



Ruislip-Northwood Swim Squad

Parent House of Hillingdon Swimming Club

swim21
Accredited



The RNSS Guide To Galas



Types of Gala

County Competitions. (Age Groups or BAGCATS).

You enter these as directed by your coach. You will need to have swum **faster** than the qualifying times on each event you enter.

County Development Meets

You must be **slower** than the times listed for each event you want to enter. If you swim faster than the qualifying time on the day, you will not be eligible for a medal, but will get a 'speeding ticket'.

Open Meets

Usually organised and hosted by another Club. They are often graded at different levels, (so that you swim against other people of similar ability). Your entry times will usually need to be either faster than, or must not be faster than, the set times, or fall between two times sometimes known as qualifying time and cut off time. You must read the criteria for each gala carefully to see which of these apply

Team Galas

You may be selected to represent your club to swim as part of a team. These can be in many formats, but usually the gala consists of individual sprints in each of the 4 strokes, a Freestyle relay and a Medley relay for each age group, male and female swum separately.

There is sometimes a 'cannon' relay with 1 boy and girl from each age group forming one large relay team at the end of the gala.

You would normally be asked to compete in novice team galas to begin with but if you do well, you may be invited to swim in the Speedo Junior League commonly known as the 'Diddy' League- we have two teams that compete in this.

Club Championships

We are a competitive club and all swimmers are expected to compete in club championships.

We hold the main sprint club champs towards the end of the calendar year. This involves races of varying length, depending on your age. Races are held on all four strokes.

We also hold club champs on longer events throughout the year, including a 100m/200m individual medley gala, 200m butterfly and freestyle gala, 200m back and breast gala and a 400m freestyle gala. There is also a Novice Sprint gala.



The Entry Form

These may appear confusing as they are often laid out differently, but there are always clear instructions for you to follow. You will be expected to fill out the form with information such as name, date of birth, ASA number and entry times (PB's) for each event. You can always ask for help from the RNSS competition secretary, your squad rep or another experienced parent.

Once you have filled out the form, it is a good idea to keep a record of which events you have entered and the entry times as well as the date/time and venue of the gala as it may be a month or more away.

There is **NO CHARGE** for club champs or team galas. For all other galas you will need to pay for each event/race you enter. You must always send payment with the gala form to the competition secretary via your squad rep. **Always** make cheques payable to '**Hillingdon Swimming Club**'.

Preparation

Your coach will have prepared you for your gala in training, possibly by practising the stroke(s) you will be swimming as well as starts, turns and finishes. However, if you feel unsure about anything, do not be afraid to ask your coach or a senior swimmer for advice. They will be pleased you asked.

The Night Before

Have a high carbohydrate meal e.g. pasta, rice , potatoes of a type that you are used to. Do not try new foods now.

Have plenty of fluids.

Have a good night's sleep.



If it is an open or county gala you must take your **cards** or **confirmation slip** with you, so pack them in your swim bag. These tell you which events you are entered for and warm up times. Always try to arrive about 15 minutes before warm up.

What to Take

You will need your **RNSS costume**, **RNSS hat** and **racing goggles**.



You will also need at least one **spare costume**, **spare hat** and **goggles** as well as **2 towels**.

It is a good idea to take a plastic bag to put wet costumes or towels in. This will keep your other clothing dry.

At all galas there is a warm-up after which you will probably have to wait for your first event.

It is important to keep warm and dry whilst waiting for your race(s). If your muscles get cold, you will not perform as well as you should and it can lead to injury. Therefore, put on your **RNSS T-Bag/T-shirt** and often you will need extra layers, so an **RNSS fleece** and **tracksuit bottoms** are advisable. **Pool shoes/trainers** are essential as you rapidly lose heat through your feet and at some galas they will not let you into the whipping area without them.

You may also like to wear a temporary RNSS tattoo. These are available to purchase from the club shop on Friday evenings from 7-9pm.

Make sure all your belongings are clearly marked with your name.

You may like to take something to occupy yourself such as a book or a puzzle book.



Nourishment

Keep some **healthy snacks** with you in your bag. You will be using a lot of energy and your body needs recovery food. For long all day galas, take healthy snacks such as fruit (fresh or dried), carbohydrates such as pasta or sandwiches, energy bars etc, but **not** chocolate as it melts and makes a mess!

Don't forget the all important fluids - keep drinking **water** all day and if you also want to take diluted fruit juice or squash or an isotonic or 'sports' drink that's fine. Do not take milkshakes or fizzy drinks.



At The Pool

If you have been issued with **gala cards** (pink for girls and blue for boys) you will need to 'post' these before each session. They will have the event number on them and you put them in the appropriate numbered box for each event.

If you have a printed **confirmation slip** with your events on you need to 'sign in' (ie sign your name against each event you are swimming in. Some times you have to do this yourself and some times there is an official at the desk who you report to and they do it for you.

If you are not sure, ask your coach, an older swimmer or a gala official.

Get changed, put everything in your bag and take it poolside. (Don't leave anything in the changing room).

Go and join your friends and coaches (they should be wearing RNSS club kit).

Keep your hat and goggles in an outside pocket of your bag so you can find them easily when it is time to warm up or race.

Your RNSS coach will tell you when to warm up and in which lane.

The race

You will be sent to wait for your race by your coach or another official.



Before the race it is a good idea to stretch your muscles (you may see other swimmers doing this)

Do your best in the race and remember all you have been taught.

After each race go and speak to your coach. They will want to give you feedback on how you raced, give advice and hopefully be able to congratulate you on a PB or personal best time!

Don't forget to record all your times and enter them on your Swim Record Sheet. If you do not already have one, you can download or print one off by going on the RNSS website and clicking on the fun page.

If you don't manage to record your times at the gala, we usually publish results on the RNSS website a few days after the gala.

Most of all - **have fun** and you will look forward to the next one.