

Team Selection Policy

The following represents the principles and policy which guide the Team Managers and the Coaches in the selection of swimmers for galas. It is published for the benefit of parents and swimmers.

Background

The Club aims to be inclusive, open and fair and to run a programme of galas that caters for all ranges of ability. The programme includes Friendly Galas, Open Meets, League Competitions and Annual Club Championships and we believe it to be one of the broadest in Surrey.

Our ability to run events at home depends on the level of support provided by parents and volunteers. With over 180 competitive swimmers all of whom have varying levels of aspiration mistakes can occur, despite best intentions. In situations where a swimmer feels that they have been overlooked, the swimmer or their parent, should talk to their Coach or to one of the Team Managers to avoid resentment or any feeling of preferential treatment being given to other swimmers.

Guiding Principles

As a guiding principle every eligible swimmer will be asked to swim for the club in a league and or friendly competition at least twice during the competition year. All eligible swimmers are expected to compete in the Club Championships without exception. If however a swimmer repeatedly declines to take part they may not be asked again (unless there is a particular reason for declining where their coach has previously been informed). Constant and repeated refusal to compete in galas will ultimately call into question a swimmers commitment and in turn their place in a particular squad.

Criteria for normal competition selection is as follows : the swimmers dedication to turning up to training; their work ethic; commitment; consistency; and level of performance. Selection is

also guided by the nature and content of the gala itself. There is no automatic right of selection.

As a general rule the fastest swimmer in the age group concerned over the distance to be swum will be chosen to compete in the individual event. When putting together team combinations the best ie fastest combination is selected. A swimmer may therefore be chosen to swim in a stroke which would not necessarily be their first or even second choice. Personal best times will be the basis for selection. Choice of swims are also affected by the order on a particular programme. Also some galas are time-restricted. That means a swimmer may not swim faster than the minimum time set for the event. If this occurs the swimmer is disqualified and in Open Meets will be presented with a speeding ticket. If it occurs in a league gala no points will be scored for that swim.

Where two teams are competing in different galas the best team combination will be chosen for the A squad. B squad swimmers are expected to compete in the same league competitions but possibly in a lower division against full strength rival clubs where we enter a second team. Preference is given to the A squad in terms of first call on swimmer availability. Selection of swimmers to A or B squads is based on latest personal best times.

Relay Events

As a general principle the swimmer who swims fastest in the individual age group relay during the evening is selected to swim in the Squadron relay. Where this has no effect on the final gala result the Team Manager and Coach may experiment with different combinations.

Swimming Out of Age

Swimmers will be asked to compete in their age group first unless the particular competition has been identified as a priority gala – one identified as a target to go out and win - which the Competitions Sub Committee has approved. Unlike Open Meets where swimmers age is decided as age on the day, League events use a different system ie age as at 31 December in the year of competition.

Where competition is known to be highly competitive and targeted by our major Club rivals such as the Speedo League (one team), the Premier (two teams) and Rother (two teams) a swimmer may be selected to swim out of age only if their time is appreciably quicker than his/her counterparts in the next older age group. Where the time difference is marginal ie within 1 or 2 % the older swimmer will be selected first.

In exceptional circumstances the Team Manager or the Coach may select a swimmer out of age if in their opinion a swimmer might be embarrassed or confidence impaired.

Competition Rules and Restrictions

In some competitions restrictions apply to which swimmers can compete. The purpose of these are to ensure a consistent standard of competition. For example, the Hants and South Coast Team Open Meet in October the Junior Cup and the Minor League have different restrictions that can change from year to year depending on success in county or achievement of national qualification times. To comply with these League competition rules a swimmer may be excluded.

Swimmer Responsibilities

Team Lists are posted on the Club Notice board two weeks prior to the gala date. **It is a swimmers responsibility to indicate availability well in advance. It is not acceptable to cancel at the last minute** or leave names unmarked on the Notice-board if selected to swim. If alternative arrangements have to be made because of swimmer unavailability the responsibility is on the swimmer to inform the coach. Where a swimmer is to be away they should use the 'holiday' form copies of which will be on the Noticeboard.

With as many as 70 places to fill on a double gala night there is considerable communication necessary to confirm each place is filled. Make the job of the Team Manager easier by contacting them.

Club policy is not to release details of who is swimming in what event. Combinations can change at short notice. Particularly serious are situations where a swimmer or their parent expresses

the wish not to swim at the very last minute thus potentially letting the team – and their friends down - in terms of the relay combination and points lost. Where there is genuine reasons for with-drawl – and they do occur – the swimmer or parent must inform the Team Manager or Coach at the very earliest opportunity.

A swimmer if selected is expected to swim even if selected to swim in the relay only. Attendance at selected Open Meets forms part of the training regime for certain squads to obtain qualifying times for county, district or national competitions. If you are serious about competitive swimming you are expected to attend.

All swimmers are encouraged to attend Open Meets appropriate to their level of ability. These range from 'C' grade to Designated - therefore giving every swimmer an opportunity to better their times particularly in strokes and over distances eg 200m for which they would not generally compete. If an Open Meet is listed on the Gala Competition programme the club will have a coach or experienced parent present on poolside to advise and guide swimmers. The Club does not select swimmers or the events that they are enter at Open Meets but coaches can guide which events to enter. Open Meets represent an opportunity to win medals and ribbons and also give a social aspect to competition.

Executive Committee
Woking Swimming Club
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