



"Talent wins games but
team work wins
championships"-
Michael Jordan

Colchester

Swimming Club Handbook

"Seven days of no
swimming makes
one weak."-
Unknown



Introduction

This is an introductory guide covering many aspects of competitive swimming. This information is geared to help parents/ guardians understand what they are getting into when they join the swimming club. If you have not belonged to a club in any sport before, please understand that you, the parents/guardians, are very important components to their swimming programme.

Refer to this for advise, print off sheets to make your log book and return to it for motivation and guidance. Not all of it will be relevant to you, but hopefully useful and informative.

Contents:



Swimming at Colchester is based on the belief that we are offering an enjoyable, healthy, life enriching experience for any young person that joins. Swimming competitively and learning all of the skills that accompany it, will develop any young person in a positive manner.

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Chapter One:

My Training Log Book



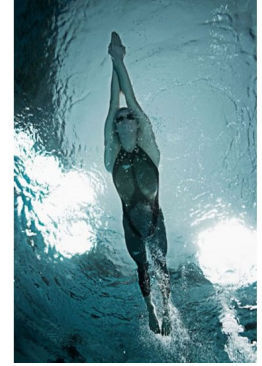
H2O: two parts Heart
and one part
Obsession.

My Swimming Log Book

Name:
Squad:



Introduction to your Log Book



Your logbook is for you to record your swimming development. To help with this the logbook contains pages that you should record all your training session and competition details. In the logbook is a page to record information about yourself, so if it gets lost it can be returned to you. A really important detail that you should fill in is your ASA registration number - you will need this number when entering Open Meets etc.

The goal setting pages are interesting. Perhaps there is a certain time you would like to achieve or particular technique you would like to improve. A mid term goal maybe you would like to win a medal at an Open Meet, and in the long term perhaps you would like to achieve a County qualifying time and swim at the County Championships.

Next in the logbook are pages for you to record your personal best times (PBs) and for you to keep them up-to-date. Log on to www.britishswimming.org rankings page, type in your ASA number and all your licensed times will appear. A p.b list is also posted on club notice board.

The competition results pages are for you to record times achieved in competitions and comments about your swims i.e. how you felt, what you did well, what you ate and drank before the competition (chips or pasta? sports drink or coke?). This is very useful as it can sometimes explain why you swam so well or why it wasn't as you'd hoped.

The training sessions pages should be filled in after each training session. Write down what you did well and what you want to improve at the next session and any other comments i.e. I felt good about my swimming today; I have a cold; I played in a football match after school.

At the end of the logbook are some really useful bits of information that you would want to know about competitive swimming.



Personal Details

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Tel no. _____

DOB: ____/____/____

ASA Registration No: _____

Height: _____ cm

Measured on: ____/____/____

Weight: _____ kg

Measured on: ____/____/____

I joined Colchester SC on: _____

My Coach's name is: _____

My Best stroke is: _____

I train _____ times a week

My other hobbies are: _____



Monthly Information:

Week beginning:

Month:

Comments:

Height	
Weight	
Resting Heart Rate	
Total metres	



Training Log

Weekly Volume Record Sheet

Week	Week Commencing	Weekly Volume	Running Total	Average Weekly Volume	Week	Week Commencing	Weekly Volume	Running Total	Average Weekly Volume
1					14				
2					15				
3					16				
4					17				
5					18				
6					19				
7					20				
8					21				
9					22				
10					23				
11					24				
12					25				
13					26				

Guidelines for Effective Goal Setting

The goals you set yourself to help improve your swimming should be:

- S**pecific → Instead of simply saying "I want to improve my 50m freestyle", say what you want to improve *about it*, e.g. "I want to improve my 50m freestyle turn". This will give you a specific focus to work on in training.
- M**easurable → Make sure you will know when you have reached your goal. For example, using a time as a target will make this easier.
- A**greed → Speak to your coach about the goals you set. They will tell you if it is suitable.
- R**ealistic → Setting a goal that is too challenging will not help yourself-confidence because you are not likely to achieve it. Try not to make it overly difficult or too easy.
- T**ime- based → Give yourself a deadline to reach your goal, e.g. in 6 months time. You can adapt this time range according to what competitions you have coming up, such as I want to achieve this time before the Essex championships.
- E**xciting → Your goal must not be like a chore but instead a mental stimulation.
- R**ecorded → Write down your goals - it will make you more determined to achieve them and help you monitor progress.

Goal Setting



Goal setting

Every September when the new swimming season starts swimmers are encouraged to set goals for the next year. You should set a short term goal that can be achieved between September and December and then a longer term goal that you hope to achieve within the year. In January you should review your short term goal and set yourselves a medium term goal.

It is important for swimmers to set themselves achievable and realistic targets that are specific to a particular aspect of swimming.

Your goals should then be agreed with Michelle or Ian.

Personal best record sheets

Your log book is your record of achievement and so you should regularly update your Personal best times. Current times can be found on the club notice board but every time you compete you should record any new times by stroke on the sheets in your log book. It is the swimmers responsibility to know their own times.

Every time you compete in a competition you should record it on the competition page and rate your performance, explaining it in the comments box.



