

# Getting ready for the Open Water Season



## In the weeks leading up to the season:

1. Plan to swim in the open water before you enter a race (no black lines, choppy conditions, practise sighting etc)
2. Test out your wetsuit, which will give you added buoyancy and speed
3. Train at least 2-3 sessions a week and vary your training between interval training (shorter distances with speed and rests in-between) and longer, steady endurance swims
4. Kick lightly to achieve a good body position underwater
5. Rotate your body and swim on your side reducing frontal drag. This allows the stronger back muscles to be activated for a stronger pull, automatically lengthening your stroke
6. Practise for the distance you will be swimming in the open water
7. Practise sighting when your forward arm enters the water and begins to pull down (Don't breathe on this stroke) Breathe on the next stroke

**An effortless efficient stroke is the key to an enjoyable swim on the day RELAX and DON'T PANIC**

## Hints to relax during the race:

1. Breathe normally while exhaling gently and fully underwater
2. Focus on the sky above
3. Get the feel of the water
4. Count strokes in batches of 50 or 100
5. Chant a mantra to keep your stroke rhythm

## Hints to control panic:

1. Plan your trip and arrive early at the swim location
2. Allow plenty of time to register, put on your wetsuit and warm up
3. Position yourself where you feel comfortable on the start line – If starting from the beach, slower runners/swimmers may be better to position themselves towards the back of the group to avoid being run over or swum on top of!
4. Practise swimming in a wetsuit beforehand
5. When doing a warm up, swim out and look towards the finish line - identify a marker/building to swim to and note any drift or current
6. If you get kicked while swimming accept it and move on
7. If your goggles get ripped off, roll over and readjust
8. In rough conditions, try to relax and take on the challenge with the best technique you can manage
9. Swim near others for company (swim behind them and get that added lift!)
10. While everyone else is trying to come as close to the buoy as possible around a turn, take the road less travelled and go wide in clear water. This will save you from getting punched, swallowing water, having your feet grabbed, etc.

## Hints on how to have a great day:

1. Pack your bag the night before
2. Check the weather report the day before if you dare!
3. Wear a comfortable wet suit that you have tried out previously!
4. Plan to wear 2 caps. A silicon cap first to keep your head warm and then your age group coloured cap
5. Get yourself some new goggles. Spray antifog on the lenses and let dry overnight. Wear your goggles in-between your two caps to prevent the straps being knocked around by other swimmer's arms etc.
6. Start hydrating the day before the race. Water is safe and very simple
7. Don't forget the PLASTIC BAG to make the fitting of the suit easier. Put over each foot to ease the suit on. Pull the suit up from the inside, taking care not to leave fingernail impressions in the wet suit material. It has happened to all of us! Use gloves, socks or even the plastic bag over your nails. It is best to pinch the suit between the finger and the thumb to avoid this happening. Get your best friend to blow up each sleeve to release any pulling tension on your skin! It feels good
8. When you warm up in the water, give a gentle tug of the neckline and let a small amount of water in to lubricate the shoulder area. You will feel and swim better
9. SNACKS: Look at the website and check the time of the swim and your approximate wave time. You may need some healthy snacks to get you through the morning.
10. Arrange to drive down with a friend or car pool – saves getting lost and the company calms the nerves.

Look out for the Marlin Banner and join your club mates at the next Open Water swim.

Please take some pics for Laptalk and Face book

*Good Luck and enjoy your open water swims this season!*

Jan Jeffrey

