

# **The Health Related Exercise Programme**

By Jonny Elworthy 4B

This coursework is an overall assessment on a programme, which I have been doing for six weeks. The sport I will be doing for this assessment is swimming. I will go to my local health club and do ten lengths in the quickest time possible. I will perform front crawl and the components of fitness I will be trying to improve are speed and power.

I will be trying to improve speed and by timing myself if I improve my speed I should finish quicker than the week before, as I get better and fitter. I have chosen swimming as it is a sport which I am not very strong at therefore my improvement should be much more over 6 weeks than say football or cricket. Both sports I feel I am quite strong in.

Power of course is very important in a sport like swimming. Not in sharp bursts, but in maintained levels of power which are needed to pull yourself through the water which requires power all the way through. Towards the end of the ten lengths say from about the seventh you are very tired and you need more power than normal to keep you going at a decent speed. So if I am finishing in a quicker time then I must be using more power to do so, and as I get fitter the more power I will be able to use whilst swimming.

Now I am a fairly fit bloke and do a lot of sports so I do not really need to test my fitness prior to this assessment as I know already that I am quite fit. But to make sure I am 100% certain I did an 800M run and finished in quite a good time of 2 minutes 12 seconds proving my fitness.

The principles of training in this assessment are followed pretty well I feel as swimming is the right sport to increase both speed and power and I felt that I am really pushing myself in the activity to get the best results possible and am fully committed and I follow my plan each week and am making progress each week which is what I should be doing to make the assessment work.

The pool was indoors so there was no problem with the weather and I really liked going up to the health club with my dad every Sunday evening and there was no way that I would get bored. I would get to have a steam room and a sauna afterwards which no one is going to turn down so I knew that by putting all my effort into my swimming that I would be rewarded afterwards. I would be very committed beforehand and would put my all into doing my best and getting better results each week and I would also be absolutely shattered after my ten lengths. Here is what I did when I got to the health club every Sunday night:

### **How I would carry out my tests**

I would arrive at the health club and get changed into my swimming shorts (shorts slow me down in the water which requires more power), But then instead of going straight in I would sit down and take my resting heart rate in beats per minute. I would make sure I did not do anything that would make my heart rate rise on my way to the health club so that my resting heart rate would be reliable. Once in the swimming pool area I would do a few stretches to warm myself up along with two lengths of very slow and relaxed breaststroke to get a feel for the water and get my muscles warmed up and ready for the swim. I would then rest for about a minute or so to give my heart rate a chance to go back down to near resting heart rate and then when I was ready my dad would give me a starting call and start his watch and off I would go. I did not realise how tiring this would be and nearly quit after the first week to change to something else because it was so bad but I am very glad I didn't. My dad would officially count the ten lengths but I would be counting in my head but would easily loose count as I was so concentrated on my swimming. Then putting all my effort into the last few lengths to take a crucial few seconds off my time I would get to the end where my dad would stop his watch and record my time. But I would not stop there. I would record my heart rate again as soon as I had finished so that is was beating as fast as possible. Then I would relax in the water for five minutes and then I would take my heart rate again to see how much it had dropped. I would take my heart rate straight after and after five minutes whilst still in the water and I think this may have had an effect on how my heart rate changed. Then after all my hard work it was two lengths of slow relaxed breaststroke and a few stretched which I held for a bit longer to get rid of lactic acid then straight in the steam room and sauna as my nice big reward!

I would record my results in a table like this :

<b>Week</b>	<b>Resting Heart Rate (Beats per minute)</b>	<b>Time taken to complete 10 lengths (Front crawl)</b>	<b>Heart Rate when finished (Difference in brackets)</b>	<b>Heart rate 5 minutes after completing 10 lengths</b>
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

6				
---	--	--	--	--

As you can see I would also put the difference of my heart rate from when resting to when just finished, as it would give a brief idea of how much effort of power I had put in to that particular swim. My aim was to have been at least 1 minute quicker by week 6 then I had been at week 1.

### **Completed results and diary of each week**

I will now do a diary of each week now to show you how I felt each session went good and bad.

First of all though here is my completed results table after six weeks of hard work.

