



WHALES TALES

Saturday the 7th of January 2026



Saturday Club Races

Welcome to the third club race championship of 2026. Today's championships are the 25m, 50m and 200m Freestyle. Good luck to all those participating!

We will be using our touchpads this morning in testing for SwimFest. As you know there is a fair bit of setup to have all the touchpads installed ready for racing to commence. With a packed morning program (Freestyle championships are our most popular championship morning) we need extra helpers bright and early at pool deck to help set up at 6:15am.

With Learn to Swim also starting today after club races we need to ensure club races run as quickly and smoothly as possible.

Please ensure your family of swimmers are aware of what events they are swimming and are ready at marshalling before their name is even called!

Merrylands SwimFest

SwimFest is only 2 weeks away! The last chance for all swimmers to enter is today (entries close online at 5:00pm). So, if you have not entered yet make sure you do when you are back home after club races today.

Thank you to all that have volunteered to help, we are still in need of some awesome bakers for our bake sale. So, if you're interested in baking some baked goods, please speak to Sylvia ASAP.

We have a timeline prepared for the setup jobs we need to complete, so we are asking that parents arrive by 11.30am on the day to help.

- 11.30am: Set up commences
- 12.45pm: Swimmers need to have arrived and changed ready for warm-up
- 1pm: Swimmers warm up commences
- 2pm: Racing commences

Please remember that SwimFest is a whole pod effort and cannot be done without the support of our fantastic volunteers, so if you are able to help, please speak to Sylvia.

Let's make this meet as smooth and successful as possible and show the other clubs how AWESOME our Club is!



Speedo Sprint Series

Merrylands' team of 15 swimmers delivered outstanding performances at the Metro South West Speedo Sprint Heats at Sydney Olympic Park last Sunday. Our swimmers competed in 49 individual events and achieved an incredible 40 new personal best times with every swimmer contributing to the PB tally. The Breaststroke events were particularly impressive, especially coming just one day after our Breaststroke Club Championships, with many swimmers lowering their times twice in two days. Across the meet, the team recorded PBs in nearly every event, highlighting strong progress in Freestyle, Butterfly, Backstroke and Breaststroke, and showcasing the impact of consistent training and skill development across all squads.

Beyond the times on the scoreboard, our swimmers demonstrated excellent race skills, particularly in their starts and finishes, reflecting the hard work happening in Development, Junior and Novice squads. It was also fantastic to see swimmers increasingly analysing their races and learning from each swim, a key part of long-term improvement.



Outside the pool, the team spirit was just as impressive, with swimmers cheering each other on, helping swimmers to marshall and celebrating achievements together. A big thank you to all parents and families for their support throughout the day, and to Alison, Peter, and Matt for preparing the swimmers so well for competition and a special thank you for Peter and Alison being there supporting all our swimmers!

From cheers to positive encouragement, parents and swimmers showed exactly what Merrylands is all about. Teamwork!



Lions Club Nominees:

Our club cannot operate without our amazing volunteers, the Lions Club award recognises our volunteers, this month we received nominations for:

Name	# of Nominations	Nominated for
Sophia Vicic	x 1	Starting races for the first time. Stepped up when needed.

Matthew Vicic	x 1	Started races and marshalling. Took on roles to ensure club races went smoothly when needed.
Danielle Vicic	x 1	Accepted Chief timekeeper position when required and always positive attitude around the pool.
Ian Johnston	x 2	1. Squad accounts reconciliation and dealing with banking. 2. Setting Up on Saturday Mornings.
Ian Wilson	x 1	Setting up on Saturday mornings.
Tricia Johnston	x 1	Setting up on Saturday mornings.
Graham Edwards	x 1	Setting up on Saturday mornings.
Margaret Edwards	x 1	Setting up on Saturday mornings.
Peter Johnston	x 1	Timing Superstar.
Johnson Chan	x 1	Timing Superstar.
Sylvia Chan	x 1	Meet Director Duties for SwimFest.

Thanks again to all our volunteers, and if you would like a chance to get on this list, help around the club as much as possible. If you would like to nominate someone, you can do so [Here: Lions club.](#)

⌚ Squad Training Reminder

If you will miss a session please remember to mark your absence in the swim school system via the parent portal.



🏆 Club Records Broken – 50m Breaststroke Championships 🏆



Congratulations to Pavla Hannan and Leo Zhu, who both set new club records in the 50m Breaststroke Championships last week!

Pavla lowered her own Veterans 50m Breaststroke record, stopping the clock at 52.22, an impressive 1.53 seconds faster than her previous mark set just last year, a fantastic achievement.