Personal Goals

Short Term (This term)	
Mid Term (Next term)	
Long Term (Next year)	
Signed by Swimmer	
Date of goal setting exercise, deadline to be completed by and the actual date it was completed.	Date of goal setting: Deadline: Completed by:
Signed by Coach	



My Competition Results

Date	Competition	Event	Time	Rating & Comments (circle)
				☺ ☹ ☹
				☺ ☹ ☹
				☺ ☹ ☹
				☺ ☹ ☹
				☺ ☹ ☹
				☺ ☹ ☹
				☺ ☹ ☹
				☺ ☹ ☹
				☺ ☹ ☹
				☺ ☹ ☹



My Training Sessions

Date	Rating	What I did well today	My aim next session	Comments
	😊 😐 😞			
	😊 😐 😞			
	😊 😐 😞			
	😊 😐 😞			
	😊 😐 😞			

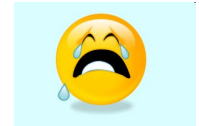
Date	Rating	What I did well today	My aim next session	Comments
	😊 😐 😞			
	😊 😐 😞			
	😊 😐 😞			
	😊 😐 😞			
	😊 😐 😞			

How I would rate my training this week

1=



5=



1	My overall performance in pool sessions					
2	My attitude in pool sessions					
3	My commitment to improving my flexibility					
4	The quality of my streamlining after every push off and turn					
5	The speed and technical quality of my turns					
6	The distance I achieve off the wall after my turns					
7	The quality and speed of my underwater dolphin kicking					
8	The quality of my technique when swimming at maximum speed					
9	How regularly and accurately I count my strokes					
10	How regularly and accurately I check my heart rate.					

Coach's comments

How To Take Your Heart Rate

To train effectively you must know:

- Your current level of fitness
- The amount of aerobic training you need for your sport
- The amount of anaerobic training you need for your sport

For example, sprinters use mainly anaerobic training and marathon runners use mainly aerobic training. You can use your maximum heart rate (MHR) to calculate how hard you should work your heart to develop either aerobic or anaerobic fitness.

To calculate your maximum heart rate:

$220 - \text{your age} = \text{your maximum heart rate.}$

Your first step is to find your resting heart rate (RHR) which is a measure of your basic fitness level. Before you get out of bed in the morning, take your pulse for 1 full minute, counting each heart beat to find your beats per minute (bpm).

How to take your pulse:

1. Place the tips of your index, second, and third fingers on the palm side of your other wrist, below the base of the thumb. Or, place the tips of your index and second fingers on your lower neck, on either side of your windpipe. (See the illustrations to the right.)
2. Press lightly with your fingers until you feel the blood pulsing beneath your fingers. You might need to move your fingers around slightly up or down until you feel the pulsing.
3. Use a watch with a second hand, or look at a clock with a second hand.
4. Count the beats you feel for 10 seconds. Multiply this number by six to get your heart rate (pulse) per minute.

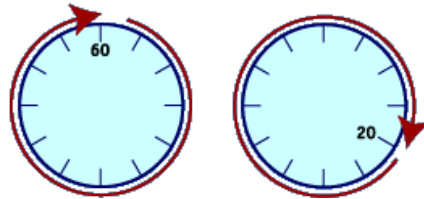
Check your pulse: $\frac{\text{beats in 10 seconds}}{\text{beats in 10 seconds}} \times 6 = \frac{\text{your pulse}}{\text{your pulse}}$



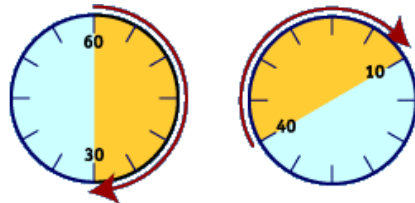
How to Read The Pace Clock

By thinking of the clock face as a pie that has been cut it becomes easier to visualize segments and keep track of your swims and send-off times. Listed on this page are some basic intervals along with an explanation of how to figure your next repeat.

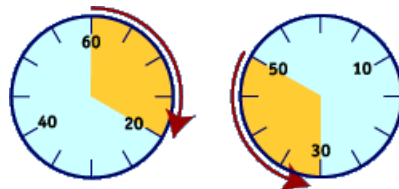
Intervals or pace that are exactly one minute (or two minutes or three minutes, etc.) are easy. Whatever number you leave the first repeat on, it will be this same number for all repeats in the entire set.



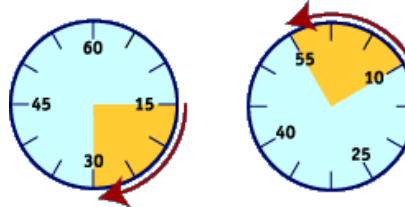
When using intervals or pace that are 30 seconds (or 1:30, 2:30, etc.) you will always leave on one of two numbers. Those numbers will be directly across from one another on the pace clock.



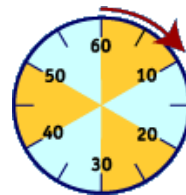
Intervals of either 20 or 40 seconds slice the pie (pace clock) into thirds. This means you will always leave on one of three numbers. If your interval is 20 seconds (or 1:20, 2:20, etc.) your numbers will rotate clockwise. If your interval is 40 seconds (or 1:40, 2:40, etc.) your numbers will rotate counter clockwise.



Intervals of either 15 or 45 seconds will split the clock into fourths. Intervals ending in 15 seconds (1:15, 2:15, etc.) will have send-off numbers rotating clockwise. Send-off times in 45 second intervals (:45, 1:45, etc.) will have send-off numbers that rotate counter clockwise. In both cases, send-off numbers will alternate ending in 5 and 0.



