



## *Weymouth Swimming Club Guide to Swimming Competitions*

When you first join a swim club the many different types and levels of competitions can all seem quite daunting. So we have produced this guide to help you.

First you have to be registered with the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) to make sure your child is insured to swim and able to take part in competitions. You do this when you first join the club and renew it annually. Your category of registration will depend on the level of competition you are able to compete in: Category 1 Swimmers may enter club internal events such as rainbow galas. All swimmers who are under 9 will be registered in this category.

Category 2 Swimmers are able to compete in all levels and types of event. The club will ask you to complete a Level 2 registration form when needed.

### Weymouth Swimming Club Competitions

**Rainbow Gala** - (2 galas are for blue to development squad)  
(January gala is for blue to squad)

This gala is a great introduction to competitive swimming. They take place 3 times a year. The gala held in January is also open to squad swimmers who are eligible to swim at Southern Junior League. The coaches use the times recorded from these galas to select their team for events such as the Novice League.

**Trophy Gala**- 10/under (who can do 50m) to masters

This event is held once a year usually in April. Children 10/under and masters swim 50m in all strokes. All other age groups swim 100m. This gala is a great opportunity to win trophies and improve your personal best times (PB's).

**Individual Medley (I/M) Trophy Gala** - 10/under (who can swim 100m) to masters

This event is held once a year usually in October. Children 10/under swim 100m. 11 and over swim 200m.

**200/400m Trophy Gala** - 10/under (who can swim 200m) to masters

This event is split into junior (14/under) and seniors (15 and above). This gala is recommended for children who are in the higher end groups (pink, red, d squad and squad) who can swim 200m.

**50m Sprints Gala**- 11 years and over as at 31/12

This event is held once a year usually in September.

Unfortunately due to the changes in the ASA rules we are unable to use the times gained in these galas to qualify for the county level competition. We are in the process of obtaining this license and hope to be licensed from next year.

## Other Types of Meets (Competitions)

**Open Meets** - minimum entry age - 9 as at age of the meet to 14 years

Open meets are a great opportunity to get qualifying times for counties and to gain PB's. As a club we will be entering the West Dorset Christmas Open Meet. Information for this will be posted on our Facebook page and our website with details on how to enter. However, if you wish to take part in other meets these will need to be entered on an individual basis. We will advertise open meets on Facebook and will attach a link with the meet pack which contains the entry forms and instructions on how to enter and any time restrictions.

Levels of Open Meets:

Level 1 is aimed at national qualifiers and swimmers close to national qualification looking for opportunities to achieve national qualifying times. Qualifying times will be just below the national times. These meets are held only in 50m pools and are the highest level.

Level 2 is aimed at regional qualifiers and swimmers close to regional qualification. They have qualifying lower limit times, there is no upper limit. These meets are held only in 25m pools but cannot be used to obtain national qualifying times.

Level 3 is aimed at Club swimmers who seek county qualifying times. They have upper limit times set at an appropriate level.

Level 4 is the lowest level competition; from next year this is the level of our series of trophy galas. Times obtained at these meets can be used to enter County Championships.

National qualifying times will be accepted from meets only licensed at level 1. Regional qualifying times will be accepted from meets licensed at level 1, 2 and 3.

**County Championships** - minimum age 10 as at 31/12

Counties are held normally once a year over in February with the longer distance in March. You need to have achieved county qualifying times to be eligible to take part which must be obtained at any level of licensed meet. Presently the Southern Junior League and the Arena League are not licensed, so times obtained in these competitions cannot be used. Based on these times invites will be issued by the club to the qualifying swimmers. It is a big achievement to gain county qualifying times. These times are posted on our website and updated regularly.

**Regional Championships** - The next step up from county championships is regionals.

**Nationals Championships** - This is the next step up from regionals.

**Southern Junior League** - Ages 9 to 12 as at date of the last round.

This is a competition for young experienced swimmers from clubs in various parts of the South and West. There are three rounds. The club will choose the team for this league and invites will be sent out accordingly.

**Dorset Novice Swimming League** - Age 9 to 14 as at the date of the last round.

The aim of the Dorset Novice Swimming League is to provide the novice swimmer with the opportunity to compete on equal terms with other swimmers in the County. There are 3 rounds.

A time limit will be set for each event in the gala programme. Any swimmer finishing in a time faster than that set will be issued with a speeding ticket and no points will be awarded to the swimmer for that event. However, speeding tickets are celebrated within the club as it means you have achieved a fast time, which is also a valid time that is recorded on the club database and can be used as a County Championship entry time if fast enough.

**ARENA LEAGUE** - Age 9 to 15 as at 31/12

This is an important league within the swim calendar. There are 3 rounds and the club will decide which swimmers to invite to join the team and an invite will be issued accordingly.

**Development Meet** - Age 9 to 18 as at the last day of the competition.

Great opportunity to gain qualifying times and beat those PB's. Invites to this meet are issued by the club. This event is a Level 3 licensed meet and subject to upper cut-off times and lower consideration times

**Graded Meet** - Age 9 to 12 as at the age of the event.

A graded meet gives the opportunity for all children to compete equally and therefore at this event there are cut off times.

The official British Swimming statement on this issue describes:

"Our sport offers great opportunities to the most successful, with the chance of competing in foreign countries for club or even country. But competitive swimming is for all levels of ability. Graded Swimming was introduced in its present form in 1980 in order to provide incentive to ALL of the swimmers in the sport. Graded Swimming gives all swimmers the means to measure their own personal progress and also to compete in open competitions against swimmers of similar ability".

The swim club will issue out invites to this event.

**West Dorset Club Championships**

As a club we take part in the West Dorset Club Championships which is usually held in November/ December, from this year it is being amalgamated with the West Dorset Xmas Meet as one competition. It is held at the swimming pool in Dorchester. Although it is a Club Championship for some clubs that enter simply because it is licensed; it must be stressed that it is not Weymouth's as our club championships are our series of Trophy Gala's. It is however a great opportunity to gain qualifying times for counties and improve your PB's. We will advertise this on our Facebook page with instructions on how to enter.

**Schools Galas**

This is a chance for schools to compete against one another. It is separated into the primary school event and the secondary school event. Entries to these competition are organised by Dorset Schools Swimming Association (DSSA) and all Dorset Schools are sent invites to compete in these Gala's if they wish.

## Essential Items Needed for Galas

2 towels  
Swimsuit and one spare (just in case)  
Goggles (two pairs in case one breaks)  
Swim Club hat  
Swim Club T-Shirt  
Water bottle with water  
Snack

## Qualifying Times, Upper Limit Times and Consideration Times

These are times set by meet organisers for each event; this enables the promoter to control the number of entries in the meet. A qualifying time is the time that the swimmer must have already achieved in order to enter the competition. Upper limit times if applicable are when a swimmer that is faster than this time is not eligible to enter. Consideration times are sometimes published. This means that the meet organiser can consider an entry if they are under subscribed to a particular event. However if they are over-subscribed they will only allow people with qualifying times. Qualifying times are set for national, regional and county competitions.