



Typhoon TIMES

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Championship Season is Upon Us!

Spy Swimmers and Parents:
Our Championship season quickly approaches and it is time to start thinking about the Championship meets in February and March. (Junior District, District, and Area). Below is an explanation of which swimmers attend which meets:

Junior Districts

The Junior District meet is open to swimmers 12-U who do not meet the qualifying times for the District Meet. District meet “cuts” are posted on our SPY website. If a swimmer qualifies for District in just one event, it is sometimes better for that swimmer to attend Junior District in events in which they have not met District qualifying times. However, a swimmer cannot elect to attend both meets. The Junior District meet is a great event and it allows swimmers to compete against others on a level “playing field.” As coaches, we have seen the swimmers who go to this meet enjoy great success and huge drops in time. Each swimmer is allowed three individual events at this meet.

District

The District Meet is open to 12-U swimmers who achieve a district time in an event, and all 13-Over swimmers. Swimmers are limited to swimming 3 events and one relay OR 2 events and 2

relays. In the next few weeks, those who qualified for District will receive an invitation in their folder requesting that each swimmer indicate on that form their preference for events for District. Traditionally, the coaches are allowed some discretion in meeting those requests. Obviously, the coaches are trying meet the needs of the swimmers and the needs of relay teams while also creating a strong team to represent SPY at the Area meet. *As a coaching staff we are dedicated to these swimmers and these decisions are not made lightly.* The goal at the District Meet is to get as many swimmers as possible qualified for the Area Meet.

Area

The Area meet is the Illinois Missouri Area Championship (some refer to this as a State Meet). Those swimmers who meet the qualifying standards for this meet while at the District Meet (as published on our webpage) **MUST** attend this meet.

Relays

Those swimmers who are invited to participate to swim on a relay at District should not take this commitment lightly. If a swimmer commits to swimming on a relay at our District Meet and that relay qualifies for the Area meet, that swimmer will be expected to attend the Area meet in

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DeKalb, Illinois. This is true even if it is just to swim one 25/50 free on a relay. The choice not to attend will force three other swimmers to scratch from that event. Relays are created by the coaching staff. Although relays are usually made up of the 4 fastest swimmers in an age group (as recorded by our Meet Manager program), coaches do use some discretion in creating the relays. *Along with best times for the season, the coaches will take into consideration regular SPY practice attendance, illnesses, injuries, consistency, reliability, etc. For example, if someone*

has a really great time at the beginning of the season but has since stopped attending the SPY practices, the coaches may decide to put in a swimmer that they see on a regular basis at practice. Of course, the boys' high school season will also be taken into consideration and considered an excused absence from SPY practices. Again, the relays are usually a very sensitive issue and coaches do not make the decisions lightly. We want what is best for the swimmers because we love all of them and want everyone to have great success.

Parent Opportunity

More parents are needed to help coordinate the "psych up" pizza parties for Jr. District and District, as well as the treat bags for the kids at the meets. The pizza parties are usually held the weekend before the meets. If you are interested send your name to afierstos@comcast.net. These things really help the swimmers build up momentum going into their last meets.

Reach for the Stars

Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember you have within you the strength, the patience and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.

Harriet Tubman

Please help?

We desperately need more parent involvement on the board. Contact Steve Patton if you can volunteer.

Are you a bookkeeping wiz?

If so - the SPY team could really use your help. If there is a parent that would like to help the SPY team with bookkeeping contact Michelle.

Clinic Review

Four themes to carry us through the end of the season with dropping times in freestyle:

1. At the Start: **Strong Streamline!** Remember to get all of your cap and goggle problems fixed before you step up on the block. This leaves your mind free to concentrate on the pool in front of you and the event you are about to swim. Place your hands on your waist or on your knees so that you can feel, and avoid, unnecessary body movement that may end in a disqualification. Listen carefully for the starter so that you can react quickly. When you dive, dive strong from your finger tips to your toes and do not let the impact of the water effect your streamline position.
2. Posture Line & Balance: **Head Position!** Keep your head position steady and point your forehead to the end of the pool. Use your head as the axis around which your body rotates for efficient arm strokes.
3. Stroke Technique: **Reach and Roll!** Reach out front to grab the water while still keeping head still. Slide hands into the water at the top of your stroke. Don't slap the water upon entry.

4. At the Turn: **Pull Into the Wall!** Make sure that you use your last stroke to create momentum going into the wall for a flip-turn. Instead of lifting your head to create a wave into the wall, keep your head position under control and use the markers on the bottom of the pool to judge when to begin your turn. Keep your body tight to accelerate through the turn and make sure you get both feet on the wall in order to get a powerful push-off. Use undulations to carry the power from your push-off into the middle of the pool.



