

Lane Lines



Announcements:

- Next swim committee meeting: April 28, at 10:30am
- PMS Short Course Yards Championships, April 20 to 22, 2007
- Marlins Parkside Mile, May 12, 2007

Do the Deep Abdominal Muscles Need Strengthening?

From Paul Rogers

The Deep Abs Under Review:

The idea that certain stabilizing muscles can be trained to automatically contract at the time of effort to protect the joints, has long been a tenet of the exercise sciences and practices and is passed on by personal trainers, Pilates instructors and many others working with people and exercise. In particular, the deep abdominal muscles are at the center of this instruction.

The Deep Abdominal Muscles:

The deep abdominal muscles are called the transversus abdominis or TvA for short, and lie beneath the surface abdominals you know as the six-pack or the rectus abdominis -- the ones you train to get a nice washboard stomach.

The TvA has been targeted as a muscle group that has influence on the stability of the spine and thus has been promoted as important for back protection; and, the advice goes, that if you develop this muscle and train it to work subliminally for you, the spine will get protected from injury as you exercise.

Origins of the Advice:

It seems that the origin of the this information is a physiotherapy rehabilitation group at the University of

Queensland, Australia (Richardson 1996). However, the advice seems to have been taken well beyond the original context, which was for the rehabilitation of back injury and pain.

What You Need to Know:

I must admit that I have never practised or preached 'drawing in': it just did not seem useful or even practical to me. On the other hand, 'bracing' the stomach muscles ready for effort does seem intuitive. You only have to do a pullup or chinup on a bar to feel how these muscles automatically brace themselves for effort.

What bracing is. Most trainers agree that this procedure of bracing, as if for a feigned punch in the stomach, and not hollowing or drawing in, is a fundamental tool of the exercise trainer and a basic procedure from which every person involved in exercise or physical activity of any sort can benefit.

Strengthening this 'core' of muscle – at back and front of the torso – is paramount to performance and injury prevention. Let's not get confused here: it's important to understand the distinction between 'bracing' and 'drawing in' or 'hollowing'. Bracing is what we want you to do.

What bracing is not. Bracing is not holding the breath, pushing the stomach

out or trying to push your belly button through your tailbone (coccyx). Get used to the bracing idea and you can do it almost anywhere, even running. Many endurance runners have poor core strength and abdominal posture because under fatigue they get very slack in the stomach area. Another group that can benefit from braced abdominals are office workers and people sitting at work or home most of the day.

One of the basic exercises for strengthening the abdominal muscles is the crunch. See my Top Ten Exercises for New Weight Trainers for a run through of the basic crunch and other exercises.

*Reprinted from:
<http://weighttraining.about.com/od/physicaltherapy/a/transversus.htm>*

Marlin in View

Name: Liz Roepke

How long have you (swam) swum with the

Marlins: 36 years, with a short 15-year break

Typical workout time: I spread my charm

Pool/Open Water: Pool

Favorite Stroke: One lap of butterfly

Favorite Event/Swim: 50 Fly

Pets: My car

Best memory so far: Witnessing Ray Taft forget that he had no swimsuit under the towel he had wrapped around him, just as he got on the block to anchor the mixed relay at Long Course Nationals, Santa Clara. No kidding.

Why do you swim: To regain my youth

Favorite color: Love 'em all, except perhaps puce

Secret skills: (Weakness?) Nitpicking (See swam/swum above). For instance, why aren't more men responding to Marlin in View? Afraid? Identity issues? C'mon, you guys - go for it

Occupation: Architect

Favorite ice cream: Dreyer's Dibs - they're so small and go down so fast, there's no need to count calories.



April 2007

Fri-Sun, Apr. 20-22, PMS SCY, Walnut Creek

May 2007

Sat, May 12, SMMM, Parkside Aquatic Mile

Thurs-Sun, May 17-20, USMS SCY Championships, Federal Way

Sat, May 19, RCM Spring Lake Mile

June 2007

Sat, June 2, DAM Lake Berryessa

Sat, June 9, TVM Lake Del Valle

Sun, June 10, BMW Splash and Dash

July 2007

Sat, July 14, RCM Russian River 1-mile

Sat, July 21, TOC Trans Tahoe Relay

Aug. 2007

Sat, Aug. 4, CRUZ, Santa Cruz Pier Swim

Sun, Aug. 5, CRUZ, Cruz Cruise

Fri.-Mon., Aug 10-13, USMS Long Course Championships, The Woodlands, TX

Sat, Aug. 11, SNM Donner Lake Swim

Sun, Aug. 19, MAM 2x1 Mile Relay

Sept. 2007

Sun, Sept. 9, RAD Whiskeytown One and Two Mile

Sun, Sept. 23, SMMM Short Course Meters Pentathlon

Lanes Lines is edited by Henry Chan. For questions, concerns, or to submit content for future issues, send to hymc219@hotmail.com. Always remember, keep swimming!