Week	Resting Heart Rate (Beats per minute)	Time taken to complete 10 lengths (Front crawl)	Heart Rate when finished (Difference in brackets)	Heart rate 5 minutes after completing 10 lengths
1	86	7m 8s	134 (48)	98
2	72	4m 30s	132 (60)	88
3	66	4m 32s	132 (66)	106
4	68	4m 30s	132 (64)	94
5	60	4m 25s	128 (68)	86
6	62	4m 27s	130 (68)	84

### **Week 1**

Week one was strange week for me. I had not done any proper competitive swimming for a very long time and I was quite nervous about other people in the pool who all seemed to be doing breaststroke.

Remember this was a health club and I was going to be bombing down the pool doing front crawl and splashing everyone. It took me a very long time to finally get going and that was after my dad had convinced me to do so. I stayed by the left side of the pool and my dad swam inside of me so that no one got in my way.

The actual swim I found very hard and I was actually concerned about people around me as well so I found it hard to go flat out. I did though but my time was not very good. 7m 8 s at the time when I thought about it did not seem that bad but after a few weeks I realised that it was pretty poor to say the least.

## **Week 2**

This week was a lot better. I was a lot more confident and other people in the pool did not bother me. It was also a lot quieter this week than the previous one as it was such a nice day outside so people did not want to be inside. I had got used to swimming again the week before so this week my performance was a lot more positive and it showed in my time. I knocked two and half minutes off last weeks time with a time of 4m 30s and I couldn't believe it! I thought there must have been a mistake like I had only swam eight lengths or something but I had not and future weeks would prove this. Afterwards though I was concerned that I would not be able to keep that standard up and that I might go back to the seven -minute mark. But that first week just turned out to be a week of getting used to the sport again and nerves which affected my performance dramatically.

## **Week 3**

A strange week this one! I had a very bad back because I had injured it in a football match earlier on in the day but my performance was still pretty solid. I got a time a few seconds slower than the week before of 4m 32s and I knew that the time set last week was going to be tough to beat. But what was strange was my heart rate hardly came down after my five - minute rest. It had only dropped 26 beats per minute in all that time where as the previous week it had dropped 44 beats per minute. I am not sure why but it must have just been a small error because things were soon back too normal after that. Another thing I noticed was that my resting heart rate was getting lower which meant I was getting fitter. My resting heart rate was now 66 beats per minute as opposed to week 1 where it was 86 beats per minute. This assessment was going well

## **Week 4**

Another good week again as I managed to equal my best time set in week 2 of 4m 30s. But my heart rates were better showing I was fitter which probably meant I should have done better this time round. Maybe I was a bit over confident but that is a good thing but maybe I was a bit too much this week. Never the less it was still a good week and I was making steady progress as I got fitter and for the third week running I got a heart rate of 132 beats per minute straight after I had finished which was quite interesting. I noticed that I felt a lot fitter this week as well. I was able to really go for it at the end and I was pacing myself well and I was now used to the task and a better swimmer.

### **Week 5**

My best week in the assessment overall as I felt good from start to finish and took a full five seconds of my best time with a time of 4m 25s as well as my heart rate coming down a lot after my five minute rest showing my fitness was improving rapidly. The pool was near empty this week which gave me complete freedom when swimming as I did not have to worry about splashing people or other worries and I was really up for it this week after being so close to getting my fastest time last week I was determined to do it this time around and I gave it everything. I was nearly sick at the end and got severe cramp in my calf whilst doing my warm down causing me to nearly drown. My dad also said that my front crawl action looked a lot more relaxed and better which means that I am actually becoming learning how to swim better as I go through this assessment without even knowing it! Superb.

