**Rugby Swimming Club: Competition Kit List and Notes to Parents**

It doesn’t matter what level of competition your swimmer is taking part in, or whether it’s at their home pool or elsewhere – make sure they have everything they need for the competition.

**How do Open Meets work?**

Often, Open meet competitions run over a whole weekend with two or three ‘sessions’ per day. Each session then consists of various ‘events’, covering different distances and strokes. You pay per event to enter your swimmer to the competition. Sometimes there are age restrictions or upper and/or lower entry times – if you’re not sure about this, please check the competition entry pack for details, or speak to one of our coaches or the open meet secretary ([headcoach@rugbyswimmingclub.co.uk](mailto:headcoach@rugbyswimmingclub.co.uk) [developmentcoach@rugbyswimmingclub.co.uk](mailto:developmentcoach@rugbyswimmingclub.co.uk) openmeetsecretary@rugbyswimmingclub.co.uk)

Each event is made up of ‘heats’ of up to eight or more swimmers. Heats are created using entry times, with the slowest swimming first, so the ages in each heat can be mixed. Medals are awarded in age categories, so swimmers aren’t always competing for medals against those in their heat i.e., they could finish last in their heat but still win a gold medal for their age category.

A session generally lasts a maximum of three hours, plus warm up beforehand. Swimmers are expected to arrive in enough time to change and settle poolside, ready to be in the water at beginning of warm up – there is one warm up per session so it’s important they don’t miss it.

Depending on the number of events entered, there can be a lot of waiting around poolside so make sure your swimmer has entertainment e.g., a card game, colouring, reading.

For safeguarding reasons, and in line with Swim England Wavepower regulations, mobile phones are not permitted in changing rooms - some pools and clubs also ban them poolside. Photos are not permitted in the changing rooms or poolside. You may only be allowed to film or photograph races with permission from the meet organisers prior to the competition taking place.

**What should my swimmer pack?**

Swimmers should learn from an early age to pack their own swim bag. It means they’ll know what they’ve got and where to find it. It’s also good practice for when they’re older and packing for themselves.

From the list below you’ll see there are often two of each item. There are occasions when hats or goggles split, or swimwear starts to rub, so having spares helps your swimmer to feel prepared, and not to worry when these things happen.

* Swimming costume/jammers and/or race suit x 2
* Rugby swimming cap x 2 (these are available named and without names from [treasurer@rugbyswimmingclub.co.uk](mailto:treasurer@rugbyswimmingclub.co.uk)). Swimmers are expected to race in a Rugby Swimming Club cap.
* Goggles x 2
* Rugby Swimming Club t-shirt (these are available with or without swimmer initials from the Webb Ellis shop in Rugby, [www.webbellisrugby.co.uk](http://www.webbellisrugby.co.uk))
* Comfortable shorts / joggers to keep warm poolside that may well get very wet!
* A Rugby Swimming Club hoodie (available from the Webb Ellis shop) or other jumper to wear over damp swimwear to keep warm
* Towels x 2 (a hand towel is fine to dry down between races, with a bath towel for after their shower)
* Sliders or similar poolside footwear
* Small drawstring bag (for on poolside)
* Poolside snacks and drinks (no nuts)
* Lunch (if attending for multiple sessions)
* Hairbrush, toiletries etc.
* £1 or a trolley token for lockers
* Separate dry clothes (kept in a plastic bag to stay dry) to change into before going home.

When your swimmer is poolside at competition, they’re expected to wear their Rugby Swimming Club t-shirt.

Swimmers should wear sliders or flip flops poolside and when being marshalled for an event, especially if the marshalling area isn’t on poolside. If they don’t bring sliders or similar, they’ll be asked to wear the shoes/boots they arrived in.

It’s also good practice to name belongings as they’re often put down between races and sometimes accidentally get packed in the wrong bag. We encourage swimmers to be independent and this includes taking responsibility for everything they bring with them to a competition.

Poolside space is often limited during a competition due to the number of competitors. It’s easier to take a drawstring bag poolside (containing drink, snacks, goggles, swimming cap and poolside towel) and put the large bag in a locker. Swimmers should always have their bag in the changing room or poolside and not leave it with parents.

**What do we do when we arrive?**

Sometimes swimmers are allowed into the changing rooms and onto poolside immediately. If this is the case you should send them poolside to look for their Coach or Team Manager who will look after them, including helping with swimming caps if needed. For safeguarding reasons, parents should not enter the changing rooms.

If leisure centre staff aren’t yet allowing swimmers poolside, please wait with your swimmer in the foyer until they’re allowed through.

**Who will look after my swimmer poolside?**

From Rugby Swimming Club there will always be one or more Coach plus one or more Team Manager.

The Coach will often give input to the swimmer before their event, making sure they’re as prepared for the race as possible. They’ll also watch their race and ask how they felt it went before discussing what went well and what could be something to improve for the next race.

The Team Manager makes sure the swimmer has the equipment they need and is in the right place at the right time for their event.

All poolside staff also make sure the swimmer is emotionally supported should they be nervous before a race, or disappointed if something didn’t go to plan. We also love to celebrate with them when things go well!

**What happens when my swimmer has taken part in their last event?**

Once they’ve finished for the day, they can shower and meet you in the foyer to go home. We ask that if they leave poolside they let the Team Manager know. Please talk with them about where you’ll meet them after the race and whether they’re allowed to come to you in the viewing area if they’ve a long time between events – they should always check with a Team Manager whether they have enough time to leave poolside.

Results are usually posted online or pinned to the wall in both the changing rooms and the viewing area. They’re not available until the last person has swum that event so you may have to wait a while if your swimmer was in the first heat. Once your swimmer is showered and dry, they should check the latest results to see if they’ve won a medal before leaving.

A few days after the competition, you can view official times achieved for your swimmer online: [www.swimmingresults.org/individualbest](http://www.swimmingresults.org/individualbest)

If your swimmer was disqualified their time won’t show on this website. Disqualifications aren’t uncommon for swimmers just starting out in competitive swimming, it’s part of the learning curve and coaches will speak to them to make sure it doesn’t happen again.

**How to use the online entry system:**

1. Go to the Rugby Swimming Club website ([www.rugbyswimmingclub.co.uk](http://www.rugbyswimmingclub.co.uk))
2. Select ‘Swimmers’ from the menu across the top of the page and then click on Gala Entries
3. Log in using your swimmers ASA number as the account name – you will have been sent a password which you would’ve updated the first time you logged in to the site

If you have not received your log in details, please contact the membership secretary on membership@rugbyswimmingclub.co.uk

1. Select your swimmer – if you have more than one swimmer at the club you will need to choose each one individually
2. Select the competition you want to enter from the drop down box
3. Click ‘+ Add Events’
4. Tick the events you want to enter – if your swimmer already has a time, it will appear next to the event. If they don’t, you’ll be able to enter your own – speak to your Coach to get the correct time before you submit your entry. Please note that you are unable to tick the event if you add a time, however, it will be included when you submit.
5. ‘Submit’ your entries (please ensure all check boxes are filled and any pop-up boxes are confirmed)
6. Pay the entry fee
7. Can’t remember what you’ve entered? Go back to step 5 above and you’ll be able to see what you’ve entered and the entry time
8. Once you’ve submitted your entry you can’t change it online yourself, you’d need to contact Clare and Matt.

If you have any questions about entry times, or using the online system, please email the Open Meet Secretary on [openmeetsecretary@rugbyswimmingclub.co.uk](mailto:openmeetsecretary@rugbyswimmingclub.co.uk)