

TIPS FOR COMPETITORS COMPETING AT BRISBANE OPEN WATER SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Registration

- Keep the areas where your race number is to be applied (both upper arms, both shoulder blades, and the back of each hand) free of any grease before reporting to the registration area.
- Allow plenty of time for registration, warm-up, and getting into your race suit before you are required at the starting area.

Briefing & Course

- Ensure you attend the race briefing and use that time to ask any questions you might have.
- Look at copies of the A3 course map that will be posted around the Finish Tower area on the day and ensure you understand what the course is.
- Ensure you understand which buoys are the turn buoys on the course.
- You are required to swim the length of the course; any short cuts will result in disqualification.
- Buoys are positioned to define a course layout; some may be directional buoys that simply provide you with a means of keeping in line and on the correct course direction. These buoys are usually smaller and a different colour to 'turn buoys', and you can swim on either side of these smaller, directional buoys.
- All turn buoys where you are required to make a left-hand or right-hand deviation will be a distinctive colour and of a size which can be seen from a distance.

Sighting

- Practise swimming part of the course in your warm-up.
- If turn buoys are positioned on the course, swim out to one and look down the course towards the next turn to familiarise yourself with the course.
- Note any prominent landmarks behind the buoys, as this will assist with sighting whilst on the course (do this from water level).
- When swimming in a pack, position yourself before the turn so you can negotiate the turn without interfering or impeding other swimmers or being forced off the line to the inside of the turn buoy.

Swimwear

- Ensure your swimwear is not too tight; you may require one size larger than what you wear for pool racing.
- Spread Vaseline around areas where the costume will rub, especially with straps over shoulders and back, around the armpits, and around the neck area.
Please note: Vaseline may not come out of your swimwear post-event.

Start

- Find a position on the starting line that you feel comfortable with.
- You may be starting the race with a large pack of swimmers who may be older/faster than you, so start to the side or back if you are inexperienced.
- Stay relaxed and don't panic if you get knocked/kicked in the frenzy of the start.

Feeding (7.5km)

- One handler per swimmer in the 7.5km events will have access to the feeding station, which will be located on the eastern foreshore between the start and the first turn buoy (exact location will be announced).
PLEASE NOTE: NO FEEDING IN 5KM, 2.5KM, AND 1.25 KM EVENTS.
- Intake of food is allowed with the assistance from a handler/coach, subject to the FINA Rules governing this activity.
- Cups are used in preference to bottles, as the swimmer needs to intake a large amount of fluid (200-300mls) as quickly as possible without losing too much time.
- Carbohydrate supplements are usually dissolved in the drink. Intake of supplements should be done in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines.
- Feed sticks (long poles with a cup held at the end) can be used; this allows extra reach without the risk of touching your swimmer.
- Plan your feeds with your handler prior to the race.
- Swimmers can take carbohydrate supplements in their costumes and feed at other times around the course. Sometimes this can be used to advantage to avoid the congestion and time wasted around the feeding station.
- Test your supplements prior to the event in training.
- Where the water is shallow and you can stand or touch the bottom, you CANNOT walk or jump (push off the bottom) in order to recommence swimming.
Should the water be shallow (usually when feeding from a beach area), YOU MUST REMAIN STEADY AND THEN LIFT YOUR FEET AND FLOAT BEFORE COMMENCING TO SWIM.
- You CANNOT intentionally touch or be touched by your handler.

Finish

- Ensure you DO touch the plate, if not with your leading hand, then with your trailing hand, as you pass through the finish gate.

Rules

- During the course of a race, a swimmer may only receive one (1) warning (1st Infringement) for violation of the Rules. Any subsequent violation (2nd Infringement), or for unsportsmanlike conduct, will result in disqualification.
- Rule infringements against swimmers are based entirely on 'unsporting' behaviour. Unlike pool swimming, the technicalities of a given stroke do not apply, as all events are 'freestyle'.
- As races are swum in packs, unintentional contact with another swimmer is inevitable. However, any intentional contact or impeding the progress of a swimmer that is observed by an authorised official or the Referee may result in a swimmer receiving a yellow flag (warning) for the first infringement, or a red flag (disqualification) for the second infringement.
- If the action is deemed 'unsporting', immediate disqualification may be applied.
- A swimmer shall be disqualified if they:
 - Receive support from any floating object (such as a buoy or boat)
 - Are intentionally touched by their handler when feeding.HOLDING ONTO A FEED STICK WILL BE DEEMED AS RECEIVING SUPPORT
- If the Referee or a Turn Judge or Race Judge reports a swimmer for not rounding a buoy correctly, then the Referee will disqualify the competitor for not completing the race distance.

Packing checklist

Ensure you have all your essential equipment with you.

Below is an example:

Swim Gear		
	Goggles + Spares	Give spares to your handler
	Togs (training and racing) + Spares	
	Caps	You may wear your preferred swim cap under the event cap
	Towels	
	Hat + Sunscreen	
	Cold or Wet weather gear	
Pre-event		
	Latex gloves	Handler to apply sunscreen and Vaseline so your hands do not get greasy
	Vaseline	Used to prevent chafing from your togs
	Tape	To secure your transponder
	Scissors + Nail clippers	
	Garbage bag	
	Inhalers or other medications as required	Can be placed in the feed stick if required
	Snacks + Cooler bag	
Feeding		
	Drinks + sports drink powder	
	Supplements	
	Feed stick + Cups	
Handler		
	Binoculars	
	Hat + Sunscreen	
	Snacks + Drinks	
	Wet or Cold weather gear	