



Bolton Swimming Club

Festival Galas

These are internal Galas that are organised and run by the Club. All members are invited to enter, they are a great learning experience for our younger swimmers. We try to arrange three or four of these per calendar year and are always looking for parental support to help run these in-house events.

BCM Team Matches

We are currently registered to compete in three of the BCM Leagues – the Mini League, Intermediate League and Team Sprint Relay League. We endeavour to ensure that as many of our swimmers as possible, who are ready to compete, are used at various fixtures throughout the league season. These particular leagues are made up of teams from swimming clubs affiliated with the Bolton, Central Lancashire and Manchester (BCM) Association.

Open Meets

Open Meets organised by other swimming clubs and organisations that are graded Level 1, 2, 3 or 4. These are licensed meets and require that swimmers meet specific entry times for each event and pay an entry fee per event. A range of different clubs attend these events and depending on the level of the event, clubs may attend from far and wide.

Competition FAQ's

What are licensed meets?

Swim England is the national governing body for swimming, diving, water polo, open water swimming, and synchronised swimming in England. It forms part of British Swimming, a federation of the national governing bodies of England, Scotland, and Wales. This text is taken from the "Competition for All" guidelines document on the Swim England website:



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Level 1

Intended for National Qualification. (Times also accepted for Regional Qualification) These meets are intended to be the 'Premier' Meets within the calendar and are expected to provide 'Swim Down' Facilities and results sheets should show splits.

Level 2

Intended for Regional Qualification (Times swum can be used for entry into National Competitions). These meets must have an advertised upper and lower qualifying time for each event. These times will also be influenced by many of the factors above.

Level 3

These meets must have an advertised upper and lower qualifying time and are intended for those swimmers wishing to achieve a county qualifying time, and not catered for at Levels 1 & 2. Times achieved at these meets will be accepted for Regional Qualification.

Level 4

Intended for club swimmers and those beginning to enter individual open competition. Electronic timing is not compulsory. Times achieved at these meets may be used for entry into meets at level's two and three and into County Championships.

When can I compete?

Swimmers compete in our Festival Galas from the age of 8 years, but Swim England only permits competition outside the club for swimmers who will be at least 9 years old by 31st December in that year. Our 9 year olds compete in the BCM Leagues where appropriate and when selected . For Open Meets, the starting age may be 9, 10 or 11 years, depending on the competition. Don't worry - we will get you competing as soon as you are ready to do so!!

Which competitions should I enter?

You should always look to enter Festival Galas run by the club. If you have been competing in these and are 9 years of age you can look to enter an open meet event at Level 3 or 4. The



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coaching team will advise you. If you have recorded Swim England times you can look to qualify for the Lancashire County Championships, North West Regional Championships or National Championship events. The consideration times that need to be achieved for these events are published every year.

Which races should I enter?

Usually, swimmers under the age of 9 will start with 25m races in all strokes. From age 9 your swimmers should be looking to compete in 50m races in each stroke and 100IM. This is followed by the 100 and 200m races and later 400m and the distances beyond. We encourage our swimmers to compete in all strokes and IM events; the coaching team are always on hand to advise on the appropriate races before entering.

How many races should I enter?

All swimmers are different and react differently to competition. A simple rule of thumb is two races per session, but please discuss with the coaching team before entering if you have any queries.

Why is it important to get official Swim England swim times?

A non-official time will have been recorded by a coach or parent using a stopwatch who may or may not have been trained in timekeeping. An official time will have been taken by at least two trained officials or using an electronic system and will be logged on-line. Non-official times are often not trusted whereas official times are. Also, many competitions require official times for entry.

I need my Swim England registration number, where do I find it?

You should have received an email from Swim England with this number, but if you didn't when you joined the club, you will find it on the Swim England database:

<https://www.swimmingresults.org/individualbest/> (search by surname)



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This is also where you will find all your official times from licensed meets.

I don't have official swim times. What do I put on my entry?

If a competition will accept non-official times (Level 3 and 4 meets and internal club galas) then use times achieved at club gala's or BCM Mini League competitions. The coaching team will be able to help you with this. If you don't have official times, then you will not be able to enter a Level 2 or 1 meet.

My time is too fast for an event

If you are too fast you will need to talk to your coaches to identify higher level competitions to enter.

What do 'Short course' and 'Long course' refer to?

Short course events are in a 25m pool. Long course, a 50m pool. You will start out at short course events. There are online converters for short to long course times but you're unlikely to need those for a while.

What do all the acronyms mean on the results sheets?

DNS: Did not Start; DNE: Did not Enter; DQ or DSQ: Disqualified, ST: Speeding Ticket

What are Speeding Tickets?

If you enter a competition perfectly legally with an official or non-official time then swim, do really well and end up with a time that is faster than the fastest allowed entry, your time is still recorded as official but you are not allowed to win medals or trophies. Instead you are issued with a Speeding Ticket. Medals are great but attaining an improved Personal Best (PB) time in an event is far more important!

Before the Race....

Always make sure you have a quick chat with the coaching team poolside who will talk to you about the tactics for the race and remind you about technical aspects you need to focus on.



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After The Race...

Always make sure you have a quick chat with the coaching team poolside after your race. They will talk to you about what went well, what could be improved and what to work on for the next time. This feedback will always be invaluable and constructive.

If available, use the swim down facilities as directed by the coach.

Many parents try to coach their swimmer(s) pre and post races; please don't. Please leave the coaching to the coaching team, they are the experts, know the stage of development of each swimmer and will coach them accordingly.

Hydration and Rehydration

Always make sure you keep hydrated when you are poolside and especially after your race. This is vital!