



Handbook for Swimmers and Parents  
2008-2009



Affiliated Club

**Swim21**  
Accredited

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Email contacts are on the web pages: [www.witneyanddistrictsc.co.uk](http://www.witneyanddistrictsc.co.uk)

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## Useful websites & contacts

W&DSC	<a href="http://www.witneyandddistrictsc.co.uk">www.witneyandddistrictsc.co.uk</a>
ASA	<a href="http://www.britishswimming.org">www.britishswimming.org</a>
County ASA	<a href="http://www.onbcountriesasa.org.uk">www.onbcountriesasa.org.uk</a>
South East Region (SER)	<a href="http://www.southeastswimming.org">www.southeastswimming.org</a>
City of Oxford SC	<a href="http://www.oxfordswim.com">www.oxfordswim.com</a>
SwimLine	see Notice Board for details 0808 100 4001 (calls are foc)

# **1 Organisation of Witney & District Swimming Club**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Welcome to Witney & District Swimming Club (W&DSC). We are a competitive swimming club and aim to provide swimmers of all ages and abilities with the opportunity to compete in events from local to national level. Although a relatively small club, W&DSC prides itself on competing successfully at all levels of competition, from local friendly galas to National Championships. Competitive swimming demands much from swimmers and their parents, but the rewards for hard work, dedication and commitment are high too. And not just in individual success, but also in fostering team spirit, gaining self-discipline and confidence, improving fitness and making friends that last a life-time.

This handbook is primarily intended for new members and those in the younger age groups (Water babies to Junior Squad), although older swimmers and their parents may also find some of the information useful. Master's swimmers and water polo players should contact the people listed on the inside front cover/ web site for further information.

As with all sporting activities, the continued success of W&DSC depends very much on the hard work and dedication of parents, as well as swimmers. If you would like to get involved, on poolside, helping with galas, fund- raising or some aspect of administration, please let us know – all help is very much appreciated. If you have any questions or need any information, please do not hesitate to ask a Committee member or 'long-standing' parent, many of whom can be found in the upstairs coffee bar area of the Windrush Leisure Centre during training sessions. Inside the front cover is a list of key coaching and Committee members with important telephone numbers. At the beginning of each year, a newsletter will give full details of all the committee members and their responsibilities, together with Club Captains and a Gala Timetable for the forthcoming year. We have also produced a new guide to volunteering in the Club and this can be downloaded from the website or requested from a Committee Member.

## **1.2 Affiliations**

W&DSC is affiliated to the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) and all swimmers aged 9 and over become registered with the ASA (see 1.5 for more details). The Club has also gained Swim 21 accreditation (see 1.3). At County level, the Club is affiliated to Oxfordshire and North Buckinghamshire ASA and the County Championships that are held each year are often the highlight of the year for many swimmers. On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2005, the five ASA Districts were re-organised into eight new regions. W&DSC finds itself in the ASA South East Region, whereas previously we had been affiliated to the Midland District ASA. A new South East Regional Director has been

appointed and the regional council will be responsible for organising Regional Competitions (to replace the old District Competitions) for those swimmers achieving the qualifying times, swimmers development opportunities and other events such as Swimming Official Examinations and Licensing of Open Meets. Further information about the ASA, County ASA and South East Region can be found on their websites (see page 4 for details).

### **1.3 Swim21**

W&DSC is proud to have been the first club in Oxfordshire to achieve **Swim 21** accreditation. Swim 21 is the ASA's club development model. It is a planning tool, enabling clubs to help swimmers, coaches and administrators achieve their full potential. It is centred around the needs of the swimmers - striving to provide them with the best possible environment. It is regarded as the back-bone of the ASA's development programme. Our initial accreditation was as a teaching club but for our re-accreditation in 2008 we are applying for teaching and skill development reflecting the Club's commitment to provide swimmers with the opportunity to develop and achieve their potential at all levels of competition. Further information can be obtained from the ASA's website or from the Swim 21 Co-ordinator.

### **1.4 Code of Ethics**

W&DSC is committed to treating all members equally, irrespective of gender, racial origin, religious belief, disability or political persuasion and adheres to the ASA Equity policy (ASA Code of Ethics, see website). In particular, the Club will ensure that all children have an equal right to protection and we expect that all members and adults associated with the club will treat all children with dignity, fairness, sensitivity and respect. Discrimination, offensive or violent behaviour is not acceptable and complaints will be dealt with promptly ensuring that all parties are treated fairly. (see 1.5 Child Protection for further information)

### **1.5 Child Protection**

Like the ASA, W&DSC believes that the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and that all children and young people have the right to enjoy sport, have fun, be safe and be protected from harm. As such, the Club is working towards full compliance with the ASA Child Protection Policy – Wave Power (see ASA website for *pdf* copy of this document).

We have a Child Protection/Welfare Officer who is a member of the Organising Committee (see inside front cover). All coaching staff and those with significant poolside duties undergo a CRB check.

The Club is committed to providing a caring, safe and friendly environment for all our swimmers. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable. If bullying does occur, all swimmers or parents should feel that they can tell a member of the

coaching staff, welfare officer or any member of the organising committee, and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

ASA SwimLine is a service provided by the ASA for any swimmer or parent who believes that the welfare of a child is at risk – this could be bullying, neglect or fear of someone or something. SwimLine calls are free of charge (0808 100 4001). Further information on SwimLine can be found on the Club Notice Board.

One other important aspect of Child Protection is the use of cameras, video recorders and mobile phones with camera facility on poolside. The ASA has issued guidelines on photography/filming at galas and a summary of these can be found in section 5.

### **1.6 Membership, Fees & Constitution**

A copy of the Club's Constitution can be downloaded from the website or is available on request from the Secretary.

All swimmers are either affiliated (Novices or Water-babies) or full (Junior and Senior Squads) members of W&DSC. The annual membership fees are proposed by the Organising Committee each year and approved at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) each September. Except for water-babies, where fees are paid weekly, membership fees are paid annually or can be paid in instalments by arrangement with the Membership Secretary. There are no sibling discounts. Fees cover many things including pool hire, lifeguards, training, poolside equipment, insurance and ASA registration. Small additional fees are payable for training at Brize Norton, coach fares for away galas and match fees (home and away galas). In addition, entry fees are charged for Open Meets, Club Annual Championships and County/Regional/National Championships (levels set by the promoters). Fees are not refundable.

Parents are encouraged to join as Associate Members. Where both parents become members, a reduced membership fee is charged. Those that help on poolside in any way (see below) must become associate members to ensure that they have insurance cover (through the ASA). An advantage of becoming a member is that a 50% discount is given on coach fares for away galas. *Contact the Membership Secretary for more details or see the new guide to volunteering available to download from the website.*

### **1.7 The Organising Committee**

W&DSC is managed by an organising committee; nominations for new members are always welcomed. A separate document lists the current membership and this is included in the annual newsletter for parents. On the front inside page of this booklet is a list of committee members with particular

responsibilities and contact numbers. The committee meets at the Windrush Leisure Centre on the second Tuesday of each month. Between them, committee members ensure that as far as possible everything 'behind the scenes' runs smoothly to enable swimmers to train, register with the ASA, take part in galas and championships, and enter County/District/National competitions appropriate to their ability. The committee also ensures that the club is financially sound and complies with ASA and other necessary regulations/guidelines, e.g. child protection.

If anyone has any item that they would like the committee to consider or has any comments about how things could be done better, for example, then please let the secretary have details for the agenda – or speak to any committee member. In particular, ideas for social events or fund raising are always welcome.

The AGM is held each year in September, where the highlights of the evening are always the Head Coach's Annual Report and the presentation of Special Awards to swimmers and others including an award for volunteers who have made a significant contribution to the Club over a number of years. The AGM is also the point at which the Club Captains and Junior Captains are named for the forthcoming year.

### **1.8 Parent Volunteers**

In addition to the duties undertaken by the organising committee, there are many important jobs to be done to ensure that swimmers can train effectively and compete in galas/competitions. All of these jobs are very important and depend almost entirely on parent volunteers. So, please get involved and help – it can be very rewarding! Any parent helping on poolside must become an Associate Member (see above) and register with the ASA as a helper. More information can be found in the Guide for Parent Volunteers available to download from the website; a brief outline of the way in which parents can help follows.

