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Starting to Compete



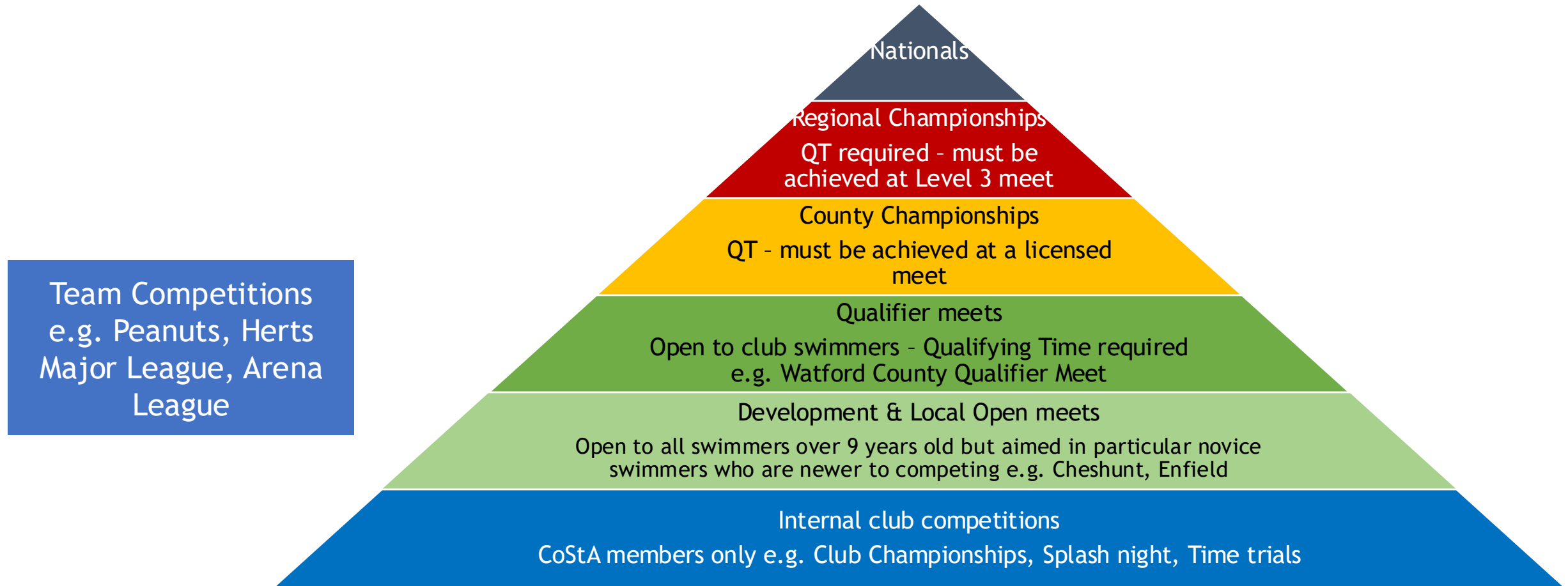
# Our Approach

Squad structure follows a long term athlete development pathway

Building an athlete is a process - each block has to be laid and cemented. Required skills are added to raise proficiency over time

Competitions are a key part of a young swimmer's training – apply what they are practicing, learn from experience and set future goals

