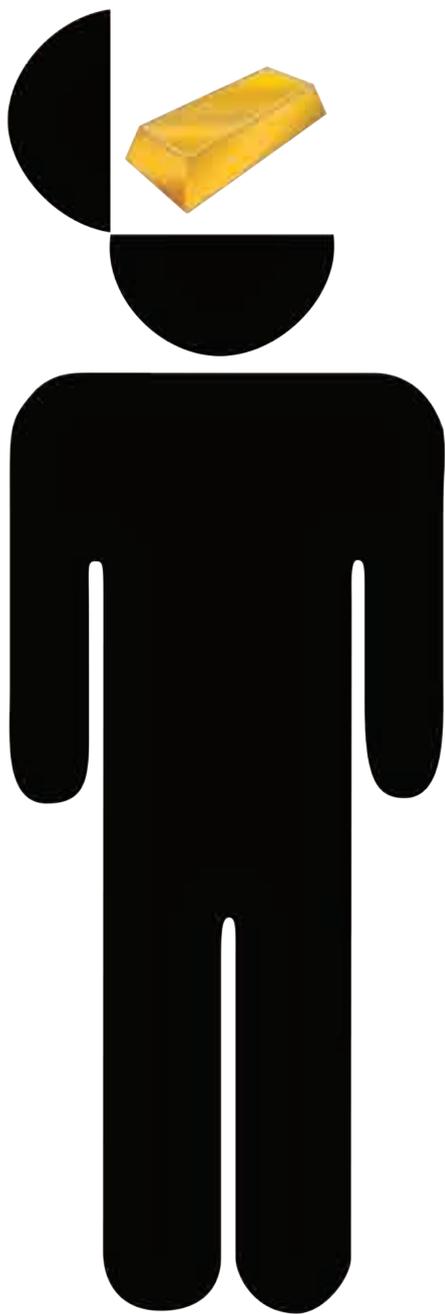


goldminds

BY WAYNE GOLDSMITH



TEN TIPS TO TURN YOUR TERRIBLE TURNS INTO TERRIFICALLY TREMENDOUS TURNS

MASTER YOUR SWIMMING TURNS, AND SEE YOUR TIMES TUMBLE!

If you swim, you need to learn how to turn...*fast!*

There's no way around it. You can't ignore it. Swimming fast and turning fast are one and the same.

Unless you can find a swimming pool that's five miles long, chances are that in every session, you'll need to turn and turn and turn again.

In racing, often it is not the fastest swimmer who wins. It's the swimmer with the best "walls"—i.e., the swimmer whose dives, starts, turns and finishes are the best of any swimmer in the race.

When it comes to turns, it's not about "practice makes perfect" or even "perfect practice makes perfect." The secret to improving your turns is doing "performance practice"—i.e., making sure that every turn you do in training is as fast and as technically perfect as the turns you plan to execute when racing at your next meet.

TOP TEN TIPS FOR TURNS

1. Don't do "turns practice." *This is really important: Don't do "turns practice."*

Instead, just make *every* turn you do in training a race-quality turn. Too many swimmers are "turns champions" when they are doing a turns practice session, then once the actual training session starts, they become "turns chumps."

For some reason, they can do great-looking, fast turns during designated turns practice, but when the fitness or endurance work starts, they develop slow, technically poor turning habits.

So, don't do "perfect turns practice." **Practice so that EVERY turn is perfect.**

2. Time your turns...or ask your coach to time your turns.

One way to improve your turns is to time them...or to have your coach time them. An excellent way to do this in butterfly and breaststroke, for example, is to time "hand-touch to foot-touch"—i.e., the time it takes from when your hands touch the wall until your feet touch the wall. As a general guideline:

- More than 1 second hand-touch to foot-touch = Slow
- 0.9-1.0 = Average
- 0.8-0.9 = Good
- 0.7-0.8 = Excellent
- 0.6-0.7 = Elite

3. Think "THIS" turn.

The key to success is to think about what's happening right now—in this moment of training. As you approach each turn, think "THIS" turn will be fast. Then as you approach the next turn, think "THIS" turn will be fast. The word, "this," brings your mind and body into the moment and keeps you focused and concentrating on each and every turn.

