

WILLOUGHBY SWIM CLUB

Information Booklet



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1.0 WELCOME

Welcome! We have prepared this information booklet to help you settle into our club and provide an introduction to competitive swimming.

Willoughby Swim Club (WSC) was formed in 1990. Its aims are twofold – to enable swimmers in our local community to have the opportunity to join a club and compete and to encourage swimming for fitness and enjoyment all through life. WSC is a member club of both Swimming NSW and our regional association - Sydney Metro North East (SMNE).

Swimmers are coached by Willoughby Swim Squads, headed by Coach Paul Hardman. Willoughby Swim Squads is separate from WSC. Payment for swim squad training fees for each school term and holiday period is made directly by swimmers to Willoughby Swim Squads (<http://willoughbyswimsquads.com.au/>).

Separately, WSC charges an annual membership fee (due September each year), which includes registration with Swimming NSW.

WSC's primary focus is on competitive development by facilitating access to top level coaching and training programs and encouraging members to compete. We help you develop and improve as a swimmer as we support you with a range of services:

- Close consultation with coaches and support to enable them to provide expert coaching to our members
- Funding coaches at competitive meets we target
- Club race nights for recreation and fun; official timing at many nights
- Support and assistance around entries for race meets
- Relay entries at competitive events and being able to participate in a relay with other club members
- Running our own annual Club Championship meet
- Assisting members to access services delivered by SMNE, such as development squad training
- Organising a weekend away meet in Canberra

- Organising and supporting coaching national age Championships
- Running a week-long 'away' (interstate) training camp for swimmers reaching particular age and training standards (this is not held every year)
- Annual Presentation Day for socialising as well as recognising swimmer achievements

Paul Hardman is our Head Coach. He has abundant knowledge and experience, holding a Platinum Licence in Swimming Coaching - the highest level attainable. Paul is one of the few NSW coaches to have achieved this qualification. Additionally, he has several awards recognising his achievements, including 1991 Australian Age Group Coach of the Year, and two times NSW Coach of the Year. He is listed on the ASCTA Honour Roll for FINA World Champion Coaches.

Senior coach Rudy Burattini is a Bronze Licenced coach with over twenty years experience. Rudy has played a big role in the development of many highly successful Willoughby swimmers. He has been involved with the club since 2005 and continues to play a vital role in the development of all Willoughby's elite swimmers.

Further information about the club and coaches can be found on the Willoughby Swim Club website

<https://willoughby.swimming.org.au>

2.0 THE SWIMMING SEASON

2.1 Competitive Swimming (Everything you need to know)

Swimming competitions across the year are divided into two separate seasons. The Long Course Season (LC) is conducted in 50m-long pools from September to April (Summer). The Short Course Season (SC) is conducted in 25m pools and runs across the winter season from May to August.

WSC participates in external competitions run by SMNE, Swimming NSW and Swimming Australia. All swimmers are encouraged to compete in these meets and should consult with coaches to decide which events to enter.

Aside from club events, most competitions do require a qualifying time. Qualifying times vary according to the level of the competition and become progressively more difficult with each higher competition level.

From time to time, local clubs will host meets with no qualifying times. These are a good opportunity for those new to racing and junior swimmers to commence their racing careers. These are typically communicated via email either by the Race Secretary or Coaches.

SMNE – Swimming Metro North East

Our regional association, SMNE, operates as an area association, comprising swimming clubs from the same geographic area. It is run by a committee drawn from its member clubs. SMNE organises a range of competitions in both seasons, where WSC competes against other SMNE clubs. SMNE is the first level of competition on the pathway to national competition. Our SMNE competitions are a very important entry level meet for our members.

2.1.1 Targeted Meets

The WSC committee consults with the WSC Coach to select a number of meets throughout the year which the club will “target”. This means that a WSC Coach will be present at that meet. The Race Secretary will advise members about the

upcoming meet and deadline for entry and will send reminders. The Coach will encourage swimmers to compete in that meet wherever qualifying times have been met.

There is usually a strong club presence of swimmers and parents at targeted meets.

WSC's targeted meets are publicised to club members by the Race Secretary. It is important that you read emails from the Race Secretary and diarise the deadlines for entry dates.

Important Note - Parent Volunteering

Parents of WSC swimmers competing at targeted meets are required to undertake parent duties at the meet. SMNE, other clubs, and on occasion Swimming NSW events require parents to help run their meets. SMNE requires it as a condition of each club with competitors. Generally, for WSC this duty will be timekeeping.

