



BeInSynch

Education Newsletter

JUNE EDITION • 2020

Welcome to the June 2020 Education Newsletter!
Our goal is to share information with you from experts, volunteers, coaches and officials. If you have suggestions to be included in future newsletters, please send them to shari@usaartisticswim.org.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Reflect, Feel, Reframe, Focus
- Water Work-outs from Coach Anna
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- Music – The Beat



UPCOMING EVENTS

2020 USA Artistic Swimming Convention – to be held virtually during the month of September

October 15th – 18th
US Masters Championships
Las Vegas, NV

November 6th – 8th
All-Star Camp
Spire Institute - Geneva, OH
Attendees: Phase 3 qualifiers from 12&U and 13-15 Age Group National Team Trials

November 6th – 8th
Coaches College
Spire Institute – Geneva, OH

Dec 27th - 31st
Camp for top 16
13-15 Age Group Athletes chosen from 2020 All-Star Camp

Nothing can dim the light that shines from within.

- Maya Angelou

VERY IMPORTANT **SAFESPORT MANDATE & COURSE INFO!!!**

As mandated by The Center for SafeSport, ALL individuals listed on USA Artistic Swimming's required list (included on the last page of this newsletter), **MUST** complete the Full SafeSport course! **NOTE: there is a new requirement for 18 year old athletes training or competing with minors which states that they MUST complete the course.**

The full SafeSport course is approximately 90 minutes long. New users will be presented with the single course automatically. **Only Coaches need to send in the "SafeSport Trained" certificate to coachcerts@usaartisticwim.org** (do not send them to Shari Darst). All individuals completing the course will be listed on the Certifications List, which is posted under Resources on the USA Artistic Swimming website: www.teamusa.org/USA-Artistic-Swimming.

IMPORTANT: If your expiration date was in 2018 or earlier or have never completed a course (refer to the posted SafeSport completion or CCP lists), you will need to take the Full Course. After completing the Full Course, you will be required to complete a Refresher course every year going forward.

Please watch your expiration dates for SafeSport! You only need to complete ONE Course per year. Refresher courses take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

NEW: When you register with USA Artistic Swimming, you will receive instructions and the Access Code to complete the course.

New Safety Reporting Form

USA Artistic Swimming has created a new athlete safety reporting form. The Center for SafeSport address will remain as the primary address to submit athlete safety concerns, but this is an alternate submission option for those that may prefer to submit to the National Office.

Click **HERE** to submit an issue to the National Office or by phone at 719-866-2235.





The **Judges' Board** has decided that, owing to the cancellation of many meets in 2020, all judge candidates at all levels may extend their testing time frame per Appendix G by one year.

New online training for Level 1F and Level 1 Judges has been developed and is available. The online course followed by a webinar is now allowed instead of in-person training. The first webinar has been scheduled for June 17th, the online course must be completed first if you wish to join the webinar. If you are interested contact shari@usaartisticswim.org.

The updated **Grades Manual as of June 1, 2020** has been posted which includes the new Level 6. Level 6 will be required for athletes attending Senior Nationals and athletes participating in Senior National Team Trials beginning in the 2021-2022 season.

Virtual land testing for Grades will be accepted for the 2020-2021 season. Instructions & the Manual are on the website – [click here](#).



Even Reggie got into the spirit of the “Synchro Ready” challenge!

TAKE A LISTEN



Podcasts worth your time:

“What Does it Take to Dive Into Dangerous Waters?” by Diana Nyad, [click here](#)

“Perfectionist Athletes and Fragile Confidence” by Patrick Cohn, [click here](#)

Great Reads



“The Importance of Staying Connected” by Glen Mulcahy, [click here](#)

“Create a Positive Sports Environment”, [click here](#)

Videos to Enjoy



“Tips from the Best: Olympic Legends on What it Takes”, by Christ Stokes, Angela Ruggiero & Tony Azevedo (Expert Connection through the PanAm Sports Channel), [click here](#)

Jump Rope Exercises, by Linda Witter, former National Team & Olympic Coach [click here](#)

“Sisters in Sweat”, by Serena Williams [click here](#)

“Focused Fueling”, by Taylor Maggio Sports Dietitian for USA National Team [click here](#)

REFLECT – FEEL – REFRAME - FOCUS

Reflect on the season, feel your feelings, reframe the experience, and focus on the future by setting new goals.

By: Dr. Tegan Adams
USA Artistic Swimming
National Team, Sports Psychologist

It starts with reflection

One important practice to engage in after the end of anything is to spend some time reflecting and reviewing. This can be a brief process that you do in your own head while running, or even while sitting on your couch, but it can also be a process that you talk through with somebody else. Figuring out the best way for you is important, but I encourage you to write it down. Writing has been found to be an effective way to process emotionally. Ask yourself these questions to review your season: What was I anticipating or planning for this season? What were my goals? What went well? What do I wish had gone differently? What were the disappointments?

