

UP THE TEMPO

In a new series of articles for 2016 **Fiona Ford** looks at how to incorporate training tools into your swim sessions, starting with the Finis Tempo Trainer



GUIDANCE NOTES

CSS - Critical Swim Speed. Effectively training at your threshold pace provides you with significant speed efficiency gains

Pacing - using the pool clock, your own stopwatch or a timing device such as a Finis Tempo Trainer or Wetronome

BB = Bilateral Breathing
UB = Unilateral Breathing
BS = Backstroke
FS = Freestyle or front crawl
BRS = Breaststroke
FLY = Butterfly
PULL = Swimming with a pullbuoy or float between your legs. No kicking.

Using technology and gadgets to improve your swimming can be especially useful if you complete the vast majority of your training solo. The Finis Tempo Trainer allows a swimmer to have a pacing guide as they swim, providing a double or triple beep at regular intervals, for example at the end of each length as you swim a 400m. The tempo trainer can also be set up to guide the swimmer's stroke rate and rhythm, by emitting a single beep frequently in time with a pre-determined stroke rate. To use the Tempo Trainer in any of the three modes, firstly switch it on by holding one of the buttons beneath the screen. Once it is switched on and beeping, with numbers in the display, it can be switched between the three modes and by holding down the top button on the device. To increase or reduce the display numbers, simply hold the left button to decrease the two digit display or the right button to increase the numbers.



These training sessions make use of the Finis Tempo Trainer in Mode 1 to develop awareness of a swimmer's pacing abilities. Being able to pace effectively is essential for open water swimmers, to maintain sustainable speed or pace for distance swims or triathlon events. Setting off too fast in training or in a race is one of the most

common reasons for under performance. When, at some stage during the race, the athlete discovers they cannot sustain the original pace this results in a much greater drop-off in speed compared with maintaining an even pace throughout. These sessions will improve awareness of sustainable pace and help the swimmer improve their pace judgement to ultimately become faster over their chosen distance.

Please note, you will need to have worked out your CSS (Critical Swim Speed) and know how to set up your Tempo Trainer in order to follow these sessions.

After your warm up, start the main element of the session with the tempo trainer in Mode 1, set to the appropriate pace. Assume your 'Tempo' pace is the equivalent of CSS plus 3 to 5 seconds per 100m, which is slightly slower than threshold pace. In Mode 1 you can set the device to beep at very precise

intervals down to 1/100th of a second. This means you can make micro-adjustments to your pace and see what the impact is.

If you're swimming in a 25m or 20m pool then setting the time to beep once per length is adequate. For longer 33.3m or 50m pools, setting the timer to beep every half length will help you stay on track.

SWIM SMOOTH SQUAD TRAINING AND VIDEO ANALYSIS SESSIONS

Triathlon Europe provides weekly Swim Smooth squad training in South West London. The squad enjoy training all year round in fabulous indoor and outdoor 33m pools. Fiona offers 1-2-1 video analysis sessions and stroke correction sessions on weekday mornings and weekend Swim Smooth workshops.

Find out more:
fionafordcoaching with www.triathloneurope.com



SETTING AND USING THE TEMPO TRAINER

Step 1: Calculate your desired time per 100m (e.g. CSS or CSS + 4s) in seconds

Step 2: Divide your 100m repeat time by the number of lengths (or half lengths) per 100m

Step 3: In Mode 1 on your Tempo Trainer, use the left or right buttons to set the appropriate time

Step 4: Clip the Tempo Trainer onto your goggle strap or (our preferred method) slide it under your swimming cap above your ear

Step 5: Choose a beep and start swimming

Note: if you want to synchronise your beeper with another swimmer's or with a pace clock, press the mode button once, briefly, to re-start the timer.

Example CSS = 90 seconds per 100m

A 33.3m pool has six half lengths per 100m so set the timer at 15:00

A 25m pool has four lengths per 100m so set the timer at 22.50

Set tempo pace as CSS + 4s = 94 seconds per 100m

A 33.3m pool has six half lengths per 100m so set the timer at 15:67

A 25m pool has four lengths per 100m so set the timer at 23:50

TRAINING SESSIONS

SESSION 1

Aim: Develop pacing awareness by keeping time with the beep

Warm up:

200m FS

2 x 100m pull

4 x 50m choice of drill

2 x 100m not FS (i.e. backstroke, butterfly or breaststroke)

200m FS

Take 10s rest between each

Main set:

4 to 6 x 100m at tempo pace + 1 beep recovery (eg: 15.80 sec rest)

4 to 6 x 100m at CSS pace + 1 beep recovery (eg: 15:00 sec)

Try to do all your turns and finishes 'on the beep'

Repeat the tempo and CSS efforts with same recoveries

Note how your effort or focus changes as you progress through the set.

Cool down:

200 to 400m easy, choice of strokes

Total: 2800m to 3800m

SESSION 2

Aim: Improve pacing skills by "beating the beep"

Warm up:

50m FS

100m FS

150m Pull

200m choice drill or kick

150m choice strokes (not FS)

100m FS

50m FS

Take 10s rest between each

Main set - part 1

200m at CSS pace +1 beep recovery

400m at CSS pace +2 beeps recovery

600m at tempo pace (stay on the beep) +3-4 beeps recovery

400m at tempo pace (beat the beep!)* + 2 beeps recovery

200m at tempo pace (beat the beep)

Main set: part 2

4 to 10 x 50m @ CSS pace + 1 beep recovery

Stay on the beep for first 25m then aim to beat the beeper on the second 25m (negative split)

Cool down

200 to 400m easy, choice

Total: 3000m to 3500m

*The best tactic while trying to 'beat the beep' is to gradually pull ahead rather than trying to build a big 'lead' in the first couple of lengths and then hanging on.



LUNCHTIME BLAST OPTION

If you've only got 30 minutes, try this abbreviated version of Session 1. Adjust the number of repeats according to your speed.

SESSION 3

Aim: Develop pacing awareness by keeping time with the beep

Warm up:

100m FS

2 x 50m pull

4 x 25m choice of drill

100m not FS (i.e. backstroke, butterfly or breaststroke)

Take 10s rest between each

Main set:

4 to 6 x 100m at tempo pace + 1 beep recovery (eg: 15.80 sec rest)

4 to 6 x 100m at CSS pace + 1 beep recovery (eg: 15:00 sec)

Try to do all your turns and finishes 'on the beep'

Note how your effort or focus changes as you progress through the set

Cool down:

200m easy, choice of strokes

Total: 1400m to 1800m

CSS values Finis Tempo Trainer settings Mode 1			Half length beeps	
	50m pool	33m pool	50m pool	33m pool
CSS*	50m pool	33m pool	25m pool	~16m pool
1:10	35.00	23.33	17.50	11.67
1.15	37.50	25.00	18.75	12.50
1.20	40.00	26.67	20.00	13.33
1.25	42.50	28.33	21.25	14.17
1.30	45.00	30.00	22.50	15.00
1.35	47.50	31.67	23.75	15.83
1.40	50.00	33.33	25.00	16.67
1.45	52.50	35.00	26.25	17.50
1.50	55.00	36.67	27.50	18.33
1.55	57.50	38.33	28.75	19.17
2.00	60.00	40.00	30.00	20.00
2.10	65.00	43.33	32.50	21.67