Breaststroke: Teaching & Technique
The basics:

- Consistent high hand & foot speed within the practice environment, this will help avoid inconstancies in stroke timing.
- Break the stroke down (rehearse and improve each component individually).
- Make sure that training fatigue does not lead to the development of poor technique.
Streamline

 Executing a fully extended streamline will allow for maximum distance per-stroke in each stroke cycle

 Continue the forward press with the head and chest throughout the sweep of the stroke

 Keep Your Body In Line Swimming with good posture

Reminder
Core Tension! Is key to maintaining good body position to help facilitate this have your swimmers push their back towards the surface of the water
Pull: out-sweep, in-sweep & recovery

The entire pull phase is a three dimensional motion. Both the out-sweep and the in-sweep are propulsive motions. The in-sweep is the more powerful of the two. The timing & constancy of speed carried through each phase is very important to the overall timing of the stroke.
Out-Sweep

During this phase the arms stay straight and are approx. 20–25cm from the surface of the water.

How wide this phase of the stroke depends on the strengths of each athlete.

The in-sweep begins to take place as the out-swept arms begin to enter the “Y” position which is also coupled with a
In-Sweep

The in-sweep motion of the stroke creates resistance on the inside of the arm.

The path that the arm takes through the in-sweep will determine its efficiency. Pay close attention to the position of the hands & elbows through the entire motion.

A balance of speed, power and mechanical consistency is needed to create maximal propulsion through this phase.

Through the in-sweep phase, the shoulders and back lift in a gradual diagonal motion, so that there is a balance between forward and upward motion.

Excessive upward motion is a common technical mistake made by swimmers. Make sure you keep a close eye on this.
As the swimmer begins the recovery phase their hands should be slightly elevated so that they are higher than their elbows.

Through the forward extension both the hands and elbows are held close together and then move straight forward.

The through the recovery phase the head remains inline with the back and settles between the arms ending the stroke cycle in a streamlined position.

Above or below?
Kick

The heels need to be drawn up towards the hips with maximum speed, ending with the toes pointed outward to initiate the propulsive force.

The heals take an elliptical path as the legs are extended.

Increasing force is applied through the kick phase, making sure that pressure is placed on the feet throughout the kick.

The last 1/3 of the kick phase generates the majority of the power.

Like the out-sweep, how wide the kick should be is determined by the abilities and strengths of the athlete.
Kosuke Kitajima at 20 m of His World Record
100 m Breaststroke Gold Medal Race at the
2003 World Championships in Barcelona
Timing & Correction

Look at the relative velocity of the out-sweep in relation to the in-sweep and make sure that there is a noticeable increase in velocity through the in-sweep into the recovery.

The recovery phase & the transition into the propulsive phase of the kick occur almost simultaneously.
Timing & Correction...Cont.

Look for the lift of the shoulders and back to occur during the in-sweep phase of the stroke with the head staying in-line with the back.

For every inch the head is lifted, the hips sink two inches.

Also for every inch above the surface the head is lifted, it will take additional time to get to the streamline position.
Things to remember

- Be consistent in your coaching vocabulary & use a common language
- Breaststroke can be a slow training stroke, but it must be done with a high attention to detail at all times. Make sure your swimmers understand this
- When in doubt....break it down & perfect the components of the stroke...then bring it back together
- Everything need to move forward, keep that in mind at all times
KICKING DRILLS

Forward egg beater is a modification of a water polo drill. This drill is designed to improve foot speed (power) and leg endurance.

1. It involves all out maximum effort pumping of the knees while swimming laps
2. I start out beginners with one length and more advanced swimmers with a 50

It is the muscles (hamstrings, gastrocnemius, and gluteus Maximus) that pull the feet to the butt that tire and fatigue most often during a race. This in turn will then slow the breaststroke swimmer down.
Breaststroke coupling with fins

1. Encourage swimmers to have a high turnover rate for their hands.
2. There is no elongated glide phase with this drill, the swimmer’s head should not be completely submerged while doing this drill.
3. Start out by doing 25’s & then progress to longer distances.
Fin