How do you rebound from disappointment?

First, it is important to notice any emotions you are having. If you don't, and the feelings are not attended to, they can develop into deeper concerns such as low motivation, burnout, anxiety, and depression.

A strategy that can help manage emotions is first to notice and recognize the feeling, name it, validate it, and then refocus.

Reframing your experience

While it can be easy to focus on the disappointments or loss experienced and maybe has even caused you to consider moving on from artistic swimming, this is the time when you can take advantage of ways your resilience has grown and to have an increase in confidence in your ability to adjust and be flexible.

Focus on what you gained from your season, ways that you became stronger and more adaptable - avoid focusing on what you lost. Many high achieving leaders focus on the silver linings. What were your silver linings from this season? For some it was having more time with family, more time to rest your body and recover from injury, more time to focus on growing skills or flexibility, or even more time to re-evaluate and rededicate yourself to your goals.

Refocus and get ready for next year

You may need to refocus and or adjust your goals for next year. One of the foundations of setting effective goals is being able to adapt your goals when needed. This is an important aspect of moving forward into this new season.

How can you start fresh, and also continue pushing towards the goals you set last year? Ask yourself what is new or different about this upcoming year that you did not have to account for last year? Maybe your schedule is different as you add in academics, or maybe you finished academics and you will have more time to focus on your swimming goals. Either way, there will likely be some adjustment that you will need to account for in order to be effective.

Other strategies to try if you aren't already

=> *Deep breathing.*

This is known as one of the ways to impact the nervous system to calm you down. Your mind gets tricked into thinking there is no threat and can reduce anxious thoughts so you can focus.

=> *Acts of kindness.*

Our levels of happiness increase when we are helping other compared to when we focus on ourselves. It helps us improve our social connections as well.

=> *Focus on what you can control.*

There is power in realizing there are aspects out of our control, but we can focus on our reaction and where we invest our energy.

=> *Exercise and eat healthy food.*

Nutrition has huge impacts on our mental and emotional health.

=> **Gratitude.**

Being careful increases happiness and well being. Write down three good things every day. Another way to practice gratitude is to write a gratitude letter to somebody else. This was found to provide a positive impact for up to one month!

The full article can be found [HERE](#)

WATER WORK-OUTS FROM COACH ANNA

By Anna Voloshyna
Jr NT Head Coach/
Sr NT Asst Coach

Now that some athletes are able to return to the water,
here are some ideas to add to your age group level work-outs.

2500 meter workout: 15% warm-up, 30% legs, 55% speed swimming

- 400m IM warm up – 25m just kicks + 50 exercise (one arm/ one arm/ both arms) + 25 regular
- 6*50m freestyle kicks
- 10*50m freestyle (breathing first 25 on every 5th stroke/ second 25 on every 9th stroke)
- 6*50m butterfly kicks
- 10*50m butterfly (breathing only on every 2nd stroke)
- 4*50m breaststroke kicks
- 6*50m breaststroke (25 regular/ 25 legs in eggbeater)

2000 meter workout: 20% warm-up, 30% legs, 50% speed swimming

- 400m warm up - freestyle exercises (25 kicks +25 arms with breaks near a shoulder, straight in front of face, near a hip + 50 regular freestyle in slow speed with long strokes)
- 8*200m freestyle (25 freestyle kicks + 100 regular freestyle + 25 freestyle kicks on the back + 50 regular freestyle with breathing on every 9th stroke)

1000 meter workout: 20% warm-up, 60% legs/breathing/arms, 20% speed swimming

- 200m warm up (100 IM kicks + 100 IM)
- 4*25m freestyle with dive in
- 4*25m butterfly with dive in
- 400m exercise (25 speed freestyle + 25 torpedo + 25 butterfly kicks on the back under the water + 25 eggbeater on the stomach)
- 4*50m (25 breaststroke + 25 breaststroke underwater)



CATAPULT COACHING

By Nick Ruddock,
Nick Ruddock Gymnastics

I'd like to introduce you to a term I call 'Catapult Coaching.'

It involves pulling an athlete back in order to propel them forward, metaphorically of course.

All too often our athletes are restricted in skill level by sub-standard physical and technical preparation, what we often loosely refer to as 'basics.'

These basics are of course the foundation of all skill development in our sport. It goes without saying that with poor foundations we will eventually have poor performance, or in many cases no performance at all due to injury etc.

The great Muhammed Ali famously quoted:

"It's not the mountains ahead that wear you out, it's the pebble [stone] in your shoe."

What a great quote. And how relevant to our athletes.

How many stones is your athlete metaphorically dealing with?

