

OFF THE BLOCKS

SOON TO GO LIVE!

Resource for British Coaches & Teachers

We have noticed a lack of understanding of the key age 'windows' available to optimally develop the performance behaviours and skills of our next generation of young swimmers

Too often the stopwatch is used as the primary 'driver' to progressing our young swimmers, as opposed to quality coaching focussed on 'technical' skill development. As a result, at junior to senior transition level we continually try to retrospectively correct technical flaws when realistically our ability to do this has long past

To address this we are now putting in place a syllabus that we believe will fundamentally define and communicate a programme of age-related skills that we would want to see being taught, developed, refined and tested for the optimal development of our swimmers

COACHING FACTSHEETS
OFF THE BLOCK
BACKSTROKE STARTS

LONG WHISTLE WARNINGS
There are two long whistles for backstroke starts: one to enter the water and the second to bring the swimmers to the wall.

"TAKE YOUR MARKS"
Both hands should firmly grip the available handles in the swimmer's preferred position. The feet should be placed on the blocks, or under the water surface, either level with each other, mandatory when using a foot ledge - (1) or 'grip' one higher than the other (2). The foot and toes should be placed firmly on the ledge, in a position where there is no toe ledge, the foot and toes should 'grip' the wall or support.
The body should be pulled up and in towards the block with the hips nearly out of the water.

"GO!"
- The swimmer from the wall should be released from the hips by the swimmer leading they are pushing the wall away.
- As the hands release their grip, the head and shoulders should move forwards as soon as possible. Forward as in the intended direction of swimming - i.e. towards the other end of the pool (3).
- The head, shoulders, body and hips should move diagonally upwards and forwards. The neck and chest should be extended.
- The direction of the push should be as short as possible (indicated green force).
- The arms should be moving forwards and extended past the head.
- The order of drive is hips, head, hands.
- At the end of the leg drive the body angle should be diagonal and straight (4).

FLIGHT
- The flight over the water should take the swimmer as far as possible.
- The hips should be raised as high as possible, then, just before the hands and arms enter the water the feet should be raised completely out of the water. This will produce an arched body shape over the water (5).
- The arms should separate the head before the entry.

ENTRY
- The hands, arms, head, shoulders, torso, hips, knees and feet should enter over the same foot.
- A small diagonal kick should be made during the entry of the legs (6).
- A slight, 'squeaky' swimming should be held in or onto no loss of speed after the entry (7).

- **Bespoke** resources to educate the teachers & coaches of our next generation of swimmers
- **Produced** by a group of cross-Home Nation performance experts along with UK Sport and the BSCA has set about producing some
- **Branded** as **'OFF THE BLOCKS'**
- **Free** online resource for all teachers & coaches working for the benefit of swimmers in Britain
- **Content** initially focuses on starts, turns, underwater kicking and finishing skills
- **Additional** layers of 'Technical', 'Tactical' and 'Physical' content resource will be added in the future

- Responsive website linked from the main British Swimming site which resizes for desktop, tablet and mobile view
- Video examples of elite male & female examples, plus additional age group male & female footage & corrections
- Downloadable factsheets to take on the poolside with:-
 - Coaching pointers
 - Drills & progressions
 - Still images
 - Benchmark data

