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STOURBRIDGE SWIMMING CLUB

(Affiliated A.S.A. (West Midland Region) and Worcester County S.A.)

OPEN GALAS

These are where individual swimmers compete against swimmers from other clubs as well as swimmers from Stourbridge. You will still swim under Stourbridge Club's name. Open meets have four tiers of structured competition and are licensed according to the purpose of their competition:

- **Level 1** - aimed at Midland/National standard swimmers to get their National qualification time
- **Level 2** - aimed at County/Midland standard swimmers to get their Midland qualification time
- **Level 3** - for Club swimmers who are looking for County qualifying times but can also achieve Midland qualification times
- **Level 4** - for Club swimmers who are just beginning competition but can also achieve County qualification times

You need to check the entry details for:

- Qualifying/Consideration times – these may include an upper limit (you cannot have swum a time faster than this) and/or a lower limit (your personal best time must not be slower than this)
- There is a fee payable (by the swimmer) for each event entered, usually around £3.00 to £5.00 per event
- The results are determined either by a final, in which case the fastest swimmers from the heats swim off against each other, or by heat declared (shown on the entry details as HDW), in which case your place in the results is determined by the time you swim in the heats. However the results are determined it is important that you swim as fast as you can in the heats.
- The age group you will swim in may not be single year ages. Most Opens are Age on Day i.e. your age on the last day of the Open Meet
- Closing date for the entry is the last date that the host club will accept your entry. You also need to check if entries are on a First Come, First Served basis – in which case the earlier you get your entry in, the better your chance of being accepted

An Open Meet is an ideal opportunity for you to enter races that you do not usually do for the team or swimming strokes that you do not usually swim. Don't just enter your favourite swims as your stroke may change and you may be missing out.

You will not be chosen to compete in Opens but Stourbridge Club does recommend certain galas (targeted meets) and would like you to support these. There will normally be a Stourbridge Coach in attendance at these meets. If we have targeted the meet, there will be a notice on the notice boards with the cut off date and the name of the person to give your entry and payment to. This payment must be made to "Stourbridge SC". The Club will then forward your entry, along with all the other swimmers, and send one Club cheque to the host club.

When entering an open meet which is not a targeted meet you must send your completed entry form and fee payment directly to the hosting club before the closing date of the event. Make sure you send a large stamped addressed envelope, with sufficient postage, for any return correspondence if requested.

You will be 'seeded' according to your entry times - which means you will swim against others with similar entry times as yourself. Age is not taken into account until the results are in.

Trophies and/or medals may be awarded for individuals and/or Stourbridge Club. You will need to check the entry information as each Open Meet will vary.

You will be expected to have your own transport to get to an open meet.

Some open meets have a secondary card system i.e. you will be sent pink or blue cards for each of the events you have been accepted for. If you are unsure what to do with these, just ask. This is also explained in the Stourbridge Club Handbook.

WHY DO OPENS?

This is a way you can compete at longer distances, at a stroke you are not normally chosen to do by the Club or to achieve a time for County, Midland or National qualification. It is also a chance to improve on your personal best performance times (pbs).

Licensed meets from levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 use a computerised results service to enable data to go into the national ranking system. You can check your rankings if you have competed in one of these events on the British Swimming website at www.britishswimming.org - under swimming-rankings. Unlicensed meets are still good competition but the times are not put on the ASA rankings.

Please check the web-site, newsletters and the notice-boards for details. Also remember – there are lots of experienced parents in the Club who will gladly give you some help and advice.

GOOD LUCK FOR ANY SWIMS YOU CHOSE TO DO AND MOST IMPORTANT –

HAVE FUN!