



## GALA INFO

### Competition Guidance - Why enter a Gala?

- To see how much progress you have made.
- To put into practice what you have been learning in training.
- To stretch yourself to your limits.
- To improve your Personal Best times (PBs).
- To achieve qualifying times for other galas.
- To compete.
- To learn from watching better swimmers.
- To represent WVASC.
- To meet new people.
- To have fun.
- To win!

Swimmers are usually introduced to competitive swimming through the use of time trials. These are organised regularly by squad coaches. There is no formal entry procedure for these events, as the squad coach will decide which events he wants the squad members to swim.

The main benefits in participating in time trials are:

- Introduce swimmers to the rules and regulations of competitive swimming
- Allow swimmers to experience competitive swimming in their home environment, before travelling to other venues
- Provides swimmers with entry times for other meets
- Ensures that athletes experience a range of competitive events of varying distance and strokes.
- Allow the squad coach to assess progress
- Allows coaches to identify talented athletes
- Swimmers are usually introduced to time trials at the pre-dolphin and dolphin squad level.

### Club Gala

This is similar to time trials with a greater emphasis on the competitive element. These usually take place twice per year, with swimmers participating in events against other individuals of a similar age. Prior to the event (Usually 4 Weeks before the event), a gala information board will be put up. This board will provide details about which events your

child may enter. The events will be listed next to the swimmer's name. To enter them in an event, simply put a tick next to the events you want to swim.

Anyone who is a member of the club is encouraged to compete in the club gala, but swimmers may choose not to.

The club gala is followed by a presentation evening (a few weeks after) where swimmers can collect their awards.

### **Graded Meets**

Graded meets are aimed at novice swimmers to introduce them to competitive swimming in individual events.

These are hosted by a variety of clubs throughout the year at different venues.

As these competitions are aimed at novice competitors, the organisers will enforce an upper entry time for each event. Swimmers who have surpassed the upper entry times for a specific event will not be allowed to compete in that event.

The squad coach may hand out gala information to each individual in his/her squad.

The meets are usually open to competitors of all age groups, although some may be specific to age group (9-14) swimmers.

### **Open Meets**

These are similar to graded meets in that swimmers will compete in individual events. However, there will be no upper entry time. This will allow swimmers of any standard to enter the meet. These are generally a higher standard than graded meets. Some open meets may have a lower entry limit, restricting their entries to swimmers of a higher standard.

### **Northumberland and Durham Counties Championships (N+D's)**

The Northumberland and Durham Counties Championships is high level of competition aimed at the best swimmers across the two counties. There will be a qualification time which swimmers must have achieved prior to entering the event. The championships run in February and March with 5-6 events in total.

### **North East Region Championships (NER's)**

This is very high level of competition aimed at the best swimmers in the North East. There will be a qualification time which swimmers must have achieved prior to entering the event. There is a short course championship which takes place in November with the Long Course Championships taking place in May/June.

### **ASA National Championships + British Championships**

These events are the highest standard of competition in the domestic calendar. Qualification times are set very high and must have been achieved at specific designated meets. The head coach or competition secretary is responsible for entering swimmers into these competitions.

- **Information about all galas will be published on the notice board.**
- **You will need to complete a Gala Entry Form and return it together with payment to the Competitions Secretary.**
- **If you are unsure of swim times please speak to the squad coach.**