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Guide to Swimming Competitions

1. **Club Championships**

**Key Information**

Our annual Club Championships are an inclusive event, open to all members regardless of their skill level, from Academy to Performance. The Championships follow ASA Laws and Technical Rules, giving swimmers a great opportunity to achieve official times in a formally recognised competition.

**Joining the Championships**

To participate, simply complete the entry form and pay the associated fee. An invitation containing the form link is typically distributed approximately one month prior to the event.

**Age Group Categories**

Swimmers are grouped by gender and age into the following categories:

* 9 & Under
* 10 Years
* 11/12 Years
* 13/14 Years
* 15/16 Years
* Open

**Race Structure and Recognition**

Events are divided into heats based on submitted times, ensuring swimmers compete against those of comparable ability. Results are categorized by age group. The top performers in each age group and event will be awarded medals.

**New Club Structure and its Impact**

From September 2024 to August 2025, swimmers in Bronze squad and above will need to achieve specific licensed times to maintain or progress within their squads. While Academy swimmers currently have no requirement for licensed times to be considered for the Bronze squad, the Club Championships offer them a chance to compete and gain valuable experience in a welcoming and encouraging environment.

**Events to Enter for Different Squads**

**Academy Squads**

* **Academy 2:** Most swimmers should enter both the 50-meter Front Crawl and 50-meter Backstroke events. Before entering any other event, please consult your swimming coach.
* **Academy 1:** All swimmers must consult their swimming coach before entering any event.

**Bronze Squad**

All swimmers in this squad are expected to enter the following events:

* 50 metre Front Crawl, Backstroke and Breaststroke.
* 100 metre Individual Medley.
* 100 metre Front Crawl and Backstroke.
* 200 metre Front Crawl or Backstroke.

Permission must be sought from your coach to enter any additional events

**Silver Squad**

 All swimmers in this squad are expected to enter the following events:

* 50 metre Front Crawl, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Butterfly
* 100 metre Individual Medley.
* 100 metre Front Crawl and either 100m Backstroke, Breaststroke or Butterfly.
* 200 metre Front Crawl and Backstroke.
* 200 metre Individual Medley.
* 400 metre Freestyle.

Permission must be sought from your coach to enter any additional events.

**Gold Squad**

All swimmers in this squad are expected to enter ALL events.

**Sprint Squad**

All swimmers in this squad are expected to enter the following events:

* 50 metre Front Crawl, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Butterfly.
* 100 metre Individual Medley.
* 100 metre Front Crawl, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Butterfly.

**Performance Squad**

All swimmers in this squad are expected to enter ALL events.

1. **Open Meets**

Open Meets, also called "Opens," are swimming competitions where any swimmer can join, as long as they're the right age and swim fast enough. These meets are usually big, with 200 to 300 swimmers, and happen over a weekend.

**Types of Open Meets**

There are four levels of Open Meets:

* **Level 1 & 2:** These meets are different based on the pool length. Level 1 is always in a long course pool (50 meters), and Level 2 is always in a short course pool (25 meters). You need to swim fast enough to meet the qualifying times for these levels.
* **Level 3:** These meets can be in either a long or short course pool. There's a maximum time allowed to finish the race, and sometimes there's also a minimum time. Some Level 3 meets might even let you swim without a qualifying time.
* **Level 4:** This is for special meets like Club Championships or invitation-only meets. Only up to 8 clubs can join these.

**Joining an Open Meet**

To join, you need to fill out a form and follow any rules the host club has. There's a fee for each race you want to swim in and a small fee for coaches' passes. You will need to fill in verifiable entry times on your form (please see the link below), ensuring compliance with the qualifying times specified in the meet schedule. It's really important to check the rules and qualifying times before you sign up!

**Completing an Entry Form**

* All entry forms must be fully completed before submitting and paying
* All needed information can be found here <https://www.swimmingresults.org/individualbest/>

If you need to convert between short course and long course times, use this link [https://www.pullbuoy.co.uk/times/](https://ddsc.us18.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a695e794c84a10bb620972020&id=ff33c71fe4&e=60b1db61ab)

**Attending an Open Meet**

* **Live Results:**
  + Most Opens use the Meet Mobile app (downloadable with a yearly subscription)
  + For Opens not using the app, there's usually a QR code or website link for results
  + If neither of those are available, printed results will be posted
* **Arrival and Preparation:**
  + Arrive early to find your team, coach, and team manager
  + Bring:
    - DDSC blue swim hat
    - Goggles
    - Swimwear (and a spare!)
  + After warming up and racing, put on clothes over your swimwear. DDSC clothing is available for purchase [https://www.ddsc.org/shop/](https://ddsc.us18.list-manage.com/track/click?u=a695e794c84a10bb620972020&id=82feeefcc5&e=60b1db61ab)
* **Other Essentials:**
  + Water (refillable bottle recommended)
  + Lunch/snacks (if staying all day)
* **Withdrawals:**
  + If you need to withdraw from an event, tell your coach/team manager BEFORE warm-up so the organizers know

**How the Meets Work**

Swimmers are put into groups called "heats" for each race, with the slowest swimmers going first. Boys and girls always race separately. The fastest swimmers in each race and age group win prizes.

