



BRAINTREE & BOCKING SWIMMING CLUB

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Information for Parents and Swimmers

Firstly I would like to take the opportunity to wish all our members a Happy New Year. This is always an exciting time of the year for the club, the long hard months of training from September to December are behind us, the days seem a little brighter and for there is the anticipation of the County Championships which are about to start.

I would like to thank all those parents who have given so much of their time to help in whichever way they could to ensure all the events we have held have been so successful. I firmly believe that as a club we have not even started to realise the potential that we have. We have a pool to be proud of, have made great progression over the last three years, have great talent within the club and as I mentioned motivated parents.

I was lucky enough to be at a conference recently where one of the speakers was Nick Juba, the head Coach of Hatfield swimming club. For those who do not know Hatfield, they are an extremely successful club, with Olympic, International and National Champions amongst their membership. What inspired me about what Nick said was; they have an active membership of only 150, they train as we do in shared pool space, sometimes using only 1 or 2 lanes (this to train Olympic standard swimmers in!), of the 150 active members 37 qualified for National championships in 2009. This convinced me that good as we are, we can go so much further.

Nick outlined his thoughts on what made a successful club, these included;

- Positivity at all levels, a successful club has a membership who are overwhelmingly positive in how they behave and how they encourage each other.
- Coach led, the development of the swimmers has to be coach not committee or parent led. What is needed is supportive committee and parents.
- Continuity, he mentioned that as with football clubs, the more successful ones tend to have a coaching structure and team that has been in place for a number of years.

As I mentioned above, we have many of the elements in place to progress, I hope that you share my optimism for the future and that 2010 is the year when BBSC really starts to fulfil that potential.

Coaching Team

The club is very lucky with the number of qualified coaches and helpers that we have, our team is:

Head Coach: Steve Hall – overall responsibility for the club coaching.

Junior Coach: Nikki Wiseman – Nikki is responsible for the junior section. The junior section coaches are: Amanda Durban Lynne McLagan, Wayne Bulleid and Janet Watkins.

Intermediate Coach: Mike Woods – responsible for swimmers who are making the transition from Junior squad to Senior squad.

Lane Helpers: Rachael Firth, Jess Mitchell, Nina Wiseman, Rachael Knowles, Adam Shambrook, Amy Shambrook.

The following pages contain information that I hope you will find useful.



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Training

These are some of the ways that swimmers and parents can help the coaches run effective training sessions.

- Ensure swimmers are on poolside or awaiting collection at the correct time. For senior swimmers this is 15 minutes before the start of the session to give them time to prepare themselves and stretch properly. Continually arriving late is not giving the coaches and your fellow swimmers the respect they deserve.
- Have all their necessary equipment with you: Club hat (if a swimmer wears a hat it must be the club one), goggles, flippers and a full drinks bottle plus any other equipment your coach has asked you to bring.
- Ensure you have been to the toilet prior to the session, too many swimmers are regularly leaving sessions to go to the toilet. This is disruptive to the session, distracting to their coach and other club members and most importantly seriously affects the training they are doing.
- Make sure goggles are correctly adjusted and do not continually 'fiddle' with them during the session – your head does not change size that often!
- It is not possible for coaches to supervise swimmers who are not fit enough to swim. If a swimmer is present at a session the coach will assume that they are fit enough to complete it, please do not send a child who has a cold or to 'see how they get on'. Unless previously agreed with the coach swimmers will be expected to complete the full session.
- Galas, if you are selected for a gala please make every effort to attend, we are a competitive swimming club. Please check the notice board for team list and tick these as soon as possible.

Finally, you **will** race the way that you train:

It is not the time you spend in the pool that counts – it is what you do with that time.



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What am I doing here?

This is a question that has been asked by countless swimmers and parents (especially at those early morning sessions!). Club members have many varied reasons for wanting to swim and also many different expectations of what they are hoping to get out of the sport. Some swim for fitness, others because it complements a sport they participate in and those of course because they love the sport and want to achieve all they can. Braintree has members who fall into all of the above categories and we welcome and support all of them. For those, whom swimming is their main sport the following is an outline of how the season is structured and what needs to be achieved and when.

- **Club Championships**

Held at Braintree during November, majority of swimmers who will be competing at the Essex County Championships will be expected to achieve qualifying times here.

- **Essex County Championships**

These are held every year, over 4 weekends during the period January – March. Entry is based on age and achieving the published qualifying times. Swimmers who will be competing at the Eastern Regional Championships will be expected to achieve qualifying times here.

- **Eastern Regional Championships**

These are the next level of competition, allowing the best swimmers in the Eastern region to compete against each other. Held at the University of East Anglia over two weekends in June. Qualification is by achieving the published qualifying times. Those swimmers who will be competing at the National Championships will be expected to achieve their qualifying times here.

- **National Championships**

This is the next level up from the Regional Championships. The best swimmers in the country compete in July at Ponds Forge, Sheffield to find the national champion in each age group and event.

- **How is the age worked out for entry to Championships.**

Age is defined as being the age of the swimmer on the last day of the competition. For example if the last day of competition is 28th March, swimmers whose birthdays are up to including the 28th March swim all events as the age they will be on the 28th March.

- **Achieving qualifying times.**

As a general rule of thumb qualifying times need to have been achieved 6 weeks before the day of competition. **Important** – The County Regional and National qualifying times have to be achieved at designated competitions. The qualifying times will be available on the club website and from your coach.

Outside of these events there are club galas, annual competitions and open meets.

Finally

Each swimmer will reach a different level. What is important is that they take a pride in whatever they achieve and know that they are involved in a sport that has very many benefits for them



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How often should I be training?

This is a question that is often asked and whilst everybody is different in their needs and time they have available the following guidelines can be used.

- **Club Swimming**

Swimming in club galas & the occasional open meet, 4 or 5 hours a week will keep you fit for this, but with very little progression.

- **County Qualifier**

Between 6 and 8 hours a week will give you a chance of qualifying for county championships. **Note** that is only to reach the qualifying standard.

- **County Finalist & Regional Qualifier**

Now it is starting to get a little more serious, 9 hours a week would be a minimum recommendation if you are serious about reaching the final of county championships and qualifying for regional championships.

- **Regional Finalist & National Qualifier.**

You are now thinking of being competitive against the best in the region and qualifying for the national championships. A minimum of 11 hours a week is what you need to train if you want to get to this level.

- **National Finalist & National Champion**

Accept it; your life is now swimming! 13 hours a week is the starting point for this level.

The above is intended to give you an honest idea of the commitment that is needed at each level. There will of course always be exceptions & participating in some other sports can aid your swimming and reduce the amount of time you need to train.

Steve