Intervals of 10 seconds (1:10, 2:10, 3:10, etc.) and 50 seconds (:50, 1:50, 2:50, etc.) are easy. For 10 second intervals your next send-off always advance in a clockwise rotation. Send-offs for 50 second intervals always retract in a counter clockwise rotation.



Intervals of 5 seconds (1:05, 2:05, etc.) and 55 seconds (:55, 1:55, 2:55, etc.) will always advance and retract one number respectively.

Chapter Two:

Swimming Information

Warm-Up



WARM UP IN SWIMMING

Warming up before competition is important because it prepares the body for greater effort and reduces the risk of muscle and joint injury.

All swimmers, whether they are involved in a 1500 m race or a 50 m race, need a warm-up. It can last from 20 minutes to an hour.

Most swimmers and coaches choose the intensity and duration of warm-up intuitively or based on what has been successful in the past.

Understanding the reasons why warming up is helpful in development of a warm-up protocol.

BENEFITS OF WARM UP

Good warm-up provides rehearsal effect. Swimmers rehearse swimming technique, starts, turns, and intensity prior to race. It familiarizes the swimmer with the pool conditions.

Joints and muscles increase flexibility and thus improve stroke efficiency.

Muscles can contract faster and relax more completely. That reduces the chance for injuries.

Economy of physiological systems increases 20%-30% after warm-up. Swimmer can swim longer before fatigue during the race if warm up was executed properly.

The resultant increase in body temperature and heart rate takes physiological systems closer to the "competition state".

The rate of blood flow increase. This helps to deliver oxygen and glucose to the muscles.

Blood and muscle lactate accumulation decreases after warm-up.

Warm-Up and Stretching Exercises

Most athletes (swimmers included) use a combination of controlled movement exercises and specific joint/muscle stretching to improve performance potential. The proposed benefits of pre-training (or competition) warm-up and stretching activities include:

Increased blood flow to the active muscles, heart-rate is increased during the warm-up activity.
Decreased "stiffness" due to increased stretch tolerance of the nerve receptors in the muscle.

This allows for an increased range of motion.

Decrease in reflex inhibition of opposing muscles or muscle groups (once again -- this improves range of motion).

A combination of the above affects that may reduce the risk of muscle or joint injury when more vigorous physical activity begins.

General Guidelines

Active warm-up exercises are most beneficial when performed prior to more specific muscle/joint stretching exercises. Movements should always start in a slow and controlled pattern, but may progress to more rapid and vigorous activities. Exercises are performed as a series of repetitions, each exercise may last 30 seconds to several minutes. Rest between exercises is usually kept to a minimum (only a few seconds). Alternating exercises that focus on different body parts (i.e. an arm exercise followed by a leg exercise) will help to stimulate blood flow and increase body temperature. After several minutes of warm-up exercises (the total time will depend upon the individual and his/her capabilities) the athlete should progress to specific stretching exercises and finally to the full sporting activity (i.e. swimming, running, etc.).

The athlete's goal is to prepare the body to accept more demanding physical activities -- work within your limits to maintain control and precision during all warm-up and stretching exercises.

Loosening

Rope Skipping



Rope skipping offers many movement variations, pictured above are ⇒ left-leg and then right-leg leading "skips"; side-to-side double-leg "jumps"; high knee lift single-leg "hopping" and double-leg "jumps" (many other variations are possible)

Arm swings with Latissimus Stretch



Starting Position → standing
Action ⇒ rotate one arm up (bending the elbow) to reach behind the back as the other arm swings across the front of the body (finishing under the opposite shoulder) -- reverse the swing to the other side

Double arm swings



Starting Position → standing, arms at the sides
Action ⇒ keeping the arms relaxed and straight -- lift both arms (turn palms out) to a position above the shoulders then continue to rotate the arms back and down to the starting position

Skiing



Starting Position → bent forward position with back straight to involve abdominal muscles
Action ⇒ swing the arms back, then forward through a full range of motion

Jumping Jacks



Starting Position → standing, feet together and arms at the sides
Action ⇒ bend the knees slightly as arms swing out and up (perform a small jump to separate the legs); feet strike the ground and knees continue to bend as arms extend overhead; arms swing down (perform a second small jump to bring the legs together.)

Split Leg Lunge



Starting Position → standing with feet together and back straight; extend arms overhead
Action ⇒ step forward with one leg (right angle at the knee) to lower bodyweight while keeping the back straight -- return to start

Arm Swings with trunk rotation



Starting Position → feet at shoulder width (or wider) and knees slightly bent; trunk bent forward (maintain body position with abdominal muscle control)
Action ⇒ keeping the arms relaxed, rotate the shoulders and arms to the left and then to the right

Opposite Arm Swings



Starting Position → feet at shoulder width and knees slightly bent; trunk bent forward; arms hanging below the shoulders (maintain body position with abdominal muscle control)
Action ⇒ right-arm swings forward as left-arm swings back through maximum range of movement -- reverse arm positions (i.e. left-arm back and right-arm forward)

Stretches

Lower Back Stretch



Stand upright with feet close together about 1m from a wall. Place both hands against the wall and keep the lower-back flat while gently pushing down the upper-back.

Quadriceps Stretch



From a standing position lift one foot up toward the buttock by flexing the knee. Hold the foot in place and feel the stretch in the front of the thigh.

