

## **Age Group: Racing Technically Correct**

By Coach Cathy Manthey

***Editors Note:*** The following terrific "instruction sheet" is developed by Coach Cathy Manthey for her age group swimmers. Complete, thorough, but not overwhelming for young minds, it is a great example of what age group coaches teach in racing skills.

Coach Manthey has recently "temporarily retired" from coaching at San Jose Aquatics, where she was a mainstay of one of the finest coaching staffs in the USA, working for Head Coach Bill Thompson. Coach Manthey will undoubtedly return to coaching when her life circumstances allow. We're eager to have her back! Good Luck Coach Cathy! --JL

### **FREESTYLE**

<i>Distance</i>	<i>Breathing Pattern</i>	<i>Pace</i>
25 metres	As few as possible	Sprint
50 metres	Every 6 or 8 or 3, 5 or 7	Sprint
100 metres	2-2-4 Build 1st 50 or every 3rd (Bilateral breathing).	Sprint 3rd lap Last lap takes care of itself.
200 metres	2-2-4 or 2-2-3 or 2-2-2-3 Build 1st 100	Sprint 3rd 50 Last lap takes care of itself.

Starts	Not too deep Kick and streamline Do not breathe 1st stroke
Turns	Accelerate inside the flags Snappy flip turn Streamline and kick off wall Do not breathe 1st stroke
Finishes	Accelerate inside the flags Do not breathe last 5 metres Reach and touch the wall underwater - no extra stroke

**100IM**  
Breathe 2 down - 1 up / or every 2 strokes in fly  
Build your backstroke  
Faster pace on breaststroke - stretch & streamline  
Finish strong in freestyle and remember your breathing pattern  
Good transitional turns  
Do not breathe last 5 metres at the finish

**200IM**  
Breathe 2 up, 1 down in fly  
Build the 1st lap and sprint 2nd lap of each stroke  
Remember your zones - accelerate in and out of all turns  
Good transitional turns - long streamlines off all walls  
Stick to your breathing pattern and do not breathe last 5 metres in freestyle

## **BREASTSTROKE**

<u>Distance</u>	<u>Breathing Pattern</u>	<u>Pace</u>
25 metres	Every stroke	Sprint
50 metres	Every stroke	Sprint
100 metres	Every stroke	Build 1st 50 Sprint 3rd lap Last lap takes care of itself

Starts	A little deeper than freestyle 3-2-1 pulldowns Accelerate inside the flags Touch with 2 hands
Turns	"Karate chop" - telephone call Streamlined push-off A little deeper than freestyle 3-2-1 pulldowns
Finishes	Accelerate inside the flags Stretch for the wall - do not take an extra stroke Always touch with 2 hands under water

## **BUTTERFLY**

<u>Distance</u>	<u>Breathing Pattern</u>	<u>Pace</u>
25 metres	As few as possible	Sprint
50 metres	2 down - 1 up or alternate.	Sprint
100 metres	2 up, 1 down or every other	Build 1st 50 Sprint 3rd lap Last lap takes care of itself

Starts	A little deeper than freestyle Long streamline and dolphin kick hard to surface Do not breathe the first stroke
Turns	"Karate chop" - "Telephone call" Touch with 2 hands A little deeper than freestyle Long streamline and dolphin kick hard to surface Do not breathe the first stroke Accelerate inside the flags
Finishes	Do not breathe the last five metres of your race Accelerate and charge the wall Always touch wall underwater with two hands Reach for the wall Do not take an extra stroke on your finish

## **BACKSTROKE**

Distance	Breathing Pattern	Pace
25 metres		Sprint
50 metres		Sprint
100 metres		Build 1st 50 Sprint 3rd lap Last lap takes care of itself

Starts	Hands on gutter Long streamline 2-4 dolphin kicks then flutter Strong breakout stroke - 1 arm only Accelerate inside the flags
Turns	Know your stroke count from the flags without looking for wall Snappy flip Long streamline 2-5 dolphin kicks then flutter Strong breakout stroke - 1 arm only Accelerate inside the flags
Finishes	Know your stroke count Last stroke-head goes back and kick Charge the wall Always touch wall under water

### **REMEMBER**

#### ***FOCUS ON THE PROCESS AND THE RESULTS WILL COME.***

With our final "peak performance" of this season upon us, it is essential that we all focus on being "technically correct." Most other teams and our competitors are in good shape, physically. Winning races comes down to who swims smarter and which athletes swim technically correct. *The following reprint is especially appropriate as we approach Peak Performance.*

### **‘Perfect Practice Makes Perfect’**

I have always felt that the single most important thing to teach 12 and under swimmers is how to be technically sound in race situations. I want our swimmers to know what to do at each step in their races and to be able to execute these techniques and strategies like clockwork. I do not believe in focusing on the outcome of a race because there are just too many factors that are uncontrollable. What I do believe in is focusing on the process of what you can do to give yourself the best possible performance. Swimming or racing technically correct is my term for describing the ideal way to swim a race. Swimming technically correct is now the number one task in our training plan. All of our age group swimmers need to establish flawless basic racing skills before individual race strategies can be determined. Once a swimmer can consistently demonstrate these basic principles during a race, we can then individualize variations in racing techniques that will continue to enhance the swimmers performance. Every time a swimmer swims a race technically correct, it is like putting money (i.e. experience) in the bank. When peak performance meets come along, these swimmers have the greatest reserves to draw from. These are the swimmers that have trained hard at being technically sound, rehearsed their races correctly several times at meets, and in practice, and with a taper and proper rest they are consistently able to do their personal best times when it really counts. These swimmers are also better prepared to handle the transition from the age group agenda to the senior development program.