



North West Athletics
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Thanks to **Bill Sweetenham** for many of the basic factors
 and **John Beckworth**, ASCTA (Gold) Head Coach, Geelong Swimming Club for his comments and advice.

Swimming: Reviewing Your Form

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Self Analysis is VERY important

Structure your analysis .. repeat the images over and over .. slow motion - freeze frame
 various stages of your stroke.

Before viewing each stroke/skill sequence:

1. Think carefully about what you are hoping/expecting to see. Make yourself aware of the **Key Performance Factors** of each stroke .. what are you aiming to achieve? and, the **Stroke Evaluation Forms**.
2. Watch your (the) images at least once to familiarize yourself with detail and sequence; and, have a laugh at anything that takes your eye ... after that, let's get down to it.
3. Watch again (several times is better) analyzing specific parts of your performance .. compare with ideal movement aspirations and other swimmers.
4. **Jot down** things you see .. things you question .. things you applaud .. things YOU wish to discuss with your coach.
5. **Be thorough** (careful) .. review will require several viewings of each stroke/skill.
 Don't rush .. allow at least 15 minutes per stroke/skill .. a stroke/day may be your best approach.
 I have a drills video I made more than 10 years ago .. every time I watch it (currently >100) I see something "new".

www.nwaswimaths.com
General Programs
 Follow Your Dreams
Swimming Programs
 Setting Goals—Naber

Remember

An eyeful is better than a mouthful

An aim — an enhanced appreciation of your performance
 by drawing together what YOU feel with what the coach can see

DO IT !!
 Before the
 dream fades

Stroke—Skill Evaluation Forms: all aspects described do not require a response.

The **aim** is to have **each swimmer**

think

about each stroke-skill, their execution, and how their execution may be improved.

The technique aspects described are **NOT** the only aspects.

They **are** to **assist your observation** and **stimulate** and **direct your analysis**.



CONSULTATION with your **coach** can help
 you highlight technique elements to complete a
 comprehensive stroke-evaluation

The **Evaluation Forms**
 are for you to keep and
 refer to ..
 they offer reminders on
 various issues
 and
 represent a record
 of a standard
 to which you can refer
 (compare)
 at some future date.

There are "other" factors, but
 you will have made a start.



Thinking about and seeing
your technique specifics
 can help **you**
refine your stroke



TODAY is the **TOMORROW**
YOU created **YESTERDAY**

Google
 almost anything
 you want
 is
 available
 Think ..
I want to see
 go for it.
 It's up to you!



The following are **NOT** presented as precise nor complete. It is very difficult to present a sequential description of form (so much is going on at any one time) .. but, plenty to talk about.

They **are** presented as resources that may assist swimmers and coaches to implement and develop technique aspects and self evaluation strategies.

Presented are resources that may be used at coach discretion with individual swimmers, or, form the basis of focus at camps or specific sessions.

In general, the Form Review documents will require underwater and /or over-the-water video arrangements to be made; this can be inconvenient .. it can be time consuming and labour-intensive .. **BUT .. it is (can be) worth it.**

ACCURACY & CONSISTENCY
critical elements in directing athletes to acquire correct movement responses
50 repeats forms a habit
Thousands of (correct) repeats to change a habit

An eye is better than a mouthful

Coach analysis and evaluation is important ... however, equally important is the need to assist swimmers to make their own evaluation of their performance. **The coach sees .. the athlete feels.** **Our** aim should be to bring these two critical aspects of performance and progression, together, to produce the best possible outcome for the **swimmer**.



I would not presume to put forward a complete technique expectation in relation to any stroke or drill.
Every athlete is an experiment of one ... also, every coach is different.

However, clearly, certainly in the sports with which I am most familiar,
the language of coaching is a major issue.

Some coaches refine .. some develop. A excellent **Senior Coach** recently said to me "I don't have the time to develop fundamental skills as my primary aim". But, a primary aim of the **Development Coach** is to empower athletes with fundamental skills—*accelerate talent development and when you can't match the talent level for whatever reasons as a coach or provide the environment, then progress the athlete on to a program that can.*

(Bill Sweetenham—Leigh Nugent) i.e. ready each swimmer for further refinement and progressive overload by a **Senior Coach**. (Interesting question .. Should the best coach lead the learner or the accomplished? Answer: different skills required; different coaches .. certainly coaches with a different focus .. but, development requires team work.)

