PUSHING THE FRONTIERS - VIRTUAL LEARNING FOR SPORTS

Many athletic institutions that pivoted to virtual training have reaped surprising benefits in response to closures and lockdowns. Team building, educational opportunities, and exposure to different coaching techniques during online training have fostered continued enthusiasm and passion for athletes and Ignite Artistic Swimming is no exception. Ignite's coaches have infused their virtual instruction with high-level land training, choreography, mental training, and team building, proving that online learning platforms can help athletes excel in their sports.

In the same way that virtual learning can complement traditional education, e-learning platforms can help foster athletic principles such as team building and skill advancement. Engaging with the team through partner activities online and bonding exercises can lead to new relationships and allow for different opportunities to connect with team members.

Focusing on strength and flexibility during online training is immensely beneficial for artistic swimmers as they can help prevent injury and build strength and endurance. For artistic swimmers, land training is an important foundation for performing skills in the water. According to my athlete, who trains with Ignite, "if you can't do a skill on land, such as splits, you can't do it in the water." Shifting focus, while online, to mastering skills and positions on land can greatly benefit artistic swimmers and contribute to success during Ontario Artistic Swimming skills assessment competitions.

During the uncertainty of Covid and navigating through the ins and outs of lockdowns, it is worthwhile to embrace the opportunities for growth and advancement in virtual training. Being adaptive and proactive in training can help make young athletes better leaders in their sport and life.