

KEY TRAINING SESSIONS

Olympic open water swimming silver medallist **Keri-anne Payne** explains how to plan your training schedule to achieve your goals

With winter fast approaching now is the time to make your training plan a reality. The easy thing to do when the nights get darker is to stay in and sit on the sofa so we need to make sure that your training plan is exciting. If you followed last month's article you should have a well prepared and specific performance plan. You should know why you are trying to achieve your goal and more importantly what you need to improve on in order to achieve it. There are three key sessions to fit into your training week to ensure you become a more efficient, quicker and stronger swimmer to achieve your goals.

Speed – To ensure you have the ability to push the upper end of your speed range.

Race Pace – Building your capacity to maintain race pace.

Technique endurance – Increase the distance you are able to swim with great technique.



Keri-anne Payne is a double open water world champion, triple Olympian and Olympic silver medallist in the 10k open water marathon at the Beijing Olympics in 2008. She created the Straight-Line Swimming methodology with her husband, triple Olympian David Carry. straightlineswimming.com

Speed session

WARM UP – 15 minutes of mixed swimming finishing with 4 X 50m with 1st 15m sprint the rest easy with 20 seconds rest.

MAIN SET – 6 X 25m MAX effort with as much rest as you need. minimum 1.30 second rest

SWIM DOWN 15 – 20 minutes recover swimming with a few 10m bursts of speed to remove the lactic acid.

Race pace session

WARM UP – Aim to swim at least half the distance of your main set – 800m mixed warm up finish with 4 X 50m descending each 50m to race pace speed on number 4 & 8.

MAIN SET – either 100m – 800m reps. Aim to take your heart rate regularly and give each session a mark out of 10 for how much effort you put in and how hard it felt. Tracking this will give you an idea if you are improving.

SWIM DOWN 15 minutes of recovery ideally on the strokes you did do in the main set. Add some bursts of speed to remove lactic acid from your system.

SPEED SESSION BREAKDOWN

These sessions are short sharp repeats with full recovery between each. Think about your speed on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being your maximum. If you've never pushed your body to its maximum speed then you will likely feel like 6 out of 10 is your max, but what we are trying to do is push that to your true 10 out of 10. This will enable you to start hitting your race pace times.

RACE PACE BREAKDOWN

The aim of this session is to try and simulate what your race goal will feel like and to give you confidence swimming at your race pace.

If you have done a successful performance planning session you will know what your goal pace is. Now you

need to break that down into 100m splits. For example, if your goal is to swim 1600m in 32 minutes that's 2 minutes per 100m. Now that might seem little scary if you have never been able to swim that pace before.

Let's say your current pace is 2.10 per 100m, so we need to drop 10 seconds per 100m over three months.

As important as it is to ensure you know what 2 minutes per 100m feels like it's also important to try and see what 200m or 400m will feel like hitting goal pace. The table below is an example of how to plan and do your race pace sessions.

The table below is a rough guide but following it will give you a good idea if your goal is achievable. Coupled with the speed set each week your overall speed will be much quicker.



Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Distance	16 X 100's	16 X 100's	20 X 100's	16 X 100's	8 X 200's	8 X 200's	16 X 100's	8 X 200's	4 X 400's	16 X 100's	4 X 400's	16 X 100's
@ pace	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	1	1	4	2	2
Recovery	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Rest	20 sec	20 sec	20 sec	rest week	30 sec	30 sec	20 sec	rest week	30 sec	20 sec	30 sec	10 sec

TECHNIQUE ENDURANCE BREAKDOWN

The aim of these sessions are to complete the distance with technical excellence. Speed and time are not the challenge, the focus will be on the mind. The great thing about this session is that you can build up each week to add a few more 100s to achieve your goal distance. You are looking to have the best technique during this session which is why you will need to use your brain to keep a check on that.

The overall distance of this session depends on your overall goal but here is a guide of how far you should think about swimming dependent on goal distances.

Under 2km goal – Aim to swim over the distance at least twice a week.

Under 5km goal – Aim to be swimming up to the distance at least once a week.

5-10km goal – Aim to swim close to the distance in one session but over the distance in your weekly volume.

15km or over – Aim to swim over the distance in weekly training volume.

In your first few weeks of training you might struggle to swim the goal distance but don't worry – use the above as a goal guide over your training plan. Each goal distance is individual and if your goal is 15km and if you want to feel super confident you can cover the distance then you can aim to swim close or over 15km in one training session if that will make you feel confident you can achieve the distance.

Giving yourself as much time as possible. I would recommend at least four months of training to really give your body the chance to improve all aspects.

My final tip is to ensure that you give your body some time to rest and adapt to the training you are doing. My suggestion is that you plan your training in four-week cycles with the fourth week always being a rest week. On a rest week maintain the number of sessions but decrease the distance and effort 🏊‍♀️