- If your child is competing, automatically assume you will be needed for parent duty for some part of the day.
- If a family has no parent volunteering at a meet where their child is competing, and our roster organiser hasn't been contacted, the family will be allocated a timeslot and expected to do the duty.
- Occasionally, there are more WSC swimmers than parent duty spots that need filling. In these situations, leeway will be given to those families who have volunteered willingly at previous meets.

For more information on Parent Involvement and Duties is available further in this booklet.

2.1.2 Events Calendar and Non-Targeted Meets

The Swim Central events calendar is the central location for all swimming meets in NSW. Generally, your swimmer will be able to swim at any of these events, as long as they meet QT or eligibility criteria.

You may see references being made to Non-Targeted Meets – this means that coaches will not be in attendance.

2.1.3 Invitational Meets

From time to time, WSC will be invited to compete at certain Invitational Meets (these are usually other SMNE clubs). If you don't see "Targeted Meet" in the email, then coaches will not be in attendance.

2.2 Entering a Race Meet

Organisers of competition race meets publish their program with qualifying times required for each event, and the deadline date and time for entering. Competition programs can be found on the website of the organisation running the meet. The event will also be able to be located via the Swim Central events calendar.

Some race meets – especially those being run by local clubs – will have a limit on the number of total entries in order to keep the length of the meet within the set times. Entries for these meets often close early as soon as entry limits are reached, before the publicised deadline. If you are keen to compete at a certain event, it is best to enter sooner rather than later, as you may miss out. The event page is the best source for updated information on the meet. Keep checking this page in the lead up to the event.

The deadline for race entries for Swimming NSW meets is strict. No leniency is given for being even one minute past the cut off time. Please ensure you enter before the deadline.

Event Entry – Swim Central

All entries for race meets are now completed through the Swim Central portal. There will often be a link on the program.

Please note that Swim Central was introduced in mid 2019 and is still going through a number of improvements.

Swimming NSW has published a number of Member Resources, including FAQs on its website. For issues with Swim Central, please go to the FAQs in the first instance and then contact Swimming NSW.

<https://swimcentral.swimming.org.au>

Swim Central will require payment by credit card at the time of entering the meet.

The swimmer's entry times will usually be automatically selected from the best time recorded by SNSW without the swimmer being required to enter any time information themselves.

You will receive an email from the club or Swimming NSW in the case of Metropolitan or State meets, which is a Preliminary Start List.

Important – Preliminary Start List

It is highly recommended that you check your child's entry, including events and times. If you believe that there is an error and on occasion there are errors, you must make contact per the instructions and within the timeline provided. Once the Start List has been finalized, you will not be able to make changes on the day.

Entries process by the Race Secretary

On very rare occasions, the Club's Race Secretary may be required to process all entries. For the odd meet that still require entries this way, our Race Secretary collects entry information and payments from the Club's swimmers, collates it all, and then provides to the competition organiser.

To enter, you will need to have first paid the race entry fees into WSC's bank account. Your EFT payment into the club's bank account should reference Surname and Meet name.

Next, you will need to email the Race Secretary advising your desired races. Please give the Secretary the following information:

- advise the Meet name, event number and age category, and your entry time for each event.
- advise the date and amount paid in to the WSC account (this should be the entry fee multiplied by number of races being entered)

Details of the club's bank account for entries processed by the Race Secretary are:

Willoughby Swim Club

BSB: 112 879

Account: 0985 35969

2.3 Start Lists and Timelines

After entries have closed off, both a Start List and a Timeline will be published on the website of the meet organizer. Our Race Secretary usually forwards the Start List to our swimmers. Please check carefully that all your entries are correctly shown.

Timelines are available for all competitive meets we attend. These give a reasonably accurate estimate of the time each race will commence, based on the number of entries received. Timelines are only published after entries have closed off. Please refer to the website of the organisation running the meet (local club or SMNE or SNSW) for the meet timeline and print it off to take with you.

2.4 Relays

The club enters relay teams in a variety of swimming competitions. Our swimmers thrive on the camaraderie and excitement from racing in a relay with their club mates, especially if the relay is their means of competing at that level of competition for the first time.

Relay teams are selected by the club Coach after consulting with the Race Secretary and are based not only on best times achieved but on recent performances. The Race Secretary will email parents of swimmers to advise of their child's proposed selection in the relay team. Please advise the Race Secretary straight away if your swimmer will not be available to swim in the relay team because of prior commitments.

There will generally always be WSC relay teams entered at targeted meets.

It is important that if you have been nominated to participate in a Relay that you arrive at the Meet well in advance of the scheduled race time.

2.5 Race Days

Please aim to have your Swimmer at the pool at least 1.5 hours before their race time in order that they have sufficient time to warm up and get into their suits. Competitive meets have an official warm up time before racing starts, and swimmers will be allowed into the competition pool to warm up from then on, until about ten minutes before competition starts.