Teres Stretch



Raise one arm to shoulder height and flex the arm across the body (hand past the opposite shoulder). Grasp the elbow and gently pull the arm across the body.

Calf Stretch



Stand in front of a wall, move one leg back (keep heel down and leg straight), feel the stretch in the calf (straight leg).

Adductor Stretch



Sit with knees bent so the soles of the feet are together. Gently push the knee using the elbows to push down against the inside of knees.

Pectoralis Stretch



Stand side-on to a wall or post with elbow at a right angle. Gently press the body forward and away from the bent arm.

Hamstring Stretch



Sit with one leg extended and the other leg flexed so the foot rests on the inside of the thigh. Lean forward with the trunk and slide hands down the extended leg.

Back Extension



From a prone position push the trunk up with both arms while stretching the lower back. A flexible lower back can position hands close to trunk.

Swim Down and Recovery Process

The recovery process is an extremely important one and one which is receiving increasing attention in attempts to maximising performance.

Recovery is the process of returning all body systems to resting levels following intensive swimming.

It is generally accepted that the process of steady swimming after an intense rep or race will improve the speed of recovery more than passive rest.

Objectives of most warm down procedures are to maximise speed of recovery and to improve subsequent performance.

Sprinters tend to have a larger muscle mass and a higher percentage fast twitch muscle fibres than middle distance and distance swimmers. The consequence is that they will tend to produce more lactate and suffer lower muscle and blood pH concentrations following maximal sprinting such as a race. As a result, higher lactate levels will usually necessitate a longer Warm Down in order to return the body closer to resting levels quickly.

One anomaly is that distance swimmers are capable of more swim down, but that sprinters usually need it more !!

One of the consequences of maximal swimming or racing that is often forgotten in the recovery process is the replacement of fuel sources. Swimming at this intensity producing high lactate values will deplete muscle glycogen significantly. It is important that that refuelling process starts immediately in order to ensure adequate muscle glycogen replenishment and not compromise subsequent performances. A carbohydrate solution (usually to a maximum of 8%) should be used in drinks bottles and regular drinking throughout the Warm down is recommended.

Swimmers should always use Swim Downs to enhance recovery. If a second pool is not available, other forms of land exercise in conjunction with a hot shower can be used. Individual adjustments can be made depending on the nature of the event, the type of swimmer and the intensity of the repetition. All Swim downs should be performed with excellent technique.

Swimmers should attempt to keep moving as soon as they have completed a race, this includes moving the arms and legs in the water, and stretching and moving arms and legs out of the water on the way to the Warm Down pool.

Remove leg suits before the swim Down when time permits. Report to the Swim Down pool within 3 mins of the end of a race with a full drinks bottle and food. Replacing fluid and glycogen replenishment should be major objectives during and after the Swim Down.

Coaches should not usually hold discussions with the swimmer until after the Swim Down has been completed. A few brief points on the way to the Warm Down pool will provide the swimmer with some initial information with delaying the recovery process.

Chapter Three:

Parents' and Swimmers' Information

Gala/Open Meet Protocol



1. **Warm-Up Costumes/Trunks** - 1 per session (i.e. 1 for morning warm-up and/or 1 for afternoon/evening warm-up)
2. **Racing Costumes/Trunks** - 1 per session. Must be black. Must conform to new FINA rules for Jan 2010
3. **Goggles** - minimum 2 pairs. Ensure they fit correctly.
4. **Club Hat** - x 2.
5. **Club Polo/poolside Shirt** - must be worn on poolside and for presentations.
6. **Towels** - minimum of 2 - 1 for poolside, 1 for drying.
7. **Shorts** - may be worn poolside between races, saves your costumes and trunks from plucking.
8. **Poolside Footwear** - flip flops, trainers (clean, not what you arrived in!), pool shoes. Prevents cuts and keep the heat in your body, saving energy.
9. **Drink** - minimum 1.5litres Water or weak squash. Little and often Additives limited to instruction of coach. No fizzy, Red Bull type.
10. **Food** - Carbohydrates (low fat): pasta (sauces limited to tomato based only, no cream), rice, sandwiches (no butter/marg, fillings low fat). To snack on during gala - fruit, raisins, cereal bars. No sweets, chocolate or crisps. Fat is difficult to digest and should be avoided on race days.
11. **Entry for Open Meets** Swimmers can only enter Open meets hosted by other clubs, which have been approved by the Chief Coaches.
12. **Open Meets** are advertised on the notice board at Leisure World. All entries should be made via the competition secretary/meet coordinator with completed forms and fees, by cheque, being handed in before the stated Club deadline. After the closing date, you should check that your details and entry times are correct. A week before the event you will need to collect your entry cards from secretary. Also check the board for any additional information about the meet.
13. **Entry Cards** - where applicable. Do not forget these cards and ensure they are posted in time. It is the swimmer's responsibility to ensure all cards are posted correctly.
14. **Withdrawals** - if for what ever reason you are unable to swim you must withdraw before the meet dead line or pay any fines due.
15. **Club phone no'** - 07813311993
16. **Arrival Time** - all swimmers must arrive on poolside minimum 30 minutes before advertised warm-up unless instructed by coach. Carry out loosening and stretching routine before pool warm-up.

17. On Poolside - You are expected to support your team mates, show exemplary behaviour, do not forget you are representing your Club, and anything that reflects badly on you will reflect badly on the Club and your team mates. At galas all club swimmers will stay on poolside for final results.