**Poolside helpers** are needed during training sessions to assist the coaches at the end of lanes, put out and clear away lane ropes, backstroke flags etc. At galas, the team manager needs an 'end-of-lane' assistant to help with warm-up and relays. Some parents may even train as ASA Assistant Swimming Teachers/Coaches. If you are interested, please speak to the Membership Secretary, Head or Junior Coach. Anyone helping on poolside in a significant manner (e.g. assistant coach) will be required to undergo a CRB check.

**Stewards** are needed at all time-trials, galas and competitions. At time trials, club championships and home galas, the stewards help organise swimmers and ensure that they are in the right place at the right time for their swims.

Where appropriate, they also collect match fees. For away galas, stewards are responsible not only for organising the swimmers on poolside, as described above, but also for checking swimmers onto the coach at Witney and before leaving the away pool, collecting coach fares and match fees and for maintaining good and safe behaviour on the coach. *If you are interested in helping out or find out more information, please ask.*

**Time-keepers** are needed for all time-trials, galas and competitions. At every gala, W&DSC must provide two time-keepers for the Witney lane. For Club competitions and time trials, many time-keepers are needed (2 per lane at least). Time-keepers must be trained and qualified to ASA Club Timekeeper standard and courses are held on demand, when the Club has sufficient numbers of parents interested. The Club aims to hold at least one training course each year. *Please see the Membership Secretary for more information.*

**Judges, Starters and Referees** are always needed for each gala/competition. For each position, there are appropriate ASA training courses and standards to be met. All entrants must first have passed the time-keepers qualification. *Contact the Membership Secretary for more information.*

### **1.9 Sponsorship and Fund Raising**

In order to try and keep fee increases to a minimum each year and to provide funds for development opportunities for both swimmers and coaches, the Club relies on sponsorship and fund raising. In the past, sponsorship has come largely in the form of support for the annual Witney Open Meet. However, in future it is clear that the Club will need increased levels of support beyond that even of the highly successful Swimathon in 2007. Fund raising involves the 100 Club and Christmas Penguin Draw amongst other activities. If any parent can help or has ideas, please contact the Fund Raising Officer (see inside front page).

## **2 Organisation and progression through the Swimming Squads**

W&DSC welcomes children from six years of age through to Master's swimmers. All swimmers are assigned to one of four main groups or squads according to age and ability. Progression through the Club is dependent on individual progress and achievement and is assessed by the Head Coach in consultation with lane coaches. The Head Coach's decision is final in these matters.

**Water babies.** Children can join the Club after they have had their sixth birthday, when they join Water babies who swim in the Learner Pool. See 2.4 for more details. They swim for 0.5 h per week.

**Novices.** From the age of seven, swimmers may progress to Novices, where they are introduced to lane swimming in the Main Pool and start to develop the four competitive strokes as well as being introduced to starts and turns. Novices swim between 1 and 2 hours per week.

**Junior Squad.** Children normally progress to the main Junior Squad in the autumn preceding the year in which they will be nine. There are three coaching groups within the Junior Squad: Adelies, Kings and Emperors. Children remain in the Junior Squad until they are 11. Junior squad are expected to swim 3.5 hours per week.

**Senior Squads.** Children normally progress to the Senior Squad in the autumn preceding the year in which they will be 12. Within the Senior Squad, swimmers are placed by the Head Coach into coaching groups (Red, Orange, White or Black) according to age, ability and space. Squads have the opportunity to train between 4 hours (orange) and 9 hours per week (Black/White) as detailed under squad training times (2.9)

## **2.1 Swimming Year**

The swimming year is based on a calendar year rather than school year. Most galas that swimmers compete in use '**age at end of year**' to determine age groups for races etc. However, it is increasingly common for '**age at gala**' or '**age on last day of competition**' to be used, and this means that swimmers may compete in different age group categories in a single calendar year, depending when their birthday falls. This particularly applies to Open Meets and County/Regional competitions.

The Head Coach posts details of the squads for each year on the **Club Notice Board** (upstairs in the Windrush Leisure Centre) and the change over date is normally at the end of October, so that all changes have been made and swimmers settled into their new coaching groups before the start of the new swimming year. At the discretion of the Head Coach, some swimmers may move earlier or later in the year. In addition to this, some younger swimmers may also change coaching groups or squads at Easter time. Parents will be notified by Junior Coach if this happens.

Training continues throughout the year with the exception of breaks for Christmas, when the pool is normally closed for maintenance, and the Summer (usually the whole of August). Exact dates are posted on the notice board. Occasionally training sessions are needed for galas or time trials – these dates are always posted on the notice board.

## **2.2 Training Requirements (for every session)**

Swimmers should bring the following to every training session (see also Swim Shop):

- Well-fitting costume or trunks (make sure it does not sag – check regularly)
- Two pairs goggles suitable for competitive swimming (Speedo or equivalent – must be adjusted to fit before sessions start). Please do not send swimmers to training with ill-fitting or unsuitable goggles. Much pool time can be wasted dealing with goggle problems! The coaches would very much appreciate your help in this.
- Water bottle – very important that all swimmers have access to water during training (water or very dilute squash – no fizzy drinks or juice)
- Towel
- Hat (optional but best for those with long hair)
- Large bag to take on poolside (do not leave bags in changing rooms)
- Inhaler (if used and needed – please let lane coaches know you may need it)
- Please let lane coaches know of any medical/emotional problems that may affect your child so that we are aware of any potential problems.

## **2.3 Trainer of the Month Award.**

At the end of each month, and normally on a Friday evening, the coaches award the Trainer of the Month award and runner-up for both the Junior and Senior Squads.

## **2.4 Water Babies**

Children of all swimming abilities can join Water Babies as soon as they have had their sixth birthday. The Membership Secretary keeps a waiting list for prospective swimmers and they are invited to join when six and when places are available. Teaching/coaching takes place in the Learner Pool initially from 5.00 to 5.30 every Sunday. Swimmers progress to swimming from 5.30 to 6.00 and remain in this group until they are ready to join the Novice Squad. Teaching and coaching in Water Babies broadly follows the ASA Plan for Teaching Swimming with the emphasis on the teaching and development of each of the four strokes – front crawl, back stroke, breast stroke and butterfly. Water babies are affiliated members of W&DSC and fees are paid weekly (currently £2 per session).

***When Club Championships, time trials and Home Galas are on a Sunday, Water Babies sessions may be affected.*** If sessions are cancelled, this is always announced on the Notice Board. *Contact the Membership Secretary for more information.*

## 2.5 Novice Squad

When recommended by the Junior Coach, children progress from Water Babies to the Novice Squad, who swim from 5.00 to 6.00 p.m. every Sunday. Older novice squad swimmers may also be invited to swim with the Junior Squad on Thursday mornings from 6.15 to 7.15 a.m. They are normally offered initial membership of Novices for six months and affiliated membership fees are payable to cover the costs of pool hire, lifeguards, insurance etc.

Membership of the squad enables both parents and children to get a taste of what competitive swimming is all about. Children are introduced to lane swimming, all four competitive strokes and aspects of ASA Law together with starts and turns. The teaching programme continues to broadly follow the ASA Plan for teaching swimming. Assessments take place at regular intervals. After about six months, and at the discretion of the coach, membership may be renewed for a further period until offered a place in Junior Squad.

Children in the novice squad are encouraged to compete in the Club's Junior (Diddy) Championships, which are held in May/June each year. This gives them a chance to compete in races for the first time. Most swimmers in novice squad would enter the youngest 8/under age group (25m races in each of the four strokes plus a 100m individual medley. See *Diddy Championships for more details*. Novices may also take part in some time trials in the Autumn term: details are always posted on the notice board.

***When Club Championships, time trials and Home Galas are on a Sunday, Novice Squad sessions may be affected.*** If sessions are cancelled, this is always announced on the Notice Board. *Contact the Membership Secretary for more information.*

## 2.6 Junior Squad

On the recommendation of the coach, children will be invited to join the Junior Squad, who train at the following times:

- Sunday 6.00 – 6.30 p.m. (Starts, Turns and Finishes)
- Sunday 6.30 – 7.30 p.m.
- Thursday 6.15 – 7.15 a.m.
- Friday 7.15 – 8.15 p.m.