Refer to the meet program or timeline for the warmup times. You may want to print out copies of the timeline for you and your swimmer to take with you to the meet, with their races highlighted.

Programs can be bought on entry to SOPAC for SMNE/ SNSW meets. For each event, your swimmer's heat number and lane will be listed in the program. Having a pen or highlighter with you is useful. Local clubs sometimes only make meet programs available online for swimmers to print out relevant pages themselves.

Race Day at SOPAC

At SOPAC, the warm-up time is generally at least one hour before the start of the meet.

If you are swimming within the first 2-3 hours from commencement of warm up time, it is suggested you join our coaches for the warm-up session. Swimmers can enter the pool on the eastern-side and they will see the Willoughby coaches and team members gathered close to lane 0 (usually to the left of the entrance by the training pool).

Willoughby parents also sit together on the eastern side of the SOPAC pool - this is the first side as you come in. Enter down the long hallway and look for door no. 104 - parents generally position themselves in the stands left or right of 104. You can also look for the upright standing Willoughby Club banner which is usually positioned near the Willoughby sitting area by a committee parent.

2.6 Club Night Races

Club race nights are the perfect introduction to competitive racing, especially for younger children, and our club nights give them valuable racing experience. The club holds races at the Willoughby pool on several Friday evenings throughout each school term. Dates are shown on our website's Club Calendar (see under the "Events" tab). The Club's Race night organiser will also email reminders to parents in the week before, as well as update our Instagram (@willoughbyswimclub) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/willoughbyswimclub). Our Friday race nights foster a great sense of club spirit as parents and families get to know each other.

Warm up is from 6:00pm and racing starts at 6:30pm. In the half hour from 6pm there is a pre- race warm up and practice of skills, such as starts, turns and sprints. Entry is simple: there is no formal pre-entry requirement. Just turn up ready to race at 6:30pm.

Parents must volunteer to time keep at our Friday night races. If there are not enough parents present then there can be no race times recorded.

The Club makes as many of these race nights as possible into nights with officially recorded race times. This means that times achieved on the night will be “official” and can be used when a swimmer needs a qualifying time for a race meet. We also arrange for an officially qualified Starter and Referee to be present, to meet SNSW requirements. However, on official nights we require three parents timekeeping per lane to meet SNSW requirements. So please volunteer. Volunteering at club night is good practice for external meets.

At some officially timed race nights we will also offer time trials over longer distances where swimmers can choose the stroke they want for recording as an official time. This helps swimmers who are just starting out to get a time over a particular distance.

Results of each race night and each swimmer’s progressive point score are published on our website.

2.7 Results – Official Times

Racing at an organised swimming competition under the Swimming NSW (SNSW) umbrella or at ‘Official’ Club Night means your times from that competition meet become ‘official’ and are recorded by Swimming Australia in Results Central. Official times are those that can be used as Qualifying Times at meets.

<https://www.swimming.org.au/events/results-central>

To search for your recorded race times, go to the SNSW Home page (<https://nsw.swimming.org.au>) and click on the Results Central icon. Enter your surname and further details to commence searching. It is a good idea to keep a hard copy of your Personal Best times (PBs) for your own easy reference - these times are used to enter races.

2.8 Club Uniforms

One of our club members organises the Club's uniform. Wearing a club swim cap at race meets is compulsory. We encourage swimmers to wear the club T-shirt or hoody, as swimmers are representing the club at meets. It is compulsory to wear a club shirt when a swimmer is receiving a medal at a medal

presentation poolside. Please see our website under "Resources/Uniforms" for details about ordering, and contact information.

3.0 REPRESENTATIVE SQUADS & TEAMS

3.1 SMNE Development Squads

WSC members may be eligible to be selected in the SMNE Development Squad program. The current program has five levels and is offered to swimmers from clubs in the SMNE area. As well as the opportunity for skill improvement, participation is also a good way for WSC swimmers to better get to know others in their age group from fellow SMNE clubs. The squads are run after Australian Age Nationals have finished (usually April) and the first squad to get underway will start around early July.

The SMNE Development Squad program offers different and separate training activities for each different level - such as special training sessions run by coaches from the area, competition meets, or weekend camps with senior coaches. There are currently 5 levels ranging from Juniors (7-9 years) through to National Age Representative Squads.

The club subsidises the attendance of its swimmers at these SMNE Development Squads.

For more information on the Development Squads go to the SMNE website and select Development Squads.

