

An introduction to competitive swimming training

The information in this booklet is intended to help swimmers who are joining the squads.

Please take some time to read through it.

If there is anything you don't understand anything please ask one of the sharks teaching staff or coaches.

Transition squad is intended to introduce swimmers to competitive training by gradually increasing the hours spent in the pool. This will build up stamina, strength and improve stroke technique.

The training might seem quite hard at first but you will be surprised at how quickly you will build up the stamina required.

It is important to try and attend as many training sessions as possible so that you are ready to join junior squad and increase the training sessions you attend.

Transition swimmers train on:

Tuesday	6.00pm – 7.30pm.	Great White Hour plus
Friday	7.30pm – 8.45pm.	Marlin Hour plus
Sunday	4.30pm – 6pm.	

Swimmers will be in transition squad until they meet the criteria to move into junior squad. The criteria is 8 x 100m F/C on 2.15. They will remain in Juniors until they complete the qualifying for Seniors.

There are qualifying times for swimmers to achieve before they can train in Senior squad. The criteria are as follows:

Girls 200m F/C 3mins	Boys 200m F/C 2.55mins
15 x 100m F/C off 1.50mins	15 x 100m F/C off 1.50mins

and one of the following from below:

Girls 200m Bk 3.20 mins	Boys 200m Bk 3.15 mins
Girls 200m Br 3.45 mins	Boys 200m Br 3.40 mins
Girls 200m Fly 3.30 mins	Boys 200m Fly 3.25 mins

These times can be achieved in any competition or there is a time trial at training.

Training times for Junior, Masters and Senior squad:

Monday	6.00pm-7.30pm	Junior, Senior, Masters
Tuesday	6.00pm-7.30pm	Junior, Senior
Wednesday	6.00pm-7.30pm	Junior, Senior, Masters
Friday	7.30pm-8.45pm	Junior, Senior, Masters
Sunday	4.30pm-6.00pm	Junior, Senior

Swimming Kit

The swimming club have a club kit which is available for squad swimmers to buy. There are swimming suits, hats, towels, T-shirts, hoodies and kit bags all with the shark's logo on. These can be purchased from the kit secretary.

Each squad swimmer needs to have the following at every training session:

- Flippers
- Pull buoy
- Kickboard
- Snorkel
- Hand Paddles

Working in lengths

The distance of swimming is measured in metres.

Most swimming pools like the pool at Mildenhall measure 25 metres this is also sometimes referred to as short course.

There are a few 50 metre pools (long course) the nearest one to Mildenhall is at the U.E.A. campus at Norwich. Senior squad swimmers are fortunate to be able to train at Norwich occasionally.

Training sets are written in distances of metres for example,

25m = 1 length (short course)

37.5m = 1 and ½ length starting from the middle and then completing a full 25m.

50m = 2 lengths

75m = 3 lengths

100m = 4 lengths..... and so on.

Swimmers need to learn the distances and how many lengths are required so that they can follow the set independently.

Working in Lanes

There has to be lane discipline, to ensure safety and an effective session.

Lane organisation depends on the number of swimmers in the pool but usually transition swimmers will start in lane 4, with Junior squad in lane 3, top senior squad in lane 2 and senior squad in lane 1.

Swimmers follow a chain or circuit pattern, with swimmers in the next lane usually following the opposite direction. It is important to know the direction to swim in your lane.

Usually, the fastest swimmer in your lane will lead the lane, the second fastest will be next and so on, with the slowest at the back.

This will not necessarily be the same swimmer for every stroke.

The swimmer leading the lane must be able to understand the set and follow the pace clock.

A gap should be left between each swimmer. This helps to avoid swimmers being interrupted by contact with others and this is achieved by leaving the end of the pool 5 seconds or more, after the swimmer in front.

Try not to overtake a swimmer in the middle of the lane, wait until you are at the end and ask to go in front. If a swimmer keeps catching up with you then let them go in front as this will create a better training session for you both.

Using a pace clock

Our pool has two pace clock it is important to use just one as sometimes they are not in time with each other.

The pace clock shows the time in seconds. Swimmers need to learn how the pace clock can be used in training and to use it independently.

The pace clock can be used in several ways, for example,

- To tell a swimmer when to start the swim (e.g. the lead swimmer in the lane is to start when the red hand is at the top or on 60).
- To gauge when the next swimmer should start (e.g. leave a 10 second gap between each swimmer).
- To time a rest interval (e.g. rest interval R.I. 20 sec.)
- To approximate time a swim.
- To time the swim & include the rest time (e.g. 6x25m on 45sec which means for each length & rest you have 45sec until you start the next repeat. If it takes 30 seconds to swim the length you will have 15 seconds' rest).

Understanding the set

The first section of the set is the warm-up. The purpose of the warm-up is to gradually prepare the body for the exercise ahead by stretching and increasing the blood flow to the muscles and the range of movement in the joints. A correct warm-up lessens the possibility of injury.

This is why it is important to try and arrive on time. If you are 5 or 10 minutes early prepare yourself by doing some pre-swim loosening up exercises and stretches on poolside.