Joining the Junior Squad normally occurs in the autumn, preceding the year in which swimmers will be nine. Squad changes and coaching groups are posted on the notice board and parents are informed by letter. On joining the Junior Squad, swimmers become full members of W&DSC. New swimmers may be considered for membership of the Junior Squad at any time, if places

are available. The Junior Coach will normally assess swimmers over one or more sessions before making a decision.

### **2.6.1 ASA Registration.**

The year in which a swimmer becomes nine is an important one, as this is the year that they become eligible to compete in Junior Galas and the County Championships (either the 9 years age group as 'age at end of year' or 'age at gala' – for the latter, swimmers will only be able to compete after they have had their ninth birthday). Before being able to compete in galas or competitions, swimmers must be registered with the ASA. ASA Registration Forms will be given to swimmers at the same time that they receive their invitation to join Junior Squad. **ASA registration fees are included in the Junior Squad annual membership fees.** Swimmers will then receive their ASA Membership Number and a Registration Card, which must be kept in a safe place. *Further information is available from the Membership Secretary.*

### **2.6.2 Coaching Groups.**

The Junior Squad is divided into three coaching groups, broadly corresponding to 8/9 years (Adelie), 9/10 years (Kings) and 10/11 years (Emperors). Each group has a main coach who is helped by an assistant (Senior Squad swimmers or parents) and adjustments are made to squads and or lanes within squads during the year to allow for swimmer development and in the interests of maintaining good swimmer/coach ratios. During the year swimmers will be given the opportunity to compete in the Club's **Diddy Championships** (see 7.4) and may also be selected to swim for their club in a number of different types of gala. They may also compete in the main **Club Championships**, the **County Championships** (see 8) and possibly some **Open Meets** (see 6.3).

Each autumn, a number of County Qualifying Events (time-trials, see 7.1) are held and swimmers are expected to swim to get 'qualifying times' to enter various competitions. Time trials also help the Head Coach select the most appropriate swimmers for galas and allow the swimmer to monitor their own progress. Dates of time trials are posted on the notice board. *See also section on time trials.*

During their time in the squad, swimmers will continue to develop each of the four competitive strokes and will also practice starts and turns. Swimmers will be given the opportunity to obtain their ASA Competitive Start Award, which when passed allows them to dive from the starting blocks and from the shallow end in relay events. Children are not allowed to dive at the shallow end until they have been tested and passed this award.

All swimmers and parents should check the notice board regularly (at least once a week) to check on gala lists, gala details, coach leaving times, results and times, holidays lists etc. *See also section on the Notice Board.*

The **holiday list on the notice board** should be used to indicate dates when swimmers will be unavailable (holiday, school trip etc) for galas. Anyone not on the holiday list will be presumed available for swimming.

### **2.6.3 Junior Galas and Competitions.**

Junior Squad swimmers may be selected to compete in galas for age groups 9-12. These are listed as Junior Galas in the Diary of Events (see 3.1). Some older swimmers (10-11 years) may also be selected to swim in the 11 year age group of Senior Galas. Swimmers are expected to compete if selected as we are a competitive club. *(see also section 6)*

### **2.6.4 Requirements for Junior Galas, time trials, competitions:**

- Plenty of water/very dilute squash
- Snack food for poolside (not too many sweets though)
- Supper for the coach journey home from away galas (swimmers will be very hungry!)
- W&DSC shirt/jacket or other top/shorts to keep warm on poolside
- Adjusted and well-fitting goggles (and a spare pair)
- Well-fitting W&DSC costume/trunks (or in plain black)
- W&DSC hat (named hats can also be purchased through Swim Shop [3.3])
- Towel
- Poolside shoes (preferably)
- Large bag or holdall (W&DSC bags are available from Swim Shop [3.3])
- Match Fee (currently £2.50) and Coach Fee for away galas (£2.50)

## **2.7 Senior Squads**

In the autumn preceding the year in which swimmers have their 12th birthday, and depending on individual ability and space availability, swimmers will normally be assigned to one of the senior squad coaching groups: Orange, Red, White or Black. Squad changes are announced on the notice board and by a letter from the Membership Secretary. The change over is completed before Christmas so that swimmers are settled into their new groups before the start of the new swimming year. Some swimmers (e.g. those relatively new to the Club) may move up after the Club Championships in February or after Easter.

## Training Times (at Witney unless stated):

**All squads:** Tuesday 5.00-6.00 Land Training (Circuits)  
Pirate Fitness (£3 fee/session)

**Red Squad:** Monday 7.45 to 9.00 p.m.  
Wednesday 6.15 to 7.15 a.m.  
Thursday 8.00 to 9.15 p.m. (Brize Norton\*)  
Friday 8.15 to 9.15 p.m.

\*Brize training normally starts a few weeks after swimmers have settled in to their new routines, and is at the discretion of the Head Coach. Swimmers meet at the gate at 7.45 and go in together, returning about 9.30 p.m. There is a small additional fee payable for each session at Brize (£2).

**Orange Squad:** Wednesday 6.15 to 7.15 a.m.  
Thursday 8.00 to 9.15 p.m. (at Brize Norton\*)  
Sunday 5.00 to 6.00 p.m.

\*See note above, however, no additional fee is payable as this is a main training session for Orange Squad

### **Black and White Squads:**

Monday 7.45 to 9.00 p.m.  
Tuesday\*\* 6.15 to 7.15 a.m.  
Tuesday\*\* 8.00 to 9.00 p.m. Land Training (Weights)  
Palace Fitness (fee payable)  
Wednesday 6.15 to 7.15 a.m.  
8.00 to 9.30 p.m. (at Brize Norton\*)  
Friday 8.15 to 9.15 p.m.  
Sunday\*\* 6.00 to 7.30 p.m. (at Brize Norton\*)  
(under review & may change to a morning slot)

\* Swimmers meet at the gate 15 mins early and return about 15 mins after the session ends. £2 fee payable/session.

\*\* At the invitation/recommendation of the Head Coach.

## **2.8 Medication and Asthma.**

It is important that all swimmers taking regular medication (e.g. asthma inhalers) register this fact with the Club and the ASA. Medication/asthma registration forms are available from the Registration Officer. See also the section detailing with medication and drugs in general (4).

## 2.9 Keeping a Record of 'Times Swum' (Swimming Log Book)

All Junior Squad (also Novice and Senior Squad) swimmers (or their parents!) need to keep a record or log book of 'times swum' in each of the different strokes/distances, together with the date and location of the swim. **This is a very important record of times achieved and must be kept safe.** These times will be needed to enter fastest or qualifying times in Club, Diddy and County Championships and any Open Meets. It is also a very good way of recording and tracking a swimmer's progress and achievements. A typical page in a log book is shown below. It is strongly recommended that a fresh page is used for each distance for each stroke or individual medley (IM).

Pages are needed for 25m, 50m, 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m (and 1500m boys) front crawl/free style\*; 25m, 50m, 100m and 200m breast stroke, back stroke and butterfly; and 100m, 200m and 400 IM.

**\*Freestyle.** Frequently, the term 'free-style' is used in a race. Free-style means that any stroke can be swum but it is usually synonymous with the fastest stroke, front crawl.

**Only official times should be entered in the log book** and these can only be obtained from the **Results Section** on the notice board or from official print outs from Open Meets and County Championships. All results are posted on the notice board and remain there for about two weeks. An asterisk (\*) against a time indicates that it is a **Personal best (PB)** according to the Club Times Co-ordinator.

If a PB time is obtained at an Open Meet, you must obtain an official record (often downloadable from web pages) and give to the Head Coach for club recording purposes.

