



WHALES TALES



Saturday 17th of October 2026

Club Championship Qualification

Club Championship races start next week (Saturday 24th October) with the 200m Individual Medley.

A reminder that to compete in Championship races you must have already swum that event (distance and stroke) successfully during this summer season. To make sure you don't miss out on qualifying for Championship events, it's important to plan your swims well ahead to ensure you qualify.

Guessing Competition

Despite a disaster this week, the M&M Jar Guessing Competition remains running over October. We also witnessed the creative flair of Luke Hannan in action following the spilling of the beans 😊



The jar and M&M's have been replaced, so don't miss out on the chance to win big, see Sylvia to purchase your entries. The draw will be held on Saturday 31st October after races.



Cash or card - winner announced Sat 31/10/26 after Club Races

Masters NSW SC State Championships

Congratulations to Kylee Murray, who competed in the Masters NSW Short Course State Championships last weekend in Canberra. Kylee swam in 5 events and came 8th in her age group, taking home a bronze medal in the 100m Freestyle 🏅🥉

Learn to Swim Assistants Needed 📞📞

The club is seeking members aged **12 years and over** to assist with our Spring Learn to Swim program.

The Spring Learn to Swim program runs from **Saturday 17 October to Saturday 12 December 2026**. Assistants would be required from **9:15am to 9:45am**.

Assistants will support Learn to Swim teachers with class activities, demonstrations and swimmer support during lessons.

Assisting with Learn to Swim is a great way to develop leadership and communication skills, gain experience working with younger swimmers and support the next generation of swimmers.

There is no obligation to become a Learn to Swim teacher in the future. However, for those who demonstrate commitment, aptitude and an interest in teaching, there may be opportunities through the club's Coach and Learn to Swim Teacher Development Program to undertake formal Learn to Swim teacher qualifications.

If you are interested in assisting with the Spring Learn to Swim program, please speak with Kylee Murray, Learn to Swim Coordinator.



Timekeepers are important

Accurate times provide feedback on the swimmer's performance in races and also provides officially recognised times for them to use to enter meets with Qualification times. Your volunteering to help in this role is an important part of our club's races.

How can you help achieve accurate timekeeping?

- Watch the swimmer in your lane and move to the front of the wall as they approach the wall (approx. 15m from the wall);
- Take split times when races are longer than 100m (i.e. every time the swimmer touches the wall in a turn at the start end of the pool);
- Stop your timing device when the swimmer first touches the wall (or noodle rope);
- Record your lane swimmer (not another lane);
- If you do not have a swimmer in your lane do not take a time on your device.

If an issue arises (e.g. your watch stops, you miss a split, press the button too early or late, timed the wrong lane) please tell the Chief Timekeeper (Denise) immediately, so that the issue can be resolved by the Referee, Timing Operator & Recorder.

And we have a special reward to recognise excellence. Where a lane has two timekeepers, if both record exactly the same time for a swimmer, show your watches to Denise to receive a small reward 😊👏

Become a Qualified Timekeeper

We are keen to encourage all of our timekeepers to obtain their technical accreditation. This is a great way to enhance your knowledge and skills.

We plan to hold a briefing session immediately after club races next Saturday, where we will take you through the small-time investment to complete the Timekeeper online course and provide you with morning tea.

Whales Challenge #1

Next week we undertake the first of our season's Whales Challenges. All swimming members are placed into two teams and compete for their team in every race they enter. The Teams are named after two of the club's former State Champions (Maroon "Turner" Team and White "Emery" Team). Both Darren Turner and Mitchell Emery went on to represent Australia in their chosen water sport.

Entries are submitted as usual for a normal Saturday morning (entry cut-off is 8.00pm Thursday).

Last year the Maroon team achieved a clean sweep, winning all 3 challenges. Can the White team gain ascendancy this season?

Swimmers must wear their club cap in their team colour while competing to win points for their team.

