

Utilizing Training Tools and Toys to Enhance Your Workouts

Susan Ingraham — Masters of South Texas, South Texas LMSC
Aaron Schneider — Riptide Masters Swimming, Southern LMSC

Agenda

- Introductions
- What's in your equipment bag? How do you use it?
 - Balls
 - Snorkels & Breathing Restrictors
 - Paddles & Buoys
 - Fins & Kickboards
 - Tempo Trainer
 - Cords
 - Weight Belts & Parachutes
- Q&A / Wrap-Up Discussion
- Next Steps
- Resource Links
- Presenter Bios

Presenters



Susan Ingraham

Head Coach and Owner – Masters of South Texas (San Antonio)
Secretary and Zone Record Keeper – South Texas LMSC
USMS Level 4 Certified Coach & ASCA Level 2 Certified Coach
2023 Inducted to Texas Swimming and Diving Hall of Fame
2008 USMS National Coach of the Year
2017 Jesse Coon Award – SC Zone Volunteerism and Inspiration
2021 Texas State Senior Games Hall of Fame
2021 & 2018 USMS National Open Water Champion
2010 USMS National Champion in 50 Fly & 100 Fly
Collegiate swimmer and Team Captain for University of Arizona

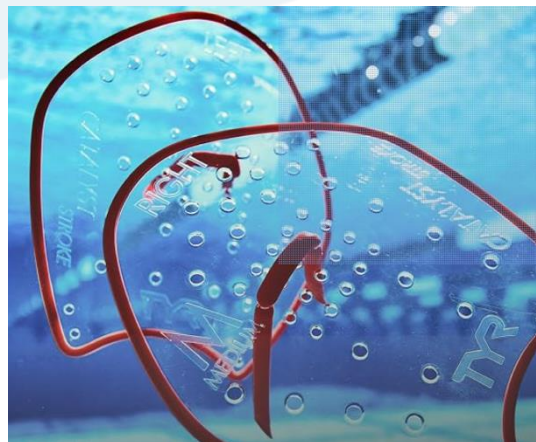


Aaron Schneider

CEO/Head Coach/Business Owner – Riptide Masters Swimming (New Orleans)
General Chair – Southern LMSC (Louisiana & Mississippi)
Vice Chair – USMS Coaches Committee
USMS Level 3 Certified Coach & ASCA Level 3 Certified Coach
2022 Southern LMSC Coach of the Year
Southern LMSC Record Holder (500, 1000, 1650 Freestyle, 200 Back, 400 IM, 1 Mile OW, 5K OW, 10K OW & Pool, & 1 Hour Swim)
Coach of 27 Individual USMS Top 10 Ranked Swimmers & Multiple National Champions in the last 5 years
Former collegiate swimmer (LSU), Club Swimmer (Sarasota Sharks, Mission Viejo Nadadores, and Las Vegas Gold Swim Team)
2x ASCA Doc Counsilman Award of Creative Coaching winner

What's in our equipment bag?

How do we use it?



Balls

- Inflatable Balls and Drills



Balls

- Head



Balls

- Hand



Balls

- Leg



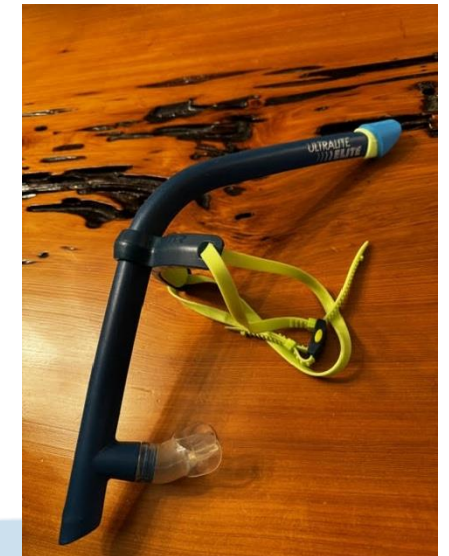
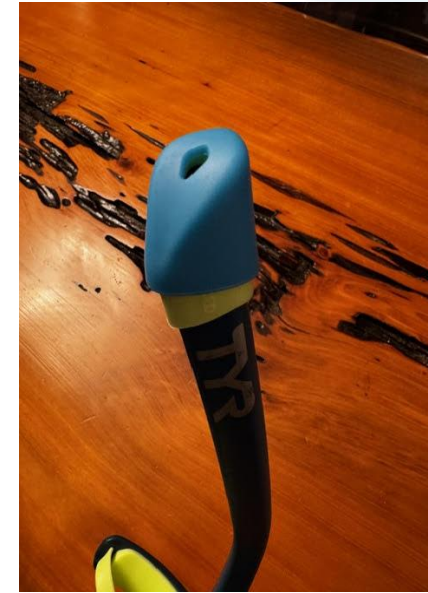
Balls