**Other Important Things**

* Some meets use your age on December 31st, others use your age on the last day of the meet.
* Swimmers may be required to sign in for all their chosen events at the start of each session or, alternatively, a withdrawal system may be in place, enabling swimmers to formally withdraw from events they no longer wish to contest.

1. **Team League Galas**

Team League Galas are exciting swimming competitions where clubs face off against each other. These events unfold as a series of rounds or galas held throughout a specific period. Our swimmers who participate in Team events are carefully selected by the coaching staff based on age, stroke proficiency, and performance times.

We engage in several team galas annually, including the Millennium League, Tudor League, Kent Junior League, and the National Arena League. You will receive email notifications regarding these events, and it's essential to promptly confirm your attendance if selected. We strongly encourage all chosen swimmers to make every effort to participate and support their team.

**League Specifics:**

**Tudor League**

* Open to swimmers of all ages
* Comprises 6 galas held within the first 6 months of the year at Crook Log Leisure Centre
* Features 8 local teams and serves as an excellent introduction to gala competitions
* Team selection is at the discretion of the club coaches

**Kent Junior League**

* Designed for Kent-based clubs, currently with around 16 participating teams
* The initial two rounds are organized regionally, with clubs competing at pools closer to their home base
* The final round involves all clubs ranked by points, with the top and bottom eight facing off
* Open to junior swimmers aged 9 to 13, with team selection determined by the coaches
* The winning club in each division is promoted, while the last-placed club is relegated

**Arena League**

* Consists of three rounds, consistently held on the 2nd Saturday evening in October, November, and December
* The team is chosen by the coaches and includes swimmers from 9 years old to Open age

1. **Kent County Championships**

The Kent County Championships are a major annual swimming event held across three months: January, February, and March. Most races happen at the London Aquatic Centre, but the longer 1500m and 800m events are usually held at K2 Crawley.

**Who Can Participate?**

* Swimmers aged 10 and older (as of December 31st of the competition year)
* Members of clubs in Kent and the London Boroughs of Lewisham, Bromley, Greenwich, and Bexley.
* Note: Swimmers aged 10/11 can't enter the 400m Individual Medley, 800m Freestyle, or 1500m Freestyle.

**Qualifying Times**

* You need to have achieved certain times in official competitions since January 1st of the previous year.
* These times must be "licensed" and listed on Swim England Rankings.
* Your age for the competition is determined as of December 31st of the competition year.

**Types of Qualifying Times:**

* **Automatic:** This guarantees you a spot in the event.
* **Consideration:** You might get in, depending on how many swimmers have automatic times.

**We Want You to Swim!**

Even if you only have a consideration time for one event, we encourage you to enter! It's a great chance to race against some of the best swimmers in Kent.

**How to Enter**

* Entry forms are usually sent out in December.
* Talk to your coach if you have any questions about qualifying times.
* There's a fee for each event you enter.

**2025 Qualifying Times**

We're still waiting on the official times for 2025, but you can look at the 2024 times to get an idea. <https://www.kentswimming.org/imgs/championship_qts_2024_v2360.pdf>

More information about the Championships can be found on:  [**www.kentswimming.org**](http://www.kentswimming.org/).

1. **Regional Championships**

The Regional Championships are prestigious swimming competitions where the top swimmers from various counties within a region compete against each other. It is a level 1 licensed meet distinguished by its heightened level of competition.

**Age Divisions:**

* **Youth Championships:** Typically scheduled for May, these championships cater to male and female swimmers aged 15 and older. (Please note that dates are subject to change.)
* **Age Group Championships:** Generally occurring on the second and third weekends of May, these championships are designed for swimmers aged 11-14. (Dates may also be subject to change.)

**Stringent Qualifying Standards**

The Regional Championships are exclusively conducted in long course (50m) pools, and the qualifying times are notably more challenging than those required for the County Championships. The entry regulations are stringent, stipulating that:

* Competitors must have achieved or surpassed the published qualifying time in an event licensed at Levels 1, 2, or 3 by Swim England.
* The qualifying time must be officially registered on the Swim England rankings database.
* Qualifying times must have been attained within the 12 months immediately preceding the Championships' closing date.

**Entry Procedures and Considerations**

* An entry fee is applicable per event.
* The club meticulously verifies swimmers' entry times against the British Swimming database.
* Entries from swimmers who have not met the requisite qualifying times will not be processed.

**Comprehensive Information**

For detailed information about the Regional Championships, including precise dates and qualifying times, please refer to the Swim England Southeast website: <https://www.southeastswimming.org/>