<http://smne.org.au>

3.2 SNSW Representation

Swimming NSW and the NSW Institute of Sport have several teams and squads that are selected based on results in NSW and Australian Championships. Several swimmers from Willoughby Swimming Club have been selected in SNSW or NSWIS Squads over the years. Details of qualification criteria and competitive pathways are available on the Swimming NSW website.

<https://nsw.swimming.org.au/swim-0/competitive-pathway>

3.3 Australian Swimming Junior Excellence Program

The Australian Junior Excellence Program (JX) recognises, rewards and encourages junior swimmers who, through their development of aquatic skills

and fitness, achieve certain standards of swimming excellence, based on times achieved in specific events.

Under the program, swimmers aged from 9 to 16 years, who accomplish times pre-determined by Swimming Australia, will qualify at Gold, Silver, Bronze or Green standard, depending on their best performance/s during the season.

Qualifiers receive special recognition by way of:

- Publication of their name on the SNSW website
- A JX prize pack including at least a cap, poster and certificate.

Each WSC swimmer achieving one of the JX standards is recognised at one of the club's official Friday night club races, where they receive their JX pack.

For more information go to the Swimming Australia website.

<https://www.swimming.org.au/swim-1/bio-island-australian-junior-excellence-program>

4.0 MEMBERSHIP & JOINING

Membership numbers for all Willoughby Swim Club members are allocated by Swimming Australia. The membership number never changes and enables a swimmer to compete at any carnival in Australia or overseas.

4.1 Requirement of Parent as Member

As explained in the Parental Involvement section below, the Club requires parents (or guardians) to volunteer at swimming competitions and meets at club, area and state level, and at WSC race nights so as to enable the smooth running of these events.

Because of volunteer participation, whether on pool deck, or for other duties, it is necessary that WSC parents be covered by the policy of insurance applying to Swimming NSW members in the event of accident or injury.

For these reasons, one parent from each family (the parent who is most likely to be the volunteering parent) is required to become a non-swimming member of Swimming NSW when their child is under 18 yrs. If both parents will volunteer at WSC and other swimming events, then both parents should join. The non-swimming member category covers parents, and costs around only \$35 per year per person.

4.2 Membership Requirements

As a requirement of their child joining our club a parent must:

- become a non-swimming member (see 4.1 above),
- provide a Working With Children Check number (see below),
- give a commitment to volunteering for parent duty where required at meets in which their child is competing (see “Parental Involvement” section in Part 5 below)
- agree to photography of their child in situations consistent with the conditions set out in Swimming Australia’s ‘Safe Sport Framework’ adopted in July 2016
- abide by the policies and standards in Swimming Australia’s Safe Sport Framework, including its Code of Conduct.
- give these commitments at the time of joining.

A Working With Children Check is required for anyone who volunteers with Willoughby Swim Club. It is a policy requirement adopted by the Club as a commitment to keeping its young swimmers safe.

The WWCC number is obtained through the Service NSW website. It is a process that is free for anyone who volunteers in child-related work in NSW. Once obtained, the number does not have to be renewed for five years. All information related to this check is available on the Service NSW website.

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-working-children-check>

4.3 Fees

Fees for the Club's current membership year are detailed on our website. Charges incorporate Swimming NSW registration fees and Swimming Australia fees (through which insurance coverage is obtained) as well as a Willoughby Swim Club fee component.

4.4 Process to Join

All memberships (new and renewals) are managed through the Swim Central portal.

For new members joining, you will then be taken through the setup process step by step. This will include setting up a profile, setting up a family and then buying membership. At the buying membership stage, you will search for Willoughby Swim Club.

Swim Central - <https://swimcentral.swimming.org.au>

For help with Swim Central, Swimming NSW provides additional guides and FAQ's. Please access these for assistance.

<https://nsw.swimming.org.au/swim/join/member-resources>

Important – Parent Registration

Please note that it is a requirement that at least one parent/carer (as a non-swimmer) joins at the same time as joining a new swimmer. There is a small fee for non-swimmer membership.

Renewals of Existing Members A Membership Renewal email will be sent by Swimming Australia during September each year prior to the new swimming season starting on 1 October each year.

5.0 CLUB INVOLVEMENT

5.1 Parental Involvement

It is crucial to the smooth running of WSC that our parents are involved with club activities. A number of our parents have committee roles, and some are accredited in various duties required for meet hosting and running of SMNE and other official carnivals. All parents at swimming competitions do volunteer parent duty and parents are needed at a range of other WSC events, including race nights.

Parent Volunteer Duty

Our SMNE area, and sometimes Swimming NSW, needs parents on duty to help make meets run, and so they require volunteer duties to be undertaken by each club with swimmers competing at that meet.

Many parents are also required to help run the club's own annual Club Championships and Invitational Meet held in August each year.