- Tennis Balls
 - Used in place of paddles for EVF
 - Enhances use of forearm for feel
 - Used for breaststroke head position
 - Placed under chin
 - We primarily use them in early pre-set during extended warm up or post main set during recovery drills



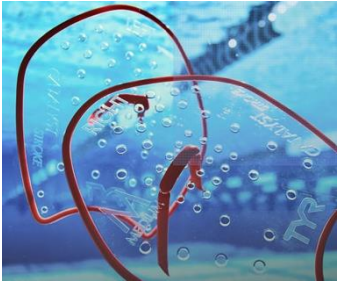
Snorkels & Breathing Restrictors

- Add breathing restriction devices
 - First restrictor feels about like 3,000' of altitude
 - Second restrictor feel about like 8,000' of altitude
 - USE WITH EXTREME CAUTION AND MANAGE DURATION
- Typically use the snorkel in ½ of our main set
 - About 1,500 yards per day in threshold type sets
- Kicking sets – whenever we use a board, we use a snorkel
 - Improved body position and alignment
 - Improved VO2 Max/Aerobic capacity
- Drills (Free, Fly, Sculling)
- Cords & Parachutes (take breathing out of the equation with the added resistance)
- To initially get used to the breathing restrictor, use daily in warm up and warm down



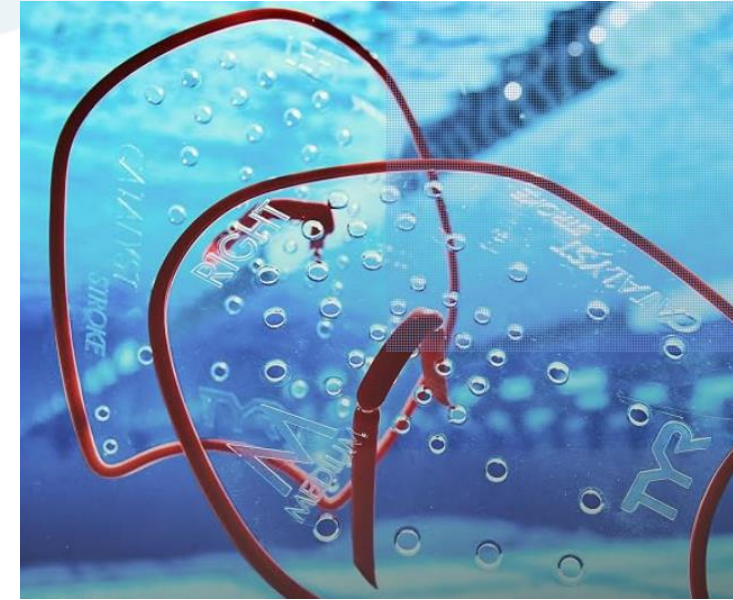
Paddles

- Paddles



Paddles

- Non-Traditional Paddle Use
 - Opposite Paddle Opposite Fin (fiddle-faddle)
 - Turn paddles around (Right/Left)
 - Turn paddles upside down (becomes very catch focused)
 - Turn into forearm paddle
- Tips and tricks
 - Limit to ~15% of total workout volume
 - No back straps
 - Start with small size, especially with newer swimmers
 - Prefer paddles with holes to maintain some feeling after taking them off



