

OPEN WATER SWIMMING

SOEE OWS 4

April 2017

As we get closer to summer, now is a good time to set goals and plan for the Open Water Season. We want to share some ideas on best practice for goal setting, planning and record keeping for coaches.

Setting Goals

As Open Water Swimming is a new and growing sport, it is a good idea to identify and set some goals (with your club or sports organisation). Goals will help you set direction, track progress and will help motivate you and athletes. This might include how many swimmers you would like participate in your OWS programme, perhaps an event you would like to hold, increasing the distances for some swimmers. Your goal(s) should

- * Have a time frame, they can be short or long-term
- * Need to be realistic
- * Agreed with other stakeholders (club, other coaches, SO program)
- * Most importantly, you need to write them down! This will help you be specific and will help you define a realistic goal that you can commit to
- * May need to be flexible – goals might need to change if circumstances merit it.

“If you have a goal, go out there and achieve it”

Michael
Phelps



In this newsletter

- Setting goals
- Planning
- Record Keeping
- Goals and plans for athletes

Planning

Once you've set some goals, you should identify tasks that you need to achieve your goals. This might include areas like agreeing a training programme for swimmers to ensure they are ready for the OWS season, what support you need or organizing an OWS event. It's a good idea to then prioritise these tasks and assign an owner (it could be you!) and a time line to achieve this goal. Developing a plan for OWS training is particularly important – if you've set a goal to prepare athletes for a specific event (for example), you might need to plan your training schedule to build up stamina or skills to ensure the athletes are ready. It will also help the athletes if you can share the plan with them, so they can be willing participants in achieving the plan and goal.

Record Keeping

We recommend keeping track of progress and activities, measured against your goals and plans. This might include details of attendance at practice, timing for athletes, stroke analysis. This will help you to

- * Assess how you and your athletes are progressing to achieve the overall goals or specific targets
- * Allows you to look back at your plans and see what is working or what needs to change
- * Helps you and athletes to decide on their readiness to compete in OWS events
- * Helps you plan specific support you might need for you and your athletes to participate safely in OWS
- * Most importantly, it will help you to motivate the athletes (and yourself)!

Goals and plans for athletes

You can work with athletes to set goals that are specific to them. If possible, athletes should make a personal commitment and be accountable for their own goals, with support if they need it. You can remind athletes that goals should be SMART:

S – Specific

M – Measurable

A – Achievable

R – Realistic

T – Time-bound

Athletes can also track their progress against these goals. This will help them to take ownership for their progress and will help their motivation. (It will also help you to track progress).

Contact

Open water swimming

Wendy Scholten
wendyscholten@live.nl

Jennifer Hughes
hughesja@hotmail.com