18. Positive Attitude - Remain focused, do not mess around. Mentally rehearse your races 1,000 times beforehand. Remember the three R's - **Rest, Relax, Rehearse**

19. Prepared - Keep your body ready to race. Muscles need to be used to stay in a ready state. Every few minutes move about, swing and stretch. Do not sit in a cramped position - keep stretching and moving. Keep awake and be aware of what is going on in the water. Cheer your team mates; this helps them and keeps you in the mood for competition.

20. Mental Preparation Rehearse your race in your mind. See yourself starting well, going into a good stroke. See yourself hitting the wall on the turns and pushing off hard and fast. Watch yourself holding the pace and finishing fast. Be confident you can swim a good race.

Decide what sort of race you are going to swim. Are you going to go out fast, or are you going to pace yourself? Are you going to make a final sprint to the finish? If so, when are you going to start the sprint - before the last turn or as you come out of it? If it is front crawl or butterfly, what sort of breathing pattern are you going to use?

Think about your streamlining. On the dive and turns valuable hundredths of a second can be saved. Streamlining may give you the winning hundredth!

21. Going to the Start Be alert. Do not let anything get to you. Be ruthless. Do not talk to the people around you. Concentrate on the water and what you are going to do.

Do not join the "I'm dreading this swim" - "I'll finish last" people. This sort of negative thinking will influence your swim. Think positive thoughts, "I'm going to try for a PB this time." - "On every turn, I'll swim in hard, push off hard, and streamline off the wall."

22. In the Race Swim the race according to your plan. Be aware of where the other swimmers in your race are but do not look around. Put in 100% effort and make it a performance that YOU are pleased with.

23. After the Race if a swim down pool is not available - Collect up your clothes and speak to your coach about your swim. Don't always expect the coach to tell you what went right or wrong; discuss your own feelings about the race. How you feel matters. Analyse the good and the bad and you will know what needs to be worked on for next time.

Dry yourself and put your poolside clothes on as soon as possible.

If you have another swim, put the last swim behind you and start to focus on the next event - go back to 19!

Remember, luck is when preparation meets opportunity. Good Luck!

24. Thank any volunteers who have supported you today.

Guide to licensing

OPEN MEETS - A GUIDE TO LICENSING

Open meets do not have to be licensed, but where they are specific ASA guidelines must be followed. If licensed they are graded level 1-4. Results from these are submitted to the ASA for inclusion on the National Rankings database.

LEVEL ONE MEETS

Are intended for qualifying for National and Regional Championships.

Minimum entry times apply equivalent to the ASA 'A' Grade qualifying times

Pools must be either 25m or 50m long

LEVEL TWO MEETS

Are intended for qualifying for Regional and National Championships, however with effect from 2009, for the Essex Swimming Championships (previously Essex senior/junior) entry times will also need to be obtained at Level 1 and 2 Licensed Meets. Qualifying Times and Upper Limit times apply. Upper qualifying times for these meets should not be faster than the National qualifying time for the respective age group

Pools must be 25m or 50m long

LEVEL THREE MEETS

Are intended for qualifying for County Championships, and level one and two meets. Although swimmers who achieve a Regional Qualifying Time at a level three meet may use that time for entry into their Regional Championships if it appears on the national rankings. Qualifying Times and Upper Limit times apply. Pools must be 25m, 33m or 50m long. These galas are aimed at B/C Grade swimmers

LEVEL FOUR MEETS

Are intended for club swimmers and those beginning to enter individual open Competition. Qualifying Times apply. Upper Limit times usually apply. Pools must be at least 25m long. Further details about licensed meets can be found on the ASA Website under Swimming Calendar and Competition information.

QUALIFYING TIMES AND UPPER LIMIT TIMES.

Qualifying times - are set as a minimum time that swimmers must have achieved to enter an event. Upper Limit times - swimmers must not have swum a time faster than the upper limit time to swim at this level of open meet.

If you enter a time outside of these times, your entry will be rejected.

New FINA Swim Suit Rules



New FINA swim suit rules come into effect from 1st January 2010 for all competitions except Masters events.

New FINA bylaws on swimwear with effect from 01-01-2010 for all competitions except Masters events.

BL 8 SWIMWEAR

BL 8.1 All FINA approved swimwear to be used at the Olympic Games and FINA World Championships must be approved by FINA at least twelve (12) months prior to the start of the respective competition. In addition, it must be available for all competitors by 1st January of the year of the Olympic Games or FINA World Championships.

BL 8.2 In swimming competitions the competitor must wear only one swimsuit in one or two pieces. No additional items, like arm bands or leg bands shall be regarded as parts of a swimsuit.

BL 8.3 From January 1st 2010 swimwear for men shall not extend above the navel nor below the knee, and for women, shall not cover the neck, extend past the shoulder, nor shall extend below knee. All swimsuits shall be made from textile materials.

It should be noted that BL 8.1 relates only to those specified Championships listed in the By-Law.