Buoys & Kickboards



Buoys & Kickboards

- Buoy Use Tips and Tricks
 - Limit Buoy Use to 25% of total volume of workout (especially triathletes and distance swimmers)
 - Use during sculling drills with snorkel
 - Use during tethered cord swimming with snorkel (body position)
 - Use during parachute swimming with snorkel (body position)
- Kickboards
 - Alignment board with snorkel for kicking sets (body position)



Fins

- Tips and tricks
 - Underwater kicking
 - Stroke drills
 - Kick/Swim combination sets
 - Sprinting
 - Starts and short sprints
 - Add to make intervals when swimming short rest sets
 - Don't allow swimmers to become findependent



Tempo Trainer

- Finis Tempo Trainer Use



Cords

- Quite possibly the most versatile training tool in my bag...
- Personal split is 90% resistance and 10% speed assisted
- Training in hotel pools
- Training in the space between the bulkheads
- My cord is almost always with me, as I never know when I will get 30 minutes of free time and can jump into almost any pool regardless of its size.
- Use stroke count as your guide
- Add a buoy to assist with body position
- Add a snorkel
- Example workout for 60 minutes
 - 1x1000 strokes of freestyle (count to 100, 10x) to warm up
 - 6x200 strokes of freestyle at a descending effort with 10 seconds between each one
 - 1x100 strokes of backstroke (recovery)
 - 6x75 strokes (25 FL, 25 BR, 25 FR) with 10 seconds between each
 - 3x50 strokes of backstroke (to make up the IM) with 10 seconds rest
 - 200 strokes recovery mixed up



Cords

- Tips and tricks for tethering on a cord
 - Use a buoy
 - Use a snorkel (small pools will get very wavy)
 - Put coins on the bottom of the pool for paces
 - Music is your friend while swimming on a tether
 - Set an alarm for your workout time on your watch or phone
 - Prepare your set in advance and stick to it– don't swim aimlessly
 - Attach to any point that you can find (skimmer, ladder, fence, etc), they all work



Weight Belts & Parachutes

- Not just for sprinters anymore...
- 2 designed workouts each week for aerobic/threshold level training with weight belts and/or parachutes.
- Several swimmers use the weight belt during our pre-set (extended warm up) as well – typically 1000-1500 yards per day in all 4 strokes, kick sets, drill sets, etc.
- Recommendation is to start with a lighter weight belt (2 – 3 lb), then graduate up
- Typical “time cost” is about 5-10 seconds per 100 yards with weight belt only
- Typical “time cost” is about 30-40 seconds per 100 yards with the parachute only



Weight Belts & Parachutes

- An example threshold set we did last Saturday

3x Through:

1x200 Freestyle with weight belt, parachute, buoy, and snorkel on 3:45

2x150 Freestyle with snorkel only on 1:55

1x100 easy choice on 2:15

*interval includes the time to add/remove equipment



Weight Belts & Parachutes

- An example sprint set we did late last season

10x50 on 2:00

- 25 all out sprint from a dive in odd lanes, then duck under the lane-line and 25 recovery in even lanes
- all with fins and parachutes (some swimmers added weight belts)





Wrap Up / Q&A

Don't be afraid to ask. If you're thinking it, someone else is too!

Next Steps / Take Action

- What new equipment can you add to your bag?
- What new uses of your current equipment can you bring back to your team?
- How will you use it with your team?
- How will you adjust your training plan to incorporate the new equipment?



Thank You!

**Slides, Resource Links, and Panelist Bios
will be posted on the USMS website**

Resources

- National Coaches Clinic - <https://www.usms.org/coach-central/national-coaches-clinic>
- Temu parachutes & cords – www.temu.com
- NZ Cordz in water cords – www.nzcordz.com
- TYR Sport snorkel and breathing restrictor – www.tyr.com
- Finis alignment kickboard – www.finisswim.com
- Kiefer weight belt – www.kiefer.com
- Tempo Trainer – www.finisswim.com

Presenter Bio: Susan Ingraham

Susan learned to swim at an early age while growing up on the beaches of California. She competed in her first ocean swim event (2 miles) at age 14, which was done without goggles because they weren't invented yet.

