



QUALIFYING FOR COUNTY EVENTS FROM LICENSED MEETS

On 13 November, Jan Eddy, on behalf of the ECASA Swimming Committee sent an email to clubs advising of the following change in the criteria for entering County Championships:

The following change was therefore notified to clubs on 13 November 2008:-

1. **With effect from 2009**, for the Essex Swimming Championships [*formerly the Senior/Junior Championships*] – our premier event – entry times will need to be obtained at **Level 1 and 2 Licensed Meets**. To assist Clubs in planning for this, the County will publish qualifying times by no later than the end of March in the year of the competition, but will endeavour to publish earlier.
2. For the Age Group Championships, the requirement to qualify from a licensed meet will be discontinued **immediately**. However, we anticipate that this may cause an oversubscription in the number of entries. Therefore, in the event that it is necessary to restrict entries in some events, priority will be given to swimmers with times obtained at licensed meets in that event and entry times will be amended/removed accordingly. In such regard, **splits** will **NOT** be accepted but **conversions** **WILL** be.

The County has received some questions and comments arising from the email and the following hopefully summarises and addresses these.

Q1. Why has the County changed the criteria so soon after the original criteria was announced and at such short notice?

A. *The decision to change the criteria was as a result of some anomalies in the original criteria identified by the County and having taking into consideration some of the comments raised by clubs. These included the following factors:-*

1. *The cost to parents of swimmers having to attend additional licensed meets to gain qualifying times in the current economic climate.*
2. *The limited number of licensed meets available which were heavily oversubscribed and therefore resulting in large numbers of rejections.*
3. *That swimmers were substituting competition for training in order to achieve qualifying times which is contrary to the Long Term Athlete Development Plan.*
4. *The additional administrative burden on clubs in having to separate licensed meet times from non-licensed meet times within their own PB records and then have to go to the trouble to explain conversions/splits and produce the necessary evidence.*
5. *The limited opportunity for swimmers to swim 50m events at licensed meets.*
6. *Swimmers who had been out of swimming for a period for whatever reason not having had the opportunity to swim at licensed meets in the preceding twelve month period.*



Q2. Why might it be necessary for the County to restrict entries?

A. *As the qualifying times for next year's programme of events had been fixed based on the assumption that swimmers would have to qualify from licensed meets, an immediate relaxation in the criteria means that events are very likely to be over-subscribed. The obvious solution would have been to toughen qualifying times. However, as the qualifying times for the 2009 Age Groups has already been published, this was out of the question. In any event, this was not be the County's favoured reaction as we are aware that the qualifying standard for our Championships is already very high, particularly for the longer distance events.*

Q3. Why does the rejection criteria give priority to swimmers who have gained times at licensed meets?

A. *If the qualification criteria was to be relaxed then it was felt necessary to publish the criteria for rejecting swimmers in the event that any event was oversubscribed. The problem with not having an objective prioritisation criteria is that some clubs may enter fictitious (faster) times to ensure that their swimmers are not affected by any rejection criteria. This has proved to be the case on many an occasion in the past, with swimmers who have been entered on valid times being rejected and losing out. The decision made by the County stops this and also means that swimmers who have obtained times at licensed meets or whose clubs have gone to the trouble to licence their Club Championships will take priority over swimmers whose times cannot be verified.*

Q4. Why will the County not accept split times?

A. *Clubs can still enter swimmers on a split time. The issue over splits only arises if the County has to reject swimmers in a particular event.*

It is important to appreciate that, apart from Block A (sprints), the closing date for each of the other Blocks is only three weeks before each block. The County will not have time to refer to clubs with any queries over times in the event that it is necessary to apply the rejection criteria. It is therefore essential that the County can verify the times to be accepted immediately. For short course times this can be done easily from the ASA Rankings and conversions can quickly be calculated using the Sportsystem Equivalent Performance software. Splits cannot be verified quickly. As mentioned, one of the criticisms of the previous criteria raised by clubs was the additional administrative burden and it was therefore understood that clubs would not wish to go to the trouble of providing such evidence with their entries (which would need to be results sheets from the actual meet, not just "evidence" from a club's own records).

Q5. What events does the County expect to have to apply the rejection criteria in?

A. *Unfortunately we have no idea as to which events (if indeed any) we are likely to have to reject swimmers in and we will not know this until all entries for a particular block have been received.*

Q6. What about swimmers who obtain times at meets which are not licensed such as the World Championships, National Masters, etc?

A. *A proviso has been included in the Championship conditions that the Swimming Committee is able to deem that times obtained at any meets which are not licensed meets but which the Swimming Committee consider have equivalent status to Level 1 or 2 Licensed Meets or higher can be accepted.*



Q7. How will the prioritisation apply to 9 and 10 year olds when previously they did not have to qualify from a licensed meet?

A. *For 9 and 10 year olds age groups entries if necessary will be restricted based on entry times only.*

In such regard the County is therefore relying on clubs to enter swimmers on accurate times. Accordingly, where entry times have not been obtained at licensed meets competitors who fail to achieve the qualifying time/restricted cut off time may have to submit proof that they have previously achieved the required standard or be excluded from further events.

Q8. When checking for times from licensed meets will the County be including or ignoring 100th?

A *The County can confirm that it will ignore 100ths.*

Q9. If the County is not considering split times when applying the rejection criteria, does this mean that splits will no longer be acceptable when claiming County records?

A *The rules concerning County Records are not affected by this criteria.*

Q10. How does this affect fines? If a swimmer fails to make the time in the Age Group Championships, but can prove he made the time at an earlier licensed meet will the Club be fined?

A. *We do not apply fines to swimmers who do not make the time – we simply publish the information on a "name and shame" list.*

However any swimmer who does not make the qualifying time, even if they made the time at an earlier licensed meet, will not be able to compete in the final for that event or be eligible for awards.

Q11. The County has stated that if an event is over subscribed, priority will be given to swimmers who achieve their times at a licensed meet. Does this apply to the 'slower' swimmers in the event, or would you remove swimmers who might be ranked in the top 5 but the time was not achieved at a license meet?

A. *The rejection criteria applies to all swimmers regardless of the submitted time. However, as indication above (Answer 6) the County has the discretion to deem that any times not obtained at licensed meets can have equivalent status. In this regard a suitable application would need to be made with the entries just in case it is necessary to reject in that event, although obviously we will not know this until that particular Block closes.*

We hope the above has covered all the points raised. However, if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Swimming Committee.

ECASA Swimming Committee

November 2008