



South West Swim Session Name: Return To Open Water

Introduction To This Session, What's It About

Hi Squad,

So after lockdown we now find ourselves in a situation where we are allowed to get into the open water environment once more. After months of not swimming I thought I would pop out a quick session plan for you for that first dip back into the lake.

As so much time has been spent away from water our first weeks of swimming want to be easy, and very technically focussed. Please do not get into the lake and think you can start where you left off, this will simply cause you to be exhausted, questioning your swim skills and ability and be a disappointment. Take it easy, feel the water and your speed and endurance will come in time. Do not worry about distance or times, the only times you should be keeping an eye on is the time spent in open water as it is still a bit nippy in the middle of May.

As only lake86 is open locally at this present time, this session has been written with their course in mind. Please observe lake rules and social distancing throughout these sessions. This is a basic and productive plan but you will need to pay attention to where you stop for rests, and other swimmers around you (still and moving). Please use common sense around your rest periods and locations to observe the lake's social distancing rules.

We will not be back in the lakes for a little while yet. I have no news on your pool squad session returns yet but it will certainly be after July, as this is when leisure centres are set to return if all is well.

Take care of yourselves and be safe as always. Your Dryland swim cord session was sent to you this morning so have fun with that, and the tethered pool session is ready to come to you tomorrow.

Any questions please drop me an email at Jason@southwestswim.co.uk

Pre Session Preparation

A list of things to ensure you have thought of, as it may have been a while. Remember many lakes are not opening changing areas, so you may wish to think about wearing your wetsuit to the lake. Wear a pair of shorts over the top in your car (or joggers) to lessen the chance of damaging the suit.

Kit:

Costume

Wetsuit ([see our video on how to put on your wetsuit with no help here](#))

Towel (or two, one for the car seat afterwards)

Swim cap (Your awesome SWS cap preferably)

Goggles

Swim Band or Pass to get into the lake

Booking confirmation (if needed at your lake)

Flip flops or old trainers to walk around (you may be hanging around a bit longer than usual)

Clothes for after you get out (don't forget your undies)

Optional Kit:

Dry robe / changing robe

Wetsuit booties and / or gloves

Tow Float or dry bag (Highly recommended)

Ear plugs (protection to ears in the cold water)

Swim bag to store your kit

Protective cases for phones and keys etc

Pre Session

Pre Session Warm up

Normally we would advise you to do some pre session warm up exercises such as running on the spot, high knees, leg swings and arm swings. If you can do these whilst waiting please do. However you may not be able to due to social distancing and waiting in line.

Getting into the water

The key to a safe and enjoyable swim in cooler water is your acclimatisation. Basically what we call 'short term acclimatisation' and what you do to get into the lake to lessen the effects of the cold water on your body and breathing.

Perform the routine highlighted in our recent video ([see the video here](#))

Noted simple steps of short term acclimatisation:

1. With wetsuit, hat and goggles on, head to the water's edge
2. Slowly walk into the water but **ONLY** to the hips
3. Whilst walking in make sure your hands are also in the water, and leave them there
4. When ready sink down to the armpits, the water will naturally enter the suit through the zip (this is your Ooooooh moment although if cold you may say other words too)
5. When ready submerge the shoulders
6. When ready splash your face with water and breathe out as you do so, splash back and front of neck as well
7. Float up onto your back and then your front
8. Place your face in water and breathe out under control, repeating this 3-5 times and inhaling and exhaling in a relaxed manner. Have a good look around under water and get used to the light and the environment
9. You are now ready to swim, take it easy and chill into the warm up

Warm Up

Key: Take It Easy, Focus on Technique. Times do not matter!

Perform a nice and easy swim to the first buoy. During this swim focus on nice relaxed breathing into your normal breathing pattern. As soon as your face is in the water you should be thinking about breathing out (remember "Bubble bubble breathe" or humming a tune). Relaxation is key in this first step.

