

## Freestyle Clinic Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2024

### Coach: Elena Nesci

Elena had 2 white boards and spent 25 minutes explaining the Foundations of the Stroke. The foundation was built on 4 layers each made up of bricks. The layers above the foundation are to complete the whole stroke (building a wall or baking a cake!). The layers in ascending order (of course they are inter-connected) are:

Layer 1 Breathing. The points here are to focus on exhalation (steady, and no over-breathing). Rhythmic is good (steady exhaling, blowing out a candle) and then a final soft blow and then inhale before repeating.

Layer 2 Body Position. The important issue here is to reduce drag (so tuck bottom in and keep head position appropriate). The chains of muscle (anterior, lateral and posterior) must be maintained. Key elements are the head, core, and these chains.

Layer 3 Kicking. It is important to realise that the main purpose is not propulsion but to provide balance and a good body position. The core plays a crucial role here (no John Travolta open leg poses).

Layer 4 Rotation. This is driven from the hips (not the shoulders) and although the swimmer may not breathe bilaterally the rotation should be symmetrical to both sides (about 30 to 60 degrees from horizontal). The rotation is not that of a clock pendulum (regular) but more like that of a wrecking ball that pauses before its downward sweep. On drills it is recommended to breathe bilaterally.

#### In the water drills (both with fins).

1. With start-off in position 11 (the "neutral" position with arms outstretched in front, facedown while exhaling steadily) and kicking for about 6 kicks then catch & pull with one arm (slowly) finishing the exhale and then inhaling before bringing the arm back to neutral. Then after about 6 kicks in neutral, repeat the one arm catch & pull with the other arm (with the exhale and then inhale to the other side, if breathing bilaterally. If not only breather on one side). *This drill must be done slowly and carefully.*
2. As in 1 start off in position 11 and after 6 kicks bring one arm back to the side and hold it there while swimming laterally on the side of the outstretched arm. Return to the neutral position for about 6 kicks and rotate to the other side. *This drill must be done slowly and carefully.*

The session finished with a slow freestyle.

Coaches were recommended to include drills 1&2 for 5 minutes in a training session.