

# **NEW MEMBERS**



# **INFORMATION BOOKLET**

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## **1. Introduction to the Club**

Welcome to Torfaen Dolphins Performance Centre! The Mighty Torfaen Dolphins! We are delighted that you and your child(ren) have decided to join our swimming club and on behalf of the Committee, Coaches and all our volunteers we would like to welcome you with open arms.

We appreciate that you may have many questions at the moment about the club e.g. how it is organised and how it operates and hope that the following information will help you to understand some of the basics. Please always feel free to come to us if you have any questions and of course you will find more information on our website [www.torfaendolphins.com](http://www.torfaendolphins.com). You will also find contact information below.

## **2. Background**

Torfaen Dolphins (TD) is a Swimming Club based at the Pontypool Active Living Centre (PALC), Cwmbran Stadium and Fairwater Leisure Centre, Cwmbran. We offer swimming options for all ages and all standards and are one of only 11 Performance clubs in Wales and the only one in the Torfaen area. We are currently ranked the 3rd best performing club out of that 11 and are extremely proud of our achievements. Our Swimming Club caters for a huge range of ages and abilities within our programmes, so if you are a Club swimmer who wants to reach their full potential, or become a future Commonwealth Games representative, we are able to help every swimmer to achieve their goals.

New swimmers are always welcome. Each year TD develop youth and master's swimmers who are able to compete at national and international level. Our philosophy is to develop excellent technique in our younger swimmers providing them with the quality of stroke that enables them to develop into highly competitive swimmers towards their middle teens and beyond. The club provides a friendly and family type atmosphere where the interest is in providing the platform from which all swimmers, of all abilities, can flourish and reach their full potential.

Whether your interest is in swimming competitively or improving your fitness, TD has something to offer you. We have a proud history dating back over 30 years! We have some members who have been with the club for a substantial part of that time, still enjoy swimming and who still represent the club with pride.

## **3. Joining Torfaen Dolphins: What to Expect?**

Swimmers are eligible to join TD once they are in or have completed Wave 7. They are welcome to attend up to 4 free trial sessions to find out if they enjoy the club environment.

Once your child has completed their trial sessions and been offered a place, they will then be able to attend their squad's swimming sessions. You will also be asked to set up a monthly standing order to the club for their swimming fees.

### **2019/20 Monthly Fees<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Squad</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Squad</b>	<b>Price</b>
Spartans	£20.00	Perf Development	£35.00
Academy	£20.00	Performance 3	£57.00
Development 4	£33.00	Performance 2	£62.50
Development 3	£39.00	Performance 1	£73.00
Development 2	£42.50	Masters	£20.00
Development 1	£47.50	Triathlon Club	£25.00

<sup>1</sup> As of September 2019

## **Active Portal Registration**

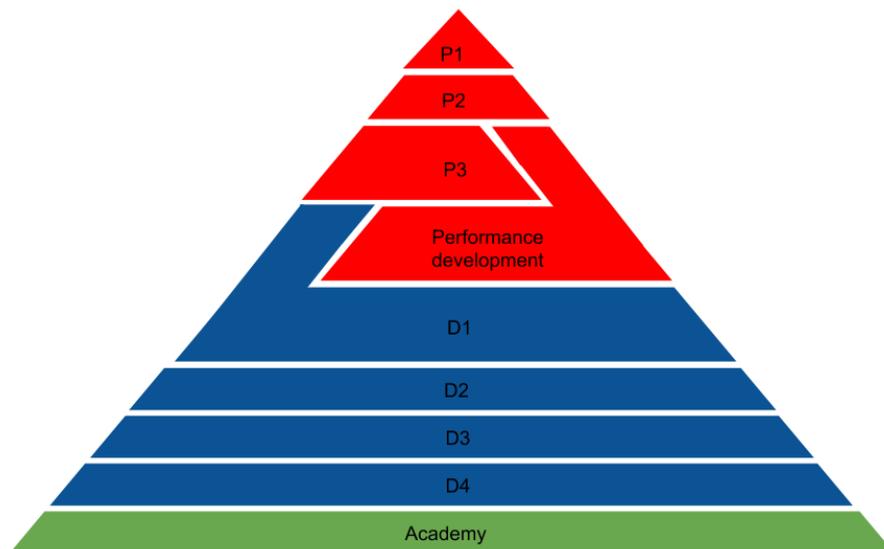
You will also be asked to register your details on our online Active Portal and pay the Swim Wales and TD annual membership fee - 2019/20 £42.00. All swimmers must be registered with Swim Wales for insurance purposes and to be able to compete in future swimming competitions.

