



WHAT IS THE MICRO LEAGUE?

The swimming Micro League of the North West is one of eleven leagues that are affiliated to *The Arena Junior Inter-League Swimming Competition*. The North West League is split into four divisions (A, B, & C) and swimmers compete in events for their age group and gender. Teams in each league compete in **FOUR** matches against other teams in the same division. Points are awarded based on the position within each event (four points for first place down to one point for fourth place). The total points in all events, in all four meets contribute to the final position of a club within their division.

WHO COMPETES?

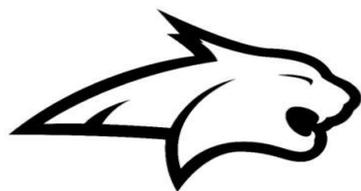
The competition is for swimmers aged 9 to 12 years. A minimum of four boys and 4 girls are usually needed in each of the 9, 10, 11- and 12-years age groups.

- Age groups shall be determined by the age of the swimmer as at midnight on the last Sunday in November in the year of the competition.
- For the 2023 competition this will be Sunday 26th November.

HOW IS THE COMPETITION ORGANISED?

To decide the overall annual winner of the North West Micro League, the top four teams from the North West's Division A teams will compete in a final match during September. The winning team from this final progresses to the Northern Finals. If they are successful and win the Northern Final this club will be entered for the National Final where they will swim against the finalists from all the other regions top Micro-League swimming clubs.

For Division B & C, the competition is not quite over yet! The top two teams from Division B and the bottom two teams from Division A compete in a swim-off on the same day as the final. This match will determine either the promotion or the relegation of those teams. The top two teams from these swim-offs will then compete the following year in Division A, with the bottom two teams competing in Division B. There are similar swim-offs between the bottom two teams from Division B and the top two from Division C, again these matches will determine the relegation or promotion of these teams for the following year.



BOBCATS

EVENTS AT EACH GALA

These galas are a combination of individual and relay races. All the below races are swum for both male and female:

Year Group	Individual Races (Div. A)	Individual Races (Div. B/C)	Relay Races
9 Year Olds	25 metres Butterfly 50 metres all other strokes	25 metres all strokes	Freestyle & Medley (25m)
10 Year Olds	50 metres all strokes	25 metres Butterfly 50 metres all other strokes	Freestyle & Medley (25m)
11 Year Olds	50 metres all strokes	50 metres all strokes	Freestyle & Medley (25m)
12 Year Olds	50 metres all strokes	50 metres all strokes	Freestyle & Medley (25m)

In addition to the above 48 events there is 1 cannon race at the end to finish the gala. This is where one male and one female from each year group take part in a freestyle relay race.

HOW ARE TEAMS SELECTED?

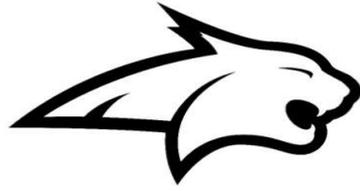
The Assistant Head Coach will select swimmers for the Micro League team by analysing the competition data for each age and gender group to decide which swimmers have the fastest times.

Time Trials will also be held during your normal sessions to assess swimmers speed and race skills; these will provide us with valuable information for 9- and 10-year olds who may not have any competition data and give all swimmers an opportunity to stake their claim for a place.

SUPPORTING YOUR SWIMMER

This may be your child's first experience of team selection, so it is very important that you support them irrespective of their success or disappointment. Team selection is not an indication of whether the coaches feel a swimmer is 'the best' or not. It is important your child is aware of this and you remind them that there are lots of opportunities in the coming year to compete as an individual and for the club.

Swimmers who are not selected will still be able to gain competitive experience in the North East Lancashire Friendly League and open meets that arise during the season. The most important thing to remember is your child's journey as a swimmer, every child is on their own path, developing at their own rate.



BOBCATS

IF YOUR SWIMMER IS SELECTED

Once swimmers have been selected for the team, coaches will organise which races each swimmer will compete in. As a parent of a swimmer you will only know this information at the event. Therefore, it is essential you do not confuse your swimmer by making suggestions about the races you think they will be competing in. Sometimes a swimmer may only compete in one race. It is essential you reinforce to your swimmer that this one race is as important as any other race in that competition and they should not be disappointed. As a parent you must not assume because your child is only competing in one race their contribution is not valued – it is. The coaches make selections that are for the benefit of the team, their priority is making sure all swimmers enjoy the experience of competing for their club. Please respect the difficult choices that must be made in preparation for each match. Please note, Coaches and Team Managers will be very busy on the day of a swimming match and they may be unable to discuss anything with you unless it is an emergency e.g. regarding the immediate health of your swimmer or if your swimmer cannot race that day.

TEAM BUS

There may be occasions where a team bus is provided, parents will be notified in advance if swimmers are expected to travel together.

EQUIPMENT

On the day, your swimmer will need to have a waterproof sports bag (that they can carry) to take with them onto the poolside. It is important that they have all their equipment to hand as Team Managers and Coaches will not be able to individually find parents to collect spare equipment.

Inside their bag, the swimmers should have the following equipment:

x2 pairs of goggles & a club swimming cap – goggles break all the time! Please ensure swimmers have two pairs as they will need them over the coming year, especially when racing.

x2 towels – one for poolside and one for drying themselves with later.

A spare set of jammers/costume – just in case!

A T-shirt to wear in-between races - swimmers will get very cold waiting around for their races, this equipment is essential for keeping them dry and warm poolside. Bobcats sell club T-shirts specifically for this purpose, these can be ordered in advance via the club website.

Drinks –Water or very diluted cordial in a large drinks bottle.



Snacks – Swimmers need healthy snacks to maintain their energy. Fruit, Cereal/Muesli bars, Rice cakes, yoghurt pouches, mini pancakes and flapjacks are all great snacks that work well poolside.

Sweets, Chocolate Bars and Fizzy/Energy drinks should not be consumed on poolside.

WHEN ARE THE MATCHES?

The matches take place between February and July each year.

Team selection is a big commitment that from both parent and swimmer. If selected, it is expected that you will compete on the day; please ensure that you are available for each match.

Match fixtures are decided at the Micro League AGM in January, details will be sent to parents as soon as these have been confirmed.

IF THERE ARE ANY DATES THAT YOUR SWIMMER CANNOT MAKE OR IF THERE IS A LAST-MINUTE CHANGE IN CIRCUMSTANCES PLEASE INFORM THE COACHES / TEAM MANAGER AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY TO ALLOW OTHER ARRANGEMENTS TO BE MADE. A LATE WITHDRAWAL BY A SINGLE SWIMMER MAY MEAN THAT THEIR WHOLE RELAY TEAM HAS TO BE WITHDRAWN FROM BOTH THEIR RACES.

For more information and to follow the league results as they happen visit:
<http://www.microleaguennw.org.uk/>