



# TELOPEA AMATEUR SWIMMING CLUB

## HANDBOOK FOR NEW SWIMMERS

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## New to Swimming

Welcome to the beginning of your swimming journey, which we hope is long and enjoyable.

Swimming is a fantastic sport for fitness, friendship and life-long learning about healthy habits for your body and mind alike.

We understand entering meets may be overwhelming at first – what meet to enter, what events to swim, what to wear and what to bring are probably just a few of the questions you are asking yourself. Don't worry, our coaches and other parents are happy to help explain the intricacies of swimming.

Swimming, like all sports, has unique terminology which you should familiarise yourself with. Hopefully, this Handbook for New Swimmers gives you an understanding of the basics.

## Glossary

Break Time	To enter an event, the swimmer's best personal time must be slower than the break time listed on the program
Claims board	An information board that indicates the event that is being called and the current event being swum
DQ	Disqualified for a technical breach
Long course	Events are swum in a 50m pool
NT or No Time	Entered meet without a time
Marshalling area	Where the swimmers are organised prior to being escorted to the blocks for their race
Over the top	A race is started with the swimmers from the previous event still in the pool
Qualifying Time	To enter an event, the swimmer's best personal time must be equal to or faster than the qualifying time listed on the program.
Seed Time	Is the fastest time a swimmer has swum for a particular event during the meet qualification period
Short course	Events are swum in a 25m pool
Timed Final	Heats are swum and places determined by times recorded in the heats

## Competitions

Teloepa Swim Club encourages all swimming members to compete at local and interstate meets. All meets have meet flyers listed on the [Swimming ACT](#) or [Swimming NSW](#) (SNSW) and [Swim central](#) websites.

Swimmers of Teloepa Swim Club will compete for QT Swimming.

## Long Course and Short Course

Competitive meets are run throughout the year. There are two swimming seasons: long course (LC) and short course (SC).

The long course season runs between October and April and all competition is swum in 50m length swimming pools. The short course season runs from May to September and all competition is raced in 25m length pools.

## Types of Meets

There are numerous swimming meets held throughout ACT and NSW each year. Each year, Telopea Swim Club hosts a Development meet for Swimming ACT and a Qualifying meet.

A calendar of events is available on the [Swimming ACT](#), [Swimming NSW](#) and [Swim Central](#) website.

Competitive swimming meets are graded from Development to International meets.

As a new swimmer, you will start at Development meets, which are designed to introduce swimmers to competitive swimming.

## Development (and Intermediate) Meets

In a Development meet, each event has a **“break time”** listed and swimmers can only enter an event if their personal best time is slower than the break time. There is a break time for Development level and Intermediate level swimmers. This means that when you achieve the Development break time you will progress to swimming at the Intermediate level.

When a swimmer does not have any racing times and is entering a meet or a particular event/race for the first time, they will enter with no time and the program will reflect this with the swimmer listed with no time (NT).

Development meets have 25m races for swimmers who want to compete but who are not yet confident to swim a 50-metre race.

Development Meets are usually run on Sundays once a month. Swimmers are restricted to five events and ribbons are awarded to the first three placegetters in each event.

During the summer (LC) and winter (SC) seasons, the swimmers accumulate points and at the end of each season, Development and Intermediate Champions are awarded with certificates for their outstanding efforts during the respective racing season.

## Qualifying Meets

These meets are of a higher level than Development meets and usually provide a greater level of competition for swimmers.

Instead of break times, these meets have **“qualifying times”** listed for each event. To enter an event at a qualifying meet, the swimmer's best personal time must be equal to or faster than the qualifying time listed on the program. Generally, the swimmer must have swum the qualifying time since the date published on the meet flyer (for example, must have swum the time since 1 January 2018).

There are separate qualifying times for boys and girls for each event.

Swimmers are usually awarded medals for finishing in the top three places in events at these meets (the program and meet flyer will let you know who is entitled to an award or medal)

## District (ACT) Championships

ACT Championships are held for LC and SC over a two or three-day period.

Medals are awarded at these meets.

## NSW Country Championships

NSW Country Championships are for all SNSW registered swimmers who belong to a club outside of the Sydney Metropolitan area (NSW Metro clubs hold a separate Championship meet). For the purposes of swimming, ACT is considered to be part of country NSW.

These meets have qualifying times that must be met in order to enter. These meets occur in the LC and SC seasons and are held at Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre (SOPAC) at Homebush, Sydney.

The first three placegetters are awarded medals in a medal ceremony on pool deck. The remaining top 10 finalists (placings 4 to 10) are awarded with a ribbon.

## State Age and Open Championships

At these meets, swimmers throughout NSW come together to compete (with swimmers based around Australia often entering NSW Open Championships). The qualifying time for these meets are faster than those needed to enter NSW Country Championships.

## Meet entries

Talk with your coach about what events to enter. They will help you to decide what events you are ready to swim.

Entries can be done via an online entry system. A copy of the meet flyer and access to online entry system are available from the Swimming ACT website (and SNSW website for state level meets).

The flyer for each meet will set out times for events and rules of the meet. Please read the rules carefully before entering the meet as it will tell you what you can or cannot enter. For example:

- at Development meets you can only swim a maximum of 5 events
- new swimmers under 10 years can only enter 25m events until they achieve a time faster than the break time for a given stroke.

## Online entry system

Refer to Swim Central (Section to be updated when Swim Central is problematic free)

## Closing Dates

All meets have closing dates for entries and all entries are done through an online system. The online entry system is accessible from the relevant swimming website (usually next to the flyer) and a link is also on the meet flyer.