### Typical example of a page in a swimmers log book

50m Freestyle			
Date	Gala/Competition	Time	Notes
2/10/01	Time trial, Witney	50.00	PB
14/2/02	Gala, Wantage	49.00	PB, 3rd
5/6/02	Diddy Champs.	47.00	PB, 2nd
7/7/02	Milton Keynes Junior League Round I, Oxford	45.00	PB, 1st
9/9/02	MKJL III, Aylesbury	45.50	2nd
6/10/02	Time trial, Witney	44.00	PB
3/12/02	Open Meet, Oxford (licensed level 2)	44.01	8th
15/3/03	Count Champ. Oxford	43.00	PB, 3rd

### **3 Communication with swimmers and parents**

The main source of regular communication with parents is the Notice Board situated in the cafeteria section of the Windrush Leisure Centre and the Web Site ([www.witneyanddistrictsc.co.uk](http://www.witneyanddistrictsc.co.uk)). In addition, there is an annual newsletter that gives information about the Organising Committee for the forthcoming year and a Diary of Events that highlights the major gala and competition commitments for the year (although this is subject to change). *Ad hoc* newsletters are also provided for Junior Swimmers during the year.

All parents are also invited to the Annual General Meeting in September each year, when the Head Coach gives his annual report and a meeting for new parents is also held on an annual basis.

Parents are also welcome to speak to the coaches after any session, if they have any concerns or need further information/guidance.

The Club also produces this handbook, which is updated annually and a copy provided to each family with swimmers in Junior/Novice or Water Babies or to new swimmers in senior squad. Additional copies are available to purchase at a nominal charge from Swim Shop.

#### **3.1 The Diary of Events**

This is published by the Fixtures' Secretary and lists the main galas and competitions of the year, so that swimmers know well in advance when they are likely to be swimming. The anticipated age ranges involved in each competition are listed but sometimes swimmers 'swim up' an age group so this should be taken into account when looking through the list. Swimmers should use the holiday list on the notice board to indicate when they are not able to swim (see below). If your name is not on that list, it will be assumed you can swim. Please try and keep League Gala dates free. **You must let the Squad Co-ordinators know immediately if you cannot swim at short notice (illness etc.). There are no automatic reserves and other swimmers will need to be contacted with as much notice as possible.**

**Remember it is an honour to be selected to swim for your club.**

#### **3.2 The Notice Board**

The Club notice board contains a lot of information that can take a while to understand. If you are not sure of anything please ask a Committee member or 'long standing' parent. After a while it all makes sense! The important thing is to look at the notice board for new additions each training session.

## Information to be found on the Notice Board includes:

- Holiday List (indicate known dates that you will be unable to swim)
- Gala Team Selection List (prepared by the Head Coach)
  - Put up 2 weeks before a gala
  - Tick to confirm availability (so substitutes can be contacted in good time if necessary)
  - Away gala coach departure time will be listed
  - If you are accompanying your child to an away gala, please tick and indicate +1 (for 1 extra person)
  - If you will be driving to an away gala, where a coach is provided, please tick and indicate 'by car' (so that we are not waiting for you)
- Gala Events List
  - This is posted on the Friday night before a gala, when team selection is confirmed.
  - States who is swimming each individual race or relay
  - Coach departure time is confirmed for away galas or the warm-up time is stated for home galas and local away galas where no coach is provided
- Gala Results
  - The results sheet is posted shortly after the gala and gives the overall team result and individual/medley times and placings
  - These are 'official times' and should be recorded in the swimmer's log book (see above)
  - Club records are annotated with a CR and Club Championship Records with CCR
  - Personal best times are annotated with an \*
  - Another annotation used is DQ (disqualified). This is usually followed by the reason: SA (stroke arms); SL (stroke legs); T (turn); S (start) or F (finish).
  - In a time-banded gala, a swimmer going too fast may receive a speeding ticket but their times (placed in brackets) are still used for personal recording purposes.
- Time trial and Club Championships
  - Details of heats, finals and results are posted on the board
- Squad Lists and Training Times
  - Posted in late autumn by the Head Coach
- Dates when training will not take place
- Open Meet information
- County, Regional and National Championships information
- Awards Night and AGM
- 100 Club Draw (see Fundraising)
- Lost property and Swim Shop news
- SwimLine and other Child Protection information

- Anything else that is important!

### **3.3 Web Site**

The Club web site is increasing being used to promote Club activities, recognise achievement of swimmers and provide a useful resource for parents and swimmers (e.g. links to other web sites, gala results, internal event results). It also contains the email contact details for Committee members and provides details of coach times, gala times etc.

### **3.4 Swim Shop**

The Swim Shop can be found upstairs in the Leisure Centre, near the Notice Board, on most Friday and Sunday evenings. Swim Shop stocks all essential supplies: goggles, hats, costumes, bags, shirts and tops. Specialised items can also be ordered. Once children start going to galas they will need a large holdall for all their poolside things: W&DSC bags are available and make excellent presents! During galas, time trials and competitions all swimmers need to keep warm between races with a top and shorts. The Swim Shop stocks supplies of W&DSC polo shirts and track suit tops, which again make good presents. All tops and bags MUST be named. W&DSC hats are essential for all galas and competitions as they identify Witney swimmers quickly both on poolside and in the water. Named hats can be ordered and should help lost hats find their rightful owner!

### **3.5 ASA Swimming Magazine and ASA website**

This is the main publication of the ASA. It contains a lot of useful and interesting information as well as details of Open Meets. Discounted subscriptions are available if ordered through the Club. Please contact Swim Shop for further information. The ASA website ([www.britishswimming.org](http://www.britishswimming.org)) has a wealth of useful information for swimmers including information about the ASA, lists of licensed Open Meets, County, Regional and National rankings for all registered swimmers. BAGCAT points calculator (see 9).

## **4 Drugs, Sport and Doping Control**

The following is a brief summary of the information provided by the ASA. Further details can be found on their website under Membership Services. The use of performance enhancing drugs in sport is considered to be cheating and their use is illegal. Procedures are in place to detect minute quantities of drugs and any swimmer should be aware of the potential problems they may face and the procedures for the collection of samples for analysis.

Fortunately, there have been few positive doping control tests in British swimmers and those that have occurred have almost always been by 'accident'. Accidental use of drugs occurs when a swimmer unknowingly takes an illegal substance. Typical examples of such mistakes include the

use of commonly available drugs such as ‘Sudafed’ (pseudoephedrine), other oral decongestants such as Benylin. ‘Lemsip’ contains phenylephedrine which is also banned. Caffeine is an agent that is permitted as long as the concentration in urine does not exceed a certain value – so drinks such as coffee, tea, coke should be taken sparingly. It is always the swimmer’s responsibility to ensure that what they use is not banned.

Many swimmers have asthma and the majority of drugs used to treat the condition are legal **as long as they are taken by inhaler**. Drugs such as salbutamol (ventolin) and steroids are illegal if taken by mouth or injection, even if prescribed. All swimmers with asthma and taking medication **MUST** declare this to the ASA in writing. The registration officer of W&DS maintains an asthma register and informs the ASA. There are also other conditions that use notifiable medications and the registration officer can advise further (or see list on the ASA website).

In Britain, any registered competitor may be asked to take a test for drugs. **In practice this very rarely happens for younger swimmers**. However, all swimmers competing at National level and above may be tested. The ASA website has further details of how testing is carried out.

## **5 ASA Guidelines for photography/filming on poolside**

W&DSC follow the ASA guidelines for the use of cameras, video recorders or mobile phones on poolside. In addition, many pools have their own regulations that may ban all forms of photography/filming on their premises. Gala/competition rules and regulations will specify the exact arrangements in force. At W&DSC home events (time trials, Championships, Open Meet), we operate the ASA Guidelines and ask all parents to note the following:

- Any parent/spectator wishing to use photographic/film/video equipment (including mobile phones) must register their intent with the organisers and wear a sticker to let other parents/spectators know that they have done so.
- Parents should be vigilant and look out for people who don’t appear to be relatives or friends of children who are swimming but who are spending time photographing/videoing swimmers.
- Professional photographers wishing to take official photos must seek accreditation with the organisers and produce their professional identification for details to be recorded.
- The Club will ensure that swimmers who have mobile phones with an image capture facility are aware that that they must not be used to take photos on poolside or in changing rooms. We ask that parents help us by reminding their children of this as well. The ASA does not recommend that such mobiles are banned from poolside because they

recognise that phones are an important way of children maintaining contact with their parents/carers.