Our Membership Secretary will be able to help you throughout the joining process, if you have any further questions. Email: [Membership@torfaendolphins.com](mailto:Membership@torfaendolphins.com).

## **The TD Squad Setup and Performance Pathway**

Swimmers begin in the **Academy Squad**, where basic skills are developed. They then progress into the **Development Squad** programme to enhance techniques and competition skills. We then have 3 **Performance Squads** which have produced age group swimmers at the very highest levels of elite swimming. Here they will refine their skills and techniques further and build fitness and endurance in the pool and through Land training. To complement our mainstream squads, we also have **The Spartans**, which is our para/disability squad and the **Torfaen Triathlon Club**. Both are producing results at the very highest level. We also offer a session for more senior swimmers in our **Master's Squad**.

### **Squad Pathway Pyramid**



## **How Your Child Will Progress and Expectations of Parents and Swimmers**

Once swimmers have joined TD, they will be expected to attend their specific training sessions (see timetables overleaf) and also abide by the TD Code of Conduct. There is further information about the Code of Conduct below and you can find this document in full on our website, as it contains detailed guidance on how swimmers and parents should conduct themselves at both training and at Competitions. It will hopefully clarify further questions you may have about the club and about what is required from all our members. All members will need to read and sign to say that they agree with the contents.

**Training Timetables**

<b>Spartans</b>	<b>Academy*</b>	<b>Dev 4</b>	<b>Dev 3</b>	<b>Dev 2</b>	<b>Dev 1</b>
<b>Monday</b> 6-7pm Fairwater	<b>Sunday</b> 5-6pm PALC	<b>Sunday</b> 5-6pm PALC	<b>Sunday</b> 6-7pm PALC	<b>Sunday</b> 6-7pm PALC	<b>Sunday</b> 7-8pm PALC
	<b>Tuesday</b> 5-6pm Stadium	<b>Tuesday</b> 5-6pm Stadium	<b>Tuesday</b> 5-6pm Stadium	<b>Tuesday</b> 6-7pm Stadium	<b>Monday</b> 5:30pm – 7pm Fairwater
	<b>*one session</b>		<b>Wed</b> 4:30-5:30pm Fairwater	<b>Wed</b> 4:30-5:30pm Fairwater	<b>Wed</b> 6:45-8pm Fairwater
			<b>Saturday</b> 8-9am Fairwater	<b>Thurs</b> 4:30-5:30pm Fairwater	<b>Thurs</b> 4:30-5:30pm Fairwater
				<b>Saturday</b> 8-9am Fairwater	<b>Saturday</b> 7:30am – 9am Fairwater
<b>Masters</b>	<b>Tri Club</b>	<b>P Dev</b>	<b>P 3</b>	<b>P 2</b>	<b>P 1</b>
<b>Monday</b> 8:30-9:30pm PALC	<b>Monday</b> 8:30-9:30pm PALC	<b>Sunday</b> 6-6:45pm Land Training 7-8pm PALC	<b>Monday</b> 5-6:30pm PALC 6:45-7:30pm Land Training	<b>Monday</b> 5-6:30pm PALC	<b>Monday</b> 6-7:30am PALC 6:30-8:30pm PALC
	<b>Wed</b> 8:00-9:00pm Fairwater	<b>Monday</b> 4:45-6pm Fairwater	<b>Tuesday</b> 5-7pm Fairwater	<b>Tuesday</b> 6-7:30am PALC 5-7pm Fairwater	<b>Tuesday</b> 6-7:30am PALC 5-8pm PALC
		<b>Wed</b> 6:45-8:00pm Fairwater	<b>Wed</b> 5:30-6:45pm Fairwater	<b>Wed</b> 5:30-6:45pm Fairwater	<b>Wed</b> 6-7:30am PALC
			<b>Thurs</b> 5:30-7pm Fairwater	<b>Thurs</b> 6-7:30am PALC 5:30-7pm FW	<b>Thursday</b> 6-7:30am PALC 5-7:30pm PALC
			<b>Friday</b> 6-7:30am Fairwater	<b>Friday</b> 6-7:30am Fairwater	<b>Friday</b> 6-7:30am PALC 4:30-6:30pm PALC
			<b>Saturday</b> 7-8:30am PALC	<b>Saturday</b> 7-8:3am PALC	

