

Sue's Open Water Swimming - Reminders (just a few) for 2023

Swim Effort

- **Race Effort** - Sprint (1-2%)- Steady (96%) – Sprint (1-2%)
- **Sighting** - Every 10 strokes at first, then 20-30 strokes.

Tip: - Time your sighting to happen just before you're going to take a breath. Lift your eyes out of the water by pressing down lightly on the water with your lead arm. Only lift up enough to get your eyes just out of the water.

Breathing - Bilateral (is best) and sight often (if on your own). Breathe away from the chop/wave if you can.
Can't breathe? – Don't panic, just roll over onto your back and get some air. Swim a little BK if you need to.

Swim Strategies - Plan Your Swim

Check out everything BEFORE you swim

- **Course layout**, the colour of the buoys, start and finish places (run in or in water start), direction you will need to turn after the start, around each buoy and to the finish.
- **General Weather, wind and currents, wave height.** Which way is the wind blowing, what is forecast during your time in the water.
- **Landmarks** - Pre-sight large stationary objects beyond buoys in case you can't see the buoys from water level. In the water, to observe properly you need to wear clear/clean goggles that don't fog up.
- **Water temperature** - don't dash into water you don't know. Getting slowly and warm up before racing. Don't forget to cool down after a swim, unless your getting on your bike!

Drafting – If you can, stay in bubbles of the lead swimmers feet or with your head in line with their hip.

This saves 18 to 25% of the energy expenditure. In a race it makes perfect sense to capitalise on this source of free speed! Note:- The water turbulence will disrupt your stroke rhythm, and this can feel off putting at first but don't be tempted to seek out clear water. The benefits of being in this draft zone are huge and by becoming accustomed to it you will be able to swim much faster than you otherwise would.

Stroke Techniques

- **FS Arm Recovery** - Straighter arms in choppy water.
- **Tempo** – Arm stroke rating is slightly quicker with less kicking than in the pool.
- **Sighting** - Two to three consecutive strokes only (eyes just clear of water).

Cautions

- **Contact** - Prepare for 'bumping' at the start and around the buoy.
- **Objects** - Things floating only seem like scary creatures.
- **Marine life** – Yep, all types are out there. Hopefully not near you.
- **Following other swimmers** – Questions:-Can you trust them, can they see better than you, how fast are they, what is their race plan. If you don't know the answers, then swim your own race and trust yourself!
- **Disorientated** - Don't panic, stop and look around. Find those landmarks you checked out earlier, look for arm movement from swimmers ahead/behind or look for the water safety crew.
- **Wierdos** - Sometimes people do strange things.