



# WHALES TALES

Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2026



## Saturday Club Races

Welcome to first club race championship of 2026. Today's championship is the 50m Butterfly, and the 200m Butterfly. Good luck to all those participating!! Along with this, as this is the weekend right before Australia day, we will be having our annual board short relays. No payment of entry required, just show up ready to swim in your board shorts. Please arrive as early as possible to help setup.

Last Saturday was the opposite of the week before, although we started off strong, with our swimmers and volunteers, the weather it seems had other plans. We would like to thank everyone who helped pack up, during the torrential rain and all the volunteers who still came that morning to help set up and run the event.

## Squad Reminders:

Firstly, this is a reminder everyone who attends club, please remember to mark yourself absent in the swim school system, if you are not attending squad throughout the week as soon as possible. This helps with preparation and the smooth running of the squad.

Secondly, Speedo Sprint Series heats are coming up on Sunday 1st February and the entries for the meet closed on Thursday, 22nd January, so thank you and good luck to all swimmers who entered!!

Most importantly, there will be no Training on Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> due to Australia day.

## Merrylands SwimFest

SwimFest is just a few more weeks away, all swimmers who can swim, masters as well, should be competing at SwimFest and representing our club. Make sure you enter if you have not already. This meet is great practice for all swimmers and a great opportunity to gun for some pb's. Entries close on Saturday 7th February, so make sure you get your entries in early. Merrylands members can use the special member button for discounted entry fees.

As always SwimFest is not run by a lone Whale but the entire pod, so please step forward and let Sylvia Chan (Meet Director) know you are available. Please do this ASAP!



If you hate confrontation, we've got you covered. You can also sign up to help at this form: <https://forms.microsoft.com>

## Spotlight on Leanne Tovkach



This week we shine the spotlight on Leanne Tovkach, a long-time member of the club whose swimming journey has come full circle, from Learn to Swim, to Masters racing, and being an important part of our club community.

### Q1: Tell us about your swimming journey

A: I started Learn to Swim when I was about 5 years old at McCredie Park Club. I swam all throughout primary school and stopped after high school. I only



resumed swimming when my own kids joined Learn to Swim at McCredie Park. After a bit of stop starting, I switched over to Merrylands Amateur Swimming Club because, due to work, I couldn't do the McCredie Park club races on Friday night. I've been here since, about 10 years now.

## Q2: Best swimming achievement

A: My favourite and surprise! achievement was getting my very first Masters medal at nationals a few years ago (2022 at SOPAC). It was surprising to get one for 100m Backstroke!

## Q3 What I love about our Club

A: The family feel, and I enjoy swimming not just against my own age group, but also younger and older swimmers.

## Something interesting about me

A: I used to be a Scouts leader and I am a gamer! I play World of Warcraft (one of the biggest

multiplayer online role-playing video games). I've been playing since it came out about 25 years ago!

## General Message

If you have been enjoying the Whales Tales so far and have any Ideas on how to improve, please speak to Matt.



## Upcoming Meet Calendar

Check the [website](#) for the full list of upcoming meets, closing dates, programs and qualifying times.

MEET NAME	MEET DATE	ENTRY CLOSING
<b>Speedo Sprint Series Heats</b>	Sunday, 1st February 2026	closed
<b>NSW Senior Metropolitan Championships</b>	Friday 13th to Sunday 15th February 2026	Tuesday, 3rd February @ 11:55 PM
<b>Merrylands SwimFest</b>	Saturday, 21st February 2026	Saturday, 7th February @ 5:00 PM
<b>Speedo Sprint Series Finals</b>	Saturday, 28th February 2026	n/a
<b>Blacktown Masters Meet</b>	Saturday, 28th February 2026	Friday, 20th February @ 12:00 PM
<b>NSW Youth State Age Championships</b>	Saturday 21st & Sunday 22nd March 2026	Tuesday, 10th March @ 11:55 PM
<b>MSW 5-8 Year Development Meet</b>	Saturday, 28th March 2026	n/a