



A Letter from Rusty

Happy New Year to all the young swimmers at Colonial! My knee has recovered 100%, and I now enjoy walking again. Coaching will be more of a pleasure this summer.

Let's get ready for summer swimming! I'm hoping we can begin training in May.

We have something new for training this summer. Olympic swimmers from Katie LeDecky to Mark Spitz use music to practice their rhythm. They keep the same cadence, as if they were in a marching band. We will be practicing the same technique. Remember, swim on your side, not on your stomach, and swim like a fish.

As you swim with music, your mind is focusing on the technique, and you will form good habits. At a swim meet, remember that your habits are in charge. You don't want bad habits; you want Olympic habits.

Our pool has a sound system above and below the water. I can talk to you, or I can play music. Study after study has proven that music helps swimmers swim better, and they don't slow up when they get tired. When you swim through the water, and your arms get tired, learn to keep up the rhythm. There is research that you can keep swimming better with the rhythm of your hips. Michael Phelps loves the song "Till I Collapse" as one of his favorite psyche songs. Katie LeDecky loves to listen to "Hello" and Tom Petty's "I Won't Back Down."

So, before we get in the water (on the deck, before we swim free or back), you will demonstrate the hip roll: left hip/right hip. Once in the water, you will move your arms with the rhythm of the music. Do not lift your head. Turn your head with your hip roll. Get ready to learn to dance.

Great swimmers are very smooth in the water.

Great swimmers know how important breathing is.

Your hip roll will allow you to turn your body to the side and inhale and exhale. Good hip roll, inhale, exhale, and enjoy the music.

Rusty



Prepare for Summer Swimming

After 60 years of coaching, I still get excited in helping young kids! As you read my writing, please visualize it over and over. Get ready for when we return to the pool this summer.

Good habits are key. Used properly, habits are a powerful tool that brings about permanent change in your swim strokes. Start working on good habits that can make you a super swimmer. At practice, visualize your technique in your mind. Visualize it with music.

Good swimmers don't cover distance with faster strokes. They try to travel farther with each one.

Don't over-kick: only 20% of your kick moves you.

Try swimming with your arms by your side. Roll your hips, not your head. Use your legs.

This summer, we are going to be using the underwater sound system during training. You'll be able to hear the music and me. As you swim, visualize.

Your success in swimming depends on your daily habits.

In walking, you put your foot in front of you, and the foot moves forward. In swimming, you put your palm in front of your shoulder (don't pull back), and you move forward on the other side.