

News For

# SWIM

# PARENTS

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## Two A Day Swim Practices When Should the Athlete Start?

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When looking at the possibility of beginning two a day workouts for an athlete it is important to consider three things:

1. Age
2. What events the athlete is training for
3. The goals of the athlete

Over the years some of the top sprinters in the world have not begun swimming until their mid-teens. With this in mind, two a day practices with some sprint athletes must be handled with great planning and understanding. Young sprinters can be overwhelmed with the workload of two a day practices and may be chased out of our sport.

On the other hand, distance swimmers who are interested in competing as distance swimmers must start two a day practices as soon as the individual athlete is ready. The age of 12 for males and maybe younger for some females is our guideline. Distance swimmers must develop a base level of aerobic

conditioning which requires years of training. Distance swimming and training is an art just like sprinting.

The goals of the athlete are also important in determining the age to start two a day practices. Normally, swimmers who have the ability to swim fast want to begin two a day training sessions early on in their career.

Over the years, I have tried different combinations of two a day training. During the school year I have found the following schedule to be successful:

- Monday, Wednesday, Friday, from 5:00 am to 7:00 am.
- Saturday from 9 - 11 am.
- Afternoon workouts on Monday through Friday from 4 - 6 pm.

This schedule allows us to train at our maximum four days a week and rest the other three days a week.

The best two a day practice schedule is the one that enhances the development of the athlete.

The athlete needs to have fun and needs to want to achieve success.

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This article is reprinted from the ASCA archives. Coach Blair passed on in 2006. He was recognized as one of the great sprint coaches and a great team builder. He developed John Hargis to an Olympic gold medal and his Arkansas Dolphins swim team won the men's national team title in 1989.