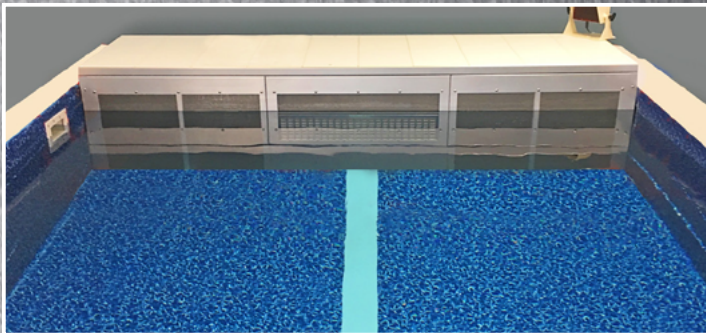
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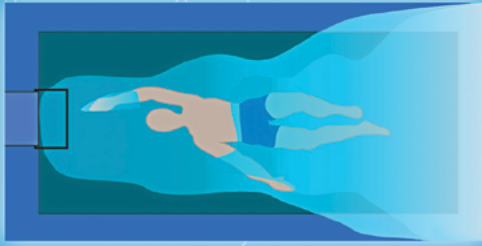
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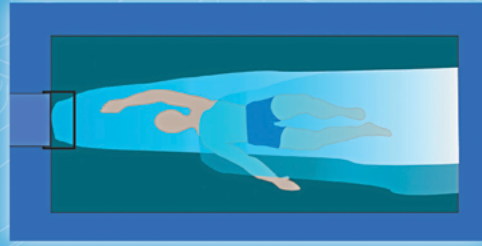
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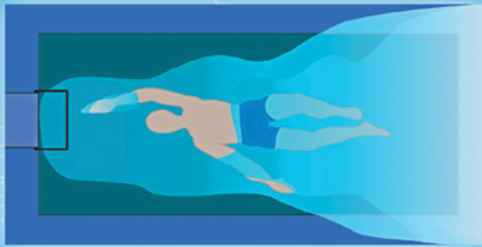
Sentry vs Competitor



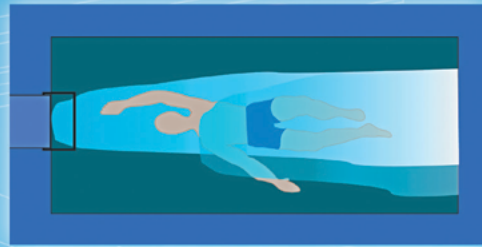
24" Walkway all around pool is standard



Construction does not allow for walkway unless a deck is attached off of the structure



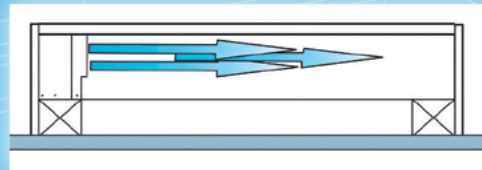
Wider current



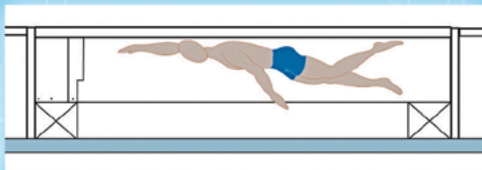
Narrow current



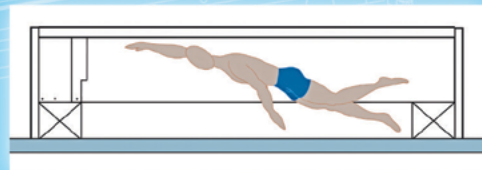
Deep Current from waterline to the bottom of the pool



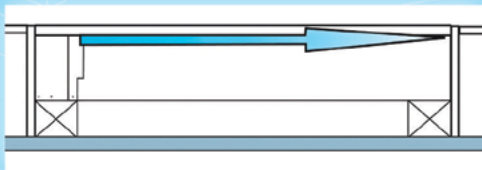
Current depth 12" from the waterline



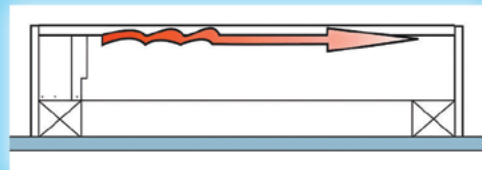
Current flow lifts you for a more natural swim and easy kick



Current flow forces swimmers to kick hard and always look downward to stay on water surface



Water current is smooth at water surface even at high speeds



Water current has three rolls at water surface and swimmers must be between them to breathe

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45"

FRONT VIEW

INDOOR STACK

POOL HEATER


POOL HEATER

SIDE VIEW

EXHAUST

ROOF

INDOOR



Condiment Coaching

by Trey Taylor,
Head Coach, Gaston Gators Masters

Add some flavor to your workouts with Condiment Coaching!