If your child is competing at any event, then assume you will be needed for parent duty for some part of the day. The Race Secretary also acts as the roster organiser for each meet we are attending. If you are unable to fulfill the timeslot allocated, please contact the Race Secretary as soon as possible. Please check all emails sent by the Race Secretary in the lead up to a meet. If your circumstances change on the day of the meet, you are responsible for swapping your timeslot with another family.

Occasionally, there are more WSC swimmers than parent duty spots that need filling. In these situations, leeway will be given to those families who have volunteered at previous meets.

Technical Officials

In addition, our club and area train parents to become technical officials to help our swim meets run smoothly. These roles can involve becoming a Marshall, Check Starter, Judge of Stroke etc. It is essential for parents to be willing to take on these roles to enable WSC and the SMNE Area to continue to host meets for our Swimmers

Swimming NSW is increasingly moving its training for these roles into online modules that can be completed in your own time, instead of face-face training which is more difficult for parents to attend. Following completion of coursework, the time commitment remaining will be to undertake some practice sessions at meets and an assessment by a senior accredited official.

5.2 Social Activities

Being a member of WSC is not just about competition. We are a friendly and social club. Our swimmers spend a lot of time training together and in the process, strong friendships are formed between both swimmers and parents which often carry on beyond the swimming years.

Aside from our club races and BBQ, our activities include the following:

- Annual Presentation Day held in September/October each year where Club Champions, Club Point Score Winners are announced and recognised. Social activities are organised and an inspiring guest speaker, often a senior Australian swimmer, is arranged.
- In April we hold a gathering to acknowledge our National Age and new State level competitors, held at Willoughby Pool in conjunction with fun relays and BBQ.
- A Christmas party is arranged around November/December at the pool where members of all ages can relax and enjoy this annual get-together.
- A breakfast BBQ is often held in late December or before New Years' Eve following morning swimming.
- The chilly winter trip to a weekend Canberra meet is a highlight and enjoyed by many swimmers each year. This includes two nights in Canberra and bowling on Saturday night for swimmers and parents

6.0 CLUB COMMITTEE

The Committee oversees the running of the club. Committee members are elected from the general membership at each Annual General Meeting. Committee members can be re-elected annually. Details of the current Committee are listed on our website at “About/Committee”.

The Committee has five specified positions under the club’s Constitution – President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Race Secretary - and it may have up to eight other members.

Committee members organise all the activities of the club. For example, different Committee members have roles organising Friday race nights and parent duty rosters for meets, arranging Club attendance at ‘away’ meets and an ‘away’ training camp for more able club members, running fund-raising BBQs, overseeing communications & PR, and all those other jobs that are needed for the smooth running of a swimming club.

The committee is replenished and refreshed annually as committee members’ circumstances change or, regularly, longer-term committee members leave after children grow up and move away. If you have an interest in joining the committee, please let us know.

The committee may be contacted by sending an email through the club’s website (see “Contact Us” on our website). Alternatively if you have a query you can send an email to offtheblocks@gmail.com marked to the attention of a particular committee member.

7.0 CLUB COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL MEDIA

We communicate with our members in a variety of ways. These are some regular communication processes in place:

- Emails direct to members from Committee members with particular roles
 - Race Secretary keeping you up to date on targeted meets and club arrangements for them, and relays your child is being considered for
 - Similarly, our Club Night Organiser will remind you of upcoming race nights & arrangements
 - Our Team Manager will email about proposed club tours for a weekend competition away, and the 'away' training camp that is conducted for swimmers at a particular age and level of training
 - A regular newsletter keeps everyone aware of what's been going on – emailed and up on webpage
- The Club's website is frequently updated in the "News" section. Keep a watch on it.
 - The Club's Facebook page is a fun way to keep in touch with latest happenings_
<https://www.facebook.com/willoughbyswimclub/>
 - The Club's Instagram page is a fun page that shares highlights of our swimmers achievements, having some fun at meets and up to the minute club news
@willoughbyswimclub

8.0 USEFUL WEBSITES & LINKS

Willoughby Swim Club	https://willoughby.swimming.org.au
Willoughby Swim Squads	http://willoughbyswimsquads.com.au
SMNE	http://smne.org.au/
Swimming NSW	https://nsw.swimming.org.au
Swimming Australia	https://www.swimming.org.au
FINA	http://www.fina.org

Swim Central	https://swimcentral.swimming.org.au
Swim Central Member Help Guides	https://nsw.swimming.org.au/swim/join/member-resources
Results Central	https://www.swimming.org.au/events/results-central
Service NSW Working with Children Check	https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-working-children-check