# Competition structure



QT = qualifying time obtained at a  
licensed meet

# Competition Cycle

|                             | Sept                                                                              | Oct                                                                               | Nov                                                                               | Dec                                                                               | Jan | Feb                         | Mar                                                                                 | April                          | May                                                                                 | June                                                                                | July                                                                                | Aug |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| CoStA Meets                 |  |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |  |     |                             |  |                                |                                                                                     |  | Club Champs                                                                         |     |
| Other Open Meets            |                                                                                   |  |  |  |     |                             |  |                                |  |  |  |     |
| League Meets                |                                                                                   | Arena Round 1                                                                     | Arena Round 2                                                                     | Arena Round 3                                                                     |     | Herts Major R1              | Herts Major R2                                                                      | Herts Major R3                 | Peanuts R1                                                                          | Peanuts R2                                                                          | Peanuts R3                                                                          |     |
| County 2025 Qual period     |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |     | County Champs               |                                                                                     | County 2026 Qual period* (tba) |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |     |
| Regionals 2025 Qual period* |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |     |                             |                                                                                     |                                |                                                                                     | Regionals                                                                           |                                                                                     |     |
|                             |                                                                                   | Winter Regionals                                                                  |                                                                                   | Winter Nationals                                                                  |     | Nationals 2025 Qual period* |                                                                                     |                                |                                                                                     |                                                                                     | Nationals                                                                           |     |

# Licensed Meets

Different galas are aimed at different levels of swimmer. Competitions are often licensed by Swim England/British Swimming and described as being at one of four levels:-

- **Level 1** meets - aimed at the elite swimmers and usually have very tough qualifying times (times that the swimmer must have swum faster than in order to enter). These galas are held in a 50m pool (Long Course). These galas tend to be 'fastest first'. If the meet is oversubscribed the swimmers with the slower QTs will be scratched (SCR)
- **Level 2** meets usually have slightly easier times and can be held in a 25m pool (Short Course). Many of these meets will have upper and Lower QTs
- **Level 3** meets are aimed at swimmers who are trying to achieve qualifying times for Counties, Regional and/or higher level galas. Some have Upper and Lower QTs (times that the swimmer must NOT have swum faster than and times that the swimmer must have swum faster than) to be able to enter the event. However, Dev Meets fall into this category and often can be entered with NT.
- **Level 4** meets can be either single club events, such as club champs, or a meet where one club invites others to participate. These can be held in any length pool from 25m and above.

All meets have their own licensing conditions & they all vary! Parents embarking on open meets need to be aware of the conditions so that they are entering the correct events for their swimmer. These galas are 'first come, first served' galas. Many L3 meets will fill up quickly. To ensure CoStA's entry to the L3 meet, we enter as soon as the Entry Pack is published. This can be 3 or 4 months before the meet date!

Times from Licensed Galas will be recorded on the Swim England rankings database [swimmingresults.org](http://swimmingresults.org)

Unlicensed galas are great opportunities to get competition experience and will include time trials, Peanuts league and other galas that are still run to World Aquatics/British Swimming technical rules. Times will be recorded on CoStA systems and used to enter CoStA galas/team selection but will not be eligible for the Swim England rankings database.

# Glossary of terms

Full glossary is available in the Handbook section of the website

- NT - no time on record
- QT - qualifying time
- CT - consideration time - a slower time than QT that will be considered for entry but will not guarantee you a place e.g. at Counties
- PB - personal best time
- AaD - age at date - open meets tend to be age at the date of the meet. Club Championships, County and Regionals are age as at 31<sup>st</sup> December
- HDW - heat declared winner - results are taken from heat times; no finals are swum
- Over the top starts - swimmers from the previous heat stay in the water at the end of the race and the swimmers in the next heat dive over them.
- DQ - disqualification
- Infraction - swimmer has not complied with a FINA/SE rule which will lead to a DQ
- NS - no show/non swim - swimmer did not show up for their race
- FINA DQ codes - the list of codes which relates to the reason the swimmer was disqualified. This can be found in the Officials section of the CoStA website and via [swimming.org](http://swimming.org)
- AOE - Automatic Officiating Equipment - electronic pads and timing system used at most licensed meets
- CoStA closing date vs Meet closing date - CoStA will have an earlier closing date in order to guarantee our entries get accepted
- Rankings - database of times achieved at licensed meets which can be searched by swimmer/by event/by age group/by region/county/nationally. Used to check meet entries. Can be accessed by anyone via [swimmingresults.org](http://swimmingresults.org)

