



Coach-Athlete Q&A

A look at some coach-replies to common questions by topic.

Q: Tell me about the swim "hip belt?"

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A: The "hydro-hip belt" is a tool that I (& Randy) have used for over a year now. I find that it's been a big help in teaching the mechanics of ideal rotation. In fact, you'll find that it's VERY tough at first.....but that each week, it'll get easier. This is for 2 reasons:

#1-it's **STRENGTHENING** your "rotation muscles".....the obliques, abs, back, etc.....your core. You notice this "trunk fatigue" after you've swam w/ it for a while.

#2-(& this one is even more dramatic).....it alters the **TIMING** of "**WHEN**" you rotate. You see.....most of us only rotate the hips to get them out of the way of a hand that's passing by. So the hand is leading while the hips follow. **THIS IS BACKWARDS!!**

Think of throwing a baseball. Stand flat-footed, hips facing your 'catcher' in front of you. Now throw the ball as fast as you can while NOT moving the hips. Not too impressive, huh?
NOW.....turn to the side, cock the hips back (what most refer to as 'raring back') and throw as you quickly rotate the hips. ALOT more force, huh?!?!

Example one is how most people swim.....FLAT.

Only moving the hips as a result of the arm-1st action. This is NOT good because EVERYONE's arms are weaker than their hips. In this example, the arms lead the hips .And weaker muscles fatigue faster and "cost" more energy.

In example #2.....the hips lead the arms. **THIS** is what we want in the water!!!
So the hydro-hip belt not only strengthens the core "rotation" muscles.....but it gives you instant feedback as to just how much of a timing 'change' you need to fully use the power of the hips. By using the belt.....you'll naturally make this adjustment (or else you go Nowhere).

Here's a fun thing to do when you get it.....swim a straight 500m w/ it. Then swim 10 x 50m @ race-pace w/ it.....then (& this is the fun part) take it off and swim 3 x 50m @ that same effort of "race-pace". WOW!!! You'll feel the rush of new speed and feel as though you're swimming is someone elses body.

Why is this?.....you've altered the ****timing**** of your hips relative to your hands and can immediately feel the difference. Now, to engrain this permanently in your stroke.....you'll have to use the hydro-hip belt quite alot (weekly).....and the 50's session is the best place, because we can watch that stroke count fall as you get better and better @ this.

You can get the "Finis hydro-hip belt" @ www.lanefour.com . It's about \$25 and well worth every penny.

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