Medical

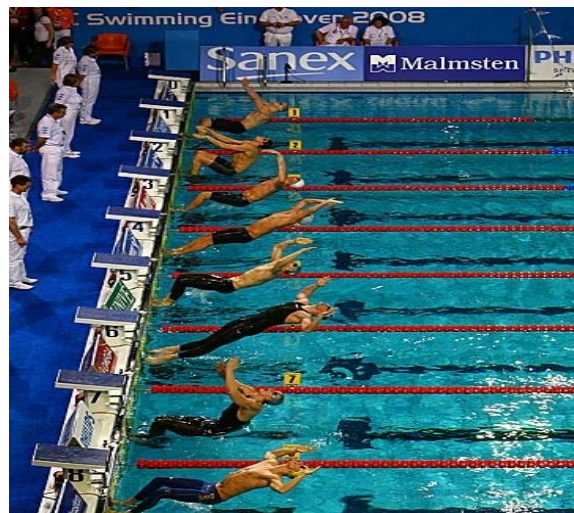
DOPING CONTROL AND ASTHMA

If you suffer from any medical condition which requires medication, you are required to declare this to the ASA by completing a medical declaration form.

Many swimmers suffer from Asthma. Some of the medication taken by asthma sufferers is legal, some is not. A list can be found on the ASA website.

It is important to take your inhaler to every training session, gala and competition.

Make sure that your coach knows that you suffer from Asthma.



Glossary

Aerobic: Longer distance energy system. (See energy)

Age for competitors: Generally age-determined events rely on the age a swimmer will be on the date of the competition.

Age group squads: The competitive 10-16 year old squads

Anaerobic: Sprint energy systems. (See energy)

Arena: A league organised by the Company in which we compete. 3 rounds take place in the winter.

ASA: Amateur Swimming Association.

ASA number: A unique reference comprising the first 4 letters of the surname, first initial, second initial or X, and date of birth in the form dd/mm/yy. This has to be applied for on a form available from Bridget.

BAG points: The ASA's British Age Group (BAG) points system. This is based on a statistical analysis of lower age group times. It provides factors to correct for the differences in difficulty of the events within a given year of birth but not between years.

BAGCAT scoring:

5 scores are awarded. One each for the best BAG point in each of:

(a) 50m any stroke (sprints);

(b) 200m Back, Breast, Fly (form);

(c) Individual Medley;

(d) Freestyle distance (200m+); and

(e) (If applicable) 100m any stroke.

The sum of these scores determines the overall points and a point must be scored in each applicable category.

Boxes: At open meets the place where entry cards must be handed in before the start of the warm-up.

Entry Cards: At some open meets a card is sent to each competitor for each event entered. This shows the entry time, the start time of the gala and various sessions and your competitor number. These cards must be checked when they arrive, taken to the gala and handed in before the card boxes close.

DQ: Disqualified. These can be for or all sorts of reasons including; false starts, not touching the wall properly, incorrect technique and others.

Energy: The cardio-vascular system provides energy. The body has three complementary energy systems.

The first two are anaerobic, which instantly provide energy and do not use oxygen, but will only produce energy for 45-55 seconds. The third system is aerobic and needs a constant supply of oxygen. It is a slower and more economical system of energy production. The anaerobic systems are the major provider for 25m and 50m sprints whilst the 200m events, and longer, are mainly served by the aerobic system.

Entry time: The time on the entry form, the best time achieved within a given period of the closing date for entries.

Heat declared winner (HDW) : Only heats are swum, not heats and finals. Several events are swum together, usually different ages of the same stroke and distance. Swimmers are graded by entry time. The winner is the swimmer in the relevant category, usually age, with the fastest time, not the winner of a particular heat.

A nightmare for spectators wanting to know the result because you have to identify all the swimmers in a particular age category and note all their times before you know how well your swimmer has done (barring disqualifications).

Individual Medley: A race in which all 4 strokes are combined in the order - Fly, Back, Breast, Freestyle. [When swum in a relay, the order is Back, Breast, Fly, Free - so as to avoid a takeover to backstroke.

Lane order: The lane order for finals is decided from times in the heats or semi-finals. The fastest qualifier will swim in lane 3, second fastest in lane 4, third in lane 2, fourth in lane 5, fifth in lane 1, sixth in lane 6. Theoretically, this creates **spearhead format** in the race.

Licensed gala: A gala designated by the ASA for County, regional and national qualifying times.

Long course: Races in a 50-metre pool.

Medley relay: A relay where each swimmer swims a different stroke in the order - Back, Breast, Fly, Freestyle.

Notice Board: The Club Notice Board is situated on the first floor of leisure world along the corridor before entering the fitness pool.

NQT: National Qualifying Time, must be obtained in an ASA designated event.

Off X seconds/ minutes: The interval between the start of one set and the next. Any spare time is rest.

Open Meet: A race in which swimmers of any age may compete.

Open gala: A gala open to swimmers from any club, but usually of a specific age.

Over the top start: Swimmers from the last race remain in the water until the next race has started.

PB: Personal Best, the best time ever swum by that person over that distance for that stroke.

Pull-buoy: The keyhole shaped float that keeps your left afloat in an arms only drill.

Rankings: Lists of the top 50 swimmers in each age/gender from 10 years (see age) upwards.

Red top: When the red hand of the timing clock is pointing to the 12 o'clock position. "Red 15" is when it is pointing 3 o'clock and so on.

Rest Interval/RI: Rest period at the end of a set.

Senior: Swimmer aged 17 years and over.

Session: A training period, usually 90 minutes.

Set: A series of training routines.

Short course: Races in a 25-metre pool.

Spearhead: The lane order for finals is decided from times in the heats or semi-finals. The fastest qualifier will swim in lane 3, second fastest in lane 4, third in lane 2, fourth in lane 5, fifth in lane 1, sixth in lane 6. Theoretically, this creates **spearhead format** in the race.

