

Lane Lines



PMS Long Course Championships

If you haven't registered to swim, come and cheer, time, count laps, or watch and learn at our regional championship meet!

Friday July 8th – Sunday July 10th

UC Santa Cruz Aquatic Center

For more information go to <http://www.pacificmasters.org/comp/05cruzlcm.pdf>

Announcements:

- Taft Memorial Swim, July 14, 2005, 10 am to 12 pm
- Next Committee Meeting, July 16, 2005 after 9am workout, all are welcome to attend
- Oceanic Training Swim, July 17, 2005, 8:30am, Miramar Beach, Half Moon Bay

Rev 'Em Up for Long Course

By Joe Seliber

A last minute inspiration found me at the Stanford Invitationals on Saturday morning May 21, 2005. I had come hoping to see some of the best swimmers in the country and maybe get a few pointers. After all I was about to face a "chance in a life time," with the PMS Long Course on the horizon, and I will have a chance to swim against guys of 80 to 84. I won't be 80 until December; however, under Long Course rules I am officially 80. Clearly my chance to score big points has improved astronomically.

My secondary motivation was to actually see how these people did it. The cast of characters included the famed Michael Phelps and Natalie Coughlin. I expected to see giants. Indeed they were, but most of them ranged in age from 14 to 17, and there were even a few 13 year olds. I expected them to be college age swimmers. What the heck, I can learn from anybody who is faster than me; which covers just about everybody.

I came in at the early heats of the Women's 200 IM. I wanted to see how much glide the swimmers had in the backstroke and freestyle legs. Smooth was universal, as was "strong kick" but fast turnover and power won most of the heats.

I have always been interested in stroke count and these women finished their 50 meter freestyle leg in 40 to 45 strokes. Most of them breathed on one side only and a few alternated using two breaths on the left and two on the right in sequence. The power [swimmers] just reached out as far as they could and pulled, and it works. Of course the 200 IM is really 4 sprints, and finesse, glide and body rotation are more likely to appear in the 400 IM. The Men's 200 IM was similar to the Women's as far as technique, stroke count, and style are concerned. For both male and female swimmers the body type is uniform. From my location, just a little past the flags at the starting blocks, the female swimmers approached 125-lbs and were close

to 6 feet tall. The men were also slender. If these swimmers did any weight training they majored in reps rather than heavy weight.

The next event was the 400 Free which has become one of my major options. Natalie Coughlin had one of the most pronounced glides and lowest turnover of any of the women. Around the 300 meter mark she was doing the length of the pool in 34 strokes. She came home in 41 strokes. The SF Chronicle later reported that she did not have a lot of time to get in shape for this meet because she was just finishing her academic requirements for graduation.

For me, the most interesting event was the next to last heat of the Men's 400. Michael Phelps was in lane 5 and he was surrounded by Sean Phelps and Sebastian Roualt. These were the preliminaries so the objective was to win without breaking the bank. Phelps uses a dolphin kick on each push off. But what was immediately outstanding is that he completed the 2nd 50 in just 29 strokes. The three swimmers had already established a small lead over the rest of the field. A few swimmers were doing a length in 34 strokes. The three continued neck and neck through 350 meters, at that point Phelps picked up his kick and got his turnover up to 32 strokes and finished a body length ahead of his escort. I believe he was the only swimmer to break four minutes.

In addition to Phelps's obvious power, technique and endurance another detail may play a roll in his success. He was the only male swimmer wearing a blue swim cap. So what is my "take home" message in preparation for the PMSLC at Santa Cruz in early July? I'm going to start practicing with the blue swim cap I earned in the 1 Hour Postal Swim hosted by the Oregon Barracudas in 2003.

Different Strokes

By Bob Cooper

In the last sweaty miles of a hot summertime run, nothing seems more inviting than a dip in a cold pool, lake, or ocean. But does swimming offer anything besides a way to cool your heels? Absolutely, according to Anne Wilson, a former collegiate swimmer who coaches Phoenix-area triathletes. Swimming is a great workout for runners because it builds strength in often-neglected muscles and promotes recovery. "Swimming enhances functional strength in the upper body and core muscles," says Wilson. This is the kind of strength you need to maintain an upright running form at the end of races and hard workouts, when runners have a tendency to hunch forward.