## 6 Competitive Swimming

### 6.1 Home Galas

There are normally three home galas each year, as indicated in the Diary of Events (a relay gala, a Diddy gala and a time-banded gala). Team lists and events lists are posted on the notice board and names should be ticked to indicate availability as soon as possible. Squad co-ordinators will check the list and contact swimmers who have not ticked their names off. The warm-up time will be indicated and swimmers need to be at the pool 10-15 minutes before the warm-up is due to start. Parents who are not helping on poolside should wait outside until the doors officially open. Help is very appreciated, however, with setting out the poolside chairs for time keepers and spectators. Please contact a committee member if you are willing to help.

Swimmers should have their match fees (currently £2.50), which will be collected by a steward. Swimmers should take their bags to poolside and make sure they have plenty to drink and some snack food. They must not wander off from the designated 'Witney' area unless they have permission from the stewards, who will check to see that they are not about to swim. About two events before a swim, the stewards ask a swimmer to join the Team Manager at the deep end of the pool (or shallow end, if appropriate for relays). Swimmers may only dive from the blocks or in the shallow end if they have passed their ASA Competitive Start Award.

Spectators may watch from the upstairs seating area or on poolside (limited seating). See note about poolside photography (5).

At the end of the gala, all Witney swimmers are expected to remain on poolside until the final results are announced. Before going to the changing rooms, ensure that all rubbish, clothing, goggles and drinks bottles have been collected. The Club Captains and Junior Captains collect any trophy on behalf of the Club. The team manager selects a Swimmer of the Match and runner-up. A results sheet is then posted on the notice board showing all times, placing and PBs. These should be recorded in the log book (see 2.)

### 6.2 Away Galas

There are many away galas each year, as indicated in the Diary of Events (3.1). Galas may either be **Trophy Galas**, where teams compete for a trophy or cup; **League Galas**, where clubs compete against each other in series of galas (normally three rounds) to determine the league champions and

positions; or **Friendly Galas**, at varying levels of competition against clubs of a similar standard.

Team lists and events lists are posted on the notice board as described for home galas. Lists should be ticked to indicate availability and should state whether or not a coach has been booked, and if so what time it will leave the Leisure Centre. Coaches are not booked for a few local galas (e.g. Kidlington and Gosford, Oxford, Bicester, Abingdon, Wantage). In these cases swimmers should arrive in good time for the warm-up. Maps showing the location of these local pools can normally be found on the various pool websites or ask for directions.

On the gala day, it is advisable to be at the car park in Leisure Centre in plenty of time for the coach. If swimmers are travelling alone to the gala, there must be firm arrangements for them to be met when the coach returns. The coach driver can normally give a good estimate of the time of return. Swimmers may also like to take a mobile phone to phone home when the coach is close to Witney. Alternatively, swimmers may always use the phone of an adult on the coach. If swimmers are going home with another swimmer, it is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their child is aware of this arrangement. **Otherwise, parents MUST be at the Leisure Centre to collect their children when the coach returns.** Team managers/Coaches will never leave a swimmer alone, but it is only fair that parents collect their children promptly.

#### **Check list for away galas:**

- W&DSC hat
- W&DSC costume/trunks or plain black
- Goggles (adjusted to fit well and a spare pair)
- W&DSC or other polo shirt/top and shorts
- Pool shoes (optional but preferred)
- Plenty to drink (for poolside and the journey home)
- Food for poolside
- Supper to eat on the journey home
- Coach fare (£2.50) and Match Fee (£2.50)

**Parental Support** is welcomed at away galas. If there is a coach booked, please indicate how many extra sets will be needed on the team selection list (including non-swimming siblings). Swimmers and officials will board first, followed by 'signed-up' parents who are associate members or with younger swimmers, followed by any other supporters. The coach fare is currently £6 per adult or £3 for associate members and non-swimming children.

**Match Fees.** The stewards will collect the combined fees (£5) on the coach and ensure that all swimmers are present. **If you are driving to the gala,**

**please make sure that the Team manager/stewards know this.** The Team Manager will also hand round the final team selection and events list so that swimmers know what they will be swimming.

**Safety on the coach and on poolside.** It is very important that parents remind swimmers that good behaviour is expected on the coach and on poolside. It is essential that seat belts are worn for the entire journey. **The stewards will check on seat belts but please would parents stress the importance of wearing seat belts to their swimmers.** Allowances will be made for minor high spirits but swimmers must remember they are representing W&DSC and we have a very good reputation to keep up! On arrival at the pool, swimmers go promptly to get changed and meet the stewards at the designated Witney area – the team manager will have hopefully picked the best spot on poolside. The team manager supervises warm-up. Afterwards, swimmers should keep warm and not leave poolside without the express permission of the stewards – they need to know where swimmers are at all times. If you do leave poolside with permission, always report back. The stewards will deal with any concerns or worries and have supplies of hats and goggles for emergencies. Please remember to continue good behaviour on pool side.

About two events before a swim, the stewards will ask a swimmer to join the team manager at the deep end of the pool (or shallow end for a relay). Swimmers may only dive from the blocks or in the shallow end if they have passed their ASA Competitive Start Award.

At the end of the gala, all W&DSC swimmers remain on poolside until the results have been announced. Collect rubbish and belongings before going to the changing rooms. After changing, return promptly to the coach and remember to take your supper onto the coach (do not leave it in your bag in the hold!). The stewards will make sure that everyone is present before the coach leaves.

During the homeward journey, the parents and officials jointly vote for the swimmers of the match and runner-up and the team manager then announces the result and presents the customary Yellow Duck! A full results list with times, PBs and placing will be posted on the notice board shortly after the gala. Times should be recorded in the log book.

On arrival in Witney, the stewards will ensure that all rubbish is picked up before swimmers leave the coach. It is then time to go home. **If you have not gone on the coach, please make sure you are waiting to meet your swimmer when the coach arrives.**

## 6.3 Types of Gala

### 6.3.1 League Galas

League galas are where the Club competes against others in a series of galas (normally three rounds) to determine the League Champions and positions. These are important galas and swimmers should make every effort to be available to swim. W&DSC competes in a number of leagues:

- Home Counties League (HCL)
  - Three rounds from January to April. The Club aims to enter two teams when possible (ages 11 and over although some 10 year olds may swim up) (age at end of round 3)
- Chiltern District League (CDL)
  - Three rounds from January to April. The Club normally enters one team (ages 11 and over although some 10 year olds may swim up) (age at end of round 3)
- West Midlands League (WML)
  - Three rounds from October to December. The Club normally enters one team (ages 11 and over although some 10 year olds may swim up) (age at end of year)
- Milton Keynes Junior League (MKJL)
  - Three rounds in June, July and September. For ages 9 to 12 (age at end of round 3).

### 6.3.2 Graded Galas

These galas are for swimmers who either compete in a stroke that is not their first stroke or for swimmers who do not swim in the 'A' team (or only occasionally). Often these events are time-banded and the coach selects swimmers who he expects to swim within the time. Sometimes swimmers go faster than the time permitted, in which case they receive a 'speeding ticket'. Swimmers should not worry about this as it probably means that they have swum really well and obtained a good personal best!

### 6.3.3 Open Meets and Licensed Open Meets

This is a gala organised by a Club and open to registered swimmers from another Club. Age groups are determined by the organising club and there may be qualifying times to be achieved. Recently, the ASA re-organised its Open Meets Policy so that there are now four tiers of structured competitions to provide for the needs of all levels of swimmer – from local to National standards. Open Meets may, therefore, advertise that they have been 'licensed' by the ASA at a particular level of competition.

Swimmers aiming to obtain qualifying times for Regional championships must have obtained their times, within the designated qualifying period, at either the County Championships or a Level 2 or 3 Licensed Open Meet.

Swimmers aiming at National Championships must have obtained their times at County or Regional Championships or at a Level 1 or 2 Licensed Open Meet. If an Open Meet is not licensed it means that the times achieved will not be eligible for Regional or National Competitions (they will be eligible for County Championships). Such Open Meets are often time-banded and are not aimed at swimmers capable of achieving Regional/National times.

