# **Incorporating British Swimming's OADF into a club programme**

## **Wycombe District Swimming Club**

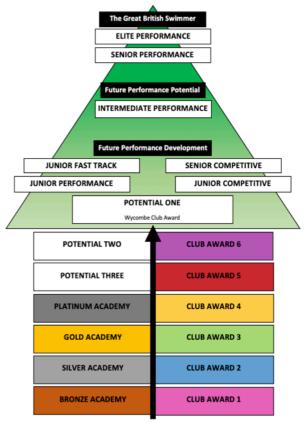


When the **Optimal Athlete Development Framework** was launched, we felt that it would be easy for it to remain as a PDF, unopened, and unacted upon. However, the OADF is too good a tool for it to sit unused. We felt that the best way for it to be 'used' would be to incorporate it into the 'daily training environment' of our programme at Wycombe.

The OADF has two distinct levels; the 'The Great British Swimmer' and 'Future Performance Potential'; and for a club like Wycombe District, these two levels link into our Intermediate & Senior Performance Squads. Both of these squads have produced swimmers that have achieved International and British Medallists. However, whilst these two squads would cover around 45 swimmers in our programme, it would be "too high" for the rest of our club's pathway...

At Wycombe we have 640 swimmers in the whole programme and from this around 400 swimmers that would sit within our **Competitive and Performance pathway**. So, in order to provide a framework that would develop swimmers in the principles of the OADF we decided to structure our 'club version' of the OADF, based on the simple diagram opposite.

You can see that 'The Great British Swimmer' sits at the top of our programme, and the 'Future Performance Potential' is for the squad below. We have created the "Future Performance Development' level which is for two of our youngest performance squads (ages 10-14) and our top two 'competitive' squads (that are for ages 11-18). We have adapted the FPP to define the FPD.



Swim England have recently launched their Club Awards Scheme and we felt that the areas that this covered linked in well with the OADF and developing progressions in our programme. Based on this we have used all 6 club awards through our Academy and Potential squads. We are in the process of developing our own "award" for Potential One and it is going to include some key areas that the OADF highlights – basically a transition from the Club Award to the OADF. We feel that in having an award for the swimmers to achieve, based around 'behaviours', it channels the swimmers (and their parents!) minds as to what we see as important, in their swimming journeys at Wycombe.

Fundamentally, the crucial part of this project is <u>HOW</u> are we implementing the OADF into our programme – at all three levels (TGBS, FPP & FPD). We've explained above about the structure, and below is the basic framework of how we are rolling it out to our swimmers, squads and their parents. **Extracts are posted on the next page**, but if coaches would like to see the full document, please get in touch with us.

