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1<sup>st</sup> August 2019

Dear Parent,

To confirm squad criteria for 2019 / 2020. The aim of the performance swimming squads is to allow talented swimmers the pathway to achieve excellence in the pool. To achieve an international level of swimming is a journey that takes over 10 years in the making. This level of swimming does not happen overnight and in the main involves many difficult times along the way to eventually achieve international level. Any athlete or individual must endure the setbacks to at some point in the future experience how it feels to be a success. This process of failure within a sport / life and how an individual deals with it will ultimately dictate how far they will go in any sport / life. Squad moves are essential to sustain a competitive environment where only the best / higher ranked swimmers train together. Swimmers who do not have the relevant squad times / rankings will have to earn their right to move squads.

#### Clarification of Squad Moves 2019 / January 2020

Squad moves will take place in September 2019, and January 1<sup>st</sup> 2020. **All swimmers ages are based on age as at 31/12/19 to fall into line with National Competitions.** (Parents are reminded there is no such thing as a bad birthday!!)

All swimmers' movements between squads are based on the following criteria:

Attendance (we are looking for swimmers who want to do all sessions)

Attitude

Ability (Squad Times (<https://www.swimmingresults.org/12months>))

Parents who show a willingness to challenge their children by bringing them to more AM sessions will be moved up before swimmers who avoid the more difficult sessions. Unfortunately, this may at times, impede on family life but successful swimmers push themselves and their parents understand that success is earned.

#### National Elite

Swimmers in National Elite will need to have been selected for British Summer / English or Welsh Home Nations Championships and fall into the 3 A's. Swimmers who are not selected to swim at their Home Nations British Champs will go into National Development. This Squad is for swimmers who train 9/10 sessions per week. Please note even though a swimmer may have been selected for British Champs 2019 this may not necessarily mean they will be going into this group. This will be dependent on the 3 A's. Swimmers in this Squad must be able to attend all sessions as per the programme they train within including all land work sessions and be willing to do Thera band / preventative exercises every night prior to the pool sessions.

### National Development

Swimmers in National Development must have a National Squad time by December 2019 (please see Warriors web site). Swimmers who achieve Home Nations selection and are 13 + will be offered a place in this squad and must be willing to attend 8 sessions per week every week which will also include the Tue, Thurs & Sat morning. Please note from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 that swimmers who are 13+ age as at 31/12/19 will be expected to swim the above sessions equalling 8 sessions per week. Swimmers who do not wish to attend those morning / evening sessions will be placed into 'A' squad. Swimmers in this Squad must be able to attend all sessions as per the programme they train within including all land work sessions and be willing to do Thera band / preventative exercises every night prior to the pool sessions. (Only the swimmers with a National Group time will be able to attend a Thursday PM session from January 2020)

### "A" Squad

Swimmers who have been in this squad a minimum of 12 months and are age 11+. Age as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December will be expected to have achieved a minimum of 1 "A" Squad time by the end of the year. The final galas for achieving these times will be the Badge Gala December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Please note that swimmers who do not achieve a minimum of 1 "A" squad time will move into Gold Squad from January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Please note there will be no time extension on achieving these times, as with hard work and minimum talent this level of swimming is easily attainable. Please also note that swimmers who do get offered a place within "A" squad will be expected to attend 4 evening sessions per week to retain their place in this squad. Swimmers who cannot or do not want to attend these sessions have the option of swimming in Gold Squad where they can train as often as they wish. Swimmers in the above groups are expected to choose swimming as their number 1 sport and past time and be able to commit to it accordingly. Parents who take up a place within 'A' squad and then choose for their children to prioritise other sports will have their children moved into Gold Squad. Swimmers who do not wish to commit to the sessions will follow the path of Gold and Silver Squad. Swimmers will be selected for this squad in the event of swimmers not having a qualifying time initially by their British Ranking <https://www.swimmingresults.org/12months/> / AA time or B1 squad time. This squad will also be limited to 42 in total.

Parents whose swimmers do move into Gold Squad in January will have the opportunity to train on the following sessions if they are willing to commit to all the sessions to attempt to achieve a squad time.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
Am	5-7am Woolston				5-7am Woolston	6.30-8.30am Orford
Pm	7-9pm Sankey	7-9pm Woolston	7-9pm Orford		6-8pm Orford	

The above sessions will only be available to those swimmers who wish to commit to all the above sessions including the two weekday early morning sessions. Any swimmer who misses any of the weekday evenings will drop the Friday night session due to it being a prime-time slot for swimmers who commit to the earlier week sessions. Swimmers in Gold who currently have the option of using 'A' Squad sessions will be expected to attend the above sessions to continue having that option.