The four levels of Licensed Meet are summarised below. *Further information can be obtained from the ASA website.*

- 1 Aimed at National or close to National qualifying times. Entry times will be set just below National qualifying times. Times achieved will be eligible for County, District and National Championships.
- 2 Aimed at Regional-level qualifying times. Entry times will have an upper and lower limit. Times achieved will be accepted for entry into Count, Regional and National Championships.
- 3 Aimed at Club swimmers looking for County/Regional qualifying times. There will be upper and lower entry times. Times achieved will be eligible for County and Regional Championships but not Nationals.
- 4 Very few Open Meets are in this category.

Open Meets are advertised in the ASA Swimming magazine and also on the Open Meets section of the Club Notice Board when they are felt to meet the needs of W&DSC swimmers (e.g. Oxford Open Meets in September and December). Open Meets are held under ASA Law and Technical regulations. Copies of official results sheets must be obtained if you wish any PBs to be recorded officially by the Club Times Co-ordinator.

**Generally, swimmers are responsible for making their own arrangements to enter Open Meets, including entries, travel arrangements etc.** However, for a few local Open Meets only, the Club organises entries on behalf of swimmers. These Meets will be displayed on the notice board together with entry forms. Entry forms and cheques (made payable to W&DSC) should be returned by the stated deadline to Swim Shop or the Open Meets Co-ordinator, who will then organise a single submission to the hosting club. Entry cards will be distributed to those swimmers who have been accepted to swim and monies returned to those who have not. Entry on the day and travel arrangements etc. are entirely the responsibility of the swimmer although the Club endeavours to provide stewards to help on poolside (if parents volunteer!).

W&DSC organises its own time banded Open Meet each year. All Witney swimmers are encouraged to enter and the gala is the major fund raising event of the year.

## **7 Club Events**

Club events are open to all Club swimmers in particular age bands. Senior events are open to those aged 10 and over (age at end of year) and Diddy events are open to those aged under 12 at the end of the year in question.

### **7.1 County Qualifying Events (time trials)**

In the Autumn each year, the Club holds a series of time trials for those aged 7/8 and above. These also act as opportunities to obtain qualifying times for the County Championships the following Spring. Lists of swimmers are posted on the notice board a week in advance and swimmers should indicate whether or not they wish to swim (swimmers are expected to swim!). They are normally held on Friday evenings and on some Sunday evenings. Results are posted on the notice board and times achieved should be recorded in the swimmer's log book (see 2.8). Time trials give an opportunity to swim under 'gala' conditions and monitor progress.

### **7.2 Club Championships**

The main Club Championships are normally held in December to February with heats in December to January and finals night in February. Times achieved can also be used as County qualifying times. Heats are held for all events. Events not swum on finals night are swum only in heats with 'heat-declared winners' (HDW). In HDW events, entrants swim in heats according to entered times, not age (those with no times can enter and swim in the slowest heats), and the swimmers are ranked in age groups after all the heats have been swum. There are therefore no finals for HDW events.

Full details for each age group are included on the entry forms and details of heats and finals are posted on the notice board. The age groups for the main club championships are 11/u (10 and 11 only), 13/u, 15/u and 16/o. The ages are 'age at end of year' for the year in which the championship finals fall. Swimmers are encouraged to enter as many events as they are eligible for. Awards are made for those coming 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> in each event and trophies are also presented for many events. Medals and trophies are presented on Finals Night (for those events being swum) and on a special awards evening for HDW events. Times achieved can be used as qualifying times for the County Championships.

#### **Club Championships Events:**

- 50m all strokes (HDW)
- 100m all strokes (finals)
- 200m all strokes (HDW)
- 100 IM (HDW)
- 200 IM (finals)
- 400m Free-style (HDW)
- 400m IM (HDW)

Parents are responsible for engraving trophies and returning them, clean and polished (please!), by the deadline for the next year's championships.

### **7.3 Christmas 800m**

Around Christmas each year, the Club holds its Christmas 800m free style event. Entry is co-ordinated with, but separate to, the Club Championships. There are awards available for completing the distance within certain times: Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum (as designated by the ASA). For those completing the distance in less than 20 min, but not achieving the Bronze award, an 800m distance certificate may be given. Badges and certificates are available at nominal cost from the Registration Officer. Older swimmers may also use the time achieved as a qualifying time for the County Championships.

### **7.4 Diddy (Junior) Championships**

The Diddy Championships are held each year in May/June for swimmers aged 7-12 years. Around Easter time forms are given out to eligible swimmers (age groups are 8/u (including 7 year olds), 9/u, 10/u, 11/u and 12/u). Ages are 'age at end of year'. The 11/u and 12/u age groups swim 50m events in each of the four strokes. The 10/u age group swims 100m events for backstroke, freestyle and breaststroke with a 50m butterfly and 200m IM. The 9/u age group swims 50m events for backstroke, freestyle and breaststroke with a 25m butterfly and 100m IM. The 8/u age group swims 25m events in each of the four strokes and a 100m IM.

Swimmers are encouraged to enter all events that they are eligible for. The finals night is normally held in June and heats, where there are more than six entrants, are held in May. Full details and results are posted on the notice board. Medals are awarded to those coming 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> and trophies are awarded to those coming first in each event. Special awards are also made. Parents are responsible for engraving trophies and returning them, clean and polished, for the next year.

## **8 Oxon and North Bucks ASA County and Age Group Championships**

W&DSC is affiliated to the Oxon and North Bucks County ASA, who organise the County Championships and Age Group Competitions each year (usually in February to April, depending on the date of Easter; the County website publishes the dates in Sept/Oct of the preceding year)). There are a variety of competitions in which swimmers can compete, as detailed below. The County ASA publish qualifying times that must be met in order to compete. The qualifying times must have been achieved in a specified time, which is usually within 8 months preceding the competition. W&DSC gives swimmers

a number of opportunities to gain qualifying times including time trials, Club championships and possibly galas. Swimmers may also enter Open Meets. The swimmers log book should have all the information needed to complete the County application form. All times are verified by the Head Coach.

At the present time the age groups for the 'Counties' are determined as 'age at the last day of the competition' and this is strictly adhered to. The full competition is open to girls aged 10/over and boys aged 11/over. There is also a more limited competition for 9 year olds and 10 year old boys (these do not enter 100m stroke events or 400m events). This information is subject to change by the County ASA and therefore parents/swimmers are advised to look at the Oxon and North Bucks ASA website for more information about these Championships.

### **8.1 Long Distance Championships and Age Group Competition**

These are held in February/early March and swimmers are eligible for distances as follows. Qualifying times (QT) are published for the 400m Freestyle and 400m IM events (for girls 10/over and boys 11/over). Best times should be submitted for the 1500m Freestyle (boys 11/ over) and 800m Freestyle (girls 10/over) events. Depending on the number of entrants, the slowest swimmers may not be selected to swim. It should be noted that in the 800 and 1500 F/S events there are no age-group categories, only Junior (16/u) and Senior (17/o) championships.

Entry forms are given to all eligible swimmers, which must be completed and returned by the deadline shown. The Club confirms entry times and co-ordinates all W&DSC entries. Ages eligible to swim in each of the distance events changes from time to time and swimmers/parents are advised to consult the Oxon and Bucks ASA website for full details of these events.

### **8.2 Main Championships and Age Group Competitions**

These are held over two consecutive weekends in March/April (before Easter), with three sessions on each day of both weekends. The morning and afternoon sessions are taken up with heats and HDW events with finals taking place in evening session. The Oxon & North Bucks website publishes dates and qualifying times well in advance.

The events are normally (*but check the Oxon and North Bucks ASA website for any changes*):

- 50m all strokes (heats and finals except HDW for 9 years)
- 100m all strokes (heats and finals except HDW for 10 year old girls and 11 year old boys; no events for 9 year girls and 9/10 year old boys)
- 200m all strokes (HDW all age groups)
- 100m IM (HDW all age groups)

- 200m IM (HDW all age groups)

The County ASA publish accepted qualifying times for all 50m, 100m and 200m events. Swimmers achieving these times will swim. The County ASA also publish considered times for these events and swimmers achieving these times, but not the accepted times, will have their entry time considered. The slower entrants may not be accepted depending on the number of entries received.

It should also be noted that 11 year old boys and 10 year old girls do not have QT for 100m stroke events, they can only enter these events (with their best time) if they have the corresponding 200m QT. 9/10 boys and 9 girls cannot enter 100m stroke events; they can enter the 100 IM.