# Entering Meets

- Meets we will be entering as a club are published on the Calendar on the website
- Open Meets in and around Herts are very popular and often oversubscribed
- Our aim is to ensure our swimmers' entries get accepted and they have the opportunity to compete
- CoStA will always have their own closing date. It is earlier than the date set by a club in their conditions. This is to allow CoStA to process entries and to ensure our entries get accepted.
- Meet opens for entries:- Parents enter via the Calendar event on the website/OnDeck app
- CoStA Closing Date:- The meet will close for entries and the Coaches and Meet Entries team will check and approve events. Where meets are needed to be "double keyed" as they are on a different system, a list of entries will be circulated for parents to check
- It is the parent's responsibility to check their swimmer's events are correct.
- Prior to the meet:- host club will always publish an ACCEPTED ENTRY LIST & there is always PRE-GALA INFORMATION (produced normally 1 or 2 weeks prior to the gala). This will give exact schedule of timings, and the withdrawal process.
- You must follow the withdrawal process as some meets will charge a penalty (£10 per event) when a swimmer doesn't swim an event they were entered for.
- We will aim to communicate via email and/or WhatsApp at key stages (Meet Opening, Entries for Checking and Pre-gala Information) for each meet but PLEASE CHECK WEBSITE CALENDAR and NEWS

# Top Tips for entering meets

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Check the calendar on the website and diarise the dates – inc time trials, Peanuts meets



Read the Meet Conditions and Schedule carefully before entering. Check the CoStA closing date



Where QTs are required – check the meet conditions. Check that times are on [swimmingresults.org](http://swimmingresults.org) for non-CoStA meets



Make the most of development meets and club champs - an opportunity to get licenced times



Cost and Time Impact - Use the meet schedule to plan your event entries – don't enter too many events in one session but be aware that you may be waiting around if you only enter one event



Getting involved as a volunteer makes meets more enjoyable and helps the time go quicker e.g. train to become an Official or Team Manager

# What to enter

## Open Meets - Events to Enter

|            | 50 | 100 | 200 | 400 | 800 | 1500 |
|------------|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Freestyle  | A  | B   | B   | C   | D   | D    |
| Backstroke | A  | B   | C   |     |     |      |
| Breastroke | A  | B   | C   |     |     |      |
| Fly        | B  | C   | D   |     |     |      |
| IM         |    | A   | C   |     |     |      |

|   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A | A events - for new/developing swimmers attending their first meets and for all swimmers to enter regularly to keep times updated e.g. for league team selection & relays                                          |
| B | B events - for swimmers who have gained some competition experience and have ideally already completed an A event in the same stroke (exc Fly). All swimmers to enter at least twice a year to keep times updated |
| C | C events - for more experienced swimmers who have already completed a B event in the same stroke.                                                                                                                 |
| D | D events - for very experienced swimmers e.g. in J3 and above and/or aged 10 & over (speak to coach)                                                                                                              |

- enter up to 3 events per session - ensure gaps between events where possible
- if you are doing a 200 or 400 only do 2 events that session (only one of which is a 200/400)
- entering just one event may mean lots of waiting around
- as each session lasts 3 hours + warm-up, entering all sessions in a weekend meet can mean spending lots of time at the pool

# What happens on the day?

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Swimmer should arrive before the start of the warm-up

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Report to Team Manager

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Swimmer should stay on poolside for the whole session e.g. should ask to go to toilet/go to see parents

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Team Manager will help younger swimmers with when they are racing

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Swimmers report to Marshals about 5 heats before their race

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Before and after racing seek feedback from a Coach

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Tell Team Manager when they leave

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Results will be on MeetMobile or a results website