			PERS	ON			
		FULFILLED	RESILIENT &	108UST	ASPI	RATIONAL	POSSESS A GROWTH MINDSET
BRITISH SWIMMER	SENIOR PERFORMANCE	Support've of each of imageotive of sporti somes     Being politive every it they are st pool     They have their own identity within a grow     Takes ownership of     actions and behavior	time positive way  It is possible	able of caethacks in a for them to a demands of	Refer     Grant     decide	nake appropriate ions both in and out of	Always seeking advice and feedbalk, and then acting appropriately     Remaining positive when given feedback and not taking it as orticism     Open to learning brespective of the outcome.
THE GREAT B	HOW?	Training camp     Team bonding     Away meets     Manning     Goal setting—more outcome based but is founded and more contained based but to founded and training the founded and training training the founded and trai	Failure planned into training and competitions (deliver seets, everload)     final setting—agreed between couch and satisfaction     Attendance		Discussions between coach and salmmer     Goal setting - process     Chile captains     Othe back by soluting with lower squals [Potential and Atademy squals]		Ne confurtable with being unconfurtable     Swimmer and coach meetings     Planning     Education on goal setting
		JOURNEY	RESILIENT & ROBUST	DRN	/EN	GOOD LEARNER	INDEPENDENT
PERCOMPANCE FOR IENTIME	INTERMEDIATE PERFORMANCE	Emeryone has a shared good and are supportive off one another. They capable of belanking summing, school, and social. Focus on long seem results. Own identity within a group. Enginery what they do	Sinthardis and an experimently to their part remain calls in difficult situations	oppo the b	ming is not a for but an family to be set that they e sured to se their goals are still so orientated	Takes on challeng with no hestation     Meannes feelback     Meannes     Meannes     Meannes     Meannes     Meannes     Meannes     Meannes     Meannes	Managing their time between training and other summitments
FUTURE PERH	HOW?	Training camp     Team bonding     Away nexts     Planning     Goal setting—individual and team	Goal setting Hen failure into sections Hen meets to fail Attendance	Cub illian     Goal     progr	dructure - inded setting - exist	Being challenged training and competitions     Education     Getting to know the swimmer/couch     Having a say on own development	in Planning - school, swimming, social swimming, social swimmer and seach needings balance belience
DEVELOPMENT	JUNIOR PERFORMANCE	Beginning of a support network – all having one common goal     Working together as a group	Competition results are not the be all of and all     Upp and downs are a part of life	Focus rathe outs:	ing how to set on process r than one – ning issue and skills	Open to challeng knowing it will be them improve     Listers to feedba and wanting to learn	Its  Taking responsibility for their own equipment and realing sum they have everything augm to issum how they can manage
	POTENTIAL ONE	Being at training because they enjoy swimming     Making friends	Challenged within a controlled analognment (e.g. training sessions)		used to the technique kills union comes unjoying ming	Listening to feedback and accepting of it     Asking questions and showing they want to learn	their time between swimming and other commitments
FUTURE PERFORMAN	HOW?	Attendance – monthly certificates     Training camplivary meet as a train     Good setting – process	Challenges in training     Four failure into sessions     New higher commitment levels compared to normal.		ated on ing and goal g - process t dance t leads by ling swimmen	Being challenged training     Opportunities to all questions     Getting to know the swimmer/coach     Involve head coacin table	Making sure drink bottle is full before session 6 Sucation on

			ATHLETE		
		DISPLAYS WINNING HABITS	PHYSCIAL ATTRIBUTES	COACHABLE	TECHNICALLY SUPERIOR
GREAT BRITISH SWIMMER	SENIOR PERFORMANCE	Motivated and innow what their pools are and what their pools are and what they exceed to be     Open to possibilities and changing what they do Looks for and uses feedback in a positive way Resolutionly reflects on their own performance.	They have full and complete physical literary revoked to perform well. Course what seviral literary states for them on land and legal graduatible. Making the right decisions when it comes to numition to perform to the best of their whilling.	Are accountable and exponsible for their own actions and performance (flective communication between cooch and sammer Able to work with others – coucher, teammates, support staff Feedback given is not an attack	Able to make technical changes to stokes and skills Constantly working on starts, storm, underwater phases, breakends, and transitions Reduces resistance in we by holding optimum bod line
THE GREAT B	HOW?	Psychology table     Individual psychology meetings     Goal setting     Discussions with the creek     Race process cheets	Attendance – pool and land     Individualized pre and pool pool sheets     Physic screening     Education     Completing Variety every day	Coach and swimmer meetings Swimmer being responsible for letting the couch know when they can't make training Self-awareness matrix	Setting own goals that an agreed with coach — constantly working on these in training     Showing a willingness to learn by asking questions for freedback
		PERFORMANCE BEHAVIOURS	PHYSCIALLY SUITABLE	COACHABLE	TECHNICALLY EXCELLEN
IANCE PONTENTIAL	INTERMEDIATE PERFORMANCE	Still facusing on process but starting to make resilent gask     Always wanting to learn     Showing long bean development	Knowing what works best for them in pre-pool     Making the right decisions with nubrition	Approximating the efforts of others to push themselves further     Series without all enough to know they are not perfect.     Open to feedback     Aptively working to change bed habits.	Training for all strokes – however may start to specialize on certain strokes/distances Constantly working on th best skills that they can d
FUTURE PERFORMANCE	HOW?	Education     Goal setting - process based, agreed with costs being challenged in staining and competition - and solvening will be learn and achieve     Roce process sheets	Attending all sessions     Attending pre- and post pool, and land work     Education on land work     and nurfation     Completing VVVVV every day	Coach and swimmer meetings Plenning feature into training and competition Good setting Self-awareness matrix	Medily based training     Skills are challenged in training (e.g. putting woggles in)     Stroke count, stroke rate fly lick count off walls, re breathing on first stroke
DEVELOPMENT	JUNIOR PERFORMANCE	Long term not chart too:     success     Lizening to feedback     Westing to advise but not     drain pacces – focusing	Furthering knowledge of pre and past pool     Furticipating in other sports, but learing towards more owlensing	Accepting heefback and not being dismissive     Building the foundations of	Training for all strokes - not specialising in one stroke or event.
PERFORMANCE DE	POTENTIAL ONE	Wanting to achieve but not chasing success - focusing on process not outcome	Busic understanding of pre- and post pool     Taking part in a variety of sports at a young age beveloping fundamental enventent patterns	a coach-shiene relationship • Respecting everyone around them	<ul> <li>Always working towards improving technique and skills</li> </ul>
FUTURE PER	HOW?	Code of conduct Galucation Goal setting process based, agreed with coach	Attending all sessions     Attending pre and post pool, and land work     Taking part in other sports and activities outside of submelor.	Getting to know the swimmer/cosch     Team bonding activities	Medley based training     Skills are challenged in training     Games worked into train to challenge but be fun.

