

## **“Help Coach! What do I do now?”**

by Sue Welker RN

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It's that time of year that I hear this comment every day from one of my swimmers. What do I do during the break until winter season begins?

Big Shoulders open water swim has come and gone. The triathlon season has come to an end and the summer season is wrapping up. The Coach and the swimmers are due for a little break from the water, but “what do we do to stay in shape?” HELP ME COACH!

I have said this over and over every September. This is a great opportunity to get a head start on your competitors and build some strength out of the water. Get strong in the weight room, go to a yoga class, try a few stability ball exercises, go for a run, ride a bike or maybe even try karate! This is a great time of the year to discover how beautiful our many forest preserves are and run through the trails or ride a mountain bike. I put on a training group for new runners at this time of the year and we headout to Starved Rock to run the Canal Connection 10K November 2<sup>nd</sup>. You wouldn't believe how many swimmers I have introduced to running. Why don't you join us nov. 2nd? As everyone else is taking some down time, you can be improving your fitness and enjoying the break from the Chlorine.

As I mentioned it is a good idea to get strong & build some swimming specific functional strength. I love to introduce swimmers to a new way to look at strength training and the weight room. While your arms & core are a little more rested you can really focus on building some muscle to help power your smooth stroke through the water this winter. I recommend you hook up with a Certified Personal Trainer or Strength & Conditioning Coach who is knowledgeable of the specific needs of swimmers. It is not just about bench pressing your body weight but rather building your safety muscles & generating power from your long core muscles into your arms & legs. These are a few of my favorite exercises:

- Dumbell chest press on a stability ball in bridging position
- Single arm chest press in above position
- Stability ball push ups
- Standing row w/ cable with mini squat upon contraction
- Standing bicep curl & over head press with bar
- Tricep extension on stability ball in bridging position
- Single arm tricep extension w/ cable while standing on 1 leg
- Delt raises in 3 positions (high, mid & low) while face down in back extension on stability ball
- Internal & external rotation of rotator cuff with cable or tubing
- Plank, Hovers, or Down dog position for core strength & stability. Do all of these with side rotation also.
- Back extension with hands in streamline position over head. SLOWLY lift from butt!
- Rotational trunk exercises on the stability ball. Squeeze & hold trunk strong.

- “Dead Bug” position (face down) on a stability ball, lifting opposite arm & leg

I recommend consulting with a knowledgeable professional to put together the perfect program for you. Every swimmer has different weaknesses and past history of injuries. This information should be taken into consideration when a trainer is putting together a program for you. Swimmers are often hyper flexible or mobile and should build strength of the shoulder joint and NOT be over extending the joint. Have the trainer focus on your back & core & build the strength of the muscles that support your shoulders.

Lastly, don't totally stay out of the water. I find if you can get wet 3 times in 2 weeks and do ½ the yards you normally do, it won't take you long to get back to your previous level & then beyond. I'm looking forward to some fast swims in Florida next spring so get out and play now! The Naperville Waves summer season goes through September & will start up again for the winter November 15<sup>th</sup>. We are offering some stroke clinics & a weekend video & stroke workshop in October. I am also putting together a one day Coaches Seminar scheduled for sometime in January or February. Check out our web site at [www.napervillewaves.org](http://www.napervillewaves.org) for more info this fall. Stay wet & wild, Coach Sue