

Basic Pool Recovery Session

by
Angela Calder

Pools are excellent environments in which to conduct recovery activities after hard sessions or games. Both active and passive recovery techniques can be used depending on the temperature of the water in the pool. During active recovery work, water provides buoyancy and resistance properties that allow the individual to undertake exercise with minimum impact on the body. Immersing the body in cool water (e.g. 22 - 28°C) following hard exercise minimises post exercise oedema and much of the ensuing residual tension, as a result of the hydrostatic pressure experienced by the immersed body parts. These factors together with water's capacity for efficient heat transfer enhance the effectiveness of recovery techniques post game or training.

Note: Any activity requires energy. If the initial focus of the post-exercise/game recovery is to recovery energy stores, then this session can be conducted the morning following a late afternoon or evening game to allow for appropriate food and fluid intake to restore muscle glycogen and protein stores.

Duration of session:	10 - 15 minutes (depending on the size of the pool, number of athletes, and recency of game/competition)
Intensity:	Light to moderate
Formation/work pattern:	Follow the Leader (walk along side of pool, one behind the other, in a rectangular formation).

Preparation: Athletes should be showered and rehydrated (sports drink or appropriate fluid) before the session begins. Each person should locate his/her drink bottle on the side of the pool for the duration of the session. Drinks (water, sports drink, or cordial) should be taken regularly throughout the session, e.g. every 5 min or after the lap sequences.

NB. Laps should be done at a moderate to fast pace to keep athletes warm enough for stretching. Stretches are done against the wall/side of the pool. A shallow pool (e.g. waist to chest deep) is preferable as deep pools are more difficult to stretch in.

Pool Activity	Lap or Reps
Laps	
Walk forward with arm swings*	1 lap
Walk backwards with arm swings*	1 lap
Side steps with flapping arms* (L)	1 lap
Side steps with flapping arms* (R)	1 lap
Backstroke	2 laps
Drink / Hydrate	
Stretches	
Calves (R) & (L)	2 each side
Shins (R) & (L)	2 each side
Laps	
Side stroke (L)	1 lap
Side stroke (R)	1 lap
Walk forwards with arm swings*	1 lap
Walk backwards with arm swings*	1 lap
Lunges with shoulder outward rotations* (elbows bent into side – <i>Flasher</i>)	1 lap
Backstroke	1 lap
Drink / Hydrate	
Stretches	
Adductors (R) & (L)	2 each side
Quads (thighs) (R) & (L)	2 each side
Bottom (R) & (L)	2 each side
Laps	
Side steps with flapping arms* (L)	1 lap
Side steps with flapping arms* (R)	1 lap
Hurdle steps forwards	1 lap
Hurdle steps backwards	1 lap
Side stroke (L)	1 lap
Side stroke (R)	1 lap
Drink / Hydrate	
Stretches	
Face wall - standing hip rotations (R)	10 reps x 2 sets
Face wall - standing hip rotations (L)	10 reps x 2 sets
Outward rotator stretch for hip (R) & (L)	2 each side
Hamstring (partner held) (R) & (L)	2 each side
Drink / Hydrate	

**Keep hands underwater to increase resistance*

Shower after pool work and complete upper body stretches in the shower:

Triceps (R) & (L)	2 each side
Lats (R) & (L)	2 each side
Pecs/chest (R) & (L)	2 each side
Neck (R) & (L)	2 each side

If there are no recent injuries or bruising, and no colds or viruses, then contrast temperatures can be used in the shower: 1 - 2 min hot, and 10 - 60 secs cold. (repeat three times). Drink / hydrate to finish.