

Shark Tales

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6 Things You Can Learn From Age-Group Swimming

Courtesy of [Claire Forrest](#)

Maturing as a swimmer is great. As you get older, you figure out your best events, make your best friends in the sport, develop your race strategies, and discover which type of coaching style works best for you. But that doesn't mean you won't ever feel wistful for your days as an age group swimmer. Yes, those kids can swim 25s in meets, which is awesome and jealousy inducing. Plus age groupers seem to be genuinely excited about swimming. I'm a firm believer that you can learn anything at any age from anybody of any age. Here are six things you can learn from an age group swimmer:

1) YOU ARE NEVER TOO OLD OR TOO EXPERIENCED A SWIMMER TO MISS YOUR HEAT.

Swimming: the only sport where you write your heat and lane information on your forearm in Sharpie. We've all had a parent or coach write on our arms when we were young swimmers. The ink would still be there at school on Monday, a badge of honor that you spent your weekend at a swim meet. As you grow older, you think you're too good to miss your heat. But we have all seen one too many a grown swimmer run to the starting block and fumble with their goggles before the official blows long whistle. No, you don't have to write on your arm anymore, but don't ever think you'll never have a close call or miss your heat. You're human.

2) MAKE NEW FRIENDS THROUGH SWIMMING.

The rule for age groupers on my club team was that you weren't allowed to swim in a lane with anyone you went to school with. We hated it at the time, but now I'm happy it existed. Through swimming, I met so many people from other walks of life that I would have never been introduced to before. As a grown swimmer, it's easy to have cliques within your team. Branch out. Talk to new people. You won't regret it.

3) IT'S NOT ABOUT THE FAST SUIT.

Fast suits are high tech and amazing. And yes, they really can help. Partly, they help because they give you the mental edge, convincing you that you'll swim fast because you're wearing the fast suit. Age groupers have energy and they give their races all they've got, with or without a good racing suit. You should try to do the same.

4) PAYING ATTENTION IN PRACTICE DOES MATTER.

A swimmer who is eight years old has the attention span of, well, an eight year-old. We've all heard coaches say that their young swimmers could improve so much if they focused a bit more. Capitalize on that as an older swimmer. Listen to your coach. Know what the set is and why it's important to do it correctly. It pays off.

5) TRY NEW EVENTS.

When you're an age group swimmer, every meet you swim includes an event you've never swum before. As you get in to high school and college swimming, you have your short list of best events. It can be easy to forget you ever swam anything else. I swam the 500 free for the first time because my high school coach said I had to try it. I thought I'd do it once, but it ended up becoming my best and favorite event. Don't complain when your coaches give you new events to try. You get a chance to switch it up, and if it doesn't work out, any time you get in a new event is an automatic best time!

6) HAVE FUN!

When I was reaching the end of my career, my club coach would pull me aside before every race and say, "Remember, this is supposed to be your enjoyable activity in life." I'm so happy he said that, because it's easy to forget. It doesn't occur to an age group swimmer to mope after a bad race or say they're too tired to

Meet Schedule

Monterey Bay LC	May 24-26 th
Woodland LC	June 6-8 th
Summer Sanders LC	June 12-15 th
Davis LC	July 5-6 th
Sierra Nevada JOs	Jul 17-20 th
Tiger Aquatics LC (None JOs)	July 26-27
Far Westerns LC	July 30 th -Aug 3 rd
Sr. Western Zones	July 30 th -Aug 3 rd
Jr. Nationals	July 30 th -Aug 3 rd
AG Western Zones	Aug 6-9 th

Swim – A – Thon 2014

The STAS 2014
Swim–A–Thon
is just around the corner
June 18th!!

We will have a silent auction to raise money for the team.

There will be
FABULOUS PRIZES!!

swim well. It's always onwards and upwards for them! Inside every adult swimmer is a little kid who fell madly in love with the sport. Remember that person, and swim for them. This is your enjoyable activity. Have fun with it.

