



## COMPETING GUIDE (March 2019)

### 1. Club's Aim

The aim of the Club is to allow all swimmers to realise their potential as competitive swimmers. This aim can be achieved through a combination of commitment from swimmers and parents, high quality coaching and strong communication ties between all parties.

### 2. Meet Types

(i) **Club Galas (Level 4)** – the Club hosts 3 internal galas every year. The Winter Gala takes place at the end of each calendar year and is open to all 9-12 year olds; this is often combined with a Time Trial for 13yrs & Over athletes. The results are used to help in the selection of the Junior League team (see (ii) below) for that year. In addition, the Summer and Autumn Galas are open to all Club members and are run in a FINA Points format and the points scoring events are specific for each age group and relate to their stage in development.

(ii) **Junior League** – the Club competes in the Northumberland & Durham District Junior League Series. This event is open to 9-12 year olds (age as of the 31<sup>st</sup> December). Each Club competes in three heats, usually held in January to June and then the top 6 clubs compete in the divisional final usually held in September. Selection for this series is made based on times, although opportunities will be given to novice swimmers if possible.

(iii) **Graded Meets (Level 2 or 3)** – This essentially means that there are cut-off times (i.e. swimmers cannot be faster than a certain time for each event). In many meets there are also qualifying times (i.e. swimmers cannot be slower than a certain time for each event). This allows the meet to be pitched at a certain level of swimmer. This level of competition acts as qualifying events for open and championship events (outlined below)

(iv) **Open Meets (Level 1 or 2)** – these are usually at a much higher level than Graded Meets and swimmers will need to obtain qualifying times to compete.

(v) **Championship Meets (Level 1)** – these are the target meets every year. There are three levels – County level (N&Ds), Regional level (NERs) and National level. All swimmers who qualify for these meets are required to compete as the training programme is designed around these high-profile events.

### **3. Procedure for entering**

The Club has now moved to e-mail as the primary form of communication. Please ensure that the Club has a current e-mail address for every swimmer and that the account is checked regularly.

Details of all meets will be distributed by the Competition Secretary by email and will be placed under the 'calendar' tab on the website, along with the specific details of the competition (i.e. events, times, closing dates etc.).

Please note the deadline set will be fixed to allow entries to be compiled, payments to be reconciled and entries to be sent. The Club cannot jeopardise missing the entry deadline which may result in all the Club's entries being rejected so please ensure entries and payment for entries is completed in advance of the closing date.

(i) Club Galas – parents must enter swimmers into the Club Galas and are encouraged to consult with the squad coach as to which events are most appropriate.

(ii) Junior League / Team Galas – the team will be selected, and a team list will be distributed. There is not usually an entry fee for these galas.

(iii) All other external meets – The competition calendar is tailored so swimmers get the right amount of competition exposure at specific stages in development. The competition secretary distributes the competition information to the eligible squads and parents/guardians are asked to either email their entries or complete the online entry system (with payment), prior to the closing date. Parents/Guardians should liaise with squad coaches as to which events to enter as this may differ depending on the time of year. Swimmers should not compete in more than two events per session unless instructed to do so.

As with all Club matters, please speak to someone if you have any questions about the entry procedure or why a swimmer has or has not been selected for a particular meet. There may be a specific reason behind it, or it may be an oversight; so please do speak to the squad coach if in doubt. Please speak to coaches before or after sessions and not during the training sessions as this will detract from the quality of coaching on offer.

#### **How to enter competitions using TeamUnify / OnDeck App:**

##### **Online Entry:**

- 1) Click on the Calendar tab on the website
- 2) Click on the Team Events, then find the appropriate meet to enter
- 3) Click on the Edit Commitment, then scroll down to member and click on their name
- 4) To select events, Click Yes, please sign name up for this event
- 5) Event list will appear, then select the events you wish to enter by clicking the tick box on the left hand side, Click Save changes.
- 6) Pay by bank transfer or put cheque in the red box at Freemans Quay
- 7) Await confirmation of entries from the Competition Secretary

##### **Entry via the App (OnDeck is available via any app store):**

- 1) Open app and Click on the menu tab in the top left corner
- 2) Click on Events, then Events & Meet Entries
- 3) Find the appropriate meet to enter, the Click Declare
- 4) Follow steps 4 through 7 as above.

#### **4. Preparation for Meets**

1. Friday Night Training – if you normally train on a Friday night, please do NOT miss this session before a meet. On certain occasions coaches will ask some or all swimmers competing at a gala to finish early the night before to allow them some additional rest.
2. Know Where & When – make sure you know which pool the meet is at, on which day, and at what time.
3. Know What Events & What Sessions – swimmers must know what events they are swimming in each session so that they can be fully prepared.
4. Eat Right – good nutrition and careful planning can make a big difference make sure you are eating properly in the WEEK leading up to a meet.
5. If In Doubt, Ask – it is always better to ask if you are unsure as to any aspect of competing. The coaches/Club officials have probably heard every question before so don't be scared to ask. There is no such thing as a stupid question.
6. If a swimmer is ill or unable to attend, please contact your coach and the Competition Secretary as soon as possible so that the swimmer can be withdrawn.

#### **5. On the Day**

1. Be Early – swimmers who are not on poolside at the time stated on the “Pre-Meet Information” sheet are liable to be withdrawn. At some meets, the Club is fined if swimmers are not withdrawn and do not compete. Make sure you set off in plenty of time, especially if you have never been to the pool before.
2. Think What To Bring – here is a non-exhaustive list:  
Swimwear (plus spares), Goggles (plus spare), Club Hat (plus spare), Plenty of Water/Juice, Towels (1 per session + an additional 1 for afterward), Club Kit (all named), appropriate Footwear (poolside shoes/crocs/sandals etc), healthy food...  
  
Even at a short meet, swimmers will need snacks to keep their energy levels high. Take some healthy snacks – fruit, cereal bars etc. If it is a full day meet then a large packed lunch is suggested. Try to avoid food with high fat and sugar levels, certainly until after the end of the meet. **FIZZY ENERGY/SPORTS DRINKS ARE NOT SUITABLE AND SHOULD BE AVOIDED OR WILL BE BINNED.**
3. Club Kit – when the swimmers are competing, they are representing the Club and therefore must race in their Club Hat. In addition, if swimmers are lucky enough to win a medal or trophy, they must receive their award dressed in Club kit.
4. Breakfast – Keep it Light! A bowl of cereal & a piece of fruit are appropriate. No McDonalds on the way or cooked breakfasts as the GI (Glycaemic Index) content in these particular foods are too high and can cause energy to drop below baseline after an initial increase and make you feel sluggish particularly on a hot poolside! Also, cooked breakfasts are high in starch and can cause Gastrointestinal Distress (upset stomach) and negatively affect swimming performance.
5. Lunchtimes – please note that whilst the coaches and chaperones will be responsible for the swimmers whilst on poolside, they are not responsible for swimmers during lunchtime. Therefore, if a parent or responsible adult is not going to be present then you must arrange for another adult to look after your child. In addition, if you are not staying during the course of the day you must ensure that the coach and/or Team Manager have an emergency contact telephone number.
6. Work with Coaches – swimmers should always speak to their coach before every race, and they should be the first person they speak to afterwards. The Club would ask parents to try and refrain from “coaching” their child as this may lead to conflicting advice being given and could result in confusing the swimmer.

Finally, competing should be an enjoyable experience for swimmers, parents and coaches alike. Racing is the reason we train and should be the target of all swimmers. Always remember that you cannot control how other swimmers do, the target is always to try their best and ensure that instructions are listened to and applied.

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