In all the excitement of skill development, it's very easy to get ahead of ourselves coaching and push a little too early [and that's ok, we've all been there]. But knowing when to stop and take action is critical.

In these times, the catapult needs to come out.

Although it may seem your athlete *can* move forwards with skills, often it might not be the right thing to do. In fact not only should they not move forwards, perhaps some prior skills and preparation needs revisiting as a higher priority.

Gymnastics coach Carol Angela Orchard, a dear friend and mentor eludes to this concept as not actually going 'BACK to basics' as you are helping the athlete move FORWARD by working on their basics. She therefore refers to it as moving 'forward to basics!' A nice paradigm shift through a change in language.

Drawing that catapult back is preparation for propelling them forwards.

So, you can see the mountain ahead.

But are you also looking for the stones?



“We will soon all look back
incredulously that athletes ever swam
without head protection of this kind

*Rowdy Gaines, Olympic Gold Medalist,
International and Masters Hall of Famer*



GAME-CHANGING FEATURES AND BENEFITS INCLUDE...



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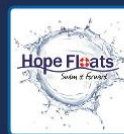


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Rowdy Gaines



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Still out of the water?

Below are some great ideas that clubs around the country have come up with!

- ~Talent Shows (doesn't have to be anything having to do with artistic swimming)
- ~Bake something having to do with your team or artistic swimming.
- ~Zoom work-outs with other teams or countries.
- ~Online sessions with professionals outside of our sport: dance, yoga, martial arts, mental, nutrition experts, etc.
- ~Team Spirit Challenge or Award – swimmers take a photo and write a positive message for encouragement for their teammates, or recognition for who has been the most inspirational?
- ~Charades / Bingo / Quiz Night
- ~“Theme” practice – 50's, team colors, dress like a coach, crazy hair
- ~Dance improv
- ~Work-outs created by the athletes
- ~Headpiece challenge
- ~Most importantly – connect & have FUN!

Able to get back in the water? Click [HERE](#) for suggested Guidelines for Returning to Training.



RISING STARS!



USA Artistic Swimming has selected the Rising Stars for the 2020-2021 season. The Rising Star program is run by Tammy McGregor - 1996 Olympian, former National Team Coach & current Coach for the Walnut Creek Aquanauts.

The program is designed to work with up and coming athletes, under the age of 15, that have National Team potential. Athletes who are chosen for this program are visited by Tammy 2 -3 times per year to work on technical and routine skills. In addition, they are provided continuous support via videos, chats and e-mails. The six athletes selected for this year's Rising Star Program are:

Lily Baoni, MAC Synchro ~ AnaMaria Camero, Splash Synchro ~ Dempsey Raftus, Austin Angelfish ~ Emma Kim, Austin Angelfish ~ Alivia Oliver, Gardens Synchro ~ Nicolette Tselikis, Nevada Desert Mermaids



MUSIC – THE BEAT

*By Chris Leahy
Coach, Swimmer, Music Guy,
USAAS VP Competitive Operations*

In case you missed Chris Leahy's webinar on Music this week, here are some key tips that he shared.

What to swim to? Finding the right music is hard. You have to find something that sounds good, is interesting, that you can count, and that you can listen to repeatedly for an entire season. So, how do you go about finding this music?

Start by considering the type of routine. A solo can get away with sections that are harder to count, a team will have a much harder time. Strong music that overpowers a soloist might be fine when used in a combo. Next look at the swimmers. While it is a rule¹ that all synchronized swimmers must swim a Disney routine at some point, those routines tend to look cuter on younger swimmers than for older swimmers. Some music might fit one swimmer's characteristics or personality better than another swimmer. For example, my coaches keep telling me that "Once Upon a December" just won't work for a swimmer who has a 5 o'clock shadow.

They may have a point.

Now for the hard part - coming up with a theme. Almost anything you can imagine could work as a theme as long as it ties the routine together. It could be a musical-style (Afro-Jazz), a movie (Spirit), a single song (Largo al factotum), a dance style (swing), an animal (birds), or even a concept (love). The theme for one of my favorite routines was chess. The theme was expressed by having endless complex pattern changes.

Great! You have a theme! Time to find music to go with it. For finding music, I suggest an account with a music streaming service and a lot of time. Try to listen to a wide variety of music. Look at other sports, such as figure skating, and see what they are using.

The most important piece is the opening. This should be something that grabs the judges' attention and hooks them for the rest of the routine. This is the piece of music that will introduce your theme to the judges. Judges appreciate when they don't have to struggle to determine what the routine is about.

Almost as important is the ending. This is the piece that finishes selling the routine to the judges. It should sound deliberate and purposeful. Don't make the judges uncertain if the routine is over or if the sound system died during the middle of the routine. Plus, a few of the national judges have an almost pathological hatred of endings where the music seems to just cut off.

