

Win to Swim

It may not be obvious to everyone, but the only way to maintain and improve on anything physical or mental is for that individual to be consistent, persistent and maintain a sustained effort, by the very and only individual directly involved. That very person is the only one that can truly make a difference, and that difference will not occur one day out of the blue!

The Cedar Valley Barracudas is an example of what I am talking about. The Barracudas have a small, but talented team, that practices and competes inconsistently. Despite this however, statistically, CVB perform better and more consistently in competitions than most other teams.

This paper aims to address not how well or poorly we compete, but rather how well or poorly our swimmers could reach their full potential as a result of our respective influences. Collectively, myself as the Barracuda coach, you as the Barracuda parents, and the swimmers of the Cedar Valley Barracudas Swim Team, it is imperative that the entire picture is understood. The picture is quite simple and requires an absolute division of responsibilities.

Swim practices are the most crucial part of the entire swim program. The relationship between the coach and swimmers at practice sessions relates directly to how the swim team performs at meets. It is imperative that coaches have the swimmers undivided attention at each and **every practice** and vice versa.

The role between coaches and swimmers at meets, ultimately effects how swimmers perform at subsequent practices, and how coach and swimmers implement strategies for improvement in future meets. Therefore it is imperative that I have the swimmers undivided attention at each and **every meet** and vice versa.

In short, meets and practices are not the appropriate forum for parents to do other than support this process. Addressing concerns on performance, training strategies or coaching philosophies should be conducted outside these times when these concerns can be given undivided attention.

The role of the parent is to give guidance and support to **all** swimmers so that swimmers feel part of our CVB team. Parents should implement good sports(wo)man like behavior; instill in the swimmer the importance of good eating habits and resting outside of practice; encourage the swimmers to be consistent, persistent and sustain a high level of commitment towards being the best swimmer they can be.

Not until parents become as skilled in swimming and competing as the coaches of CVB will this team adopt as a beneficial practice “parental coaching assistance.” The parents should under no circumstances implement changes in swim techniques, i.e. starts, strokes, rhythm, breathing or turns. Nor should they distort the biophysical techniques of this program, for these are the very areas that the coaches have been trained in and understand extremely well. Enough to be competitive both within ourselves as coaches, and in training this team to do as well as they are presently.

The role of the swimmer is to be accountable for (getting their parents to) arriving early at practices, at meets and any other event that is performance based. We need to learn to train as a team. Each part is not as important as the whole, however the whole does not exist without the sum of all the parts. We need to see each practice through to the end. Engage wholeheartedly with the coaches to gain the maximum from their instruction. Learn to listen at practices so that all of the technical concerns can be addressed and implemented during this time.

Learn to listen carefully at meets before and after events, implement the advice of the coaching staff, have fun and enjoy swimming forever. Being considerate is more important than being competitive; it gets noticed by more people and gives you and CVB more credibility.

All the records you would love to see your swim team break and all the great performances that you would hope to see in the meets, happen first and foremost at our practices. These great feats are proven at meets when all of the timing equipment and officials are there to record it!

We can build a bigger and better CVB by the way you represent us first as an ambassador and secondly as a swimmer and ultimately as a team.

Thank you,
Cedar Valley Barracudas Coaching Staff