### **Week 6**

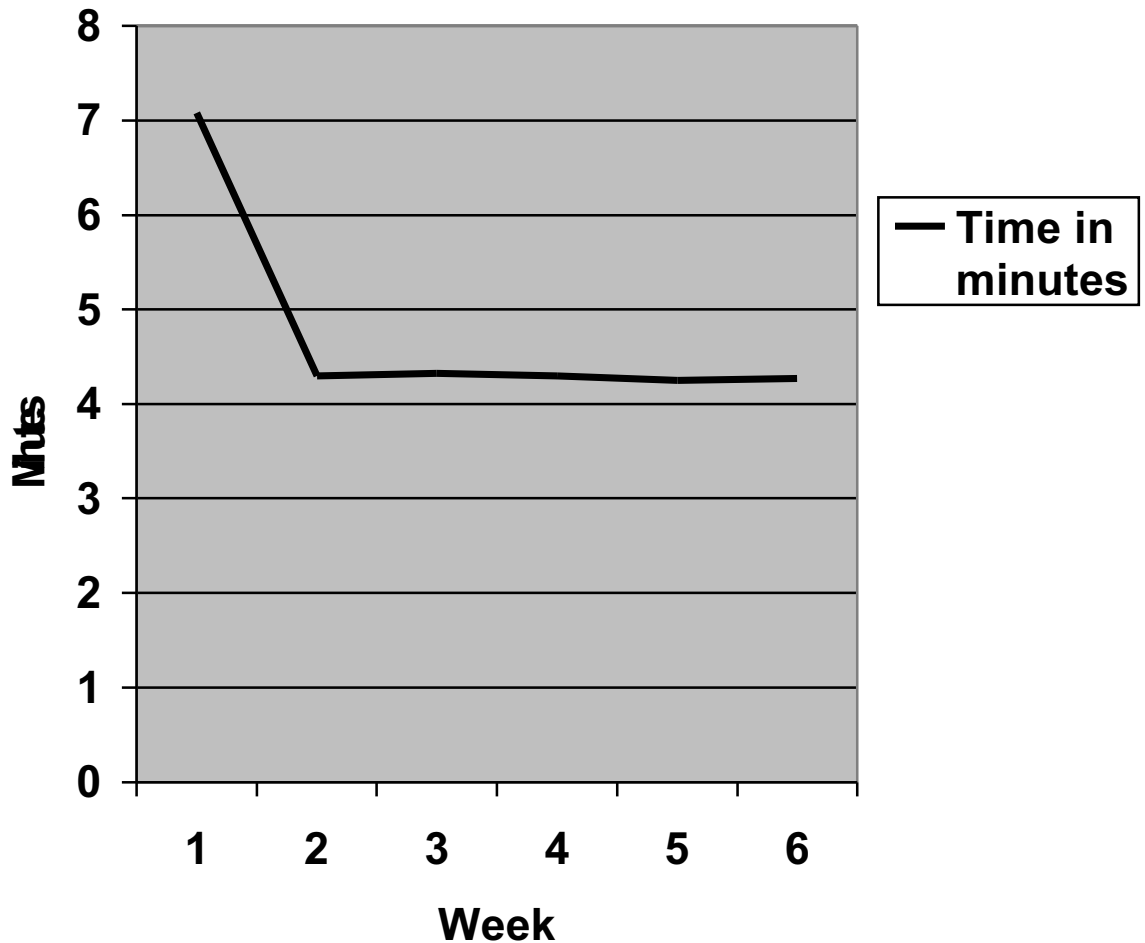
The final week of my practical assessment and maybe this affected me a bit as I did not control my swim at all trying to go flat out at the start which caused my last few lengths to be slower than they should have been as I had nothing left. I did though get a time of a couple of seconds slower with 4m 27s but a good sign was that my heart rate after my five-minute rest had recovered even more. I had certainly gained a lot by doing this assessment and I think doing swimming a sport that I was not that good at really helped me get fitter as well and I think it was more enjoyable as well because I had no idea how I would do when I first started out.

### **Evaluation**

My results have been pretty good although there was the one different week where my results were a bit odd and I have really shown how I have progressed throughout the assessment.

Speed was one of the components of fitness I was trying to improve and I have made a graph below, which shows how my speed improved over the weeks. Speed testing was achieved by timing myself over 10 lengths.