### "AA" Squad

Swimmers in this squad can follow two routes, which are Gold or 'A' Squad. Swimmers in this squad who have not achieved "AA" times by the end of the year will be moved into Gold Squad if they are 13+ in the year 2019. Swimmers who can achieve 'AA' times will move up prior to those who only achieve B1 times. Times are obviously an indicator of ability, with some swimmers being able to achieve these times with ease with either a good work ethic or natural talent. (Swimmers with a good work ethic always surpass the swimmer with talent who is not committed to the work).

Swimmers who have not been offered a place within 'A' Squad in September but did do Step Up sessions leading up to July 2019, have the option of continuing with 1x2 hour session with Gold Squad. This will allow them adequate water time and regular 2hour sessions so as to keep up with other swimmers in their age groups. (please note swimmers in this squad who do not currently attend all the sessions they have on offer will not be offered step up sessions into 'A' Squad. Also, swimmers who have been offered step up sessions for example one session per week with 'A' Squad and declined the offer will follow the route of Gold Squad). Please note that swimmers who wish to prioritise other sports will not be offered places within 'A' Squad.

#### "B2" Squad

Swimmers who have been offered places within this squad will only benefit by attending the majority of sessions - 80% plus. Swimmers in this squad are expected to do back to back sessions on a Tuesday, and swimmers will not be offered more water time when they do not currently utilise the sessions they already have on offer to them. The progression from "B2" squad can be to 'AA' or to Silver / Gold Squad dependent on the 3A's.

#### 'C' Squad

'C' Squad is for swimmers 10 and under in the year (age as at 31/12/19). Swimmers in this squad if they wish to progress into "B" Squads are expected to attend the Tuesday am session in preparation for another squad swimming. "C" Squad is a skill development squad where swimmers get the option of learning the skills that will help them swim at National / International Level. Swimmers who do not wish to commit to the weekday early morning session will follow the route of Gold and Silver Squad.

#### Gold & Silver Squad (Junior / Senior)

Is an interim squad where swimmers have adequate water time, to still train to swim at any level of the sport if they wish to attend the sessions. These squads have no criteria on the number of sessions attended per week. However due to the fact these squads are competitive swimmers within Gold will be expected to swim in end of cycle meets. These end of cycle meets are:

Cycle 1 Percy Mason Meet or Wirral Open Meet December

Cycle 2 Wirral Metro Meet March

Cycle 3 Rotherham or Manchester or Welsh Nationals

Swimmers who do not wish to compete in Gold squad will be moved into Senior Silver Squad where training time is not a necessity due to different expectations.

Swimmers who wish to attempt to get 'A' Squad times have the option of attending the same sessions as the swimmers who do not achieve 'A' Squad times by December, however swimmers who do not attend the earlier week sessions will not be entitled to the additional Friday evening and the Saturday AM session at Orford and will return to their normal Gold Sessions including the Saturday AM at Woolston.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
Am	5-7am Woolston				5-7am Woolston	6.30- 8.30am Orford
Pm	7-9pm Sankey	7-9pm Woolston	7-9pm Orford		6-8pm Orford	

Parents are reminded that as part of the Livewire Performance programme their children are expected to swim in Team Galas as, and when, selected. Swimmers who refuse and have other commitments and so let the team down will lose their position within these squads. Parents are also reminded that they are accountable for the way their children train. Training within these squads does require the support of the parents with them watching the sessions, and challenging their own children. These squad sessions are demanding and swimmers within them are expected to be competitive and be willing to push themselves. Swimmers who constantly swim at the back of the lanes with limited to poor technique are unfortunately very unlikely to be a success in this sport.

Finally, swimmers within the following squads must have swam at some point before December 31<sup>st</sup> 2019 the following events to continue in their current squad.

National Elite	1500m Free Male 800m Free Female	400 IM
National Development	1500m Free Male 800m Free Female	400 IM
“A” Squad	1500m Free Male 800m Free Female	400 IM
“AA” Squad	400 Free as minimum	400 IM & 200 IM

Parents should also be aware that all swimmers within these squads have been taught the following skills to name but a few:

- Dive: Be able do 15 Fly kicks into either Butterfly or Free off race start.
- Back Start: Be able to do a minimum of 15 fly kicks off a race start.
- Turns: Be able to make a minimum of 5 metres off a push off on all strokes with the correct under water phase as per stroke.

Swimmers who show a high skill level and the ability to take on board instructions and apply them within racing and training will be given the opportunity to be fast tracked within the programme. Swimmers who cannot do the above will not move into the top squads. Parents will need to enforce the above skills and make sure they happen in racing and training if they wish for their child to be considered for squad moves.

Finally, the door is always open to discuss their child’s progress but Parents who wish to get the most out of their child’s swimming must be able to take on board positive criticism so as to apply the correction for future improvements.

The coaching team and I are committed and look forward to working with Parents and swimmers this season and hope that we can achieve the best for the swimmers and Warriors Swimming Club.

Yours sincerely,

Darren Ashley  
Head Swimming Coach

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