



Parents guide to the National Arena league

The Arena league is run in seven regions across the country. Mid Sussex Marlins compete in the South region. The regions are split into divisions: the premier division which covers the whole region, then division one and two which are both split geographically between East and West. There are around 18 teams in the premier division and similar numbers in the lower divisions.

Mid Sussex Marlins currently has 1 team competing in South Division 1 West, teams such as Brighton currently compete in Division 1 East. The premier league sits above these two divisions.

The Qualifying rounds

There are three rounds held on the same evenings simultaneously across the country, one in October, November and December. The October and November gala's are qualifying rounds for the December regional finals with teams within each division competing against each other. The draws for these rounds are done in advance based on league positions. The final December gala's are crucial as there are double points on offer which decides promotions / relegation between the divisions. In theory Mid Sussex Marlins would be looking for promotion to the South premier division and to avoid relegation to the division two west league.

All gala's are swum in 25m pools within the region, where possible each regions premier league final in December is held in a 50m pool, the South's venue would normally be K2 Crawley.

The team with the most points after the top premier division regional final automatically qualifies for A national final (this year held in Cardiff on a Sunday in April 2015). Depending on results from other regions one or more runner up from the regional final may either qualify for the A final or the B final held on the same day at the same venue. There are 10 teams in the A and B national final.

Swimmer selection

Swimmers will be selected by the Mid Sussex Marlins coaches. Notification of selection will be by email. There are no entry fees or forms to fill in. If you are unable to compete you must notify Steve or Nic immediately. All squad swimmers are expected to compete in gala's which they are selected for as per the squad qualifying criteria. The club expects priority to be given to these events over other activities or social events (even more importantly in December which is the final / most important round). Each selected swimmer plays an important role for the team and without them we cannot achieve the result which would have been possible.

The age groups are determined as age on 31st December. The age groups are 9-11, 13 and under, 15 and under and open.

The Gala's

The youngest age group swim 50m for each stroke a 4 x 50m medley and freestyle relay. The other age groups swim 100m for the individual races with the exception of a 200m IM for the open age group at the

start of the gala's. The relays are also 4 x 50m with the addition of a men's and women's 6 x 50m open relay at the end of the gala's.

Gala day

The club usually provides a coach for transport to venues outside of Sussex. If we are drawn within Sussex then swimmers are expected to make their own way to the venue, lift sharing is recommended. At these local galas's we ask that all parents / swimmers arrive at the venue at the designated time so that the swimmers can warm up correctly and the coaches do not have to worry about making last minute changes to the team sheet.

If club transport is provided all swimmers are expected to travel on the coach. If there are exceptional reasons why this isn't possible it must be agreed with the coaches beforehand.

Once the swimmers are on poolside a number of team sheets will be available and the swimmers will be able to see which events they are swimming. Swimmers swim the stroke / distance allocated to them. There is no discussion about this on the night as in the weeks leading up to the gala a great deal of effort has gone into event selection and the strokes each swimmer will do (it isn't always black and white). Relays are swum in the order listed.

Please do not be disappointed if your swimmer only does one relay swim on the evening. Each swimmer is an important part of the team and it is an honour to be selected to swim for the club.

All swimmers are expected to stay until the end of the gala, support their teammates, and congratulate the winning club / the other participating clubs.