



SwimSmart

WELCOME



Welcome to 'SwimSmart', a NEW swimming fact sheet written by coaches **for swimmers eyes only!!** Filled jam packed with ideas, articles and ways of moving your swimming in the RIGHT direction. SwimSmart is dedicated to bringing you the best swimming information featuring mental preparedness, technique/drills, nutrition/recovery, workouts, dryland, race strategy, preparation and lots lots more.....

WIN THE WORKOUT

Everyone wants to win on competition day. Everyone lines up behind the blocks wanting to win. Some hope. Some pray. Some cross their fingers, and some will be accompanied by their lucky mascot. Some, not many, will enjoy the quiet confidence of knowing that winning is possible because of the time and effort spent preparing for that specific competition. Everyone wants to WIN THE RACE, but how many want to **WIN EVERY WORKOUT** just as badly?

One of the most respected swimming coaches' in the world, Bill Sweetenham, often says to swimmers; **'Winning tomorrow starts by winning today. To win tomorrow's race, first win today's training session. Will you be a better swimmer tomorrow because of what you did in training today?'**

Here are a few tips on how to 'win' workouts:

Arrive earlier than everyone else. Stretch for 15 minutes before anyone else arrives. If travelling, or school commitments mean you can't get to the pool early, stretch on the bus, train or in the car on the way to your training session.

Make sure you have a 1-2 drinks bottles (minimum 750ml capacity) containing clean water at every session. Drink regularly throughout your session.

Be the first swimmer to get in the pool and start training. Start the first length with a race quality dive or race start. Ask your coach to give you feedback about your dive out of ten for technical excellence.

Finish each repetition (including drills) with a legal, race quality touch and finish. In freestyle and butterfly this means no breathing inside the flags (head down). In butterfly and breaststroke this means an explosive, two-handed touch (head down). In backstroke this means counting your strokes from the flags and finishing with a powerful touch, on a full stroke and without looking around for the wall. If swimming in a lane next to other swimmers doing the same stroke, make a conscious effort to race them from the flags to the wall on every repetition to practice your ability to win close race finishes.

Swim your warm up (and swim down) with the same attention to detail as you demand in the main set. Quality, explosive starts, powerful push-offs, aggressive turns, head down inside the flags, no breathing on the first or the last stroke in butterfly and freestyle, fully controlled underwater phases on every length of breaststroke etc.

Warm up and swim down means **'GREAT SKILLS AND EXCELLENT TECHNIQUE DONE SLOWLY'**.

Challenge someone faster than you to a race every session. It could be a kicking race. It could be a challenge based on skills and speed (i.e. who can swim the fastest length with the fewest breaths-time added to number of breaths = total score and the lowest score wins). It could be a technique challenge (i.e. ask your coach to give you feedback for your drills out of ten and then try to do it better to achieve a higher score). If you are a strong backstroker who is a weak butterflyer, challenge a strong butterflyer to a swimming (or kicking) race. Work on your weaknesses.

When swimming on MAX efforts in training, ask yourself four questions: Could I do this with fewer strokes? Could I do this with fewer breaths? Could I do this with better technique? Could I do this with better starts, turns and finishes?

Challenge yourself to do it better every time.

If you want to be the best swimmer in your club, your county, your region, the UK or the World? you must be the best swimmer in your LANE first. You must be the one that sets yourself a higher standard than anyone else swimming in your lane. You must set a higher standard and a more challenging goal than even your coach imagines possible.

Aim to do it to faster, with better skills and excellent technique ESPECIALLY when you are tired. Competition success will require you to swim fast when you are tired, under pressure and hurting. Make training more demanding than any of your competitions. Deliberately make training tougher than your toughest race. Ask your coach if you can do a time trial at the end of training.

Believe that anything is possible. You can do PB's in training. You can swim 25 metres at maximum speed without taking a breath. You can kick 40 metres in your 50 metre PB swim time. You can do it. The words 'I can't' usually means 'I am not prepared to try in case I fail'.

There are no guarantees to success. You can however increase the likelihood of success by making training sessions more demanding than you ever thought possible, attempting to do the impossible everyday and aiming to win every workout.

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