

My Favourite Practice & Teaching Progressions

Novice

Practice Set-up:

1. Fun yet challenging
2. Focus on basic fundamentals
3. Repetitive
4. Progression only continues when they can perform a skill
5. Demanding “excellence”

Favourite things to do in practice:

1. Follow the leader
2. Snakes
3. Kick wars
4. Underwater Rock/Paper/Scissors
5. First person leaves when last person touches
6. Mirror kicking
7. Dive & glide competitions

Setting up the Season:

1. If possible set up full season before the swimmers hit the water
2. Know the goal of the program
3. Trust my coaches
4. Know meet schedule, reminder of meet expectations the practice before the meet
5. Evaluate the season as soon as it's finished, before it starts to slip your mind

Teaching Progressions:

1. BODY AWARENESS
2. Do you have “athletic” swimmers?
3. Creating co-ordinated/athletic swimmers in a novice program
4. Body position/Streamline co-ordination
5. Basic core strength
6. Head position
7. Kicking co-ordination
8. Sculling (feel for the water)
9. Break the stroke down
10. Demonstrations/teammates or video
11. Can they do it on land?
12. Finding different ways to teach/saying the same thing in different ways

Each Practice consists of the following:

1. Warm up
2. Kicking
3. Skill
4. Swimming (trying to apply the skill)
5. Fun

*break the stroke down, put it together, break it down... repeat the cycle

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Equipment:

1. Cap & Goggles
2. Water bottle
3. Pull Buoy
4. Fins
5. Kick boards (although most kick is done in body position)

Goals:

1. Fun/Enjoyable
2. Body awareness
3. Early stroke mechanic development
4. Games that help develop skills

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Intro to Competitive/Competitive

Favourite Sets:

1. 20x50 Test (2x50 on each pace – 1:20/1:15/1:10/1:05/1:00/0:55/0:50/0:45/0:40/0:35)
*shows progression over time – they are expected to fail
2. IM Wheels - different distances, different focuses, IM based, kick/drill/scull/swim/fast/easy
3. Distance Set – modify number of 100's at different points in the season
8x100 Free – 800pace+4 on 1:45 + 200 choice smooth or drill
6x100 Free – 800pace+2 on 1:55 + 200 choice smooth or drill
4x100 Free – 800pace on 2:05 + 200 choice smooth or drill
2x100 Free – 800pace-2 on 2:15 + 200 choice smooth or drill

“Dry” Teaching Progressions:

1. Know the goal of the group (below Regional, Regional, Provincial, etc.)
2. Start to educate the parents
 - a) get them on your side
 - b) they have to believe in you to have their swimmer believe in you
 - c) parents are responsible for getting kids to practice, they need to know the value of being at practice on time and ready to go
 - d) time standards

Teaching Progressions:

1. BODY AWARENESS
2. Teach/build/teach/swim
3. Always swimming with good skills – don't be afraid to start again
4. Always swimming their racing stroke mechanics (why practice what you're not going to use?)
5. Take the time to TEACH clearly
 - a) clear verbal instructions – know your pool and acoustics
 - b) demonstrations on land with verbal instructions
 - c) swimmer demonstrations in water or on land if needed
 - d) guinea pig – pick on a swimmer and see if they're willing to try something new
6. No pace times, or very slow pace times at the start of the season & when doing skill work
 - a) allows swimmers to focus on what they need to be doing instead of needing to make pace
 - b) slow pace times allow swimmers to be able to figure out the pace clock – especially the new/young
7. Mix/match lanes
 - a) shows your natural leaders/followers
 - b) make sure everyone knows their teammates
 - c) learn from other swimmers not just the coach
 - d) team building & team strengthening
8. Build from kick, build from scull, body co-ordination through the core

Equipment:

1. Cap, Goggles, Water bottle
2. Pull Buoy, Paddles, Band
3. Snorkel
4. Kick board

Goals:

1. Fun/improvement
2. Learning/becoming independent
3. Build mechanics & hold under stress