

Chew on this

The Newsletter of the Plantation Piranhas Swim Team

www.swimpst.com

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Lightning? Thunder? The PST site updates every 15 minutes to let you know the status of pool openings / closings.

Splash into Summer!

Sunset Invitational, Piranha Camps, Road Trip to Rocky Top and PST Golf (Round2!)

Get ready for a summer of fast swimming, team travel and plenty of good times, all kicking off with PST's Sunset Invitational May 19-21 at Central Park.

The Piranhas will perform well into the evening under a unique ABC meet format that requires each swimmer to complete the same 3-day, 9-event program. The top 10 overall in each age group receive special t-shirt awards. (Complete meet info available at www.swimpst.com.)

Raise your swimming IQ through quality on-deck time with the PST staff.

We're currently registering swimmers for the 2006 Piranha Swim Camps, five weeks of skills, drills and fun beginning May 30. The weekly rate is \$213, payable to "City of Plantation." Check with Coach Jimmy or Coach Gary for special arrangements for swimmers eight years old or younger.

'Summer' is synonymous with 'road trip,' and the Piranhas have a great one planned: eight days in Tennessee, culminating in a weekend of fast swimming at the Tracy Caulkins Aquatic Center in Nashville.

You can be teed off as long as you're hitting golf balls to support the Piranha Booster program. The 2nd Annual PST Golf Tournament will be held Saturday, June 3 at the Plantation Preserve Golf Course & Club.

Three ways you can help: *Play:* On your own or put together a foursome. *Sponsor a Hole:* \$200, tax deductible, in-



Hit the links with the PST Boosters (Sat., June 3)

cludes ad placement at the hole and an ad in an upcoming PST meet heat sheet. *Donate Prizes:* Gift certificates, merchandise and everyone's favorite--cash--will generate lots of buzz and excitement at the 19th hole. Contact Coach Jimmy at jimmypst@aol.com to register for the tournament or become an event sponsor.

Record Breaker



Said Mosquera blew past the PST 13-14 record in the 100 free with a blistering 49.72 effort at the FGC / Florida Swimming All-Star Meet. *page 4*

GET ONLINE!

Meet Sign Ups...News Wire...Updated Weather Reports...get ON!

If you haven't registered to use the interactive features on the PST website, then you're missing out on critical team procedures and information, from meet sign-ups to news flashes to up-to-the minute pool openings/closings due to weather.

Please see your swimmer's primary coach for a brief training session in logging in as a new user. It only takes a minute, and the benefits to our swimmers and families are tremendous. Get involved. Get informed. Get ON!

Take a Free Ride



Cianci's Rocky Mountain High

High school All-American
Gisella Cianci

accepts a full swimming scholarship to Colorado State. *page 4*

Best Little Coach



page 3

TECHTIP

Focus on

Freestyle

Get the most out of every stroke by swimming as smart and as efficiently as possible.

1 Turn your brain "on" The single best thing you can do at practice is to bring your brain along. Elite swimmers constantly think over every movement and feeling they experience in the water to determine what's "good," "better," and "best." Learning to perform like a world class athlete is like solving a 5,000 piece jigsaw puzzle: you can only figure out where the pieces fit by using your brain to make the connections.

It can be tempting to rip through your lengths on auto-pilot, singing tunes or thinking about everything *except* swim team. That's a mistake. You only have a few hours each day to solve your swimming puzzle. Time spent with your brain turned off is a lost opportunity.

2 Drill as well as you can Use drill time in practice to work out the kinks in your freestyle. The more accurately you perform your drills, the more likely you are to ingrain good habits that will show up as better and faster swimming.

One favorite: the shark fin drill. Kick on your side with one arm extended in front, eyes down. Slowly raise your elbow and ease your hand forward until you create a "shark fin" triangle--hand in the water, elbow held high. This is best done as a 9-count drill: 3 seconds to raise to the shark fin position, 3 seconds to pause and hold, then 3 seconds to return to the starting position.

It's a tricky drill, and you may sink and wobble on the first few attempts. But you'll soon learn to stay level in the water by balancing with your body, not with your hands. The payoff? You reserve your hands and arms for speed instead of wasting them on balance.

Drill as well as you can to learn the absolute best way to swim freestyle

3 Swim as well as you drill Drills allow you to perfect every detail of your strokes provided you commit to doing



Pete Barretto, 8, demonstrates a perfect shark fin drill: body sideways, eyes down, elbow high, hand wet.

everything right. Bring that same focus into your training sets, especially as you get tired. That's when bad habits can start to take over.

One simple strategy for staying on track through the hardest workouts: count your strokes. If you start out a set at 17 strokes per length and notice that you take 20 or 22 strokes as you get tired, your form is breaking down. Focus your energy on swimming as well as you can, using your "perfect drill" mentality to keep your freestyle clean and efficient.

The coach of Alex Popov, the world record holder in the 50 free, was famous for limiting his swimmers to "stingy" low stroke counts. He forced them to place a high value on swimming with efficiency even through the toughest training. *Swim as well as you drill.*

4 Go for symmetry In a perfect world your stroke would be evenly balanced so that one side is the mirror image of the other. This is called *symmetry*. It's a worthwhile goal to make your freestyle as symmetrical as possible.

You can work on this by using different breathing patterns, being sure to breathe on both sides. Notice when your stroke is the same on both sides and when you feel you're behaving differently on each side. Try to solve

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your 'puzzle' by experimenting with different movements--the way you breathe, the amount of head lift you use when you go for air, the degree of body roll you use on either side, There are countless aspects of your stroke that you can fine tune in your search for symmetry. A pair of experienced eyes can come in handy: ask your coach (or even a teammate) to check you out!