Club Uniforms

Need to purchase uniforms or equipment? They can be ordered and purchased through the club's online shop, visit [club shop](#).

If you have any questions about uniforms, please speak to Margaret Edwards (Property Officer).

Club Captain Nominations

Nominations for the positions of Male and Female Club Captains are open and close at 9:30am next week (Saturday, 24th October). Financial first claim members aged 14 years and over as of the 1st of October are eligible to be nominated for these positions. Information about the duties and responsibilities of Club Captains can be found on the club website under the By-Laws section.

Submit your nomination here:

<https://forms.office.com/r/qSuYfheZ6g>

Once nominations close, we'll confirm acceptance from nominees and invite them to submit a bio and photo to be included in the online voting system. All financial first claim members can cast their vote in Week 6 (Saturday, 7th November).



Swimming National Integrity Framework

We continue providing information about the Swimming Australia National Integrity Framework.

[The second of the 6 policies is the Member Protection Policy.](#)

This policy prohibits conduct including:

- (a) Abuse;
- (b) Bullying;
- (c) Harassment;
- (d) Sexual Misconduct;
- (e) Discrimination;
- (f) Victimisation; or
- (g) Vilification.

Reports or Complaints of alleged Prohibited Conduct under this Policy should only be submitted to Sport Integrity Australia where the alleged behaviour relates to Discrimination. All other allegations of Prohibited Conduct under this Policy should be submitted to Swimming Australia.

Initial concerns and advice can be raised with our club's MPIO (Graham Edwards).

For more detailed information about the Swimming National Integrity Framework and each of the individual policies you can visit the following sites:
<https://www.swimming.org.au/resources/swimming-national-integrity-framework>
<https://nsw.swimming.org.au/integrity/>

Equipment Donation

A big thank you to Habib Assi (HA Constructions) who kindly donated a new drill, battery and charger kit to the club. This is equipment needed when we use the touchpads and also carry out repairs to other items of equipment we own.



Lions Club Award

Seen someone that deserves recognition for their efforts in helping? Nominate them for the Lions Club Award, our peak award to recognise our volunteers over the season.

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Spring Races, both at the pool and behind the scenes.

Nominees for September were:

Name	Nominations	Summary
Denise Assi	2	Organising donations for the Christmas raffles and organising the Archery school holiday activity
Sylvia Chan	1	Organising the Raging Waters prize and draw
Alison Johnston	1	Chief Timekeeper duties in Denise's absence
Johnson Chan	1	Troubleshooting malfunctioning watches with Wylas

William Johnston	2	Upgrading laptops & computers to Windows 11; publishing Whales Tales to the website and uploading club races
Ian Johnston	1	Troubleshooting issues with watches and starting device
Peter Johnston	1	Troubleshooting issues with watches and starting device
Tricia Johnston	1	Troubleshooting issues with watches and starting device
Mandy Smart	1	Timekeeping in Spring
Damien Chan	1	Helping with timing on Saturday

[Nominate a volunteer](#)

Swimmer Spotlight – Patricia Johnston

Tell us about your swimming journey

I started Learn to Swim when I was about 6 or 7 years old at Parramatta Pool. I was keen to become a good swimmer like my siblings, but unfortunately, I kept getting ear infections. Back then, you couldn't just pop into the shops and buy things like earplugs or Aqua Ear drops, so I never really learnt to swim. Instead, I focused on other sports, particularly hockey and cross country.

In fact, I didn't participate in a school swimming carnival until Year 12! I was house captain and thought I should set a good example by entering a swim race, even though I couldn't swim 50 metres. I nervously lined up for the 50m freestyle, ready to go, only for the race to be called back for a false

start! After all those nerves, I decided I'd had enough and didn't bother returning for the race.

I joined our Club 39 years ago, when my son Peter was eight. It wasn't to swim; I wanted to support Peter's swimming journey, as well as help at the Club.