Having *the right to express each coach's own way of doing things* can be (is) potentially damaging to the progression of the athlete .. and can lead to athlete frustration and drop-out.

Every athlete should be able to move from one coaching situation to another with minimum of confusion.

As often as possible, coaches should use a common language .. **consistent** common terminology (assuming sound technical direction) i.e. fundamental teaching practices that enhance learning, rather than reinforce an individual's control.

The success of communication is often dependent not so much what the coach says, but how the coach says it.

Great coaches are great communicators; the best recognize endeavour, inspire changes, facilitate progress, share ideas, and do **not** rely of their right to have their own language ... often this is just another way of hoarding ideas, or, more often, hiding limitations, being intimidated by others they perceive as having more expertise.

We can **all** learn from **every** person or experience .. don't miss the/an opportunity.

Differences in personality and approach will present themselves .. coaching styles will emerge, but messages should remain consistent .. for the good of the athlete .. for the good of the sport.

There are many great coaches, but too often individuals place themselves too easily in the category; the best I have seen and worked with all have a significant similarity, other than their experience and knowledge - they care and they share. They are not intimidated by new ideas; they understand that experience accumulates quickly, but **only** in open minds.

99% of coaches will never work with an Olympic Standard athlete, let alone a medalist.

All, however, have the opportunity to develop **champions**.

We can't all be **winners**, but
We can all be **champions**
Of course, this depends on whether you understand:
WHAT DEFINES A CHAMPION?
Every coach, has a training group
of potential champions

We are ALL in this together
The contribution / the performance of every squad member is important and should be recognised and acknowledged (rewarded).
Without the support of the squad, there is no team.
Without team support, individual progression and achievement is rendered more difficult, and perhaps "not worth the effort"

Every athlete should appreciate (and, all programs should recognize and reward) **endeavour**

For most ... it's not **how fast?**
it's **how well?**



An eyeful is better than a mouthful

Today (and in the future) there are a multitude of visual resources available for you to see what the coach is attempting to communicate.

Don't complain that resources not sought are unavailable ... it's up to **YOU**

Your progression is in no small part dependent on the effort you are prepared to offer .. not just to session attendance and endeavour, but to YOU making an effort to watch and see things for yourself.

Your response and your initiative will in large part determine the rate and extent of your progression.

Let me simply say to YOU

You Tube .. Example: **Swimming—Turns—Freestyle Flip Turn Step 1**


There are an almost unlimited number of visual cues regarding strokes and skills.
Too many (by far) to list

Example: **Google - Backstroke**
See what I mean?

Example: **GO SWIM** www.swimming.org.au

So, it's up to you to support your coach and your progression

At the bottom of most pages will be an address to google .. a starting point




NO

50 repeats forms a habit

Thousands of (correct) repeats to change the habit

It's not .. how fast?
It's .. **how well?**





YES

We are what we repeatedly do;
Excellence can be (should become)
Your habit !!





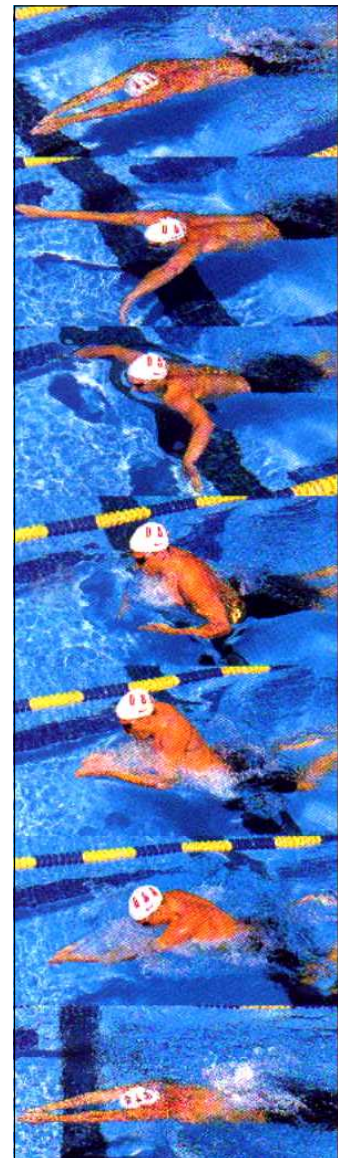

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At a Club or Junior-Intermediate Training Squad level
 the resources may be useful in an Intensive or Camp situation