## **4. Swimming Galas & Competitions**

Once you are registered on our portal, at various times throughout the year you will receive emailed invitations to enter your child in any forthcoming competitions that they are eligible for. Swimmers are encouraged to enter competitions, as they can be an exciting opportunity for parents and coaches to see how swimmers are progressing and to practice their race techniques.

Once logged into your account on the portal, you will be able to enter your child into their chosen races from the list provided. If you are not sure which races to enter, speak to your child's coach for advice. You can also contact our competition Secretary, Eileen on: [Competition@torfaendolphins.com](mailto:Competition@torfaendolphins.com) for any further help on how to enter, if needed.

If you are new to competing it can be a bit overwhelming at first, but the coaches will be there at the venue to guide your child through the day. As a parent you will be there as a supporter and can usually expect to be there for the whole day, depending on the races your swimmer has entered. A lot of organisation goes into swimming competitions and the way they're run is a real eye opener if you've never experienced one before. Races occur in quick succession and will be ongoing throughout the day. On arrival swimmers go to the changing rooms to access the poolside and parents make their way to the viewing gallery.

The day is usually split into 3 sessions with a warm up before each session starts. Check which warm up your swimmer is in and arrive at least 20 minutes beforehand to ensure they are changed and ready to start on time. Swimmers should report to their coach on poolside to say they have arrived once changed. The coach is responsible for swimmers throughout the Meet and they must not leave the building without permission. Swimmers must ask the coach for permission to leave the building with their parents between or after their last race.

During the warmup it is important that swimmers get the most out of it. Don't stop and talk to friends, as there will be plenty of time to do this throughout the day. The coaches will tell you what warm up to do and swimmers must keep going and warm up their muscles properly to avoid injury. Despite there being constant races throughout the day, you may find that your child has considerable time to wait between their races. They will need plenty of healthy snacks, lots of water to keep them hydrated and activities to occupy them. They will be expected to sit with the other TD swimmers and the coaches at the front of the seating areas on poolside. Parents sit behind.

As you can imagine being on poolside for this length of time, can prove to be quite tiring and a very hot and sticky affair, so please do come prepared and dress appropriately for these conditions. Also, make sure that you bring all the necessary swimming equipment with you including an extra towel and club t-shirt to wear between races. It is a good idea to pack your bag the night before, with everything you might need. Here is a checklist, which should be useful to you (no glass bottles or any other breakable items).

- Two swimming costumes
- Goggles (plus a spare pair)
- 2 towels
- Deck/Pool shoes to wear at all times to prevent heat loss
- Clothes to keep warm on the poolside – hat, extra t-shirt, tracksuit etc.
- Food of sufficient quantity to last the day
- Money in case of emergency
- Drink in a suitable container – at least two litres – for a whole day
- Snack food – with lots of carbohydrates and low in fat.
- Music – iPod (to help relax or psyche you up), reading book or other pastime (games consoles are not allowed on poolside)
- Your game/swimming face!

**Note: Please ensure that your name is on all items**

When you are representing the Club or training with the Club at your appointed session or at an invited session you are expected to behave properly. Swimmers are expected to sit with the team and **NOT** with parents in the spectator area. Parents are not allowed on poolside at **ANY** time during a competition.

There is lots more information on our TD website on the FAQs page, especially in the 'Gala Info. doc' & 'First Meet' documents.

