

# The Weekly Splash

June 2, 2011

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## News For SWIM PARENTS

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## The Nature of Stroke Work

Sometimes the Perception is That Not Enough Stroke Work is Being Done

Guy Edson, American Swim Coaches Association

A sometimes concern among Moms and Dads is whether enough stroke work is being done. "All they do is swim. I don't see any instruction at all," is the typical refrain. The purpose of this short article is to explain what to expect from stroke work and to describe the different ways we coaches do stroke work and when we do it.

What to expect from stroke work: Do you remember teaching your children to tie their shoes? Some get it sooner, some get it later, some get it when you are not even watching. Each gets it in their own time regardless of your efforts. Same deal on stroke work. We hope to see immediate improvement but it is not always there. Patience is the key. Thorndike's "laws" of learning come into play here: Is the child ready to learn? Does the child repeat the skill at the conscious level in order to move the skill from the conscious level to the automatic level? (Are they even operating at the conscious level during repeats?) With some children we notice a "delayed reaction" to teaching where they apparently make very little progress at the time and then some time later, sometimes even weeks later, magically get it. There is a trial and error learning going on at the subconscious level and it may take many repeats for things to suddenly click. So why do coaches allow swimmers to swim lap after lap with incorrect technique? Because, the hope is that a seed planted by the coach suddenly blossoms through trial and error learning after many repeats.

Where do those seeds come from? There are three basic types of stroke work. The most obvious is formal teaching where the lane or the workout group is stopped from aerobic or race pace swimming conditioning for 10 to 20 minutes



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and the coach explains a technique, uses a demonstrator, and then will have the athletes attempt the skill, usually one at a time with immediate feedback from the coach. This type of instruction is commonly used nearly everyday with less advanced swimmers (novice), and less frequently with more advanced swimmers. Early in the season the coach may have the more advanced swimmers involved with formal teaching nearly every day as well.

A second form of stroke work is the stroke drill. Stroke drills are intended to isolate a part of the stroke so that the swimmer can focus on that particular skill. Stroke drills are often done as repeats on a low to moderate rest interval so that there is a conditioning effect as well.

The third form of stroke work is the most common - to some coaches it is the most important - and it is the most misunderstood and underappreciated by some observers (parents). This form of stroke work is the constant reminders coaches give to swimmers either verbally during the short rest periods between swims or visual cues demonstrated by the coach during the swims. The purpose is to move swimmers from an automatically wrong movement to the consciously correct movement; and if done enough, and given enough time, will effect a change. Some coaches are "always" doing stroke work of this type, even though it is not always easy to observe from the bleachers.

I meet with parent's groups regularly and I like to do this little exercise with them: "Imagine a successful swimmer at whatever level you chose - state level, regional, national, or international. Now, let's list the factors that contribute to the swimmer's success. Ready, go." When I do this exercise I get responses such as: "work ethic," "discipline," and "commitment"—these are factors relating to the psychology of the athlete. We usually get 8, 10, or maybe even 12 factors on the list before we get to... "technique." I am not saying that technique is not important - it is - but every Olympic gold medalist has defects in their stroke. The pursuit of the impossibly perfect stroke is futile. Yes, stroke work IS important, but I am not sure it is the most important thing for advanced swimmers. When we observe a coach who doesn't *appear* to be doing enough stroke work, step back and look at the bigger picture. Is the child happy and improving? If so, then like is good.

*News for Swim Parents is a weekly newsletter with a single article published by ASCA, American Swim Coaches Association. CCAA has contracted with ASCA for the rights to publish this newsletter with our club's weekly newsletter. Above is this week's edition of News for Swim Parents.*

## CRAA Summer Practice Schedule

On Friday, June 3, with the end of school, CRAA will begin using its summer practice schedule. Please review the practice schedule that is posted on the CRAA web site at <http://www.craa.org/PracticeSchedule3.html>.

## CRAA Facebook Page

CRAA now has a Facebook and a Twitter account. These electronic sources of communicating will greatly improve CRAA's ability to publicize the team's accomplishments and communicate with members.

Facebook: Come join our group! Search for CRAA the next time you are on Facebook and request to join. The Facebook website is: <http://www.facebook.com>.

Twitter is an online messaging board where instant updates from friends, industry experts, favorite celebrities, and events that are happening around the world are sent. In order to give greater recognition to some of our swimmers accomplishments, CRAA has launched a Twitter account for the club. Members can now follow CRAAswim on Twitter and get up to the minute updates coming right from the pool deck at our meets! The website is: <http://twitter.com>.



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If you have any questions on how to set-up an account for either of these websites, please contact Brian by email at [bruffles@coe.edu](mailto:bruffles@coe.edu) or by phone at 716-597-7671.