There is an entry fee for each event, which is returned if your time is not accepted; there are no other refunds. The Club co-ordinates entries for all Witney swimmers – you cannot enter as an individual.

### **8.3 W&DSC Relay Teams**

Swimmers may be selected to represent W&DSC in the County Age Group relay events. The age group relays include 4 x 50m Freestyle and 4 x 50m Medley for boys and girls 9/10, 11/12, 13/14 (age at end of Counties). Teams are also entered for the 4 x 50 and 4 x 100m Freestyle and Medley events for older swimmers (County and Junior Championships – age at end of year!). All relay events are HDW and teams are selected by the Head Coach and posted on the notice board.

### **8.4 Entry Cards and Warm-up**

A week or so before the competitions, entry cards are given out (and refunds if necessary). Blue for boys and pink for girls! The entry card has important information on it:

- Date and time of event warm-up.
- Time cards must be 'posted' to confirm entry. If cards are not posted by the time stated you will not usually be allowed to swim; if spaces permit late entrants may be allowed to swim in the slowest heat.
- Event and event number (card must be posted in correct event slot).
- Competitor number (ranked according to entry time, slowest competitor = 1).

Swimmers should arrive at the pool in good time to post their cards by the deadline stated (coaches are not provided for County competitions). On arrival, swimmers should by-pass any queue of parents and head straight for the posting boxes for entry cards. After changing, the older swimmers will normally have obtained a good spot on poolside for all Witney swimmers.

Team managers will help ensure swimmers get to the marshalling area for their race. As with all galas, swimmers should not leave poolside unless they have permission from the team managers/stewards. The organisers will announce the order for warm-up (15 min each group) and then the competitions will start.

**Don't forget to post cards for the afternoon session as soon as the morning has finished!**

### **8.5 Heats and HDW sessions**

Swimmers have to present themselves at the marshalling area one or two events before the event in which they are due to swim, to be placed in heats and given their cards back. The cards will now have the heat number and lane number information added. The cards are then handed to the time keepers at the end of the lane. After races, swimmers should keep warm and drink plenty.

Soon after the end of each heat, the results will be placed in a designated Results Area. Where finals are being swum, the results will indicate those swimming in the final and one or two reserve swimmers. Finals are swum in the evening session. For HDW events, the results will show the entrants in ranked age groups and winners can collect trophies/awards from the Awards Table. Results sheets for particular events can normally be purchased. It will be assumed that anyone making a final will swim unless the organisers are told otherwise. So if you are not going to swim in a final, you **must** let the organiser know so that the reserves can be informed. Reserves **must** also let the organisers know if they are not going to attend the evening session. Finalists/reserves who do not turn up for the evening final, and who have not informed the organisers, may be excluded from taking part in further events!

### **8.6 Finals**

Where finals are swum, they are held in the evening session. The warm-up time is confirmed and announced during the afternoon – so be sure to check before leaving the pool. Take plenty of food with you if you think you may swim in a final – it is a long day and some pools do not have good food outlets (e.g. Oxford).

Finals are swum in 'spear head' formation with the fastest swimmers in the middle lanes. Awards are made to all finalists and formal presentations of these are usually made.

## **9 BAGCATS**

This is an abbreviation for British Age Group Categories. BAGCAT points are awarded at the Age Group Competitions (at County, Regional & National levels), for swims in all events by girls aged 9-13 and boys aged 9-14. BAGCAT points are awarded to recognise the achievement levels of the younger age groups in British swimming. British Comparative Performance Tables are used to convert times achieved in specific events into BAGCAT points using Age Group Correction Factors. The ASA website has more information about this.

BAGCAT awards are given to the top six-eight swimmers in the single age group listed above for boys and girls. The top eight swimmers are those gaining the most BAGCAT points in a specified range of events: best sprint, best form, best distance and best IM (as listed in the following table for each age group). The BAGCAT awards/trophies are made in addition to those given for coming 1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> in each individual event and are made to encourage youngsters to compete in a variety of strokes and distances and not specialise too early.

British Age Group Correction Factors are used in order to relate the performance of two different events within a single year age group and single sex. This is to take into account that for a younger swimmer some strokes are more difficult than others. For example, it is well established that for some swimmers butterfly is more difficult to master than front crawl. The reference times used are the average of the ten all time top British performances in each event. The factors are then determined by establishing the ratio between the number of points for the highest scoring event and each of the other events in each single year age group for boys and girls. All of this is explained on the ASA website. This website even has a BAGCAT points calculator where swimmers can enter their times in particular events and work out their BAGCAT points.

**BAGCATS categories used at the County Age Group Competitions**  
*(as used in 2007 and subject to change for 2008 – see ASA website)*

<b>Age</b>	<b>Boys</b>		<b>Girls</b>	
9 years	Sprint Form Distance IM	Best 50m Best 200m* 200m freestyle 100 IM	Sprint Form Distance IM	Best 50m Best 200m* 200m freestyle 100 IM
10 years	Sprint Form Distance IM	Best 50m Best 200m* 200m freestyle 100 or 200m IM	Sprint Form Distance IM	Best 50m Best 200m* 200m freestyle 100 or 200m IM
11 years	Sprint Form Distance IM	Best 50m Best 200m* 200/400m freestyle 100/200 IM	Sprint Form Distance IM	Best 50m Best 200m* 200/400m freestyle 100/200 IM
12 years	Sprint Form Distance IM	Best 50m Best 200m* 200/400m freestyle 100/200 IM	Sprint 100s Form Distance IM	Best 50m Best 100m Best 200m* 200/400/800m freestyle 100/200 IM
13 years	Sprint 100s Form Distance IM	Best 50m Best 100m Best 200m* 200/400/1500m freestyle 100/200/400 IM	Sprint 100s Form Distance IM	Best 50m Best 100m Best 200m* 200/400/800m freestyle 100/200/400 IM
14 years	Sprint 100s Form Distance IM	Best 50m Best 100m Best 200m* 200/400/1500m freestyle 100/200/400 IM	N/A**	N/A**

\*Best form stroke = best from 200m breaststroke, butterfly or backstroke

\*\*From 14 (girls) and 15 (boys) swimmers specialise more and BAGCATS does not apply.

## **10 Regional (formerly District) and National Competitions**

Swimmers achieving the required qualifying times in the 'Counties' or Licensed competitions are encouraged to compete at Regional (formerly District) or even National level. Details of qualifying times are posted on the notice board and if you think you have the required times, speak to the Head Coach. Swimmers can compete in Regional competitions from age 10 (age at last day of competition) and at National Competitions from the age of 11 (age at last day of the competition). Those with birthdays between the Counties and Regional competitions, or between Regional and National competitions, will find that the age group they compete in changes when they have their birthday so check the correct qualifying times! Full details of Regional and National events can be found on the ASA website. Details of Regional competitions and events can be found on the new South East Region website (see page 4).

## 11 Glossary of Swimming Terms

### **Absent/Holiday List**

Please use the list on the notice board to indicate dates that you cannot swim (holidays, school trips etc.) It is hoped that swimmers will not miss League Galas.

### **Age at Gala**

A swimmers who competes in the appropriate age group determined by their age on the day of the gala.

### **Age Groups**

Groups of ages set by the gala/competition organisers. May be 'age at gala' or 'age at end of year'.

**ASA** Amateur Swimming Association

### **ASA Handbook**

Contains the ASA Laws, Rules and Regulations

### **Backstroke**

One of the four recognised ASA strokes. Swimmers start in the water and must stay on their backs, except during any turn. ASA technical rules apply.

### **BAGCATS**

British Age Group Categories for younger swimmers (see section in handbook for more details)

### **'B' Grade Gala**

A gala for swimmers whose times generally fall within the 'B' Grade Category of the ASA Graded Times.

### **Breaststroke**

One of the four recognised ASA strokes. ASA technical rules apply.

### **Butterfly**

One of the four recognised ASA strokes. ASA technical rules apply. Usually referred to as 'fly'.

### **Christmas 800**

The Club's 800m freestyle race held at Christmas each year.

### **Club Captains**

Senior and Junior Boy and Girl Captains are nominated by the committee and announced at the AGM each year.

### **Club hats**

If any hat is worn during a gala or competition, it must be a W&DSC hat (available from Swim Shop).