### **An Introduction to Swimming Competitions**

There are a variety of types of swimming competitions:

**Galas** are typically where swimmers are selected to represent the Club. The Head Coach and Team Manager/other coaches decide who is swimming what. This could potentially be an individual event or a relay. There is no charge for swimming at these galas, but spectators will generally be charged admission. These events will typically last 2-3 hours.

An **Open Meet** is where the swimmer decides what events to enter. Typically, the cost is £5 - £10 per race and they are usually held over a single weekend although can sometimes be held over several weekends. Spectators generally pay to watch, but this is down to the discretion of the meet organiser. These costs help to cover the rising costs of hiring out the full facility and other costs associated with running a meet. These Meets will typically be split in to 3 sessions per day and you can expect to be there all day depending on the races entered.

**Open Meets** can be split into two main categories. Both licensed and unlicensed, the difference between the two being whether the meet has a license from Swim Wales or not. Swim Wales will impose conditions for the meet to be licensed, for example how many qualified officials you need on the poolside. Unlicensed meets generally have no or little restrictions as to who can swim, and the times achieved will not be viewed as 'official' for other licensed meets and also for the rankings.

**Licensed meets** can be further split into four different categories:

1. **Level 1** Meets are long course (50m) only and cover National, Regional and County Championships. Their purpose is to enable athletes to achieve qualifying times for entry into National, Regional and County Championships.
2. **Level 2** Meets are short course (25m) only and cover National, Regional and County Championships. Their purpose is to enable athletes to achieve qualifying times for entry into National, Regional and County Championships in short course.
3. **Level 3** Meets are long and short course events. Their purpose is to enable athletes to achieve times for entry into Regional and County Championships and other Meets at Level 1 or Level 2.
4. **Level 4** Meets are entry level events in pools 25m or greater. Borough Championships are an example. They are for inexperienced athletes and swimmers seeking to compete outside their club environment. If times are good athletes progress to Level 3 Meets.

Other key information to consider for swimming meets:

**First Come First Served Meets** accept entries until they are full. This means the deadline for getting your entries in can seem very tight and often several weeks before the Open Meet.

**Open Meets will only accept entries until their closing date.** If they are then oversubscribed, they will reject (or scratch) some swimmers from the programme. It is usually the slowest swimmers for an event (within each age group) that are scratched, so it is worth carefully selecting events for such meets as you may end up with only 1 swim per session.

**Some Open Meets set 'no faster than' times for entry.** This means that the time entered cannot be faster than the time being entered. Entries exceeding this time will be rejected. This generally is only for times swam in the last 12 months, there may however be exceptions, therefore please refer to the independent meet conditions.

**With upper / lower qualifying times** the entry time must fall within the times specified. Entries outside of this will be rejected.

### Kit

There are a variety of TD kit items available and these can be purchased through our online portal. You will be able to try a variety of sizes available on Sunday & Monday evenings at PALC from 5pm at our kit stall on the viewing balcony. All orders must then be placed online via the portal; however, you will be able to buy TD swimming caps and kit bags from the kit stall. Your order will be delivered to you at training, organised by our Committee member responsible for kit.

### Land Training

Land training should be seen as complementary to pool sessions. To gain optimum strength and power, competitive swimmers need to supplement their pool training with land training once they reach Performance level.

There are four different types of land activities that can swimmers:

- Stretching
- Abdominal Exercises
- Weight Training (only to be carried out with the consent of the Head Coach)
- General Exercise

The benefits of land training are substantial. Swimmers are encouraged to concentrate on their core muscles which are the most important for swimming performance. Land training will help improve stroke technique, starts and turns. It will also allow swimmers to develop a more balanced physical development that will ultimately result in avoidance of injuries.

### The Training Cycles

At TD the swimming year is broken up into smaller sections called training cycles. The lead coach for each squad will identify the main competitions for the year and put a plan in place for the swimmer to achieve optimum performance at those targeted competitions. Coaches work backwards from the targeted competition to prepare the seasonal plan and assign each cycle with the appropriate training emphasis. If you want to find out more about training cycles, please speak to your child's coach.