Comments?, Questions?, music ideas for me?
E-mail leahycm@gmail.com

1) CP 4.2.5.10, really. Look it up.



Core Stability in Freestyle

As you return to the pool, this is a great time to focus on strokes and becoming stronger as a swimmer. Resist the urge to crank out your usual yardage. Be smart – and kind to your shoulders! Try many rounds of the progression lined out below, focusing on body balance, core stability and a slight rotation.

Making sure your body is in near perfect alignment while swimming freestyle, means that the movements you make with your arms and legs have a better change of being productive for moving you forward.

Below is a quick progression you can do during a freestyle set.

1 – Start with a pull buoy between the thighs.

2 – Next, lower the pull buoy to between the knees, keeping the toes pointed and legs held tightly together.

3 – Move the pull buoy to between your feet. Maintain a stable body line through this part, and don't allow the hips to fall.

4 – Swim without a pull buoy and with STRAIGHT LEGS, no kicking or as little as possible. Focus on the entire body, from the shoulders, torso, hips and legs, all rotating together.

5 – Start to add a small kick and swim.

To do it really well think about your stomach and hips through this exercise. When you get to the full swimming part, you should feel the hips engaged, or touching the surface on each rotation.



The Voice Finale

In case you missed it, Olympic Duet hopefuls Anita Alvarez and Lindi Schroeder teamed up with John Legend for him to try his hand at artistic swimming!

To top it off Anita was included in the live Finale! Such an exciting experience for our athletes, and great representation for our sport

If you missed it, you can watch it [HERE](#).

RANDOM LITTLE TiDBITS =>An addition of individuals who are now required to complete the SafeSport course: **ALL** 18 year old athletes who train or compete with minor age athletes must complete the course.

=>There are currently **MANY** coaches whose CCP Level and/or SafeSport course expires in 2020 – Please make sure to stay up to date. Send ALL certificates to coachcerts@usaartisticswim.org.

=>To recertify your CCP Level you must repeat the course for your current level or higher, or attend Coaches College by the December 31st of your expiration date. (There is no Level 4 CCP at this time). **Coaches College will be held Nov 6th – 8th at the Spire Institute in Geneva, OH.**

=>**All Coach Certifications should be sent to coachcerts@usaartisticswim.org.** Anyone who is not a coach is not required to send in certifications, it will be picked up through reports that are run by the office. If you have a question about a certification not showing up on the list, contact coachcerts@usaartisticswim.org.

=>**PLEASE** be aware of your expirations dates and **DO NOT** wait until the days or week before a competition to complete CCP Levels, First Aid/CPR, Safesport or NCSI Background Checks!

SAFESPORT – IMPORTANT INFORMATION

*Everyone has a role to play in creating a healthy environment for our sport and our athletes. SafeSport helps raise awareness about misconduct in sport, promote open dialogue, and provide training and resources. Providing a safe environment to protect the health and well-being of athletes is a high priority for USA Artistic Swimming. **The FULL course must be completed 1 time, the Refresher courses are mandatory 1 per year every year after that.***

PLEASE NOTE: It is now **MANDATORY** for the following individuals to complete the course.

USA Artistic Swimming

(Staff, Board Members, Support Staff, and Consultants)

National Team

(Head and Assistant Coaches, Consultants, Volunteers & Chaperones)

National Talent, Olympic Development Camps & National Elite Camp

(Head and Assistant Coaches, Consultants, Volunteers & Chaperones)

National Team Athletes

All National Team Athletes currently listed in the USADA Registered Testing Pool

All members of all USAAS Committees, Subcommittees and Boards

(18 years old and over)

Club Teams

(Any Coaches, Chaperones, Support Staff and Volunteers who have constant and consistent interaction and/or authority over athletes,

(This includes, but is not limited to: Dance, Acrobatics, Flexibility, Swimming Staff, etc., at any national or local Training Facility)

(Any Athlete 18 years or older who practices or competes with minor age athletes)

Approved Club Options/Private Invitations/ICE Program Participants

(All Staff - including Coaches, Managers, Chaperones and Adults who have constant and consistent interaction and/or authority over athletes while traveling with the athletes, excludes Adults who are attending as fans)

All Judges

(Levels 1 through FINA A & Emeritus)

Optional but highly recommended

Club Teams - BOD members

USA Artistic Swimming has added an area on the website solely dedicated to SafeSport. Under Resources, you will find information on how to take the course, the complete list of individuals who have taken the course, information on the US Center for SafeSport, and USA Artistic Swimming's Abuse and Harassment Policy.

SafeSport for Parents is not an accepted certification, nor is any other outside program.

If you have any questions, please contact shari@usaartisticswim.org or adam@usaartisticswim.org

When we work as a team, we can build a game plan to make sport safe for everyone.