In 2000, while watching lap swimmers go back and forth, she thought, "I could fix that!", and thus decided to start an adult swim program at her local pool. Currently, Susan is the Head Coach for Masters of South Texas. She started with 0 swimmers and built it up to over 180 members and Gold Club status. The club trains at two locations with a total 21 workout options offered. Susan is a Level 4 USMS coach, with a coaching staff of six, all of whom are USMS Certified. In addition to her coaching duties, she provides swim lessons and one on one swim training.

Masters of South Texas is the 2022 USMS National Club of the Year. They hosted the 2015 USMS Spring National Championships (San Antonio, TX) and the 2021 USMS National Open Water Championships (Boerne, TX). MOST has also been the host club for the 10K, 5K, 6000 Yd, and 3000 Yd Postal Championships.

MOST was awarded the National Team Postal Champions for the 10K (3 times), 5K, 6000 Yd, 3000 Yd, and One Hour Swim. They have been crowned Zone Club Champions (SCY or LCM) 14 times. At the USMS National Championships, MOST finished 3rd in 2007, 2nd in 2015, and 6th in 2024.

Individual swimmers for MOST include 48 Masters All-Americans (ranked #1 in the Nation) in either the pool or long distance. Masters of South Texas includes 11 National Record Holders and 14 USMS National Champions.

The club prides itself in setting the standard for others to follow. MOST volunteers and gives back to the San Antonio community in numerous ways, such as Amputee Swim Clinics, Community Workouts, and raising funds to provide goggles and swim opportunities to less fortunate people. It also does facility clean-up days each year as a give back to the JCC where they train.

Susan enjoys traveling and exploring bodies of water around the world, sitting in the dirt of her garden, and spending time with her five grandchildren.

Contact: Aquatex101@aol.com



Presenter Bio – Aaron Schneider

Aaron Schneider currently serves as Vice Chair of the USMS Coaches Committee and General Chair of the Southern LMSC. He is also the CEO, Head Coach, and co-owner of Riptide Masters Swimming, with facilities in New Orleans and Metairie, Louisiana.

Aaron began competitive swimming year-round at age four in upstate New York. Before high school, he moved to Florida, where he swam with the Sarasota Sharks. He continued his competitive swimming career at LSU and later with the Mission Viejo Nadadores and Las Vegas Gold Swim Team.

His involvement with U.S. Masters Swimming began in the late 1990s, when he served as Coaches Chair of the Southern LMSC and Head Coach of All Acadiana Aquatics Masters in Lafayette, Louisiana, while attending graduate school. Following graduate school, Aaron stepped away from coaching to pursue a successful career in the medical device industry. He retired in 2019 as Senior Director of National Accounts for BIOTRONIK, a leading cardiovascular device manufacturer.

After returning to coaching, Aaron and his business partner, Stephen Kernion, built Riptide Masters Swimming from just three swimmers into a thriving program of more than 80 swimmers in 2026, making it the largest Masters group in the Southern LMSC. Aaron leads a staff of eight USMS-certified coaches who provide 11 workouts each week.

Aaron is a USMS and ASCA Level 3 Certified Masters Coach and a passionate distance swimmer. He enjoys competing in both open water and pool competitions and continues to train in the water six to seven days a week in addition to his on-deck coaching.

Riptide has developed a reputation for challenging, purposeful workouts and a highly competitive yet welcoming environment where swimmers of all abilities push one another to improve every day. Aaron is passionate about building strong swimming communities and helping Masters swimmers reach their full potential.

If you are visiting New Orleans, Aaron welcomes you to reach out and join Riptide for a workout.

Contact: RiptideSwimmingNOLA@gmail.com

