



# WHALES TALES



Saturday the 21<sup>st</sup> of February 2026

## Saturday Club Races

SwimFest is today!!! Please remember there will be no club races on Saturday morning.

Last week we had swimmers from all schools jumping in to compete for points.

In first place we had swimmers from Sacred Heart on 269 points. Following in second we had Shelley Public School on 147 points and in third we had Greystanes Public School & Sherwood Grange Public School with 107 points!



Congratulations to all who swam and our strong teams.

## Merrylands SwimFest

Today is the day! Swimfest is literally in a few hours. Please read the schedule below and please ensure you are **on time!**

- 11.30am: Set up commences
- 12.30pm: Swimmers need to be at the pool
- 12.45pm: Swimmers need to be changed ready for land warm-up
- 1pm: Swimmers pool warm up commences
- 2pm: Racing commences

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

## Message from Head Coach

Our swimmers have been practicing their pre-race warm up this week. This allows our swimmers to know how to effectively warm up their bodies, but also to prepare their minds to reduce carnival day nerves by knowing exactly what they need to do on race day.

**It is important that all swimmers arrive on time for the team warm up. We have 37 swimmers entered for this meet! Swimmers need to be at the pool for 12.30pm to get their event numbers on and ready for land warm up at 12.45pm, before hitting the pool at 1:00pm.**

Coaches and the Club Captains will be organising the swimmers to ensure they get to their races on time. Relay teams are listed in the Meet Program and are on the notice board at the pool.

Lastly, don't forget your club uniforms, white club caps, hats, sunscreen, healthy snacks and drink bottles and good luck to all our swimmers!

## Message from our Meet directors



Hi MASC SwimFest helpers,

Thank you all for volunteering your time this Saturday to help make our Merrylands SwimFest 2026 as smooth and successful as possible.

Here's a rundown of what everyone's allocated to help with - please let me know ASAP of any changes, eg, you can't come early, can't help during the meet or can't help to pack up etc...



For those that have already mentioned to me these things, hopefully I've captured it correctly below.

11.30am set up team: IanW, Graham, Marg, IanJ, Tricia, Alison, Peter, Sylvia, Johnson, Varant, Denise & Darla (once food ready), Praf, Uma, Ume, Danielle, Matt, Aaron (12.30pm), Katie, Alex, SteveB, Luke, SteveH, Kylee, Leanne.

During the Meet:

Blue = external helpers - please make them feel welcome on the day!

Meet director/s	IanW, Graham, Sylvia
Refs	Graham, <a href="#">Brad Fahey</a> , <a href="#">Lyndon Heslop</a> , <a href="#">Dennis Browning</a> , <a href="#">Shawn Simpson</a> , <a href="#">Glenn Burt</a>
Starter	<a href="#">Anthea Garbet</a>
Coaches	Alison, Matt
Chief Timekeeper	Denise
Timekeepers (no manging of 25m rope)	Lane 8. Rebecca Bishop / Darren Bishop Lane 7. Aaron & Rebecca Harb Lane 6. Katie & Alex Lane 5. SteveB & Fil Lane 4. Denise & Darla Lane 3. Luke & Lucy Lane 2. Mandy & Trevor Lane 1. Jeff & SteveH
Marshalls	Marg, Glenda
Check Starters	Kylee, Leanne
Recorders (in club house)	Tricia (Chief), Danielle
Timing Tent	Peter, Johnson, Varant (assisting)
Announcer	IanJ
Medals table	Nisreen
Warm up supervisors	Aaron (50m start end), Luke (50m finish end) <i>Check that swimmers are:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not hanging on to or crossing lane ropes</li> <li>• Dive starts only in assigned lanes</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct lane entry (sitting down, feet first slide in)</li> <li>• Keeping left</li> <li>• Not climbing over touch pads, exit the pool via the side ladders</li> </ul>
BBQ Chefs / Servers	Praf, Habib
Baked goods & raffle sales	Uma, Ume
Volunteer refreshments & raffle director	Sylvia
Volunteer Bakers	Fern, Uma, Grace, Rebecca Bishop, Lucy + <i>Subway donated cookies</i>

Pack up team: Graham, Marg, IanJ, Tricia, Alison, Peter, Sylvia, Johnson, Varant, Denise, Habib, Darla, Praf, Uma, Ume, Danielle, Matt, Aaron, Katie, Alex, SteveB, Luke, SteveH, Kylee, Leanne, Lucy, Pavla

We will also keep an eye on the forecast and have an Emergency Storm pack up plan. We'll instruct you on what to do, if activated (let's hope not!).

Any questions/concerns, please reach out to me, Graham or IanW. Thanks again for your help - good luck to the swimmers and a successful meet hosted by our awesome club.

Regards,

Sylvia, Graham and IanW.



## Swimmer Spotlight: Matthew Vici



This week we shine the spotlight on a long-time member who has grown up through the lanes at Merrylands and has now come full circle as a Squad coach.

### Q1: Tell us about your swimming journey

**A:** From 2 years old, I did Learn to Swim at Tony Shaw's Swim School in Toongabbie (no longer operating). My sister (Sophia) and brother (Michael) were already racing at MASC, and I joined in the 25m races (they didn't have 15m races back then!). I broke the 25m time straight away! I then joined the Novice squad when I was 5 years old and I was a bit cheeky and didn't listen very much. Peter Johnston, Ian Wilson, Rachel Johnston and Sarah Johnston were my coaches. Alison Johnston was my development coach for ages.

My first big meet was the NSW Metrops when I was about 12 years old where I swam 50m Fly, 50m Free and 100m Fly. I always hated racing — my brain didn't co-operate. Alison gave me some advice and said not to worry about my time and just swim. I ended up doing well with significant PBs.

### Q2: What makes you keep coming back to MASC?

**A:** I've now been with the club for 12 years and have come full circle and am now a Squad coach. I'm also happy I've still got some Club Championship Records to my name... for now! I love the social aspect — everyone here is like a big family to me.

### Q3: Favourite stroke

**A:** Butterfly. I've always liked it since I was young because it was hard! I enjoy the rhythm and to stay in rhythm I sing to myself when I swim that stroke. My least favourite is Breaststroke — I just can't do it well.

### Q4: Message to the Squad kids

**A:** You don't need to be fast to keep on swimming. I went through a stage where I wanted to quit because I felt I wasn't fast enough. But then I realised that's not why I swam — it wasn't always about racing. Swimming is so good for the mind and clearing the brain. Swimming got me through a lot of difficult times. It's a great mental release.

### Q5: Something interesting about you

**A:** I'm also a musician. I was in a band of five called *Pristine*, you can check us out on Instagram. I played bass guitar. We unfortunately broke up before we could start doing gigs together, but I want to get back into music again.

### Q6: Swimming goal for this year

**A:** I'd like to come back to training more consistently, around four times a week, to improve my fitness. My challenge now is getting the motivation!

### WhatsApp Group Chat

Rumour has it that there is a WhatsApp group chat with most parents from the swim club. If you would like to be apart, please speak to Syliva.

The group chat is for social purposes only and does not substitute official communication with club officials such as coaches, please stick to email strictly for anything formal.



## 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](#)

## 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>Merrylands SwimFest</b>	Saturday, 21st February 2026	Closed
<b>Speedo Sprint Series Finals</b>	Saturday, 28th February 2026	Heat Qualification
<b>Blacktown Masters Meet</b>	Saturday, 28th February 2026	Closed
<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>	Sunday, 29th March 2026	TBA

## Seen a Problem? Get it Fixed

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](#).

## 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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.