FAST Notes

PITCH IN! PST needs plenty of volunteers to help with the May 19-21 Sunset Invitational. You can help make the meet a success for your swimmer--and everyone else's! (954.452.2526)

READY FOR YOUR CLOSE-UP? Coach Gary Fahey is looking for swimmers of all ages and swimming levels interested in appearing in an instructional dvd. Athletes will be filmed swimming, performing drills and demonstrating racing skills. If you're ready to be a star, see Coach Gary, call (954.629.7724) or email Gary at gfahey@aol.com.

NEED STUFF? Total Teamwares can outfit your favorite Piranha in style. *Total Teamwares*, 800.888.8843

Knowledge is Power

Photos (from top): Tyler Williams coaches Lorenz Bardenheuer and Junior Comunale; Jeff Parkinson checks out Jack McClenney's breaststroke drill; Alex Alvaro gives Pete Barretto some 'shark fin' drill pointers.

Our Piranhas take their turn as coach and show that great teachers come in all sizes!

When you really know something you can teach it to others. The Piranhas put that axiom to the test in practice last week, pairing up teammates to play "swimmer-coach" to help each other improve their skills and technique.



Lauren Alvaro offers Sophia Oliva advice for improving her stroke.

Each swimmer took turns in each role. The "coach" was instructed to look for 2 or 3 important elements of a skill and judge how well the "swimmer" performed based on those points.

The key: give specific feedback with positive criticism--"You had your head in the right position and your kick was steady, but raise your elbow higher next time." The swimmer then got a 'second chance' to use the coach's advice, along with a follow-up critique.

By the time everyone took a couple of turns, some pretty amazing transformations were taking place. Before long we had a pool

full of athletes with their bodies *and* their brains turned "on." **T**his is one of my favorite practice exercises," Coach Gary Fahey said. "The kids always do their skills better for their peer coaches than they do for me. But what I really love is the communicating that goes on--six year olds having pretty sophisticated conversations about how to swim properly." They seem to enjoy it, too. What could be more fun than learning new things with a smile on your face?



OUT Takes ...because we're not always ready for our close-up!



Practice has its "bloopers"--those times when we're not quite ready for the camera. **Allie Norton** shows that sometimes coaches talk too much; **Mystery swimmer** snacks on goggles during a relay race; **Jack McClenney** almost finishes his push-ups.



Said Mosquera was PST's top All-Star scorer.



Gisella Cianci soars off the blocks at the Hall of Fame Pool at last summer's Junior Olympic Championships. A multiple All-American selection for St. Thomas Aquinas High School, Cianci is considered the Ram's top recruit for 2006-07. She's the fastest Piranha over 200 yards and should help CSU in the sprint freestyle and backstroke events.

COLORADO Ram

Mosquera Eclipses 100 Free Mark

Said Mosquera capped an All-Star weekend with a PST record in the 13-14 boys 100 yard free at the Florida Gold Coast / Florida Swimming dual meet.

The PST-Sunrise swimmer blasted Oliver Gumbrell off the record board, hitting the pad in 49.72 seconds, 0.13 faster than the old mark.

Mosquera scored 16 individual points for the FGC squad. He was runner-up in the 200 free and added a pair of 4th place efforts in the 100 / 200 breaststrokes.

Cherisse Campbell rounded out the PST scoring with a fourth place finish in the 400 I.M.

The Piranhas sent six athletes to the meet. Lucie Cardet, Matthew Diamond, Dylan Marsolek and Pablo Ortiz earned All-Star credentials by virtue of their performances at the recent Junior Olympics.



Web Weather Watch

When mother nature acts up, click on the PST site for pool closing updates

Summer brings unpredictable weather, but you can stay on top of the latest pool openings and closings by logging onto the PST home page (www.swimpst.com). We'll update the status of practice every 15 minutes during inclement weather--no more busy signals through the PST office phone, no more guesswork.

Central Park utilizes the Thor-Guard lightning prediction system, which determines the likelihood of lightning strikes and activates a single long horn blast to signal a pool closing. The system must deliver the "all clear" signal of three blasts before the pool can re-open for swimming. *The PST and Central Park staff have no latitude to deviate from this procedure.*

The Thor-Guard system does go offline from time to time. On those rare occasions the pool management and lifeguard staff make all decisions regarding pool openings/closings.

The coaching staff wants to ensure that our swimmers have as many opportunities to practice as possible; therefore, it is the swim team policy to make the decision to cancel or hold practice no earlier than the scheduled start time.

Piranhas Trek to Michigan for Grand Prix

PST's National Group will compete at the USA Swimming Grand Prix Meet on the University of Michigan campus May 18-21. Piranhas Jeff Raymond, Courtney Randolph, Ashley Hicks and crew will suit up against a field that includes Olympians Michael Phelps, Peter Vanderkaay and many of the USA's top swimmers. With months of training geared specifically for this competition, look for our local tankers to put on a show!

TEETH Marks

May 5 8 & Under Sizzler @ Sunrise

May 6-7 Sub JO Meet @ Pembroke Pines Comets

May 18-21 Grand Prix Meet @ University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

May 19-21 ABC Meet @ Plantation Central Park

June 9 8 & Under Sizzler @ Lauderhill

June 10-11 Sub JO Meet @ Pembroke Pines Comets

Swim Camp Dates

Week 1 May 30 - June 2

Week 2 June 5 - June 9

Week 3 June 12 - June 16

Week 4 June 19 - June 23

Week 5 June 26 - June 30

Cost: \$213/week payable to "City of Plantation."