

Fall Cycle

Weeks 1-4 – Cycle 1

As with the beginning of any session, you need to take some time to identify, or in the case of returning swimmers, *verify*, their goals – these should be open candid discussions – don't let the swimmers come up with what you, as a coach, consider unreasonable goals.

Since the majority of your swimmers are returning from summer session, the first cycle focuses on refinement of strokes that need fine-tuning mixed in with quality work. You don't need to spend too much time as a whole on drills, but it is good to have individual swimmers, whose bad habits have not been resolved, fix their problems. There is nothing wrong with giving a swimmer an entire practice of one or two focused drills. These are Masters swimmers. If you give them 3k of high elbow work, and then 500-1000 meters to test out what they have learned, you will make a new best friend in no time.

Lots of kick this cycle...the triathletes are more or less done with their season. There will be the occasional triathlon that trickles in during September but for the most part, bring the kick back. They all need it.

IM work – don't be afraid to throw 200 and 400 IM's at your swimmers. They will cope. Repeat 100's and 200's are good for them and you can do pyramids (ie 100 IM, 200 IM, 400 IM, 400 R-IM, 200 R-IM, 100 R-IM) and stuff like that.

Lungs and Aerobic work – ever notice that most of your swimmers breathe before the flags off of the turn? Why not talk to them about it and do some creative breathing sets to make their lungs stronger?

As a team, we are training for SCM Champs. Time to communicate it. Mention it as a super fun time, a way to test yourself and measure yourself against others, etc. Remove the pressure from the mind and apply the pressure to the body. As a result, we want to get the yardage up to peak by the middle of the third cycle.

Typical week in first cycle looks like

Monday/Tuesday – 3600-4400 Meters – Short warmup – 600-800 of kick set in there maybe? – 1800-2400 of stroke set (mix it up) – kick warmdown with some pull maybe...long and strong

Wednesday/Thursday/Friday – 3600-4400 Meters – Short warmup – Long stroke/pull set (any swimmers with stroke problems can be worked on here – follow that up with a nice sprint set – how about some underwater warmdown? 25's or 50's on Base + :30

Weeks 5-9 – Cycle 2

Anti-DQ emphasis – regardless of whether your swimmers are swimming at SCM Champs or not, this cycle is a good time to start talking about “legal” swimming. Turns, especially stroke transition turns in the IM, remain a tough point year after year. All coaches should be vigilant about turns, kicks, etc.

Much like the summer, swimmers should be doing at least 500 yards of sprint a day during this cycle. The “getting to know you” period in cycle 1 is over so its time to get to work. Heart rates should be up and remain up during the whole workout. Haven’t done breast in a while? Throw 10 x 50 breast at them on a tight interval.

Keep the kicking going. The average swimmer should be able to kick 40 meters in the time it takes them to swim 50 meters. Why not do a kick test set? Have your folks sprint a 50 and then have them kick a 50 and get their split at the 40. Let them know what their +/- is and then you could do a set like 16 x 50 – odds are sprint (on base +:05) and evens are kick (on base +:10) where they have to hold or better their first 40 time on the kicks. You should also bring in fin work (uh20 fly kick, etc). They get to feel fast, at least for a little bit. Test sets are back!!! – Test sets start in this cycle. Whether you elect to do 5 x 200 or 10 x 100 or 20 x 50 is up to you but make it hard and make it fun!

Typical week in second cycle looks like

Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday – 3800-5000 Meters – Medium warmup (include some kick and some stroke work – nothing like a 200 or 300 IM at the end of warmup to really get that heart rate going) – 1800 Bracket set with sprint pieces – 2000 middle distance set with kicking as rest

Thursday/Friday – 4400-5000 Meters – Long warmup with lung work – 2-3000 of 200’s with sprints thrown in – Test set

Weeks 10-13 – Cycle 3

You want to be at max yardage by the end of November. That will give you the last two weeks of the cycle to taper, for those who really care about SCM Champs, and for those that don't, they can have a bit of a break during the second two weeks of the cycle.

Starts and turns – starts for people going to SCM Champs and turns for EVERYONE

Since the majority of folks swimming at SCM Champs will most likely be doing events in the 100-200 range, why not give them some race pace 100's and 200's to chew on? This will also be good for folks training for the 400 and 800.

Continue with IM work and kick work during this period. Again, we are slowly tightening the crank on those intervals so make sure that people are working!

Sample set:

WU-

3x{

1 x 200 Free – BP of 5/7 - :05r

4 x 50 Kick - :50

4 x 100 Free – 50 6r/6l / 50 Breathe every 9 – 1:45

Set 1-

8 x 100 – Base - :05

2 x 200 - Base

6 x 100 – Base - :10

4 x 200 – Base -:05

1 x 400 IM for time

Typical week in third cycle looks like

Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday – 4600-5200 Meters – Medium warmup – include kicking and VO2 work in that – 3000 focus on MD pieces

Thursday – 4800-5500 Meters – Long warmup – 2000 Bracket set with 400's and pulling included – some short sprint on almost impossible intervals – 2000 LD set – 600/1200 – possible NS – 1000 Test Set

Friday – event specific training

Weeks 14-16 – Cycle 4

SCM Champs is over, your swimmers are tired, many are going on vacation or out shopping. Your workouts will thin out real quick here so, like the last cycle of the summer, keep things fun. No guidelines on this cycle except to identify those folks going to Spring Champs/Nats and begin to train them. Each of you would train someone different for a big event so go with your instinct on this. All of the other coaches would be happy to give you ideas as to how to train so and so for this and that. You will have a lot of lanes with ONE swimmer...why not pay extra attention to that swimmer and talk to them about what's happening.