			PERFORME				
		ARENA SKILLS	RACE CRAFT	PSYCHOLOGIC PREPARED		PHYSCIALLY PRIME	
GREAT BRITISH SWIMMER	SENIOR PERFORMANCE	being exiliant when facing the challenge of competitions     Styling bound and calm when the unexpected happean     Displaying the cornect body language – showing they want to be there     Displaying every aspect of your far	Goes into every race with a plan that is adoptable to the shaultion Understanding all factors that can affect a roce  bouldards their performance in a realistic way  Here significant experience competing at various levels	Remain calm an when fused with setback or press     Focused on the third race not the Ignore distraction them     Inset every day physically, ment emotionally	change, ure process of a outcome ns around	Has an individualised based and per-nos v up that are nehame adoptable to change	
THE GREAT B		Competitions planned to experience failure     Supporting team members in every race:     Away meets as a train international meets	experience failure  Supporting team members in every race Awar meets as a team  Participation  Race process sheets  Attandance at various meets of different levels to perfect processes		(group and a planned now how to	Individualized warm plan - pre pool, pool pool pool     Physic screening	
		LOVE RACE DAY	EXECUTE YOU	IR RACE PLAN	PERFO	RM WHEN IT MATTER	
IANCE PONTENTIAL	INTERMEDIATE PERFORMANCE	Seing shie handle both winning as loane,     Gan éeul with uncomfortable altus is, as ping from one race to anothe is ploying thomselves and remarks positive.     Setting a poof exemple on race of Competing at different levels whe will experience success and failure.	ations, Starting to focu but thinking ab ag get there	Surting to focus on certain outcomes but folialing about how they are going to get flows     Solis and subvirious are maintained under pressure.		perform in one event efter an sultiple events, heats and fina sing on their own performanc others are doing	
FUTURE PERFORMANCE	HOW?	Failure meets planned into season     Competing in various centris in an     Being supportive of their bean me during their sealons     Competing at a variety of differen     Arena League beam skills	e day   Race process of that they bear woggles in the woggles in the	neets is in training constantly so me engrained (e.g. having good on key setb)	Entering a variety of events over a weekend     Not withdrawing from an event unit is agreed with coach (e.g. injury)     Race process sheets     Always do finals unless performance decision not too		
JUNOR PERFORMANCE  Being part of a team and having fun Competing at some level 1 meets to get the experience and learn from them			Gouls remain p     outcome based to get	rocess orientation, not od skills, particularly and technique under	Learn one of and file to be the original or	ning how to do multiple swim fey. i.e. racing many events, I fruit etting how others are doing a your performances	
PERFORMANCE DEVEL	POTENTIAL ONE	Rating for experience, not chaing success     Being involved in the competitive but enjoying themselves     Being supportive of one another a patting upon that they were leaf teamwate.	Focusing on the	or skills and technique, ing a reflect on their swim	Engan event strok	rience swimming in a variety to in one disp, not just their fa es/invents	
FUTURE PER	HOW?	Competing on a regular basis     Competing in a wariety of competi     Entering a wariety of events     Taking part in team competitions     Being supportive of one another a others are racing	Films Working with the Learning how to sheeth Experience full to Learn how to be	Working with the couch on setting goods Learning-how to fill out race process sheets Experience failing Learn how to bounce back		Entering a variety of events at a competition. Being unconfurtable by swimming events they don't normally do Not withdrawing from events unleading with the count lag. Injury?	

