

## TAPERING



As a coach preparing a group of swimmers for Nationals within a squad, who are just swimming socially, can be quite tricky and needs careful thought and preparation to ensure all swimmers are catered for and have a session to suit their needs.

- Tapering requires planning
- It is individual but 10 days out is recommended for main event. A proper 10-day taper can really only be used twice/year.
- Remember older swimmers need more taper! So younger ones don't cut the workload back too early!
- The taper must involve some quality high intensity work; a too low intensity taper may result in detraining.
- No all-out efforts to be done within 3 days of swimming – muscle glycogen stores will be depleted and won't be replaced in time.
- Sessions should be refreshing – should feel ready to jump out of your skin! Not tired. If you are tired cut it back and rest.
- Sessions decreasing 2km to at the most, 1.5 km.
- Long relaxed warm up and cool down– concentrating on stroke and feel of water. This is the bulk of session ,e.g., 400 warm up, 700 m sprints, 400 cool down
- Small quality sprints, e.g., 2 x 100 on 4 mins (early in taper), 4 x 50 on 2 min, 25 walk backs

This is a 10 day Taper program adapted from **Anita Killmier's book, *Mastering Swimming***.

Intensity	Days before swim	Distance
No all out effort	1	No swimming, or just warm up swimming
	2	Starts turns relay changes etc
	3	No more than 1500m
90-100% efforts for 25% program	4	Race pace, distance of events shorter than distance swims
	5	Longer rest, fewer repeats. No more than 1800m.
	6	
	7	90% race pace, swim race distance and less.50 m ,25 m. Longer rests
80% efforts	8	Some over distance swims
	9	Higher intensity sprints 50m , 25 m. longer rest periods
Some race pace	10	90-100% pace, many repeats. Start reducing distance swum

***SO what do you do with the squad when you have some in taper and others wanting a good swim?***

**Some suggestions:**

- Separate your lanes and have those tapering working together. It doesn't really matter if there is variations in speed as the long recovery sessions and short sprints allow varied speeds in same lane. Run 2 different programs.
- Set the same program but allow for differentiation within the lane. Tapering swimmers can swim every 2<sup>nd</sup> sprint. For example, in a set of 16 X 50 on 1 minute. The tapering swimmer misses every 2<sup>nd</sup> 50 allowing ample recovery time. The normal squad swimmer can still have a good workout.

**2 sample Taper sets:**

<b>Taper (1 week out)</b>	<b>TAPER (4 days out from comp)</b>
<p><i>Warm up:</i> fins 500 choice + 200 drills</p> <p><i>Main Set:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4x 25 sprint kick</li><li>• 8 x 25 dive starts walk back focus on start and finish</li><li>• 100 easy</li><li>• 4 x 100 quality sprint on 4 min</li><li>• 100 easy</li><li>• 4 x 50 quality sprint on 2 min</li><li>• 100 easy</li><li>• 200 IM drill fins</li></ul> <p><i>Cool down</i> 200</p>	<p><i>Warm up</i> fins 500/600 m swim + 300 drill incl. kick - stretch out swim</p> <p><i>Main Set:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8 x 25 heart starters on 1 minute ( or more)</li><li>• 100 easy</li><li>• 4 x 50 choice dive start 90 % effort on 4.00</li><li>• 100 easy</li><li>• Start /turn practice</li></ul> <p><i>Cool Down</i> 200</p>
2200	1600/1700

Anne Smyth  
(MSNSW Coach Director)