When returning to the water after our national “COVID Taper” you might feel like you are swimming in mayonnaise. Fear not! You can ramp back up by approaching workouts as if you were selecting condiment flavors to make your meals match your appetite.


Weeks One and Two of returning to the water are the Heinz Picnic Pack, ketchup, mayo, relish, and that’s it! Nothing too spicy; take it easy, work on the basics and find your stroke again. Hit the oldie goldie drills, dial in those locked out streamlines and work on your distance per stroke.

Week Three of your return adds some Spicy Brown Mustard, now we are adding a bit of variety. The coach may break out the stopwatch for some pacing work. Breath control comes back into play, and you are still dialing in all those essentials you know and love (don’t you dare back off on that streamline!)

Week Four gets some Sriracha, Cholula, or Texas Pete (pick your favorite). A few sets are back “on the watch” and we are hitting 85-90% effort. Strokes are dialed back in and you are crushing your dolphins off the wall (so much so you’re being

referred to in practice as the “73/74 Super Bowl Champion). In Week Five we are starting to rummage back in the back of the cabinet. Reach into the back and pull out that dusty bottle of Cousin Willie’s Inferno Sauce that you got for Christmas one year as a goof. Coach has the watch in his hand constantly, music is pumping and the water is churning. This is what training is all about. Heart racing as you leave the wall, popping your push offs, and underwaters are a thing of beauty. You break out hard and there is nary a thought of breathing on the first stroke. Finish fast into the wall. Pop your head up breathless and wait for that time from the coach.

Week Six... well, Week Six is where the “fun” begins (if you’re a coach anyway). This is the “Mad Dog 357 No.9 Plutonium” Week. 7,000,000+ Scoville Units here, and it’s time to set your heart ablaze with the love of the swim. You missed the water, you craved the drive and now it’s back. Workouts are so hard you can feel your heartbeat in your tongue. You feel like Rick DeMont chasing that sub 4-minute 400, or Katie Ledecky striving for that sub 15-minute 1500 (stay tuned). You feel weightless, the water is the perfect temp, you hit the water and.... The world becomes singular, focused. You are the pool.



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- ✓ Develop A Perfect Pull
- ✓ Gain Powerful Starts & Turns



NCAA Head Swimming Coaches and Stress



**Dr. Robert Pearson EdD
& Dr. Timothy Baghurst PhD**

It will probably come as no surprise that college swimming coaches are stressed out. A 2018 research study surveyed head coaches of NCAA swimming programs to investigate issues that may contribute to high stress levels among intercollegiate head swimming coaches. The Coaching Issues Survey, a tool to measure specific, potential stressors experienced by coaches of intercollegiate athletic teams was used to collect data. A total score of potential stress and specific scores from four subscales: 1) Win-Loss (e.g., issues related to the winning and losing of an athletic contest), 2) Time-Role (e.g., work-life balance and issues related to completing job requirements), 3) Program-Success (e.g., items critical to success such as facility availability, budget, and recruiting), and 4) Athlete-Concerns (e.g., interactions with athletes), were calculated from participant's responses. Data were analyzed across variables of competitive division, coach age, years of total coaching experience, years of head coaching experience, and gender.

The age of a coach, years of coaching experience, and years of head coaching experience were not found as significant contributors to stress, but data did reveal some key findings. First, the subscales for Time-Role and Program-Success were significant stressors. Coaches, perhaps not surprisingly, have difficulty with work-life balance and successfully completing job duties identified within the Time-Role subscale. Coaches also reported struggling with facility availability, team budgets, recruiting, and other related items identified in the Program-Success subscale. Winning and losing, and interacting with athletes were not found to be significant stressors. Perhaps the key finding of the study was there was no

difference in stress experienced by coaches whether they worked at the NCAA Division I, II, or III level. Many have long assumed that coaching a NCAA Division I program was the most stressful. However, no significant difference in experienced stress based on competitive division was indicated upon review of the gathered data. The greater emphasis placed on athletics in all divisions appears to create stress that is equal for coaches in each of the three divisions, rather than only larger institutions.

Female coaches reported experiencing more stress than their male colleagues. Females experienced significantly greater stress than males in the Time-Role, Program-Success, and Win-Loss subscales. Only in the area of Athlete-Concerns were females on par with their male counterparts. This is an important finding, particularly when such a small percentage of the overall population of head intercollegiate swimming coaches are women.

Because there was no difference in stress experienced by competitive division, promoting greater cooperation and sharing of ideas may be one way to help alleviate stress. The advent of support groups, work and home stratagems, and sharing best practices may be additional factors to help all coaches mitigate stress and stay in the work force longer.

This was the first known research study to investigate stress and stressors in the population of intercollegiate head swimming coaches.