It wasn't until 17 years ago, after my first hip operation brought my hockey days to an end, that I decided to give swimming a go again since I was already around the pool for the kids. I started entering the short races at our weekly Club races, just for fun. I also tried Masters swimming, but found it made me too nervous, so I didn't continue.

Having never really learnt to swim myself, I made it my mission to ensure the next generations could all swim!

What is your Favourite stroke

Freestyle, simply because I can't do the other strokes properly! My least favourite is backstroke. I feel like I'm just lying on my back, moving my arms and wondering where the finish flags are!

Generally, when I do swim, I'm just hoping to make it to the other end of the pool! I'm currently recovering from another operation, so I won't be swimming for a while.

What was it like being Race Secretary before electronic systems?

My first official role and longest role with the Club was Race Secretary, where we relied on coloured handwritten paper race cards to manage every aspect of club races.

On race days, each swimmer had a race card per event, which was prepared with swimmers' names, events and lane allocations. Then we recorded each of their finishing times and positions. Results had to be carefully checked, with calculations for handicaps, PBs and race placings all done manually. Each swimmer also had their own larger card to keep track of their individual times and PBs. It was a meticulous, time-consuming job that required a



great deal of paperwork, attention to detail and accuracy to keep the races running smoothly.

The role has changed so much over the years. Thank goodness for technology and clicking buttons automating things.

What do you love most about the Club

I love the atmosphere and seeing both the kids and adults swimming and competing side by side. It's wonderful to have so many different ages involved and to see everyone being part of the Club.

Tell us something interesting about yourself

I played competition hockey for 50 years, including alongside my daughters, Rachel and Sarah. I played in the Division 1 women's team at Kellyville-Merrylands Hockey Club before going on to representative levels for Parramatta. I also played Masters hockey at Sydney Olympic Park. I have only recently hung up my hockey stick, 3 years ago.



P-Plate Award

As the season rolls along keep an eye out for someone making a silly mistake. We like to recognise and reward all efforts during the season, and the P-Plate award is the perfect way to do this.

[Nominate a silly mistake](#)

Walk to defeat MND

Following the success of last year's walk, we are again participating in the Sydney Walk to Defeat MND.

When: Sunday, 8th November 2026

Time: Walk starts 9:00 am

Distance: Approx 5 km

Location: Blaxland Riverside Park, Sydney Olympic Park

If you're interested in participating, we'd love for you and your family to register and join our team!

Join the MASC team here:

<https://www.walktodefeatmnd.org.au/fundraisers/merrylandsamateurswimmingclub>

Event details:

<https://www.walktodefeatmnd.org.au/sydney26>

Please note: You'll need to register your vehicle to access two hours of free parking.

See a problem? Get it fixed

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

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
MSW Long Course Championships	14 th & 15 th November	TBA
Masters LC LD Championships	22 nd November	13 th November
SNSW Youth Metropolitan C/Ships	28 th & 29 th November	TBA
NSW Senior State Championships	15 th – 21 st December	TBA
Speedo Sprint Heats	30 th January	TBA
Merrylands SwimFest	13 th February	TBA
NSW Senior Metropolitan C/Ships	19 th – 21 st February	TBA
Speedo Sprint Final	27 th February	Heat Qualifying
NSW State Open Championships	5 th – 7 th March	TBA
NSW State Youth Championships	20 th – 21 st March	TBA

What's missing?



Summer races



Spring races

The Answer



If found, please return to Merrylands Swimming Centre



Let's STOMP out Motor Neurone Disease



SYDNEY

Join or Donate to our '**Merrylands Amateur Swimming Club**' team!

9am **SUNDAY 08
NOVEMBER 2026**

**BLAXLAND RIVERSIDE
PARK, SYDNEY
OLYMPIC PARK**

**5KM CHARITY WALK TO SUPPORT
PEOPLE LIVING WITH MOTOR
NEURONE DISEASE**

ALL AGES AND ABILITIES!



walktodefeatmnd.org.au/fundraisers/merrylandsamateurswimmingclub