



## Best Practices for Open Water Workouts

- I. Have a safety plan
  - a. Identify risks, hazards and assess surroundings
  - b. Are you current and up to date with certifications?
  - c. Where will athletes enter and exit the water?
  - d. What are water depths?
  - e. What is the water temperature?
  - f. What is the water quality?
- II. Emergency Action Plan
  - a. Is the body of water marked as swimmable?
  - b. Does it already have an EAP?
  - c. Are there lifeguards on duty?
  - d. [Example](#) of an EAP for a lake
- III. Meet with athletes and go over the safety plans prior to entering the water
  - a. Abandonment
    - i. Everyone needs to be aware of the plan and understand the procedures.
    - ii. What will you do if bad weather roles into the area?
    - iii. What will you do if someone is in distress?
    - iv. How will a rescue be performed, if necessary?
  - b. Communicating with athletes on the water
    - i. How will you do this?
      1. Verbal
        - a. Waving
        - b. Arm in the air
      2. Non-Verbal
        - a. Whistles
        - b. Blow horn
  - c. Additional items to consider
    - i. Will a coach be on the water?
    - ii. Will you have supervision on land if the coach is on the water with the athletes?
    - iii. Can you always account for all athletes?
    - iv. What path will the swimmers take on the body of water?
    - v. Have any of the athletes done open water before?
- IV. Local Authority
  - a. Do you have approval to be on the water?
- V. Boat traffic



- a. Is it a public waterway?
  - b. Who has access to the waterway?
  - c. Can you swim in the body of water without a permit?
- VI. Marine life
- a. Fresh water vs Saltwater
    - i. What can you expect in both conditions?



## Practice Ideas:

- VII. Techniques
- Sighting
  - Pack swimming
  - Surges
  - Turns
  - Finishes
- VIII. Practicing the techniques
- Have the group swim and work together. If you are practicing on a course have the athletes stop at multiple points and chat as a group about what they see
    - Sighting points
    - Things to look out for on the course
    - Angle of the sun at different points on the course
  - Peer learning/ teaching
    - Send groups a minute apart to do a loop
    - Pairs, Box and Diamond Formations
      - Pairs xx  
xx  
xx
      - Box xxxx  
  
xxxx
      - Diamond x  
xxx  
xx
      - Single and Double Pace Line  
Single x Pairs xx  
x xx  
x xx
  - Last swimmer sprints to front when he/she tucks-in the next one goes. In pairs the last swimmer in each pace line sprints to the front on the outside.
  - Form and Re-form
    - Using the same Pair, Box and Diamond formations have the swimmers start in one formation and reconfigure the formation by the end of the loop. For example, Start in pairs and re-set to Diamond by the end of the loop. Specify who should be in front and/or back.
- Things to keep in mind



- i. Stay calm
- ii. Flexible
- iii. Relaxed
- iv. Go with the flow
- v. Stay together
- vi. Don't panic
- vii. Have fun