Once you have got to the buoy stop, check your kit is good to go and adjust where needed. Importantly check YOU are ready to go physically and mentally. If you are not ready return to the starting point at the bank and address the issues or exit the water. **Be safe, there is no stigma in calling it a day early. I have in the past and I spend 100's of hours in the lakes every summer.**

Main

This is a very basic session plan to get you back into the water using a mix of technique work and some longer swim efforts. It's designed to bring some basic level of skills and feel into your swim after the lockdown layoff, and is designed for all our squad swimmer levels.

Feel free to use your Finis tempo trainer on mode 3, stroke rate. I would suggest your base stroke rate is set to -2 or -4 for your first swim back. Other kit like paddles could be used if you wish to really work on your catch technique.

The suggested technique work focuses on breathing, sighting, and catch pull. If you can't breathe bilaterally it is worth working on, but not the end of

the world for these back to water sessions. Relax, chill and breathe to your normal pattern if this is the case.

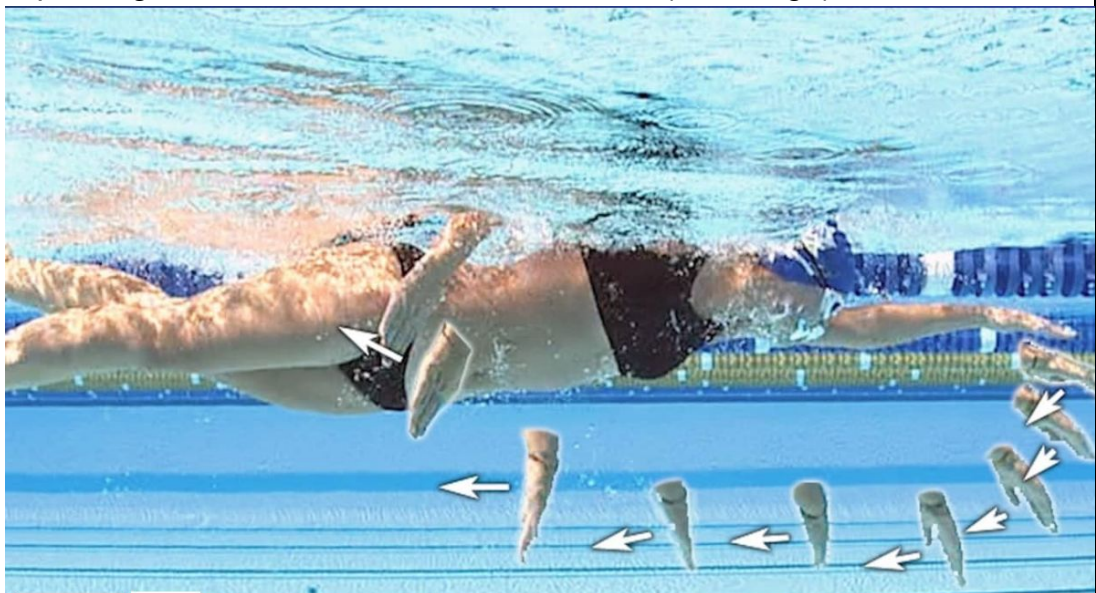
Part 1

Buoy to Buoy swims - Short distances swum nice and relaxed and focusing on technique.

Resting Tip: When resting between buoys perform the Ballet Leg Kick Drill, remember to kick from the hip/glutes with a loose knee and floppy ankle, pointing the toes. When you start swimming again simply bring yourself into your swim position whilst still lightly kicking (heavy kick is not needed)

Rest Periods: Between the buoy to buoy sections I would advise no more than a minute's rest between each. This is so we don't get cold, aim for 30 seconds rest to reset and refocus and then start the next swim. This should be fine as we are not looking to be out of breath in this whole session, it should be an easy paced swim throughout.