4. Get your feet on the wall quickly.

Race *finishes* are all about getting your hand (or hands) on the wall as fast as possible. Turns are all about getting your FEET on the wall as quickly as possible. Whether it's the tumble

turns of freestyle and backstroke or the turns of butterfly and breaststroke, the aim of turning is to get your feet on the wall as quickly as possible. This then allows you to get the big muscles of your legs and butt to push you off the wall with power and strength.

5. Think about turns differently.

Get excited about turns. Learn to love turns. When you see those backstroke flags at the end of the pool, think, “Here comes the turn—this is where I can really make up some time and gain some real speed.”

6. Make turns your domain.

Make the “turning zone”—i.e., inside the backstroke flags—your own personal domain. Become more comfortable inside the turning zone than anyone else on your team and anyone you race against.

An older swimmer might swim faster than you. A more experienced swimmer might out-dive you, but NOBODY will ever out-turn you. Make unbeatable turns your strength—your “trademark.”

7. Swim slowly, but...

During warm-up, swim-down or easy aerobic training, you might swim slowly, but...you can still turn like lightning. Every turn—regardless of when or where you are doing it—is potentially another race-quality turn.

Think of it this way: if you swim 400 in warm-up every day, you can choose to swim that 400 with slow, poor quality turns or you can choose to swim slowly but make sure that every turn—even in warm-up—is outstanding.

Imagine the effect of doing this in every session and in every warm-up! That’s hundreds or maybe even thousands of extra fast turns every season! What’s that going to do to your performances at your next big meet?

8. Set turning “goals.”

Just as you set PR goals—e.g., “I will improve my time from 42 seconds to 40.5 seconds this season,”—set turning goals—e.g., “I will reduce my hand-touch to foot-touch time in breaststroke and butterfly to 0.75 seconds.”

9. Tell your friends.

Make turns an important part of every workout for your team. If you see a teammate really nail a great turn, tell them. If they do a poor one, let them know and offer to help. Help your team to become known as the most dangerous group of swimmers inside the backstroke flags—i.e., the “turning zone”—anywhere.

10. Find opportunities to do more turns than anyone else.

For example, try “three-turn 50s.” If you are swimming in a short course pool, try starting with your fingertips on the wall and kicking fast. When coach says, “Go,” do a really fast tumble turn to start the 50 (i.e., instead of just pushing off with your feet as usual). That’s Turn #1.

Turn again at the 25—that’s Turn #2. Then finish with a fast turn and try to get your feet on the wall as fast as possible—that’s Turn #3. In other words, “three-turn 50s.”

So, in every 50 you swim, you can potentially increase your

turns training by three, and in doing so, gain a significant turns advantage over your opposition at your next meet. ♦

Wayne Goldsmith is one of the world’s leading experts in elite-level swimming and high-performance sport. Be sure to check out his new website at www.wgaquatics.com.

SUMMARY

1. **RE-THINK YOUR APPROACH TO TURNS AND “TURNS PRACTICE.”** Make turns and the “turning zone”—your own personal domain—the one place in the pool where you are never beaten. And watch your personal record times tumble.
2. **IT’S NOT “TURNS PRACTICE” AND “SWIMMING PRACTICE”—THEY ARE NOT TWO SEPARATE AND DISTINCT THINGS.** It’s all one training concept—“performance practice.” If you treat practice this way, you will ensure that every aspect of your training is performed with the same level of excellence that you are targeting for your next meet. In other words, train the way you want to race.
3. **LOOK FOR EVERY POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE YOUR TURNS.** Warm-up...swim-down...fitness work...long-distance training. Find ways to include more and more race-quality turns in your training, and your “walls” will be wonderful.

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JUNE 14, 2014
SATURDAY, June 14, 2014
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SATURDAY, June 14, 2014
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