### TD's Proven Success

TD has recently risen through the performance club league table from 11th to 3rd position, with only Cardiff and Swansea having more swimmers in the Welsh squads. We have Para Swimmers in the British Squad and are in regular attendance at British & International events for our classified and non-classified swimmers. We are very proud of the achievements of all of our swimmers and are constantly striving to help them to reach their goals and full potential. We are proud to say that as a club we deliver consistent high-level coaching and have proven results to demonstrate this at all levels.

## 5. The TD Code of Conduct

TD Performance Centre is affiliated to the Welsh Amateur Swimming Association and, as such, is expected to conduct our activities within the rules of the Association. We ask that you and your swimmer carefully read the Code of Conduct for Members<sup>2</sup> (available on the TD Website or on request), to ensure that you are aware of the expectations of you as a member

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.torfaendolphins.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/TD-Code-of-Conduct-Sept-2018.pdf>

of TD. You will be asked to confirm that you agree to abide by the Code of Conduct when you register your details on the Active Portal when you join.

## 6. Complaints & Welfare

If you have any concerns, would like to provide feedback or want to speak to someone, there are a number of ways to get in touch:

**Team Manager:** Each squad has its own Team Manager, and this would be your first port of call if there is any issue or concern you would like to discuss about your child's welfare or swimming. Our Team Managers are:

*Academy & Development Squads –*

*Chris Williams & Becky Sheen*



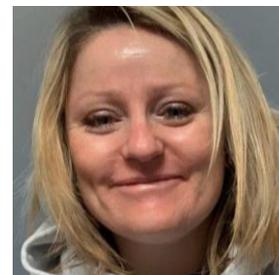
*Performance 2 & 3 –*

*Suzanne Willis (Para Team Manager) & Frances Newton*



*Performance 1 –*

*Jannine Warrender & Rachel McGuinness*



The team Managers will be able to communicate your questions or concerns to the coaches and liaise with you on their behalf. Please email [hello@torfaendolphins.com](mailto:hello@torfaendolphins.com) and indicate which Team Manager you want to contact.

**Welfare Officer:** If your concern is of a more serious child welfare or safeguarding nature then please contact our Welfare Officers:

Lead Welfare Officer: Hayley Nowell - email [hayley.welfare@torfaendolphins.com](mailto:hayley.welfare@torfaendolphins.com)

Welfare Officer: Jessica Hughes - email [jess.welfare@torfaendolphins.com](mailto:jess.welfare@torfaendolphins.com)

**Chairman:** If you wish to make a complaint, please contact our Chairman, Paul McRae - email [hello@torfaendolphins.com](mailto:hello@torfaendolphins.com)

## 7. How You Can Get Involved and Volunteer for TD

Our club, like any other grassroots sport relies on the commitment and enthusiasm of its volunteers. Swimming is no different. If you would like to get involved and volunteer you will

be able to help make a significant contribution to what we do and I'm sure you will find it a rewarding way to support the growth of your club and your swimmer.

When you join our team of committed volunteers, you'll make new friends, develop new skills, and build on your existing strengths. Make a difference to your local club and help our swimmers enjoy their sport even more.

We are looking for enthusiastic and committed people to help organise fundraising and social events, as well as at our own Meets where we always need help with marshalling, refreshments and if qualified, as timekeepers and officials.

For more information on how to get involved please email: [hello@torfaendolphins.com](mailto:hello@torfaendolphins.com).

### 8. Other Guidance

This document introduces Torfaen Dolphins and helps new swimmers in understanding who we are and hopefully provides some answers to frequently asked questions.

The diagram below shows our information and guidance set up which covers our website, social media, policies and factsheets. These are continually being developed and will be updated through our website. If you require paper copies, please get in touch.



### 9. A Final Word from our Chairman: Paul McRae

*“Our swimmers are our primary concern. Our commitment as a performance club is to avail them every opportunity to reach their true potential, some may wish to reach for the stars and others may wish to maintain fitness. Torfaen Dolphins will allow all swimmers, regardless of ability an open and level playing field to achieve their personal goals and objectives. We ask that everyone treats each other with respect, leaves their ego at the door, is an ambassador to the club and remembers at all times that they can be a role model to others. Give someone a hand up, one day you may require the same and most importantly be kind to one another, its free ;-)”*