The swimming warm-up will be written up on a board and should be started from the beginning, even if you arrive late. A warm-up should be swum at a steady pace sometimes building up to some sprints at the end. Correct turns should be practiced at every opportunity throughout the warm-up.

Instructions are written down in abbreviated terms because this is more practical. The main set is usually explained before the swimming starts but if you do not understand something or forget where you are in the set then ask one of the coaches or teachers on poolside and they will help you.

Examples of some abbreviated terms:

S = Swim

F/C = Front crawl

P = Pull

BK = Backstroke

K = Kick

BR = Breaststroke

D = Drill

FLY = Butterfly

Form stroke = any stroke but not Front crawl

I.M. = Individually Medley as Fly, Bk/s, Br/s, F/c equal distances, in that order.

Reverse I.M. = F/C, BR, BK, Fly

No. 1 Stroke = The stroke you are best at.

No. 2 Stroke = The stroke you are second best at.

Choice stroke = You can choose the stroke; this could be the stroke you most need to improve on.

An introduction to drills

Drills are used to improve stroke technique. A drill should be practiced accurately so that the full stroke can be improved. It is useful for swimmers to try and learn some of the drills so that when required they can practise their own choice of drill independently.

Examples of some drills

<u>FRONTCRAWL DRILLS</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
ZIP UP	ON ARM RECOVERY PULL AN IMAGINARY ZIP UP THE SIDE OF BODY WITH THUMB & FIRST FINGER
KENTUCKY OR CHICKEN WING	TOUCH THUMB UNDER ARM PIT ON ARM RECOVERY
CATCH UP	ONE ARM EXTENDED AS THE OTHER ARM PULLS & RECOVERS IT TOUCHES TOP OF EXTENDED ARM THEN OTHER ARM PULLS.
RIPPLE	DRAG FINGER TIPS ALONG WATER SURFACE ON RECOVERY
CONTROLLED TWO ARM	HOLD THE CATCH POSITION OF EACH ARM FOR THE COUNT OF THREE
HOVER	REACH FORWARD HAND IN LINE WITH THE SHOULDER HOVER ABOVE THE WATER FULLY STRETCHED BEFORE DROPPING HAND TO CATCH AND PULL
<u>BACKSTROKE DRILLS</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
2+2+2	TWO RIGHT ARM PULLS TWO LEFT ARM PULLS TWO DOUBLE ARM PULLS
CONTROLLED ONE ARM	PULLING WITH ONE ARM, THE OTHER ARM DOWN BY THE SIDE & A CONSTANT KICKING ACTION, HOLD THE CATCH POSITION FOR A COUNT OF THREE COMPLETE THE PULL & HOLD FOR A COUNT OF THREE (REPEAT DRILL WITH OTHER ARM)
CONTROLLED TWO ARM	HOLD THE CATCH POSITION OF EACH ARM FOR A COUNT OF THREE
CONTINUOUS SINGLE ARM	USING A CONTINUOUS ACTION PULL & RECOVER ONE ARM WITH SHOULDER & BODY ROLL & A STILL HEAD POSITION (CHANGE SIDES)
<u>BREASTSTROKE DRILLS</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
TWO KICKS ONE PULL	WITH ARMS EXTENDED AHEAD TORPEDO POSITION HANDS LOCKED EXECUTE TWO BREASTSTROKE KICKS BEFORE STARTING TO PULL & RECOVER ARMS
THREE KICKS ONE PULL	AS ABOVE BUT THREE KICKS BEFORE PULLING
LAYOUT DRILL	HOLD THE STREAMLINE POSITION WITH ARMS & LEGS EXTENDED FOR THE COUNT OF THREE BEFORE PULL, KICK & RECOVERY
BREASTSTROKE PULL DOLPHIN KICK	BREASTSTROKE PULL & ON THE ARM RECOVERY PUSH HIPS UP & EXECUTE A DOWNWARD DOLPHIN KICK
<u>BUTTERFLY DRILLS</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
DOLPHIN DRILL	WITH ARMS DOWN BY SIDES & CROWN OF HEAD LEADING PRACTISE THE UNDULATING BODY ACTION OF THE BUTTERFLY STROKE
DOLPHIN DRILL WITH ARMS EXTENDED	THE SAME AS THE ABOVE DRILL BUT WITH THE ADDITION OF THE ARMS EXTENDED AHEAD
ONE ARM PULL BUTTERFLY	KEEPING ONE ARM EXTENDED IN FRONT USE THE OTHER ARM TO PULL WHILE MAINTAINING THE CONTINUOUS DOLPHIN ACTION (CHANGE ARMS)
2+2+2	TWO RIGHT ARM PULLS TWO LEFT ARM PULLS TWO ARM PULLS TOGETHER (FULL STROKE)
1 LEFT 1 BOTH 1 RIGHT 1 BOTH	ONE LEFT ARM PULL ONE ARM PULL TOGETHER ONE RIGHT ARM PULL ONE ARM PULL TOGETHER.