Leo followed with another record-breaking swim, taking 1.77 seconds off the long-standing 16 years 50m Breaststroke record, finishing in 33.52. The previous record had been held by Anthony Ventra (set in 2009).

A huge congratulations to both Pavla and Leo on their outstanding performances! 🏊‍♂️❤️

🏆 Swimmer Spotlight – William Johnston

This week we shine the spotlight on a swimmer who has grown steadily from Learn to Swim into Development squad and loves both the racing and the social side of our club.



Q1: Tell us about your swimming journey

A: I started Learn to Swim as a toddler with one of my mum's friends in Bankstown — I also swam the 15m club races as a toddler! Then I did Learn to Swim with the Merrylands Swimming Club on Saturdays with our wonderful club instructors. I've been swimming consistently since and have now progressed into Development squads.

Q2: What is your favourite thing about our Club?

A: I love the social side of the club, seeing all my friends and hanging out with them... and then maybe the swimming part!

Q3: What is your favourite stroke?

A: Backstroke! It's nice and chill. My least favourite is Breaststroke because it's slow and tiring.

Q4: What is your proudest swimming achievement?

A: Getting a big 5-second PB in the 100m Freestyle at SOPAC's MSW Long Course Championships in November 2025. At first, I thought it was a timing issue, but it was true and I was so excited! My parents said I did a really good job. I'm also proud of making it to my school's Zone swimming carnival every year for all strokes.

Q5: What is your swimming goal for this year?

A: Crack down on my 400m Freestyle time which is currently in the 7 minutes. I haven't done it in a while, and I want to get into the 6 minutes!

Q6: What is something interesting about you?

A: I love reading about maps and atlases. I even like watching TV shows about trains just to see the train routes. I know all the Sydney CityRail and Regional network maps. My favourite train journey was the Sydney–Melbourne XPT overnight ride, it was very comfortable having the train rocking me to sleep.

P-Plate Award

We like to recognise and reward all efforts during the season, and the P-Plate award is the perfect way to recognise something silly someone has done during the season. Click on the link below to nominate someone.

[Nominate a silly mistake](#)

Seen a Problem? Get it Fixed

We have recently logged issues with Council about the changerooms (repairs & cleaning) and the loose tiles on the pool coping, so we know raising issues flags them for attention by Council.

If you see something that needs fixing you can elevate this directly with Council by logging the issue [here](#).

Club Uniforms

We have a great range of club uniforms in stock available for sale. These can be purchased through the club's online shop [club shop](#).

With the cooler month's approaching (we don't call it winter) you may need a club hoodie. These require a special order to be placed with our suppliers. If you are interested in ordering a club hoodie, please speak to Margaret (our fantastic Property Officer).

Merrylands Parramatta PSSA Zone

Carnival

We will be providing our timing system and services again this year to the Merrylands Parramatta PSSA Zone carnival. This is a fundraising activity for our club.

The meet will be held on Wednesday 4th March at Merrylands Swimming Centre.

We will need to setup touchpads, shade shelters etc for their use, so if you are able to assist with the setup or longer during the day (we will also need to pack up after the meet), please let Graham know.

Tri to Swim – SwimFest prize pack

We are pleased to let you know that we have received a great prize pack donated by Tri to Swim for the SwimFest raffle (thank you Kylee for the referral). Tri to Swim are a family business and have been operating since 2018.

Tri to Swim cater for performance swimming and competition along with squad training swimwear and essential equipment.

They stock Arena, Speedo, Engine, Funkita, Finis, Vorgee, Amanzi and DMC. For those wishing to purchase a Racesuit, they can also assist with fitting.

10% member discount for local swim club members (with free sign up).

Contact information and hours of operation:

4a/89 Batt St, Jamisontown. NSW. 2750

Phone: 0424464407

Email: tritoswim@yahoo.com

Open Wed-Fri 11am - 5pm & Sat 10am-2pm



"The Difference between an Interest and a Commitment"

If you know a business that would like to assist with sponsorship or prizes for raffles etc, please speak to Graham.





WHALES TALES

Saturday the 7th of January 2026



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
Merrylands SwimFest	Saturday, 21st February 2026	Saturday, 7th February @ 5:00 PM
Speedo Sprint Series Finals	Saturday, 28th February 2026	Heat Qualification
Blacktown Masters Meet	Saturday, 28th February 2026	Friday, 20th February @ 12:00 PM
NSW Youth State Age Championships	Saturday 21st & Sunday 22nd March 2026	Tuesday, 10th March @ 11:55 PM
MSW 5-8 Year Development Meet	Saturday, 28th March 2026	TBA