Robert Pearson is an ASCA certified Level 4 coach and has served as a coach at LIU-Post, and a head coach with several club and high school teams, as well as Macalester College. Currently he is the director for the STAR of the North swim program in Minnesota. He completed his doctorate at the University of Phoenix and his works can be found in peer-reviewed journals.

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651-497-1254

Timothy Baghurst is the Director of FSU COACH: Interdisciplinary Center for Athletic Coaching at Florida State University. He completed his doctorate at the University of Arkansas and has had over 100 peer-reviewed articles published. Coaching for Sports Performance is his most recent book. He mentors coaches and athletes privately, and is a frequent competitor in racquetball, squash 57, and pickleball.

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Training Through the Pandemic Using Higher Education Swimming

Kerry O'Brien Walnut Creek Masters

When the order came down March 13 to close our facility for what was thought to be a short amount of time to get the Covid-19 virus under control, few believed we would be in the situation we still find ourselves in for very long. But as the reality of the pandemic set in and the Shelter In Place restrictions were put in place, teams, clubs, and groups were forced to find new and creative ways to approximate "normal".

What many teams saw as a burden, some like Walnut Creek Masters accepted as a challenge. Twice weekly dryland workouts using stretch cords were set up through live Zoom with the classes being taped and cataloged for future viewings. But very soon it was understood that more needed to be offered to our membership that continued to support our team and staff. If the opportunity to train our athletes was going to be completely removed from the water, the decision was made that our staff would creatively train our swimmers "academically".

And thus the idea of Creeker University was born, a fully accredited online institution that provides an unparalleled opportunity to further one's swimming education. Creeker U would provide a unique learning experience centered on the Theories of Swimming, Swim Training, and Swimming Culture.

Our staff of five coaches was tasked with creating their own four week curriculum for any subject matter that centered around swimming. Creeker University would be on a four week quarter system, with a week off between quarters. During the week off a synopsis was sent out to describe the next quarter's classes. A school crest was designed, a mascot picked, and school fight song chosen. A letter of acceptance to Creeker University was sent to every team member congratulating them on their appointment, along with general information on how the school would conduct business.

Coaches would deliver their course studies to the Head Coach, now considered the "Dean", by Thursday to be delivered to everyone's inbox the following Monday morning for classes.

CREEKER UNIVERSITY



School Colors: PURPLE & WHITE

Mascot: FiPSO

School Motto:

"I am still learning"

—Michelangelo Age 87

Fight Song:

"As Good As I Once Was!"

—Toby Keith

The First Quarter course study list included:

Mathematics Department

Training By the Numbers

Interval training and effective ways to read a pace clock

Freestyle 101

Understanding relationship of stroke efficiency and stroke tempo to overall lap times

Department of Critical Thinking

Technique and Self Critique

Self evaluation leads to self improvement

Mind, Body, and Influence

How breathing effects your mind and body both in and out of the water

School of Aquatic Business

Be the Boss

Understanding the "Creeker" way and revealing the "why" behind how our sets and season are designed, providing insight should you ever need to write your own workouts.

The Second Quarter course study list included:

Department of Applied Mechanics

Pre-Meet and Pre-Race Warm-ups

Preparing for a successful out comes always starts the way: Preparation! - Preparation! - Preparation!

Race Planning

How to Race the 50 Backstroke

English Department

Swimming in Literature

A four week in depth look at swimming in non-fiction, fiction, technical writing and poetry

Health and Sciences Department

A Heart Healthy You

Knowing your numbers and how to work towards a healthier heart

Fortunately for Walnut Creek Masters we were allowed back in the water with limited participation in the second week of June, just as we were preparing the third quarter of class studies. But as University Dean I was so impressed with the level of buy in by our staff to the university concept and the effort each put in to their course study preparations and roll outs. It stretched each of us in our teaching capabilities in ways that we certainly may not have discovered without a pandemic to push our creativity. Feedback was very positive by our membership, even without a Homecoming game or Sock Hop. Now that we are back in the water in full "lab" mode from a learning perspective, it does not mean we will not go back and revisit the higher education platform of on-line learning.

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Joao De Lucca, Bruno Fratus & Marcelo Chierighini

PanAm Games 400-meter free relay gold medalists, 6 Olympic Games combined, Multiple National Championships, Record Holders, Brazil.



Nina Rangelova

3 x Olympian, National Record Holder, Bulgaria.



Arkady Vyatchanin

2 x Olympic Medalist, Former World Record Holder, Serbian National Record Holder.



Michael Jamieson

Olympic Silver Medalist 200-meter breaststroke, Great Britain.

From NCAA Champions, to Olympic Medalists, World Record Holders, National Coaches and World Champions... BRATTER PA has been privileged to work with World-Class Swimmers and Coaches from over 34 countries.

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