And runners who swim regularly may recover from their road miles faster than landlubbers do. "Swimming gives you 'active recovery,' free of the impact forces of running," says Wilson. "The hydrostatic pressure and coolness of water promote blood flow, which carries waste products away from sore muscles." Any pool workout can be done in the open water of a lake, bay, or ocean. But just as hilly trails are slower and harder to run than flat roads, so is swimming in the "uneven terrain" of waves and currents. "Open water poses a set of challenges that pools don't, like current, cold water temperatures, and even marine life," says Bill Floyd, a USA Triathlon certified coach in Florida whose athletes often swim in Tampa Bay and occasionally have to deal with shark sightings. Consequently, you'll work out harder—and burn more calories—when swimming in open water than you will in a pool. Cold water can also bring on hypothermia, so wear a wet suit and a thick swim cap if the water temperature is below 74 degrees. Other safety precautions include swimming with a buddy and swimming close (parallel) to shore.

Whether you're in a pool or in the Pacific, swimming is a technique sport like golf or skiing. So unless you're a natural in the water, you'll get the most out of your swimming workouts if you take lessons to learn how to stroke, kick, and breathe properly. "The most common beginner's mistake is to swim with the head tilted up, which causes the legs to sink," says Wilson. "That's called 'swimming uphill,' and it will have you gasping after a few minutes, even if you're really fit. Always look straight down except when you're rolling your head sideways to breathe." An adult swim class is the best place to learn the basics of proper swimming technique.

Treading in water

Lap swimming isn't the only way to increase your fitness in the water. In fact, aqua-running is probably the best of all cross-training options for runners because of the direct impact it can have on your running performance. "Done right, it's a full-body workout involving the legs, arms, shoulders, and core muscles," says Doug Stern, a deep-water-running instructor for the New York Road Runners since 1990. That's because, according to Stern, water is 773 times more resistant than air, so it serves to strengthen all key running muscles, thus increasing your land-running turnover and stride length. Also, water exercise is isokinetic—the water resists you only as much as you resist it—so you can work out as hard or as easy as you like. Studies have shown that runners who aqua-run improve their hip extension and even run faster 5-K times. Aqua-runners can also maintain aerobic fitness for up to six weeks when not running on land—making it a great injury-recovery activity. (cont.)

If you've tried running in a pool only to end up thrashing around like a cat in a bathtub, next time use a flotation device. Most aqua belts and aqua vests cost \$20 to \$30, but other flotation devices work well, too. "You can get by with almost anything that keeps you afloat," says Stern, "like foam 'noodles' or an inflatable 'doughnut,' which you'll find at most pools."

As with swimming, says Stern, aqua-running is all about technique. Once in the deep end of a pool or calm lake, with only your head out of water, don't try to run with the same motions you use on solid ground. "Run with a sweeping, pendulum-like motion from hips to toes, with your knees hardly bending at all," he says. "Turn your toes slightly downward like a ballet dancer's. The arms should be straightened just like your legs, with very little elbow bend, and swinging close to your sides so that your thumbs graze your thighs. Each 'stride' should be short, with the arms and legs staying within the five o'clock to seven o'clock positions."

Your head, chest, and hips should be upright and aligned, just as they would be if you were running on land, although you shouldn't be going anywhere. If you do travel around in the pool, you're probably leaning too far forward. And don't expect to move your legs as quickly as you can on land—remember the 773-times greater resistance? Aqua-running is definitely hard work. But it'll help make your next road run even better.

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July

Sunday, July 10 – RAMS Folsom Lake
Friday – Wednesday, July 8-10 – CRUZ, PMS 2005 Long Course Championships
Friday – Sunday, July 22-31 FINA World Championships
Saturday, July 23 – TOC, Trans Tahoe Relay
Saturday, July 30, CRUZ, San Cruz Pier (1-mile)
Sunday, July 31, Pier to Pier (10k)
Sunday, July 31, CRUZ Cruise

August

Saturday, August 6, Donner Lake Open Water
Thursday – Monday, August 11-14 USMS Long Course Nationals
Sunday, August 21 – MAM 2x1 Relay
Saturday, August 27 – TCAM Pinecrest Lake (1,2-mile)

September

Sunday, September 11, RAD, Whiskeytown (1, 2-mile)
Sunday, September 18, SMMM Meters Pentathlon
Sunday, September 25, RCP Tiberon Mile

October

Sunday, October 1, SAC Pentathlon
Friday – Sunday, October 7-9, WCM Pacific Masters SCM Championships
Sunday, October 23, MVM Alan Liu Invitational
Saturday, October 29, TCAM, Tuolumne County Short Course Meters

December

Saturday, December 3, SNM, Reno Winners Meet

Lanes Lines is edited by Henry Chan. For questions, concerns, or to submit content for future issues, send to hymc219@hotmail.com. Always remember, keep swimming!