

UPPER & LOWER DECK - HOW TO FINE TUNE YOUR MOVEMENTS

by Line Marr, CALA, Can Fit Pro & YMCA/YWCA Certified, CALA trainer & Assessor

Exclusively Water! 2002 CALA Conference sessions:

Friday April 26 from 5:00 – 7:00pm

Upper Deck: Line Marr & Jennie Queen

2 CALA, 2 FIS, 2 PTS, 2 NSFLLA, 2 L AFLCA, 2 SPRA, MFC, 2 OFC, 2 CPTN

This active dry land session focuses on upper body actions. Enhance body awareness & improve exercise execution for on deck teaching. Learn how to communicate perfect lines of movement through a combination of mimic, practice & expert feedback.

Saturday April 27 from 8:30 – 10:30am

Lower Deck: Line Marr & Jennie Queen

2 CALA, 2 FIS, 2 PTS, 2 NSFLLA, 2 P AFLCA, 2 SPRA, MFC, 2 OFC, 2 CPTN

This active dry land & deep water session with a focus on leg actions, will help you enhance body awareness & improve exercise execution. Learn to demonstrate a variety of leg & hip exercises with clean, clear & concise lines so your clients will 'get it'. Adaptable for chest deep.

Recently I had the opportunity of instructing aqua classes to some "new" aqua participants who were visiting relatives from another country. These guests did not speak English, or French for that matter, which is my mother tongue. This made my class very challenging. But with the use of clear visual cueing, concise movement execution and stimulating music, we had a fantastic class.

This experience served as a great reminder of how easy it is to "slack" off while teaching on deck. The combination of humidity and heat in a pool environment can make the job of teaching aqua physically demanding. The keys to a great class include precision and clarity during the execution of the moves. The leader usually gets back from the participants exactly what is "shown" through demonstration. If your participants are performing their movements with improper posture, poor alignment and sloppy technique, it is time to take a close look at your own ability to visually communicate and demonstrate the moves. Quite often we get into the habit of using verbal cues to correct movement. Since I could not speak to these participants, I had to rely on my abilities to demonstrate with no words. It was a great experience.

To improve your on deck teaching skills try reviewing the moves with a partner for verbal feedback or in front of a full-length mirror for visual feedback. Another way to practice your movement execution is to get into the water and practice the move. Pay close attention to your arms, your legs, the total body action. Think about how it feels to do the movement

correctly in water. Feel the move and get in touch with what you need to do to execute this particular move perfectly. Then get on deck and re-create this "feeling". Repeat this process for every movement. Soon your body will adapt and remember what it feels like to do the move on deck in such a way that it "looks like" you are doing the move in the water.



Since aqua classes are about 45 minutes in length, at approximately 20 minutes into the class, leaders often begin to fatigue. Soon after, movement execution begins to suffer. The arms become soft and weak, the legs are not lifted high enough, the shoulders become rounded - overall 'on deck' presence becomes significantly less than ideal. The participants will follow your lead, becoming 'lazy' in the way they perform the moves. In order to keep up your strength and avoid getting fatigued, limit the number of demos of each move. Make each demo as 'near to perfect' as possible. Remember quality of movement rather than quantity of demonstrations is the key. Use a chair or the ladder to demonstrate difficult suspended moves. Always use an approved aqua mat to decrease the impact you experience.



Another way to improve your 'on deck' teaching skills is to try to teach an entire class without saying a word.

Rely on your movement execution and visual technique tips to teach every aspect of a class.

Contact CALA by email or phone for a conference brochure or to register.

Happy deck teaching!