

Making a splash: Mood responses and swimming performance
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The relationship between mood and swimming performance was investigated in three studies. In Study 1, pre-competition mood scores of 354 age group swimmers (193 males, 161 females, $M = 13.9$ yr., $SD = 1.7$ yr.) were used to predict performance, which was self-referenced against personal best time and time goals. Mood scores predicted 24% of performance variance, with low depression and low fatigue the best indicators of good performance. Good performances could be correctly classified in 81% of cases. Methods were replicated in Study 2 among 348 swimmers (199 males, 149 females, $M = 13.9$ yr., $SD = 1.8$ yr.). Again, mood scores predicted 24% of performance variance, with depression and fatigue the best predictors. Good performances could be correctly classified in 83% of cases. In Study 3, 24 swimmers (7 males, 17 females, $M = 12.8$ yr., $SD = 2.1$ yr.) were assessed over 4 – 10 swimming competitions. Idiographic analyses revealed highly individualised relationships between mood and swimming performance. Specifically, mood scores explained between 1% and 86% of performance variance across individual swimmers. Overall, results generally supported the proposals of a theoretical model, which emphasises the pivotal role of depressed mood. Swimming performance appears to be mood-dependent but individual differences are substantial.