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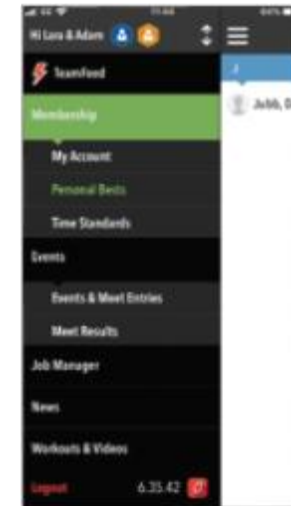
If you are not volunteering there will be a spectator fee to watch from the balcony

# What should swimmers bring to a meet?

- Extra set of clothes for poolside e.g. T shirt, shorts/jogging bottoms, sliders/flip flops
- Costume, hat and goggles (and spare costume, hat & goggles in case of breakages)
- Filled water bottle - and encourage sipping throughout the session
- 2 towels (one for poolside and one for getting dried at the end)
- Spare costume if they are swimming in multiple sessions.
- Food/snacks
  - Be aware of eating at the right time for when they are swimming
  - Watch out for sugar highs
  - Packed lunch/tea if they are there all day e.g. sandwich/pasta salad, banana, rice cakes, Soreen bar. Chocolate will melt!
- It can sometimes be a wait between events - bring a book, card game. Prefer no electronic devices (except for emergency contact)