			PERSON		
		FULFILLED	RESILIENT & ROBUST	ASPIRATIONAL	POSSESS A GROWTH MINDSET
BRITISH SWIMMER	SENIOR PERFORMANCE  Senior  Supportive of each other, irrespective of sporting success  Senior  Senior  Supportive of each other, irrespective of sporting success  Senior  They have their own identity within a group  Takes ownership of their actions and behaviours		Open to change     They are capable of learning from setbacks in a positive way     It is possible for them to cope with the demands of both training and competition  Always looking for ways to improve     Relentless towards their goals     Can make appropriate decisions both in and out of the pool     They are professional in how they conduct themselves, and someone to look up to		Always seeking advice and feedback, and then acting appropriately     Remaining positive when given feedback and not taking it as a criticism     Open to learning irrespective of the outcome
THE GREAT B	HOW?	Training camp Team bonding Away meets Planning Goal setting – more outcome based but still focusing on process, individual and team	Failure planned into training and competitions (failure week, overload)     Goal setting – agreed between coach and swimmer     Attendance	Discussions between coach and swimmer Goal setting – process Club captains Give back by assisting with lower squads (Potential and Academy squads)	Be comfortable with being uncomfortable     Swimmer and coach meetings     Planning     Education on goal setting

		ENJOYS THE JOURNEY	RESILIENT & ROBUST	DRIVEN	GOOD LEARNER	INDEPENDENT
FUTURE PERFORMANCE PONTENTIAL	INTERMEDIATE PERFORMANCE	Everyone has a shared goal and are supportive of one another     They capable of balancing swimming, school, and social     Focus on long-term results     Own identity within a group     Enjoying what they do	<ul> <li>Setbacks are an opportunity to learn</li> <li>They can remain calm in difficult situations</li> </ul>	Swimming is not a sacrifice but an opportunity to be the best that they can be     Motivated to achieve their goals     Goals are still process orientated	Takes on challenge with no hesitation Receives feedback positively Remain grounded and don't think they are above others	Being accountable for their own actions and behaviours     Managing their time between training and other commitments
	HOW?	Training camp Team bonding Away meets Planning Goal setting — individual and team	<ul> <li>Goal setting</li> <li>Plan failure into sessions</li> <li>Plan meets to fail</li> <li>Attendance</li> </ul>	Club structure – like minded Goal setting – progressive	Being challenged in training and competitions Education Getting to know the swimmer/coach Having a say on own development	Planning – school, swimming, social Swimmer and coach meetings Exam timetable balance

	PERFORMER							
		ARENA SKILLS	RACE CRAFT	PSYCHOLOGICALLY PREPARED	PHYSCIALLY PRIMED			
BRITISH SWIMMER	SENIOR PERFORMANCE	Being resilient when facing the challenge of competitions     Staying focused and calm when the unexpected happens     Displaying the correct body language – showing they want to be there     Enjoying every aspect of race day	Goes into every race with a plan that is adaptable to the situation     Understanding all factors that can affect a race     Evaluates their performance in a realistic way     Have significant experience competing at various levels	Remain calm and perform when faced with change, setback or pressure Focused on the process of their race not the outcome Ignore distractions around them Treat every day the same — physically, mentally, and emotionally	Has an individualised pool- based and pre-race warm up that are rehearsed and adaptable to change			
THE GREAT BI	HOW?	Competitions planned to experience failure     Supporting team members in every race     Away meets as a team     International meets	Race process sheets     Attendance at various     meets of different levels to     perfect processes	Psychology talks (group and individual) Challenge/failure planned into training – know how to deal with it	<ul> <li>Individualised warm up plan – pre pool, pool based, post pool</li> <li>Physio screening</li> </ul>			

