
Between **the Lane** Lines

Volume 2010 Issue 4

Congratulations to everyone on their end of season meets! Now is a great time to focus on next season's training plan and creating new goals. Hope everyone had a fun and relaxing spring break!

Sticking With Swimming....What Can a Parent Do? Excerpt from USA Swimming

The Unfortunate Path Many Swimmers Follow:

The swimmer's career often starts with 8/under success & high parental enthusiasm. The child is encouraged by parents & others to excel & a big deal is made out of every accomplishment. As the child changes age groups & moves into the 9/10 group, even the most successful child may struggle because he /she has a harder time finding success against 10 year olds. The successes achieved may not be as noticeable. Unfortunately, as many as one-third of the young swimmers & their families don't make it past this point.

By the time swimmers are 10 or 11 years old they (or their parents) may realize that twice a week practices or summer only swimming is not enough to compete with others who are practicing more frequently. Physical ability & natural coordination can still help athlete to stay competitive & have success but it is getting harder to stay on top. More big changes and rude awakenings are lurking in the future.

The first Big Change: From 10/under to 11 & 12

- Events become longer going from 25's & 50's to 50's & 100's and even some 200's and distance freestyle events.
- Competition changes from sprint to race/pace/competition.
- Sometimes, half of the athletes & their families don't make this change. They never give the coaches or the program a chance to help the athlete adapt to the change.

The second Big Change: From age 12 to 13&14/Senior swimming.

- Events change again. Now it is all 100's & 200's along with 400/500 and 1000/1650.
- Athletes must develop a work ethic & intensify their training.
- Physical changes affect both male and female athletes. Athletes get bigger and stronger, but many, especially the girls, may struggle to cope with their "new bodies."
- This can one of the most rewarding phases of an athlete's career, yet many will give up.

The third Big Change: A focus on college swimming

- Swimmers who remain in the sport start to look at the

possibility of swimming in college.

- Questions arise concerning the choice of colleges, the level of swimming, the possibilities of scholarships and the willingness to compete and train for another four years.

What Can Parents Do to Reverse the Trend?

Parents must develop, progress and grow the just as athletes do. Experience is the key and communication is the mode. Swimmers already have coaches, friends and teammates. They need a parent to fill the parental role. "Coaches coach children, parents raise children."

Here are some of the benefits your child will garner if he or she sticks with swimming:

Life Lessons: Only one swimmer can win the race. Does this mean everyone else is a loser? Of course not! Swimmers need to constantly be reminded that a top-notch effort on their part will result in personal satisfaction & a contribution to their team. Most USA Swimming clubs design a program of competitive training & competition for our younger swimmers based on long term development. Therefore, we may not stress early competitive success with a great deal of fanfare. Remember that swimmers 12 & under are very inconsistent which can be frustrating to a parent or to the swimmers themselves. Fun & patience are the keys here.

Leadership: In many cases, our team leaders & successful Senior swimmers were not outstanding age group swimmers. Those who "stick with it" often develop into outstanding leaders, having learned patience, dedication & commitment. Steady progress & understanding the meaning of various accomplishments will make a motivated, well adjusted Senior swimmer.

USA Swimming clubs go to great lengths to provide opportunities for all swimmers equally. An 8/under will swim about 45 minutes two or three times a week, while a Senior swimmer may be in the water 18 hours per week! Both swimmers are having their needs met as part of a long term progression. Understanding the long term benefits & progression will help parents navigate the waters of a swimmer's career.

Sleep key factor for success in athletics

Excerpt from news-press.com by Angie Ferguson

When it comes to performance, rest is just as important as training for the successful athlete. During these times of rest our bodies repair, rebuild and re-energize themselves in preparation for the next bout of training.

What happens though if an athlete doesn't get proper rest? It is estimated that one in three Americans do not get a proper night's sleep or adequate rest to perform well. In addition to poor performance, lack of sleep can adversely affect your physical and emotional health leaving you feeling tired, irritable, and unable to concentrate for long periods. Your immune system may also become compromised and in turn be less effective at fighting off infections and/or healing from injury.

If you suffer from sleep deprivation or even just lack of restful sleep, a few changes to your lifestyle and environment can improve your night's rest and in turn, fuel positive repeat performances, whatever your sport.

The Importance of Sleep

By Keaghan Winterhof

Sleep is part of everyone's daily routine, but do you know how important it is to get enough? The average 13 year old gets less than 7 hours of sleep a night, while it is stated kids and teenagers need at least 9 hours of sleep in order to rest their growing bodies and function properly (Discovery Health). However, athletes should try to get even more sleep!

A recent article in Science Daily covered a research project on athletes and sleep. The participants, the men's and women's swim teams at Stanford University, were told to increase the amount of sleep they got to 10 hours a night. The improvements to their performance were noticeable. "After obtaining extra sleep, athletes swam a 15-meter sprint 0.51 seconds faster, reacted 0.15 seconds quicker off the blocks, improved turn time by 0.10 seconds and increased kick strokes by 5.0 kicks." (www.sciencedaily.com). The extra sleep can and will improve swimmers' cognitive function, mood, and reaction time.

Many athletes, especially swimmers, will accumulate a large sleep debt during the season. Juggling practices with school work, friends, extracurricular activities, and family time make it difficult to fit everything into one day. You must make the decision to get enough rest. Here are some tips on getting more sleep:

- Make sleep a part of your regular training regimen.
- Extend nightly sleep for several weeks to reduce your sleep debt before competition.
- Maintain a low sleep debt by obtaining a sufficient amount of nightly sleep (nine or more hours for teens and young adults).
- Keep a regular sleep-wake schedule, going to bed and waking up at the same times every day, including weekends!
- Take brief naps to obtain additional sleep during the day, especially if drowsy.