Splits: The time at each 25/50m turn. Swimmers will monitor these to check how they paced a race.

Squadron: A freestyle relay of usually 6-10 swimmers in each team, arranged boy/girl in each age group, oldest last.

Streamlining: Reducing the cross sectional area of the body to the minimum to make faster progress through the water as a result of less drags.

Swim down: A gentle set to relax the muscles after training or competition to reduce lactate build up.

Taper: Prior to any big competition, a swimmer will 'taper'. All this really means is that they rest. They will cut back the amount of training they do and decrease the intensity.

Warm up: A gentle set at the beginning of a session or gala to acclimatise the muscles for what is to come.

Withdrawals: If for whatever reason you are unable to attend a competition you must ring the Colchester Club phone on ... **07813311993**.

Year: Age-determined events are categorised by the age a swimmer either on 31 December of the year of the competition or on the date of the competition. Look at the promoter's material to see which.

Chapter Four:

Nutrition

You can't drive a car without fuel... you can't swim a race without fuel either. Swimming is one of the more demanding sports in terms of energy expenditure. Proper pre-race **nutrition** and **hydration** are an important and often under-appreciated aspect of athletic performance by novice athletes and their parents.

[Chris Wakeling](#) at Colchester S.C has produced a wonderful Cook Book - [Take the Plunge](#) which is full of swimmers favourite recipes that can be purchased from club shop.

Nutrition

The main source of energy during training is derived from carbohydrate, therefore, it is not surprising that high carbohydrate meals and drinks are essential to provide energy and facilitate recovery. The timing of meals and snacks, however, is important.

30 Minute Rule:

The muscles are most susceptible to restoration of carbohydrate stores within the first 30 minutes after exercise. Thereafter, the process becomes progressively more difficult. The swimmer should eat 50 to 100 grams of carbohydrate*, whilst keeping fat ingestion low, as soon as training finishes, and definitely within the first 30 minutes after training. The following are examples of appropriate snack foods and their approximate carbohydrate content:

- An apple, banana or orange: 15-20g
- Muller rice: 20g
- Nutrigrain Elevenses bar: 25-30g
- Fruit Shake or Smoothie: 25-30g per glass
- 1 thick Jam or Honey sandwich (no or minimal butter): 50g
- Malt Loaf (Soreen): 18g per eighth of a loaf
- Fig Rolls: 13g per biscuit



Other excellent snacks: Rice cakes, dried fruit

* After high intensity training it may be appropriate ingest protein mixed with high carbohydrate. This may be achieved using known brand formulated drinks.

Morning Training:

Have a snack item (examples above) with fruit juice 30 minutes before training with breakfast after training.

Guidelines for event meals:

Before a race: High Carbohydrate/Low Fat meal 2-4 hours before the race.

Suitable types of food include: breakfast cereals, porridge, bread, rolls, toast, fruit juice, fruit, rice cakes, plain crackers, boiled rice, potatoes, boiled pasta, dried fruit, oatmeal biscuits, plain wholemeal biscuits, muffins and carbohydrate drinks. These are all examples of complex carbohydrates as these release energy slowly. Avoid simple carbohydrates (the sugars) as these release energy quickly but trigger the release of insulin, which can have a negative impact on performance.

A small snack (examples above) may be eaten about 30 minutes prior to the race.

If the interval between races is less than 30 minutes: The swimmer should drink fluids/juices or a sport drink.

If the interval between races is up to 1 hour: The swimmer should have a snack from the above list, with plenty of fluid, up to 30 minutes before the next race.

If the race interval is 1 to 2 hours: The swimmer should have a small high carbohydrate/low fat meal.

If the rest period between races is longer: then the swimmer should have a substantial meal no later than 2 hours before the next race (see before a race).

Important: As water is stored with carbohydrate it is essential that substantial amounts of fluid are drunk with meals and snacks.

30% Fat Rule

It is recommended that swimmers should eat high carbohydrate low fat meals. Low fat is defined as food items with less than **30% fat by calories**. This is **NOT** the value that is presented by the food manufacturers, who display fat content by weight, which makes the foodstuff appear to be "healthier" than it usually is. How can you work out the real fat content in food, so that they can be accepted or rejected as appropriate?

An easy way to calculation the true fat content of food:

Each gram of fat produces 9.3 kcal. This value is close to **10** which can be used as the "rule of thumb" value.

1. Look at the label on the food item and see how many **grams of fat it contains per serving**.
2. **Multiply the number of grams by 10** to calculate the number of kcal from fat per serving.
3. Look at the label for the **total energy, the number of kcal** per serving.
4. **Divide the kcal from fat by the total kcal and multiply by 100**.

You now have the **TRUE** fat content of the food stuff.

Examples:

1. **McCain oven chips:** The front of the packet claims to be "LESS THAN 5% FAT".

The label shows that there are 5.4 grams of fat per serving. Our "rule of thumb" gives a value of 54 kcal per serving (5.4×10).

The label shows that there are a total of 163 kcal per serving.

The % fat content is, therefore, 54 divided by 163 times 100 = **33.1%**

This is greater than 30%, therefore, these chips should be rejected by the swimmer.

2. **Salad is an excellent food but what about the dressing?**

Be Good To Yourself Salad Cream (Sainsbury) claims to be "60% less Fat". Is this OK?

The label on the jar shows that a serving has 14.0g fat, which gives 140 kcal, from the "rule of thumb".