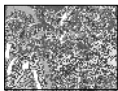
There are many more resources .. if you are interested,
you need to act.

If such resources are of interest/value, and

If you contact me I will pdf or mail you the complete set.

The only charge is your energy.





Standard Strategies

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A few ideas / strategies that should be considered in the presentation of your session(s).

You will have your own “*coaching philosophy*”; you may make personal modifications; but, keep in mind:
everything you do,
everything you say,
will be dinner table conversation in each swimmer’s home over the next few days.

Your perception of your performance as a coach or teacher is sometimes the least important consideration.

In each session

- **Speak / demonstrate clearly and confidently.** The swimmers are seeking and appreciate leadership.
- Keep your approach **simple** and **consistent**. (Don’t complicate things; simplicity facilitates success; demand attention, (*Looking and Listening*), and do not proceed without it; praise endeavour; show confidence in the ability of swimmers to achieve the standards you set.).
- **Review Skills** from the previous session; 10-20% of time allocated should be associated with this purpose. Do not prioritise “skill extension” ahead of “skill acquisition”.
- **Continually and consistently** reinforce expectations: equipment, punctuality, lane etiquette; **do not compromise** standards.
- Plan your lane organisation to allow efficient use of space, e.g. down B/K, return F/S; vary lane leadership.
- **Be prepared** .. *Why are we doing this?* Relate activities (drills) to the outcomes you are seeking to achieve.
- **Always** outline (in advance) to the swimmers “*what’s in it (the session / the drill) for them*”; use incentives and rewards, e.g. cards, certificates, praise at some stage to **every** swimmer, novelties (e.g. snakes or jelly babies), but, be sure to **expect the best they can offer** (*no more ... no less ... no excuses*).
- Positive, corrective feedback should prevail. Swimmers should walk away from **every** session confident they have enhanced their knowledge and/or skills.
- **Be in control at all times**; e.g. allowing swimmers to make decisions is just another way of you being in control. Keep the session moving—**demonstrate**, use *a swimmer who can* .. show them; don’t just explain). A **minimum** of talk. Remember, you do not need 4 years of tertiary training to let kids do what they like ... parents are watching; be accountable (a term often used but less understood).
- **Don’t be distracted.**
- Have a **theme** for each session:
e.g. **100% Right is 100% Right .. 99% Right is 100% Wrong;**
Good is not enough, where better is possible; Be Your Best: No More; No less; No Excuses;
It’s not how fast .. It’s how well.
- **Use care and common sense**, but, don’t be afraid to challenge the swimmers. Young people love to acquire new skills and have those skills recognised; they enjoy being able to do things others cannot do.
- **Do something positive and personal for every swimmer, every session**; e.g. praise; stroke correction; special attention; a comment / a joke; personal comments to swimmers in view of the parent; have the swimmer demonstrate to the group, lead the lane, or, answer (correctly) a question(s). (Only ask a question of a swimmer if you are sure they know the answer.)



There are many other issues and strategies; **every swimmer is an experiment of one**; you will constantly add to your strategies - it’s called, **experience** (you can’t buy it, only acquire it).

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But, keep in mind that **teaching is fundamentally a simple process**:

YOU take a group of students / swimmers into a classroom / pool;

show them, explain to them how to do something;

organise skill acquisition opportunities, providing appropriate feedback;

then, let them have a series of attempts; see how they perform;

reinforce, refine, replicate **the learning process never ends !**



**An Eyeful
is better than
a Mouthful**

**Knowledge (only) accumulates
quickly in an open mind**

Good is not enough, where better is possible