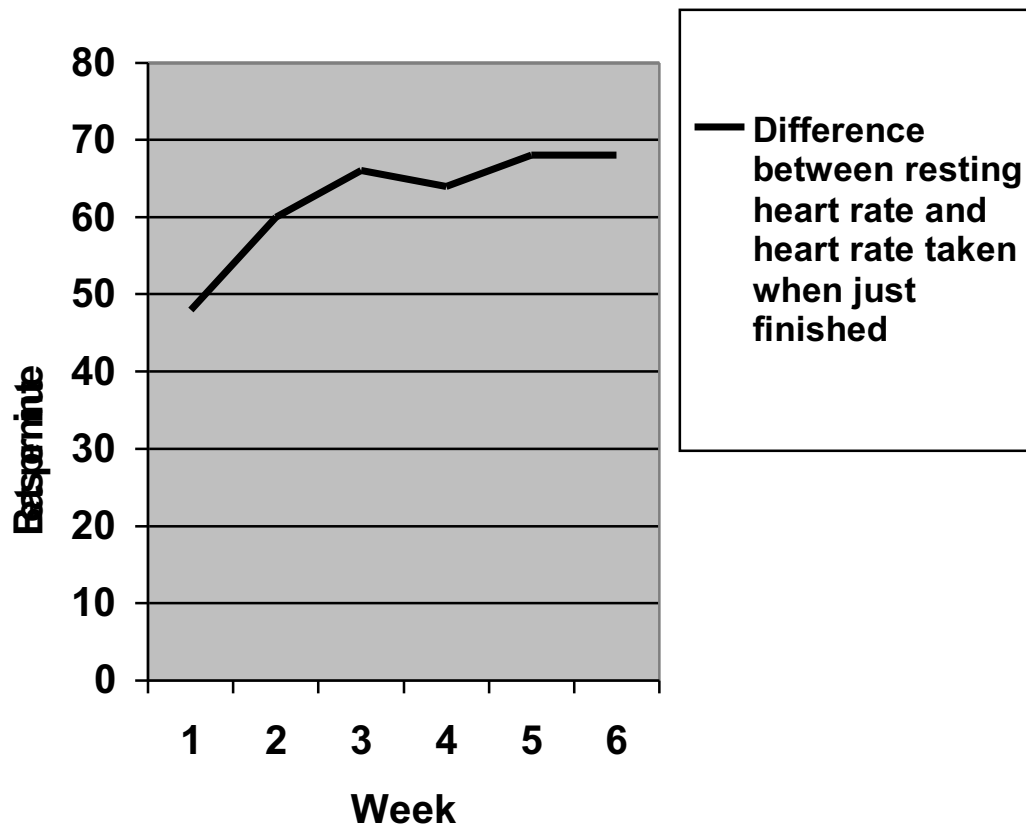
## Time Graph



This chart shows how in week 1 I really had to get used to the swimming and the surroundings and weeks 2-6 were really about getting the fastest times possible but it seems that week 2 was so good that it was hard to make a significant advance of that time. My speed improvement though was quite good.

Power is also measured by the time as the quicker you go the more power you are using but I also think another pointer to help show the power used is the difference between the resting heart rate and the heart rate taken just after I finished. I have made another graph below to show this.

## Difference Graph



Again this is a good chart to show how much I have improved in what I have set out to do as again my power improvement has got better the further into the assessment I have got.

I think that this particular programme is was perfect in testing what I wanted to especially as I am a fairly average swimmer and before testing I had hardly swam competitively at all apart from in the school swimming gala. I feel that it has improved my overall swimming ability aswell and that the testing methods I used were very effective and the tests and results I were taking were perfect for what I need to find out.

My results were definitely accurate as my dad was testing and I got similar results a couple of weeks which double confirmed that my results were accurate.

As I said earlier I never got bored as it was a health club and I got steam rooms and saunas to reward my hard work. Motivation was a problem sometimes though. I would always have a football match before going down to the gym so I would be a bit tired although I did have a decent rest in between. But then I had a bad back and the last week I found it hard to get motivated as I was really not in the mood and did not feel up

to it. But sometimes I would be really pumped up for it and couldn't wait to get down to the health club.

I think that if I did it again I would use all the same methods that I did this time round as I feel that they were perfect for what I was testing. So in that department I think that no changes would be made if I did this assessment again.

This programme has had a huge effect on me. Apart from the obvious affects like making me fitter and improving my speed and strength aswell as other aspects I have also found out that I now enjoy swimming a lot more and have learnt a lot of useful information about swimming and fitness and how it effects your body and how you can make certain areas better by doing certain exercises.

I still go to the health club regularly and sometimes I do 10 lengths of front crawl and I think that if I did it again now I could get a time of 4m 10s because I have become so much more fitter then I was before and am confident in myself that I can achieve certain things, none of which I would of thought I could do when I got in the pool on week 1. My dad also helped me a lot with useful information about how I was doing. For instance I was taking too long at the end of each length to tur n around and he told me quick ways to do so and how to breathe better whilst swimming that fast aswell.

Overall the test has been very useful and I think that I have achieved what I set out to do and I tried as hard as I could and I think that it really showed at the end of each session when I felt sick because I was so tired especially that week when I got cramp in the warm down and nearly drowned! I just hope I can keep my fitness levels up now I have got them there and have stopped the testing. I will make sure I continue to go to the health club regularly and although I will not be doing front crawl I will do a exercise which pushes me so that I can keep this decent level of fitness that I have obtained through doing this project.