The total calories per serving is 210 kcal. 140 divided by 210 times 100 = **66.7% Fat**.

Decision: Reject!

3. **Baked Beans in Tomato Sauce (Tesco):**

A 100g portion provides 0.3g Fat = 3 kcal.

Total energy = 85 kcal

%Fat content = 3 divided by 85 times 100 = **3.5 %**

Decision: Accept!

Recovery Drinks

What's the best recovery drink after training or competition?

Believe it or not, all the latest research suggests that it's chocolate milk.

World Championship medal winners Liam Tancock and Caitlin McClatchy both use it. But because it's not cheap, they make their own with Nesquik and powdered skimmed milk.

Here is an example:

INGREDIENTS:

100g of dried skimmed milk powder

50g Nesquik powder

650ml skimmed milk

METHOD

1. Mix in a suitable container and shake.
2. Wait for the froth to settle.
3. Top up to 1 litre with cold water.
4. Shake again.

This recipe makes three to four servings.

The skimmed milk and dried milk powder supply you with all the protein you need to start recovery fast and the chocolate adds the special recovery factor.

A good tip is if you're going to mix some up, mix up two batches and leave them in the fridge for the next session.

Chapter Five

Psychology

Competitive Swimming

A Guide for Parents/ Guardians and Swimmers

Introduction

If you are new to competitive swimming, then don't worry – not all of the following applies to you! As a swimmer progresses, then more of the following information is relevant. The most important thing for newcomers to grasp is that it is vital to compete and get times in a variety of events. Hopefully the following will explain why.

Starting out...

We encourage children to compete as we believe it is one of the key ways to make a swimmer faster and better. It's really important that swimmers make an effort to enter competitions for several reasons:

- It gives swimmers an idea of what it's like to compete
- It gives swimmers their times, and therefore is a clear marker of how they are progressing
- It gives swimmers a goal towards which they can work
- It gives swimmers a sense of achievement
- It shows the coaches how the swimmers cope with a competitive environment
- Gaining new improved times are one of the major factors in helping the coaches to decide whether a swimmer is ready to move up to the next level/lane.

PARENTS'/ GUARDIANS' GUIDE TO COMPETITIVE SWIM MEETS

A guide to understanding and enjoying your child's swim meet

WHAT IS COMPETITION?

We use swimming as a vehicle to teach children life skills and how to reach their athletic potential. In

competition, the most important measure is not who collected the most medals, or even who improved the most.

The critical measure is who learned and enjoyed the most from the competitive experience.

Winners are not only the swimmer that comes in first place, but more of who behaves like a winner. There are

certain characteristics of a winner, and every swimmer, no matter where they place, has the opportunity to

emulate those characteristics: concentration, listening skills, sportsmanship, and working toward a goal.

Swimmers quickly forget the medals, records, and other material benefits. They will however, remember the

development of interpersonal skills, discipline, listening skills, time management, goal setting, reaching

potential, dedication and enhanced self-image. These are things that make the swimmer a more successful

person with a better chance of living a life closer to their peak potential, and to contribute to the world in which

they live.

Parents' / Guardians' Guide to Concentration

How to Deal with Competition Nerves - Maintaining Focus and Concentration

Swimmers who get very nervous at competitions are often unable to concentrate and focus on what they need to focus upon, which is their own preparation and performance. Nervous performers often focus on what has happened or what might happen e.g. mistakes already made or the worst thing that might happen. This is sometimes called 'paralysis by analysis'.

Strategy - the swimmers have been given the following advice:

Keep It Simple Swimmer (KISS!)

- Focus on only 2-3 controllable things at a time. These are called task goals - some aspect of technique e.g. related to turns or stroke.
- Identify cue words to keep focus on task goals (e.g. kick, push, stay strong)
- This only works with practice
- identify controllables
- identify cue words to focus on task
- Put into practice - in training and then in competition

Key Points:

Control the controllables

Focus on what you can control

Parents'/Guardians' Guide to Positive Self-Talk

How to Deal with Competition Nerves- Dealing with Negative Self Talk

Negative Self Talk can have a big impact upon competition nerves and self-confidence.

Swimmers who experience in negative self-talk tend to -

- Focus on the past or future rather than focusing in the present.
- Focus on their weaknesses.
- Focus only on the outcome rather than what they need to do to achieve the outcome.
- Focus on 'uncontrollables' (e.g. their competitors). There is a link between control and stress. Focusing on what can be controlled reduces stress levels.
- Expect perfectionism all the time.

Strategy - the swimmers have been told to -

- Set and focus on controllable goals to do with their own performance
- Control what they say to themselves by -
 - Noticing what they say to themselves
 - If the talk is negative replace with positive phrases that they started to identify in the workshop.

Key Points:

1. Remember - we're not trying to kill the butterflies, we're just trying to get them to fly in formation. Competition nerves can help performance.
2. "Whether you think you can or think you can't. Either is probably true."
3. "It is mental discipline to keep certain thoughts out of your head and put certain thoughts in your head. You have conscious control over that. It takes practice and repetition." (1996 Gold Medal Swimmer). Developing Positive Self-Talk takes a lot of practice.

Useful Websites

www.colchester-swimming.org

www.essexswimming.org

www.eastswimming.org

www.britishswimming.org

www.sportingchampions.org.uk

www.disabilitysport.org.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.eatwell.gov.uk

www.kidshealth.org