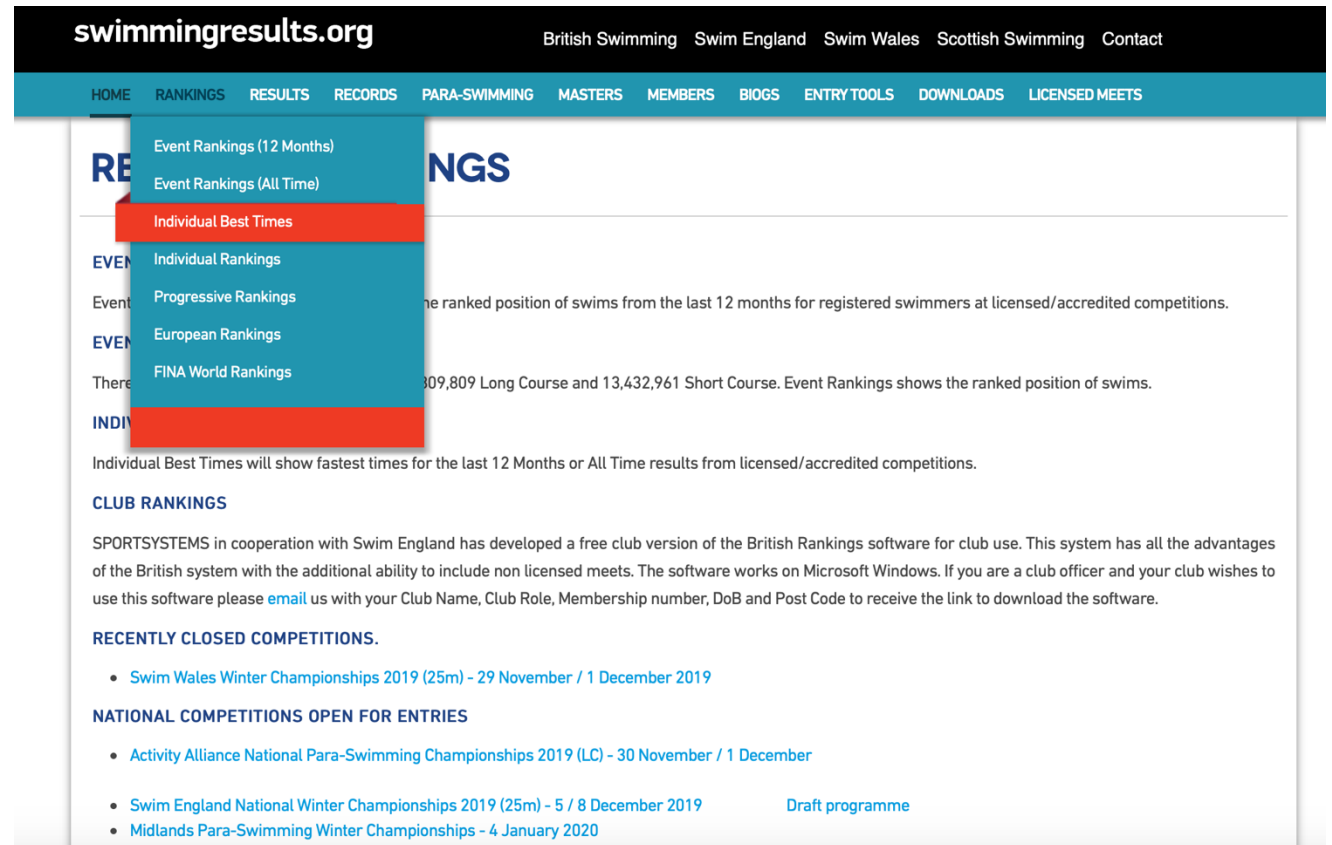
# CoStA Sports Engine website and app

- <https://uk.gomotionapp.com/team/costa/page/home>
  - Sign in top right to see:-
  - Events Calendar
  - Teamsheets
  - Meet results
  - Personal best times
- SE Motion app – “on the go” version of Sports Engine



# Swimmingresults.org

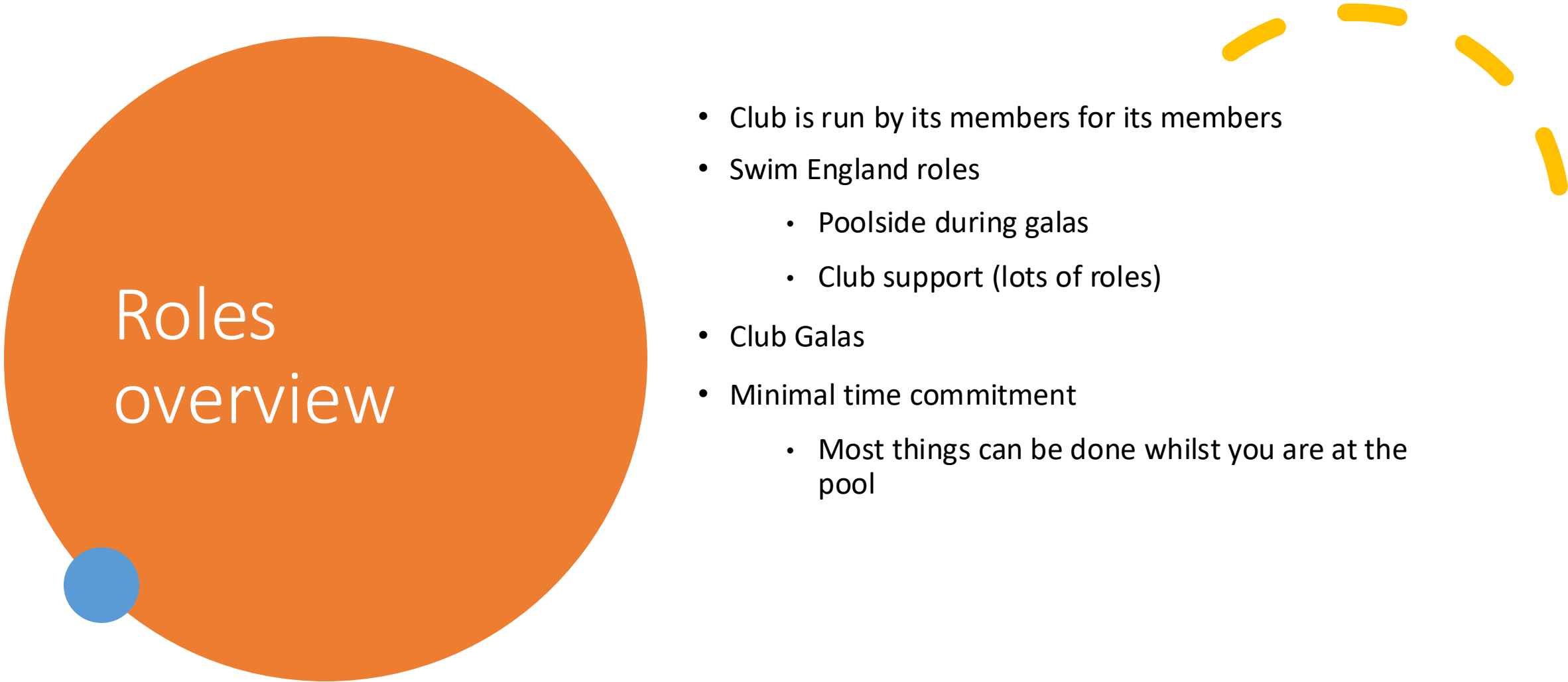
- British Swimming rankings database of times recorded at Licensed Meets
- Click on Rankings>Individual Best Times
- Search on Surname or Swim England membership number to bring up your swimmer's recorded times



