

BB's Backstroke Drill

Purpose

To emphasize hand position, head position, shoulder roll, hip rotation, recovery momentum, continuous kick, stroke synergy and position in the water through exaggeration.

Description

1. Push off the wall. Take two backstroke strokes.
2. Start with right arm. While keeping the left arm in the streamline position, bring the right arm up, thumb first, to about 40 degrees (more advanced swimmers bring it up to 90 degrees. The higher the angle, the more the legs are forced to kick faster in order to stay on top of the water).
3. Drop the right arm down quickly, tapping the water with the little finger, and, with much momentum, put the right arm in entry position over the head, little finger first. This also forces the head to be in a laid back position, as lifting the head will result in sinking.
4. Concurrently, as the right arm approaches midway (and the hand position is changed from pinky down, to pinky up), the left arm begins the pull. Forcing the shoulder down (in the meantime, forcing the right shoulder up, over and down, above the water and underneath the chin and the right hip up) pulling out, in and then pushing down, the recovery stage is exaggerated at the end of the pull. Pushing down on the water with force, throwing the arm up and out of the water to 40 – 90 degrees (the higher the angle, the more beneficial the drill).

This is not a laid back drill. It expends a lot of energy. This is a difficult drill. It is a jerky drill. It is a fast drill. To do it slowly would negate the point. The point is to exaggerate critical stages in the stroke, alternately using force and momentum to continue forward movement on top of the water. This is not a drill for beginning swimmers trying to learn backstroke; it should be used as "tune-up" drill for those who are already familiar with the stroke. It is used best alternating equal distances of the drill and then the stroke.