

Justification and explanation of the Trafford Metro Assessment process.

A series of target assessments for swimmers throughout their development in the Trafford Metro swimming club is presented. These assessments begin in the Red squad and relate to the swimmers development of swimming and training skills and abilities. Targets are based upon providing a guide toward the national standard of performance. Swimmers can identify where they are on the performance development process and identify what they have to achieve to progress forward. These standards were formulated from developmental stages of children and the requirements of skills that are required to achieve a higher level of achievement. The development of the requirements, including the kick and the pull components are through the construction of a precise model of the physical requirements of swimmers as they develop through the years of training if they are to physically evolve the characteristics required to reach a high standard of performance. It is easy to gain performance from swimmers though just doing more work at a younger age. If this work is not correctly formulated the development of physical characteristics occurs in an imbalanced way. The training may increase some factors of performance rapidly but at the same time the over emphasis of the wrong kind of work at the wrong time will reduce the ability of key factors that should be increasing at that stage. The end result is an initial fast rise in performance, followed by a premature plateau of improvement that leads to stagnation and early termination of a swimming career (early in years, 15-16 year olds).

Performance improves at a faster rate at the start of a swimmers career and generally this improvement rate slows the closer to the world standard a swimmer gets. By focusing on swimmers developing the appropriate capacities at the correct times in their development, the initial improvement will still be there, all be it a little slower, but the improvement will continue to develop as the swimmer develops their biomotor abilities that cannot be rushed or over ridden, as they are linked to the maturation of the individual. For this reason, the performance guides given here require that a swimmer improves over a range of abilities initially then focuses into events at a higher level of performance. The design

has been structures so that the appropriate physical development will be encouraged at the appropriate time.

In balance with the swimming event requirements, swimmers are also expected to achieve a kick and pull performance standard that relates to the chosen stroke performance requirement over 200m. This will ensure that they have sufficient fitness and balance of swimming ability to continue to develop their technical and physical ability toward the next level of achievement.

Additionally swimmers must also achieve distance times (400, 800 or 1500 freestyle) dependent upon the level of training group. Swimmers are also assessed for basic speed with a combination of sprint swims.

Swimmers must pass each element within the assessment criteria to move to the next squad. A pass is achieved only if a swimmers achieves a skill score of 4 or 5 out of 5 and the relevant time for the swim (where appropriate). Both elements for each swim must be achieved to pass that particular component.

The 1-5 scoring is based upon the following;

Grade 5	Displays consistent repetition of skill
Grade 4	A good attempt of completing the skill but displays some errors
Grade 3	displays elements of the skill and lacks consistent repetition
Grade 2	display some poor elements of the skill but lacks consistent coordination of movements
Grade 1	No attempt of skill and unable to complete more than a few movements without error.

Using the following criteria for assessment;

Body Position / Leg action / Head position
Coordination / Timing breathing

***Score each element
either***

1 or 0

so max score is a 5 for all elements

The following chart should give you an understanding of how long it takes for a swimmer to achieve each level of development. Some swimmers may take a little longer, particularly able swimmers may take a little less time (1 term less).

