

## Ralph McManis – Open Water Training



## THE COURSE

- Check the course beforehand, even swim it the day before
- Find landmarks that you can use to navigate the turning buoys
- Check cap and goggles, sunscreen etc. are suitable to today's race conditions
- Liaise with your feeder if 10 K or more and how and where you wish to be fed
- Register early so you can prepare and be ready for your wave start
- Position yourself where you want to start with your swim group



## SIGHTING

- A finely honed ability to sight is another important skill of experienced open water swimmers.
- During your warm-up or cool-down, pick an object at the end of the lane: an exit sign, a window, a life ring, etc.
- Raise your head slightly without disrupting your horizontal body axis, locate the object and return to your breathing rotation.



## BREATHING

- Bilateral breathing goes hand in hand with sighting skills. Sometimes difficult to master initially, it's one of the most valuable skills you can develop.
- Practice during every single pool workout. It takes up to 15,000 muscle repetitions to reprogram your body so be patient. The payback is three-fold.
- Your neck muscles become more balanced.
- You improve your sighting since you now can look in two directions during choppy water conditions.



## HIGH RECOVERY ELBOW & LONG BODY POSITION

- In pool swimming, the focus is on one perfect stroke after another.
- In choppy water, you frequently need to adapt your stroke to water conditions.
- Maintain a high recovery elbow so the waves don't wash over your arm.
- Wait 'til the wave/chop conditions are right and then quickly thrust your hand and arm back into the water.
- A longer body position is also essential to prevent you from being bounced about like a rag doll.



## MULTIPLE SPEEDS

- Experienced open water swimmers swim at a quick steady pace throughout the race.
- However, they also can speed it up when necessary to overtake another swimmer
- Or to break away from the pack
- Or to move from one pack of swimmers to another



## SOME OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Drafting
- The pack will always swim faster than the individual swimmer
- Secure your race timing bands
- Check your race suit is FINA approved
- Check feeder rules and regulations
- Experiment with drink and gels before race day
- Check the finish rules of each race

Thank you