# Volunteering Opportunities

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# Roles overview

- Club is run by its members for its members
- Swim England roles
  - Poolside during galas
  - Club support (lots of roles)
- Club Galas
- Minimal time commitment
  - Most things can be done whilst you are at the pool

# Poolside roles during galas

- Officials (the people in white) - email [officials@costaasc.org](mailto:officials@costaasc.org) for more info
  - Apart from courses below only time commitment is during galas
  - Generally well looked after by clubs during gala (officials room, lunch, thank you gift)
  - Levels:
    - Timekeeper (online training course)
    - Judge 1 (2 \* 2 hour training courses - online & face to face)
    - Judge 2
    - Judge 2 Starter
    - Referee
- Team manager (supports the swimmers and coach poolside)
  - 2 hour training course - online
  - 3 hour safeguarding training - online
  - DBS check
- AOE operator/Recorder role
  - Ensure the Automated Officiating Equipment (AOE) functions correctly and captures times accurately
  - Recorder ensures accuracy of times entered into results.

# Club support

- Committee members / Key Roles
  - Head coach
  - Chair
  - Vice chair
  - Treasurer
  - HR
  - Welfare
  - Club Secretary
- Volunteers (most tasks can be done during training time/flexibly)
  - Volunteer co-ordinator
  - Swimmark co-ordinator
  - Membership secretary
  - Vice Treasurer
  - Squad fees
  - Fundraising/sponsorship officer
  - Website/Sports Engine team
  - Facilities
  - CoStA Shop
  - Splash Night co-ordinator
  - Meet promoter
  - Events lead
  - Trophies and Medals
  - Communications officer
  - Officials Coordinator
  - Team Manager coordinator
  - League meets secretary etc

# Club galas

- All hands on deck!
- Lots of roles
  - Marshall
  - Taking entrance fees
  - Officials food
  - Automatic Officiating Equipment (AOE)
- Club galas are important for the club:
  - Provide opportunity for swimmers to compete and get times
  - Finances
  - Reputation



# How to get involved

- Catch one of us at a pool
- E-mail
  - [Tony- chairman@costaasc.org](mailto:Tony-chairman@costaasc.org)
  - Jo – [vicechair@costaasc.org](mailto:vicechair@costaasc.org)
- Club contacts:
- <https://uk.gomotionapp.com/team/costa/page/about/club-contacts->

# Useful Links

CoStA Website (Sports Engine) <https://uk.gomotionapp.com/team/costa/page/home>

Sports Engine Motion (mobile app of CoStA Sports Engine)

Club Shop link (for CoStA hats) <https://uk.gomotionapp.com/team/costa/page/about/club-shop>

British Swimming Rankings (to find out your swimmer's best licensed times):  
<https://www.swimmingresults.org/individualbest/>

Meet Mobile App (for results at some meets) <https://www.active.com/mobile/meet-mobile-app>