## Tips for New Racers

### Before the Meet

- **Discuss with your coach** which meets are appropriate for you.
- **Make note of the meet details**, including the day, date, pool location, warm up time, start time and event numbers.
- **Check the timekeeping rooster.** All participating clubs at a meet are expected to provide time keepers during the day. A roster will be emailed out before the meet. Please familiarise yourself with the roster and relieve people promptly. Timekeeping at a meet is not optional (although arrangements can be made to swap allocated times at the meet) and is an expected condition of entering in the meet to race.

### What to do on the Day of the Meet

- **Get to the meet early for warm up** (at least 15-20 minutes before warm up starts). We warm up as a team unless otherwise negotiated with your coach. Warming up as a team allows us ample lane space and a good warm up is essential in preventing injury and preparing for a day of racing.
- **Sit with the team.** We sit together at meets for many reasons, including:
  - We like to cheer each other on and this is much more effective and louder when we sit together

- It is easier to manage our team
- Swimmers and parents have the opportunity to get to know each other
- A swimmer is less likely to miss their event if they see other swimmers in their age group getting ready to talk to the coach and moving towards the marshalling area.
- **Eat small quantities of food** throughout the day and larger amounts if you have a 1-2 hour gap between races.
- **Drink plenty of fluids**, preferably water and/or sports drinks.

### Before a race

- **Check the claims board regularly for your event number.** Allow time to collect your racing cap and goggles, check in with your coach and get to the marshalling area on time. Do not be late or you may not be allowed to swim. You need to be in the Marshalling Area at least two races before your event (for example, if you are swimming in event 21 you need to be in Marshalling Area before the start of event 19). Swimmers reporting late are taken to the Referee.
- **Report to your coach.** Swimmers need to report to their coach for a short briefing before they go to the Marshalling Area. Coaches will not look for you before your race.
- **Listen in the marshalling area.** The Marshalling Area is where the swimmers are organised prior to being escorted to the blocks for their race. When you go to marshalling, you need to check your name off, sit where directed and wait for your race. Make sure you represent Telopea Swim Club in the marshalling area in a polite and helpful manner. Swimmers are NOT to leave the Marshalling area after reporting. If they need to leave – report to the Marshal, first.
- **Withdrawing from races.** If you are withdrawing from a race, speak to your coach when you arrive at the meet. You will need to go to the recording table near the announcer's box to withdraw from an event. You should withdraw at least 6 races in advance of the event. Please do not fail to turn up to marshalling – this is impolite and slows down the meet, creates unnecessary delays and extra heats that could be amalgamated on the day
- **Swim hard and do your best.**

### After a race

- **Exit the pool** from the nearest stairs, do not climb out over the touch pads.
- **Do not take your cap off until after you exit the pool.**
- **Check in with your coach** who will give you feedback on your race and give you instructions for a warm down swim if lanes are available (this is not optional).
- **Results** will be displayed in prominent places at the meet and are also available through Apps called Meet Mobile or Swim Mate.
- Sometimes, a swimmer will be disqualified (DQ). An announcement will be made advising the event number, heat and lane number of the disqualified swimmer. Disqualifications are also printed on the results sheets. Please check with your coach if you are unsure as to why you may have been disqualified.
- Remember, you are representing Telopea Swim Club – be proud of that, be courteous and respectful of those around you.

### What should you take to a Swim Meet?

- **Towels**
- **Racing goggles** plus a spare pair.
- **QT Swimming Cap.** You will need at least one and if possible a spare. Your first cap will be given to you as a joining gift from Mr Barclay, but it is wise to purchase a second cap to have

with you at racing meets. Swimmers wear the QT Swimming cap proudly in warm up and during races. No other cap is acceptable.

- **Swimwear (swimmers)** – a pair to warm up in and/or race in. There are also rules about swimwear. Swimwear of all swimmers are to be in accordance with the Rules, which are listed at the end of this handbook. Swimwear are to be in good moral taste, suitable for the individual sports discipline and non-transparent. The object is to debar immodest costumes not the swimmer. Swimmers cannot wear anything under their swimming costume.
- **Drinks.** It gets very warm in an indoor pool environment and you must be sure to hydrate adequately in order to race at your best.
- **Food.** You will need lots of healthy and easily digestible snacks to graze on throughout the day.
- **Clothing to keep you warm.** This should consist of Teloopa Swim Club uniform items.
- **Dry clothes** to change into and wear home after the meet.

## Nutrition Ideas

Here are some suggestions for food and drink:

- Water, Low fat flavoured milk
- Homemade sandwiches
- Fruit (citrus fruits are not the best when competing)
- Crackers
- Low fat yoghurt
- Fresh vegetable (e.g. carrot and celery sticks)

Food and drink to avoid:

- Soda and other carbonated beverages
- Commercially-made bakery products (usually high in sugar and fat)
- High-fat foods e.g. chips, chocolate bars – the last thing a body that is working hard wants, is fat – this is the bodies LEAST favourite energy source – it wants carbs and protein to help restore muscles after exercise.

## Timekeeping at Swim Meets

Local swimming meets require three timekeepers per lane. QT Swimming will usually be allocated a number of chairs or lanes (number of chairs/lanes usually depends on the number of swimmers registered for the meet).

A timekeeping roster will be drawn up and circulated to all families from QT Swimming who are entered in a swim meet with details of who is rostered on when to ensure that we fulfil our time keeping responsibilities.

**It is essential that a swimmer competing at a meet is supported by a parent who will undertake time keeping duties.**