

NEM Video Clinic Report
By Bob Boder

The NEM Video Clinic team has just finished its second successful clinic. The team consists of Bill Ewan and me. We have similar backgrounds including NEM top ten finishes and coaching YMCA teams. We also share an interest in applying video media as a coaching aid. Our primary objectives are:

- Demonstrate three forms of video data collection to workout groups.
- Show the value of using video analysis to improve strokes.
- Motivate groups to acquire their own video equipment.
- Bring some additional technical instruction to groups without a coach.

The first clinic was with the Acton, Boxboro and Concord practice group at the Acton High pool. The second was with the Ludlow workout group. Each had 8 to 10 swimmers and took around four hours. The workout group coaches, Kim Donovan and Dave Baxter of ABC Masters and Pete Letendre of Ludlow Masters Swimming, set the agendas to meet their needs. The clinics address four workout group needs. These are:

1. Demonstrating video options available to practice groups.
2. Leave media with the practice groups to use for their own analysis
3. Do stroke analysis as needed while on the pool deck and reviewing the videos.
4. Provide some coaching to groups that operate without a coach.

We emphasize whatever needs are most important to the group. At the end of the session, we leave above and underwater videos of each swimmer and two documents. The first document covers the options for using video equipment, best practices and sample clinic agendas. The second is a clinic handout that covers the basics of the strokes and rules. I email the documents to the workout group contact for distribution to the entire group.



Sessions usually start with camera work. I use an underwater camera hooked up to a TV with a VHS recorder and a *Handicam* to produce an above water DVD of the same swims. At the same time Bill uses a digital camera to capture the swims from below. He is sitting on the bottom with his camera capturing the action from the side and front. Our experience allows us to see something wrong and capture it. This continues when swimmers are making corrections. The cameras are on so the swimmers can see their improvements. The videos remain with the team; they cannot forget “the bad, the ugly and the good” forever!

Bill’s digital camera brings a new dimension to collecting video images. These cameras record small movies for uploading to a computer. We do frame by frame analysis at the clinics directly from the camera using a TV with a video game input port. The old TV above serves as both a recording and viewing platform for all our video formats.

To date the results have been everything we anticipated. The teams really took to seeing the videos. We were able to help swimmers improve their strokes. A former NCAA Division 3 champion was able to pick out a few things he was doing wrong. Of course, Bill and I took notes so we improved our knowledge base. Many swimmers saw errors they did not realize they were making. They knew what to do correctly and were surprised to see they were not swimming that way.

Both teams would like to have us return. The best result from my personal view is I made new friends in NEM. I do not get to swim in many meets. It was nice to experience the fellowship that is such an important part of NEM.

Dave Baxter is putting together a system for the ABC Masters. Pete Letendre will use his videos to convince the Ludlow Youth and Masters Programs to invest in video equipment for their programs.

In the future, I would like to have more coaches participate. Improving the quality of all swimmers is important to our success as an organization. The more our practice groups can offer advanced training the more NEM participation will grow.

These are pictures of the interaction between coaches and swimmers at the Ludlow session.



Bill and Bob with Pete on deck

Here are Pete Letendre with Bill and Bob (left to right) giving instruction to Amy Veras. Bill has his digital underwater camera.



Bob swims Bill instructs

This is Bob in the water demonstrating to Amy and Rich Veras while Bill provides comment. Pete and another swimmer are observing. The purpose of this instruction was to show Rich how to do a wider recovery to reduce rotator cuff soreness.



Two breaststrokes and a butterflyer

These are our last three swimmers. Bill has two breaststrokes, Bill Shea and Pete Letendre. Bob provides butterfly instruction to Kerin Doyle. Kerin is looking forward to adding freestyle and butterfly sprints to the events she wants to swim.



My fly entry

Bill took a series of pictures of me swimming butterfly. He has a complete stroke sequence that includes front and side views of my stroke. I will use these to improve how I swim and in my writings. In this one, I have a thumbs first entry with the chest pushing down to raise the hips. The actual quality of Bill's picture is even better than this. It is reduced for use here. Now I need more ankle flexibility and must keep my arms entering in front of my shoulders. It is time to get back in the pool.

That is our story. Doing the clinics is fun and educational for Bill and me. If you want to participate, please contact Bill Ewan at W1VH at cox.net to set up a date. I can be contacted at rboder at comcast.net. My son, Rob, took the deck photographs. He served as our above water camera operator and session photographer.