### **Coach Fare**

The coach fare for away galas is £2.50 for swimmers, £3 for associate members and non-swimming siblings and £6 for adults.

### **Competitive Start Award (ASA)**

A level of competence in starts and turns that all swimmers have to achieve before they are allowed to dive in from the blocks or from the shallow end of the pool.

There is also a pre-competitive start award that allows swimmers to dive from the blocks at the deep end but does not allow them to dive at the shallow end.

### **Counties**

A shortened name used for the Oxon and North Bucks Annual Championships and Age Group Competitions for swimmers aged 9 and over.

### **County Qualifying Time**

Swimmers need to achieve the 'accepted' qualifying times to be guaranteed a swim or achieve the 'considered' times to be considered for entry. For the latter slower times may not be accepted depending on the number of entries.

**CCR** Club Championship Record – only gained in a Club Championship heat or final

**CR** Club Record – can be gained in any competition and age records apply until the appropriate birthday is reached ie swimmers may achieve an U15 club record until the day before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday

### **County Team**

This is selected by Oxon and North Bucks County ASA. Coaches from each Club within the County Association nominate swimmers to the County Selection Committee.

### **Designated Meet**

The old name for Licensed Meets. See Licensed Meets.

**District Competitions** No longer in use – see Regional Competitions.

**DNF** Did not finish.

**DNS** Did not swim.

**DQ** Disqualification. The swimmer did not comply with some aspect of ASA Law. The start (DQ/S), finish (DQ/F), turn (DQ/T), stroke arms (DQ/S) or stroke (DQ/L) may not have been correct. In relays, the take over may not have been correct (see Flier). The reason for the DQ is given to the Team Manager. A swimmer who has been DQ'd for any reason cannot use a time that may have been given as an official recorded time.

**Fees** Membership fees are due annually in October. The fees are set the AGM in September.

**Flier** When, during a relay, the outgoing swimmer leaves the edge of the pool or starting place before the incoming swimmer has touched. The team will be DQ'd.

**Fly** See Butterfly.

### **Freestyle**

Means that any stroke may be swum but in practice it is used synonymously with front crawl – the fastest stroke. Few ASA Technical Rules apply – the swimmer must not walk in the water and must touch the pool wall at each turn and on finishing.

### **Front crawl**

One of the four recognised ASA strokes. The fastest stroke. ASA technical rules apply. See also freestyle.

**HDW** Heat-declared winner. The winner is the swimmer recording the fastest times in the heats. Finals are not swum.

### **Individual Medley (IM)**

A race in which the swimmer performs each quarter of the total distance in a different stroke in the following order: butterfly, back stroke, breast stroke and front crawl.

### **Judge**

ASA qualified judges are required to ensure that strokes, turns, starts and finishes are in accordance with ASA Law and Technical Rules.

### **Keep Warm**

After warm-up, swimmers must put on tops and shorts/tracksuit bottoms to keep warm.

### **League Galas**

A gala in which a number of teams compete, over several rounds (usually 3), to determine League placings and Champions. These are very important galas – not to be missed

### **Licensed Meet**

Competition licensed by the ASA (level 1, 2 or 3) in which times can be used for District (1, 2 or 3) or National (1 or 2) Championships/Competitions.

### **Log Book**

Book to record times achieved at specific dates and competitions/galas in each stroke and distance. All swimmers MUST have one.

### **Long course**

Events in a 50m pool.

### **Match Fee**

A match fee is payable by all W&DSC swimmers taking part in a home or away gala team. The fee is currently £2.50. For away galas it is collected with the coach fare by the stewards on the coach. At home galas it is collected on poolside.

### **National Championships**

The ASA National, Youth, BAGCAT and age-group championships are normally held in August each year. Qualifying times must have been obtained in a licensed meet (level 1 or 2), or a County or Regional competition.

### **Newsletter**

The Club produces an annual newsletter that supplements information provided on the notice board.

### **Official Recorded Time**

A swimmer's time recorded at a gala/competition held under ASA Law and published by the organisers. If a swimmer enters an Open Meet and they want their time to be recorded by the Club, an official results sheet must be obtained and handed to the Head Coach so that club records can be kept up-to-date.

### **Open Age Group**

This age group has no upper limit and starts above the last named age group e.g. 11/u, 13/u, 15/u, Open (16/o).

### **Open Meet**

A gala organised by an ASA Club and open to swimmers ASA registered swimmers in other clubs. Age groups and conditions are determined by the organisers and there may be qualifying times set (both upper and/or lower). Open Meets are advertised in the ASA Swimming magazine and on the ASA website. They are also displayed on the notice board if thought suitable for Witney swimmers and there are no other gala commitments. W&DSC provides an Open Meets co-ordinator. Open Meets may be licensed or not.

### **Oxon & North Bucks ASA**

W&DSC is affiliated to the County Association of Oxfordshire and North Buckinghamshire.

### **Personal Best (PB)**

A time achieved by a swimmer that is faster than any previously achieved. This should be noted in the log book and is designated on a results sheet by a \*.

### **Pool shoes**

Recommended and only for use on poolside. At County Championships swimmers must have pool shoes.

### **Points**

In most galas, the swimmer or relay team coming first receives 6 points, second place 5 points and so on. Disqualification results in 0 points.

**Recorded Time**

A swimmer's time for any swim under ASA Law.

**Relays – Freestyle**

A team of four swimmers in which each swims a leg in freestyle (usually front crawl). The leg may be 25m, 50m, 100m, 200m.

**Relay – Medley**

A team of four swimmers in which each swimmer swims a different stroke in the order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and front crawl.

**Recorded Time**

A swimmer's time for any swim under ASA Law.

**Referee**

ASA qualified official in charge of a competition/gala. Has the final say in any dispute except where the Placings Judges are in agreement.

**Regional Competitions**

The Regional ASA Championships and Age Group/BAGCAT competitions are held in May/June each year. Qualifying times are set and must have been achieved in either a County competition or licensed meet. Our region is the South East Region.

**Registered Swimmer**

All swimmers who compete in galas, Open Meets or County/District/National events must be registered with the ASA. The Club does this for swimmers who are eligible and registration fees are included in the annual membership fee where appropriate.

**Results Sheets**

Results sheets with official times are posted on the notice board soon after each gala, time trial, competition. Times should be recorded in the log book.

**Short Course**

An event in a pool that is less than 50m (e.g. 25m or 33m)

**Speeding Ticket**

Received by a swimmer for going too fast in a time-banded event. Times achieved count as official recorded times.

**Starter**

ASA qualified official who starts a race.

**Stewards**

Club officials (associate member parents) who are assigned to direct swimmers to the starting place at the appropriate time in competitions or galas.

**Swimmer of the match**

Selected by the parents and/or coaches/officials at a gala.

**Swimming Bag**

A large, water-proof bag is required for all things on poolside. See Swim-Shop for more details.

**Swim Shop**

Open on Friday & Sunday evenings for all swimming requirements – hats, named hats, goggles, bags, tops etc.

**'Swimming' magazine**

The official publication of the ASA.

**Team lists**

Swimmers selected for gala teams are listed two weeks in advance on the notice board. The Friday night before a gala, an event list is also posted.

**Time-banded gala**

Galas in which the organisers set time bands that swimmers are expected to swim within. Swimmers going too fast receive a speeding ticket and receive no points for their team. Times still count for recording purposes.

### **Time-keeper**

ASA qualified official who records a swimmer's time in a race. Under new rules in 2005, time keepers may also act as Turn Judges. From 2007, the ASA have introduced Club Timekeepers as persons qualified to time keep at all but Regional/National Events (they will not be able to judge turns).

### **Time Trials**

Also known as County Qualifying Events. Held in September to December each year to enable swimmers to get times to enter the County Championships the following year.

### **Trainer of the month**

Awarded by the coaches to a Junior and Senior squad swimmer each month.

### **Trophy galas**

Galas where teams compete for a trophy.

### **Warm-up**

The time allowed before a gala or competition for swimmers to get their muscles warmed up in the water before racing. Also good for swimmers to get to know a new pool.

### **Yellow Duck**

Highly prized award given to the 'swimmer of the match' and runners up.