As mentioned, the crucial part for us is to make use of the OADF and turn it into something that is tangible and real within the daily training environment. The coaches, athletes (and ideally, parents) all need to 'live' this and gain more understanding on how to get closer to what it means to be "The Great British Swimmer". There is no point in just printing off the OADF and asking swimmers to become more like "this"... the swimmers/parents need to be educated and developed through the OADF every session, week, cycle and year through conversations, training, competitions and meetings etc.

In addition to the various ways of developing the attributes of the OADF its important to enable your athletes to review where they feel they 'fit with it' at the moment; and regularly revaluate the **progress** or **regression** they have made on various areas.

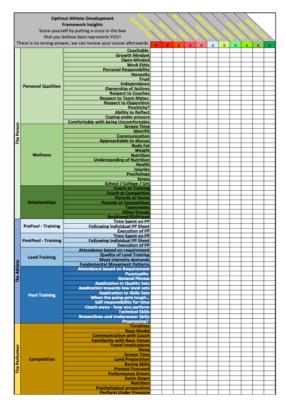
Successful performance outcomes (or negative performance outcomes) at important meets like 'Trials' or the 'benchmark meet' are a result of various factors and many swimmers (and coaches) can lack the insight into what those factors are. It's not just as simple as "I've done the work, why am I not improving?" There are always hidden 'blind spots' that coaches aren't aware off, indeed, the swimmers, as well! i.e. do swimmers recognise the impact that their action or inaction has, when it matters.

We've decided to look into this as a club and we have created (draft 1) of our own "club swimmer insight" tool. This simple questionnaire provides direction to our **conversations** and prioritises areas for the coach and athlete to work on. It also (when required) gives parents more of a "rational" understanding as to why their swimmer is (or isn't) making the desired progress. It creates deeper buy-in to the programme and this overall helps to drive the programme.

We asked swimmers to rate themselves from effectively: -5 to +5 with 0 being deemed "average". Ratings below:



The swimmers had to answer various questions on how **THEY** perceived/saw themselves against each area/question. Below is the overall questionnaire document (if coaches would like to have a copy, please get in touch)



### Example questions asked are around the three key areas of the OADF:

- The Person
- The Athlete
- The Performer

#### **Questions like:**

- The Person, rate:
  - How coachable are you?
  - Honest you are?
  - Your personal responsibility...
  - General nutrition...
  - Positivity?

#### - The Athlete, rate:

- Application to quality sets...
- Application to skills sets...
- Application when your lead coach is away...
- Time spent on Injury risk reduction/pre & post pool?

## - The Performer, rate:

- Screen time at competitions (phone/tablet use etc)
- Sleep at away meets
- Relationship with parents at target meets
- Relationship with coach(es) at target meets
- Nutrition

## **Final thoughts**

We have found that utilising the OADF in "bite-sized" chunks (relating to each athlete and each athlete's situation) has really helped to direct and inform conversations between athletes (including whole squads) and their coaches. The majority of athletes we are working with at Wycombe (in the performance section) are of youth age and their maturity levels are, of course, continually developing. Through integrating the OADF project into our training programme it has enabled our athletes to develop a greater understanding of their strengths, areas for development, and their blind spots! It also helps them to rationalise many situations and keep things simple, calm and in context.

This is only a snapshot of what we are doing at Wycombe and should any coaches wish to discuss this topic further, or discuss anything relating to our programme, then please contact me on <a href="mailto:headcoach@swimwycombe.com">headcoach@swimwycombe.com</a> ... Love a chat!

#### Kevin Brooks, Head Coach, Wycombe District Swimming Club

[Special thanks go to WDSC coaches Joe Evans & Josh Atkins on their work and support on this club project]