

# BOOST SWIM FITNESS



Three bread-and-butter swim sessions for improved fitness from January to April...

When undertaking all of these sets, learn to glance at the clock to know what your pace is while you're doing continuous swim sets. You should be able to predict where the clock hand *will be based on your pace and effort*.

## 1. THE REPEAT EFFORT

This session improves your pace judgement; a fixed recovery means you must swim at a pace so that the rest period is sufficient to maintain speed.

### WARM-UP

Your mindset should be relaxed. Separating each set with a 30sec RI, do 50m fc; 100m fc; 50m fc; 100m mixed stroke; 200m fc bilateral.

### BUILD SET

Gradually increase your effort through 6 x 50m with 30sec RI, building the pace to finish faster than your average 1,500m effort.

## **MAIN SET**

Your focus should now have a race-like intensity. Here are three options for this main set...

- 12 x 100m with recovery until the next time the pool clock hits the 12 o'clock mark. For example, if you start at 12 o'clock and swim 100m in 1:35mins, you'll have 25secs rest until you go again.
- 5 x 300m with 60sec RI, making sure you throw in bilateral lengths at least four times per 300m.
- 8 x 200m with 30sec RI, ensuring that pace is consistent and that 50m stroke counts are similar.

## **COOL-DOWN**

You should now return to a state of relaxation. On this set of 6 x 50m, focus on your vertical hand position throughout the stroke and loose wrist recovery.

## **PROGRESS**

Increase the block to 18 x 100m, 7 x 300m or similar, up to a maximum of 2,500m.

## **2. THE BUILD AND SUSTAIN**

Finishing with a solid third-distance swim proves and improves your fitness. Your pace judgement can be measured by how well you do the pyramid.

## **WARM-UP**

Your mindset should be relaxed. Separating each with a 30sec RI, do 50m fc; 50m mixed; 50m fc; 50m mixed stroke; 200m fc bilateral.

## **BUILD SET**

Gradually increase your effort through 6 x 50m with 30sec RI, building the pace to finish faster than your average 1,500m effort.

## **MAIN SET**

Swim 100m, 200m, 400m, 200m and 100m at close to 1,500m race pace (or predicted pace) with a further final 500m at best tri pace. Choose the length of your RI to what you feel is suitable: 60secs, 45secs or 30secs.

## **COOL-DOWN**

When swimming these relaxed 12 x 25m, you should focus on a still head and smooth shoulder rotation.

## **PROGRESS**

To extend the main set to 2,100m, add a 300m step on the way up and down the pyramid; in other words, 100, 200, 300, 400...

## **3. THE T20**

Non-stop swimming improves your aerobic fitness and significantly taxes technical endurance.

## **WARM-UP**

Separating each with a 30sec RI, do 100m fc; 50m bs; 100m fc; 50m bs; 200m fc bilateral.

## **BUILD SET**

Gradually increase your effort with 4 x 75m with 30-45sec RI, building the pace to finish faster than your average 1,500m race pace.

## **MAIN SET**

Swim a straight 20mins measuring the total distance swum. This is about managing lactate accumulation and getting the pace right – neither too easy nor too fast. You must try to swim as far as you can but, at the same time, avoid muscle shut-down if you go too fast.

## **COOL-DOWN**

On this set of 10 x 25m, focus on breathing less and on thinking about (and watching) both hand entries and catch phases.

## **PROGRESS**

Aim to swim at a greater speed by glancing at the clock in order to swim 1-3secs faster per 100m.