Kirk Johansen, Head Coach
Cindi Coats, Sr Coach
Jeff Float, Sr Coach
Brian Heise, Sr Coach
Terry Peyton, Sr Coach
Richard Levin, Head Age-Group Coach
Ben Ferguson, Pre-Sr Coach
Troy Nissen, Assistant Coach
Uri Grant, Assistant Coach
Stephanie Turnbull, Assistant Coach
Amy VanDyke, Assistant Coach

Respecting The Club and Our Teammates

As we enter the long-course season, we welcome back our friends who are swimming summer league programs at each site. It is very important to remember a few things to show our respect for the club and the members around us.

1. Do not leave swim bags or book bags in the locker room.
2. Do not take up space for more than one person when changing.
3. Do not use five club towels when one will do.
4. Do not stay in the shower long when other members are trying to use the showers.
5. Listen to and respect the club employees when they are asking for your help.

With the increase in kids at the club it is also important to remember to be respectful to teammates and friends who may be swimming on the summer team.

Teasing and joking around can quickly become bullying. If your child feels that they are being teased or bullied please contact their group coach immediately. Bullying will not be tolerated and will be dealt with by the Head Coach.

Dedication - Preparation - Determination



Shark Tank

Q: What can swimmers and parents do to give swimmers the best chance to have a successful meet.

PRE MEET PREPERATION:

Nutrition: (see my nutrition write-up later in the newsletter) Good nutrition plays a very important role in your swimming success. Nutrition is the fuel for the body. Eat properly before the swim meet. Plan your nutrition for the meet, before the meet. Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate (before, during, and after).

Mental Preparation: Swim meets are like exams. To do well on an exam at school you must study the night before. The same is true for preparing for a swim meet. Go over your races in your head. Try to visualize your races and be as vivid as possible. Good visualization lays down the tracks for a successful meet.

Sleep: Make sure to get a good night sleep before each day of the meet. If you don't get proper sleep it will have an effect on your swimming.

Equipment: Make sure you have all of your equipment packed for the meet. Swim suits, goggles, towels, proper clothing for the meet.

DAY OF MEET:

Arrive On Time: Part of having a successful meet is showing up on time and prepared for the meet. Coaches like to do group warm-ups and if you are late you will miss the group warm-up. If you have expectations of having a good meet and you miss the group warm-up you have started the day on a bad note.

Check In For Events: Once you arrive at the meet the first thing you need to do is check in for the meet.

Check In With Your Coach: After you check in for your events check in with your coach to see when they want you to get ready to warm-up. Usually the coach likes the swimmers to come around 10-15 minutes before they get in to warm-up to stretch and prepare for warm-ups.

Warm-ups: It is very important to do a proper meet warm-up. Don't cut corners here! Warm-ups for swimmers vary depending on the age and workout group of the swimmer but the general rule is that if you don't get tired in your warm-up, you will get tired in your race. Have you ever done a timed swim at the end of a workout or hard set and had a surprisingly fast time? Well, it's probably because you were very warmed up.

Special Note:

It has been determined that there is a manufacturers defect with the sweat-shirts we purchased in the fall.

If you are having concerns about the way your sweatshirt or sweatpants are wearing please contact Colleen O'Donnell (cmod@surewest.net) and let her know the size. We are working with the manufacturer and the vendor to have these replaced.

Dear Parents,

Every July our STAS Parent Association elects a new Board of Directors to serve for one year. This includes the four officer positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and also up to 8 other voting Directors. Each family with a swimmer on the STAS team may have up to one immediate relative serving on the Board at any given time. Anyone thus eligible who is interested in nominating his or her self or another person to serve on the Board should contact me no later than Monday, June 9. I will publish the list of candidates on June 11, and our election will take place on Friday, July 11.

The Board normally meets monthly from September through June or July for about 1 hour. Anyone eligible as described above may put their name on the slate for any position. If any prospective candidates have questions, I would be happy to answer them to the best of my ability, and I would be happy to send anyone interested a copy of our bylaws, which include descriptions of each office. Parents who are not serving on the Board are also always welcome to attend meetings and are needed to serve in other capacities throughout the year, especially at meets!