



## Coaching Tips:

### Body Position

When coaching swimmers, one of the first areas to observe is the body position in the water. It is essential a streamlined body position is maintained to enable the swimmer to move through the water with the least resistance. A high head with dragging lower legs is immediately going to create resistance and make the stroke less effective.

Before entering the water, have swimmers practise the correct body position when swimming. Get swimmers to stand tall: shoulders back, long neck, head straight with eyes looking forward and importantly, a strong core with abs pulled in.

When in the water, get swimmers to experiment with their head position:

- Start in a jelly fish float – arms and legs hanging down, head looking down, gradually raise arms and legs until body feels streamlined on top of the water. Swimmers then start to kick and bring in arm strokes. Is their head position lower than normal? Do this drill over a few 25s –ensure swimmers do not get a push from the wall.
- When swimming, ask swimmers to experiment with their head – high, low and try to find the optimal position where their body is streamlined.
- Remind swimmers of ‘1 goggle in, 1 goggle out’ when turning their head to breathe.

The other area to observe when trying to fix a poor body position is the catch. If the arms are pushing down instead of the hands grabbing the water and pushing it back, the result will be a high head position and thus, lower feet. Get the swimmer to work on catch entry and pull maintaining a high elbow position through pull, ensuring fingers are slightly lower than wrist and wrists lower than elbow. Drills to help this are:

Sculling, long dog paddle and 6-1-6 drills practising holding the catch entry position. Refer to coaching section on Masters Swimming NSW website for further details of these drills and more.

Anne Smyth

MSNSW Branch Coaching Director