1. Start buoy to buoy 1 - Focus on Breathing every 3rd breath (bubble bubble breathe)
2. Buoy to buoy - Focus on sighting skills, aim to sight every 3rd breath in a crocodile eyes fashion. Use your natural breathing pattern (and remember to keep sighting through the whole session, not just this bit). ([see our sighting video here](#))
3. Buoy to buoy - Focus on hand entry, entering finger tips first and spearing into the water about 6 inches below the water surface. Breathing pattern of 3/2/3/2/3/2 if you can (twice to one side, then twice to the other side).
4. Buoy to buoy - Focus on good catch and pull. We should always be looking at pushing water backwards with a bent elbow (see image)



Visualise scull 1 and scull 2 positions when executing this phase of the stroke. Use your natural breathing pattern.

*(Alternative part to this session. Only perform if the lake is not busy and you have no swimmers in close proximity in front or behind you)
20 strokes of scull 1 into 10 strokes of scull 2 then 20 strokes swim, repeat until you get to the next buoy.*

YOU ARE NOW AT THE 400M TURNING POINT AT LAKE86. ASSESS YOUR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL ABILITY AND EITHER TURN HERE OR CARRY ON TO THE TOP OF THE LAKE, REPEATING THE ABOVE EXERCISES BUOY TO BUOY

PART 2 - Returning swim. This portion of the swim is from either the 400m course turn or the 800m course turn. We have three options presented here, either:

1. Perform a constant swim back to the 400m mid point buoy (on the right side of the lake as you look at it from this point) Rest 30 seconds and then swim to the start buoy
2. Perform a constant swim down to the start buoy
3. Perform 'timed' swims of wither 1, 2 or 3 minutes (timed as in the length of time you swim, **not** a time trial)

Perform any of the 3 options above with a focus on good form and developing your sighting technique ([see our sighting video here](#))

YOU ARE NOW BACK AT THE STARTING BUOY. ASSESS YOUR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL ABILITY, IF YOU ARE TOO COLD (OR FEELING 'HOT') THEN NOW IS THE TIME TO CONSIDER YOUR COOLDOWN SWIM TO SHORE. IF YOU ARE CONTINUING TO SWIM THEN:

Part 3 - More Laps

1. Perform your next laps repeating the above technique focused plan
2. Perform a 400m or 800m continuous swim

Build your swim distance over time, and with it your endurance and speed will start to return. Don't do too much too soon!

Part 4 - Cool Down

To be done after your swim (of course) and from the course start buoy. Swim back to shore nice and easy, try to fit in some short bursts of rotational drill to stretch out, such as 6-3-6 or Broken Arrow.

Exit the water as directed by lake staff, observing all rules in place by the venue.

Thank You. I hope you enjoyed this open water session.

Any questions you know where I am

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Dry Land Cool Down

May or may not be possible lakeside, observe social distancing and lake rules. If it is not possible do this at home.

5-10 minutes of light stretching. Try the stretching routine in the swim smooth guru, you have FULL PRO access to this as you are a squad swimmer (hurrah). See the link below
<https://www.swimsmooth.guru/streamvideo/cLi/qR/dryland-stretching-routine>

Voluntary Session Fee

This session is free of charge, as is all our lockdown content. Our main aim is to keep swimmers moving, engaged, fit and provide interest to their lockdown training.

However these sessions do take a lot of time to put on and some of our own squad swimmers wanted a way to contribute. So we set up an optional session fee donation process. If you enjoyed the session and wanted to contribute to our work then please feel free to do so using the links below

If you did want to contribute to our work and help keep us moving forward then you can do so in two ways:

1. Via your Booking System Account: Log into your account and select to make a session fee donation [here](#)
2. Via PayPal: Donate a session fee via Paypal at <https://www.paypal.me/southwestswim>

You will find 3 contribution levels of £4, £6 or £10 in our booking system (or 4 if you did not want to contribute). We have suggested these same donations via PayPal, or a donation of your choosing.

**Either way we hope you enjoy the session and
thanks for your support by joining.**

Want to know more about South West Swim? [Click here](#)