## CRAA Long Course Kickoff Swim Meet

The following swimmers have entered the Long Course Kickoff that will be held on the weekend of June 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>.

The following swimmers have entered this meet:

Alanna Adkins	Jackie Allen	Emily Berg	Paige Broghammer
Gloria Campbell	Morgan Chambers	Kelsey Drake	Amanda Fetters
Casey Gannon	Madison Gannon	Sarah Gannon	Bibiana Granadillo
Abigail Krueger	Mackinzee Macho	Alicia Miltner	Cameron Murray
Micah Poellet	Olivia Squire	Delaney Thoma	Olivia Thoma
Kelly Wingerson	Lydia Yang		
Scott Allison	Logan Barnes	Morgan Barnes	Eric Ford
Ethan Ford	Ian Ford	Joseph Gallet	Trevarious Hayward
Nathan Homan	Ian Hoover-Grinde	Josh Horth	Matt Jackson
Stefan Kitsos	Zach Klug	Carter Kramer	Jeremy Thronson
Michael Welbes	Adam Wolff		

## DMSF Birdland Invitational

Meet information is now available for the DMSF Birdland Invitational. This is a meet will be held at Birdland Pool in Des Moines June 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>. This is an open swim meet for swimmers of all ages. This meet has yet to be closed and entries are still being accepted. Contact Bobby if you still would like to enter this meet.

The following swimmers have already entered this meet:

Amyah Arrington	Alanna Adkins	Emilie Berg	Abigail Krueger
Josh Horth	Matt Jackson	Stefan Kitsos	BJ Kolsrud

## Vinton Invitational Swim Meet

Meet information is now available for the Vinton Invitational. This is a meet will be held at Vinton Community Pool on June 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>. This is a Q- meet. This meet has yet to be closed and entries are still being accepted. Contact Bobby if you still would like to enter this meet.

The following swimmers have already entered this meet:

Gabrielle Armstrong	Morgan Chambers	Casey Gannon	Madison Gannon
Sarah Gannon	Alyssa Harris	Shannon Kelley	Abigail Krueger
Kinzee Macho	Cameron Murray	Micah Poellet	Delaney Thoma
Olivia Thoma	Rachel Velazquez	Sarah Velazquez	Kelly Wingerson
Casey Cerveny	Nathan Homan	Ian Hoover-Grinde	Cameron Kelley
Carter Kramer	Matt Peng	Sam Peng	Adam Wolff

## CIA Beat the Heat Swim Meet

Meet information is now available for the CIA Beat the Heat Swim Meet. This is a meet will be held at Grinnell College on Saturday, July 2 & 3. This is an open swim meet for swimmers of all ages. This meet has yet to be closed and entries are still being accepted. Contact Bobby if you still would like to enter this meet.

The following swimmers have already entered this meet:

Emilie Berg	Paige Broghammer	Morgan Chambers	Kelsey Drake
Abigail Krueger	Kinzee Macho	Delaney Thoma	Olivia Thoma



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Ian Ford  
Stefan Kitsos

Morgan Barnes  
Josh Horth  
Carter Kramer

Eric Ford  
Matt Jackson  
Matt Peng

## Cedar River Waves Swim Team

There is still time to register for the Waves. CRAA swimmers may register for the Waves any time. The first Waves meet of the season is Tuesday, June 21. To receive a cap and t-shirt for this season, please be registered by Friday, June 10. To Register for the Waves, please contact Bobby at [coachkelley@aol.com](mailto:coachkelley@aol.com) or Wendy at [coachwendycraa@gmail.com](mailto:coachwendycraa@gmail.com) with the following information for each swimmer:

Swimmers Name                      Birth Date  
Age                                              T-Shirt Size

The fee for the Waves is \$30.00. This cost includes:

Cedar Rapids Recreation Department participation fees  
Waves T-Shirt & Cap  
End of Season Party  
Four dual meets and the All City Meet

Payment is not due at this time. The Waves fee will be added to your monthly CRAA bill.

The following swimmers have already registered for the Waves include:

Alanna Adkins	Amyah Arrington
Morgan Chambers	Alena Diercks
Emily Fusselman	Hannah Fusselman
Alyssa Harris	Kinzee Macho
Gabe Macho	Paxton Morgan
Peyton Morgan	Wayne Padgett
Matt Peng	Samuel Peng
Micah Poellet	Delaney Thoma
Olivia Thoma	Abigail Thronkson
Jeremy Thronkson	Michael Welbes
Adam Wolff	

To register, please contact Wendy by email at [coachwendycraa@gmail.com](mailto:coachwendycraa@gmail.com) or by phone at 389-8618.



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