Apparel Pick-up

Be sure and stop by Michelle's office and pick-up your SPY apparel. With the championships coming up - the kids will need their team gear!



The Second-Half of the Season

The time has come to focus on the end of your season,

So by the time of your championships, there will be no reason,

To look back on these weeks with a sorrowful sigh,

Or say to yourself... "If only I'd tried",

If only I'd been willing to swim every set,

And not asked the coach if I could use the toilet,

At this stage of the season, every practice counts,

Every stroke, every turn, every last ounce,

Dig down deep, work hard these next few weeks,

The hard sets ahead are not for the meek,

It's time to take pride in your sport,

And don't do anything to sell yourself short,

After a lot of hard work, when the time comes to taper,

You'll reach all of the goals you set down on paper!



GO SPY!!!

So What's So Good About These Swim Clinics?

Thanks to all the SPY swimmers who attended the December 20 and 21 swim clinics. These clinics offered our swimmers a chance to work on stroke technique in a less crowded and non-workout condition. They were offered as an additional opportunity for your child to improve their technique, and provided an opportunity for the team to raise money for the club. The only expense incurred was for pool rental.

So what makes these clinics different from the workouts available to the SPY swimmers, and why is it important to participate? For those that stay and watch practice, it is obvious that we have a large number of swimmers in each lane. It is great to see so many kids dedicated to working hard and improving themselves, but it also makes it more difficult for our coaches to thoroughly critique and identify corrections to a stroke. Multiply this times four strokes and you can see how difficult it is to work on all of the mechanics of a particular stroke in a workout atmosphere. This was the premise for the clinic.

At the recent Saturday swim clinic for the P and Y swimmers, each of the swimmers was videotaped underwater through an underwater window, a factor which is not possible at the YMCA. Videotaping is really the only sure-fire way to evaluate a more advanced swimmers technique. It allows the coaches to view a swimmers stroke at normal speed, in slow motion, pause, rewind, etc., and make the necessary notes. For those that attended, you received a video excerpt of your child's freestyle and flip turn, along with a note card that lists some of the technique improvements that could be identified

within the short time frame of the clinic. During this clinic, we also reviewed the proper swim technique, and showed video excerpts that form the basis of the instruction given by our coaches. After review of the video, the swimmers worked on the correct technique, under the skilled eye of a coach.

The S swimmers participating in the Sunday clinic at the YMCA were not videotaped, as the technique corrections for beginning swimmers are more easily identifiable above the water. Each swimmer attended a station that focused on the major corrections necessary to improve techniques. There were four stations, and each focused on technique corrections that have significant impact to a swimmers stroke.

The ratio of swimmer to coach was one coach for every five swimmers at these clinics. For reference, it may be one coach per 18 swimmers at practice. This by itself is a huge benefit to your swimmer. While both clinics afforded the opportunity to identify technique issues, they only serve to begin the process of stroke correction and refinement. To improve stroke mechanics, each swimmer needs to think about the technique corrections provided to them by the coaches and try to work on these issues in practice, **EVERY DAY!** So please remind your child of these things, so that they carry this into practice. If you do have questions about what was identified, please contact any of the coaches and they will help you understand what the issues are.

Thanks again for supporting your children and the SPY program.



Recipes for Success

Aunt Liz's Chicken Spaghetti Casserole

This recipe is from Cooking Light magazine. It's good tasting, easy and good for you! You can whip this up before practice or the day before and throw it in the oven and enjoy for dinner.

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| 2 cups chopped cooked chicken breast | ½ teaspoon salt |
| 2 cups uncooked spaghetti noodles, broken into 2-inch pieces (about 7 ounces) | ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper |
| 1 cup chopped red bell pepper | 2 (10.75-ounce) cans 98% fat-free cream of mushroom (or celery) soup, undiluted |
| 1 cup chopped onion | Cooking spray |
| 1 cup fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth | 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese |

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Combine first 5 ingredients in a large bowl. Combine broth, salt, pepper, and soup in a medium bowl, stirring with a whisk. Add soup mixture to chicken mixture; toss. Put mixture in a 9 x 13 inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. Sprinkle 1 cup cheese over the top. Bake at 350° for 35 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 10 minutes. Enjoy!

Busy Mom Cooking Tip

From Coach Anneliese

For any recipe that calls for shredded or diced cooked chicken breast. Before heading out the door for work - simply place frozen chicken breast in your crock pot on low with some chicken broth and a little water. The result is really moist chicken that just falls apart when shredded. If your recipe calls for chicken broth as in the recipe above - just use the broth the chicken was cooked in.

Send us your recipes!

It's such a challenge finding time to sit down for dinner as a family - not to mention creating a healthy interesting meal for your family. If you have an easy to prepare meal that your family enjoys - share it with all the SPY families. Send your recipes to Anneliese Fierstos at afierstos@comcast.net.