

OXFORD TRIATHLETES

Open Water Swim Rules with Disclaimer for 2011 for MEMBERS only

Open water swimming is a fantastic experience but has some serious safety issues. Please **read and abide by the rules** to ensure a safe and enjoyable swim and maintain good relations with Dorchester Sailing Club.

The venue for 2011 is Dorchester Sailing Club, Abingdon Road, Dorchester on Thames, near Abingdon, Oxon OX10 7LP. There are no other users of the lake whilst our sessions are running. The banks slope to a uniform depth of around 2-3m. The lake is strictly private so should be free of items such as cans and bottles. There are no known currents or eddies, overhanging or hidden underwater hazards in our designated swim areas. Please take care on entry and exit - it is more slippery when wet. Water temperature is generally uniform.

SAFETY

Oxford Triathletes arranges these Open Water swim sessions for the benefit of its members. The club and its officers have done their best to be proactive and responsible with regard to Health & Safety while keeping the sessions friendly and accessible for a range of swimming abilities. However, no liability can be accepted by the club, its officers or Dorchester Sailing Lake. Participation is entirely at your own risk. Use your discretion if you are unsure of your ability to swim in adverse conditions and/or discuss with a club coach or safety officer.

- Minor cuts and abrasions must be covered with a plaster. If you have any deep cuts it is recommended that you do not swim. Likewise, **do not swim if unwell** or taking medication which affects you adversely and please do not endanger yourself and others if under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- If you are unwell after open water swimming and suffering with flu-like symptoms/severe headaches, see your GP asap and state that you have been swimming in open water. You could be suffering from Leptospirosis or Weil's disease and early diagnosis and treatment is paramount. These conditions are rare but can be picked up from open water swimming.
- Try not to ingest any water and after swimming it is good practice not to eat until you have washed hands in fresh water, and take a shower at the earliest opportunity.
- If you have swallowed some water then a good tip is to drink some Coca-Cola which can help neutralise harmful bacteria

CLUB SAFETY OFFICER

At each session there is a duty Safety Officer **whose instructions must be followed at all times**. The Safety Officer wears a high viz tabard and remains lakeside while anyone is swimming and has:

- Charged mobile phone
- First aid kit
- Air horn/whistle
- Loud-haler
- Binoculars
- Safety flags
- Copies of the Emergency Action Plan and Risk Assessment
- Control of the card exchange system (cards with emergency contact numbers are exchanged for a rubber swim band)

RULES & INSTRUCTIONS

- Swimming is for MEMBERS ONLY, and solely at specified club times. **No unauthorized use of the lake is permitted at any time.**
- Any minors (under 17 years old) MUST be accompanied by a parent or appointed guardian.
- All swimmers must have read and signed these Rules with Disclaimer, which also has details of Emergency Contacts and any pre-existing injuries or medical issues, before swimming. This information will be required on a 'once per season' basis and will be recorded and held on file.
- Please park where indicated on arrival and be courteous and considerate to others, especially

Dorchester Sailing Club members.

- **Wetsuits are mandatory**, as are **swimming hats**, brightly coloured for visibility please (use a neoprene cap if it is cold, or try two swimming hats). Hats will keep your head warm and are easier to spot by the Safety Officer.
- At the lake:
 - At all times comply with instructions from the Safety Officer and club officials.
 - Check in with the duty Safety Officer (wearing a yellow high viz tabard).
 - PAYG members pay the £3 session fee - please try to bring correct change.
 - At your first swim of the season hand in completed Disclaimer for 2011 season.
 - Exchange your membership card for a rubber swim band which must be worn throughout the swim session (some swimmers will be asked to wear an additional band which has a safety whistle attached).
 - If you are unsure if you should swim discuss with officials/Safety Officer.
 - Advise Safety Officer of any relevant medical conditions or injuries.
 - Attend the mandatory pre-swim Health & Safety briefing.
 - When in the water swim **only** as directed (ie. Out and back, clockwise, counter-clockwise).
 - Raise your head and sight often to avoid drifting into the path of others.
 - You are responsible for ensuring your safety and the safety of other swimmers and must do nothing to harm or impede others. You are obliged to offer help to any swimmer near you who is in distress.
 - If you get into trouble go onto your back and wave one arm slowly in the air to attract the attention of the Safety Officer and other swimmers.
 - If you hear an air horn or whistle blasts, stop swimming and look to the safety officer at the beach area for instructions.
 - Swim within your ability and try to swim with others of similar ability.
 - SAFETY FLAGS will be waved by the duty officer to recall swimmers at the end of the session and also in Emergency. As you turn at each buoy and occasionally during your swim look to the beach area to check.
 - Immediately on exiting the water it is your responsibility to exchange your swim band for your membership card. This is very important as it indicates to the safety officer that swimmers are accounted for.

(Disclaimer is on the following page)

DISCLAIMER

1. I am aware of the need to seek appropriate medical advice if I have any concerns as to the state of my health. I have not been informed by any medical practitioner and I do not have any knowledge of any medical condition which would make it inadvisable for me to participate in Open Water Swimming events or any other associated activities. Accordingly I hereby certify that I am physically fit and well to participate in any such training and events.
2. I am aware of and appreciate the inherent risks involved in such training and events including the possibility of injury and accident. I undertake to always conduct myself in a responsible and professional manner.
3. I undertake at all times to use my best endeavours to train and compete in a safe and proper manner and not to do anything which would expose myself or fellow swimmers to unnecessary risk or injury. I further undertake at all times to take all reasonable safety measures for the protection of myself and fellow swimmers and to inform the duty Safety Officer of any concerns I may have with regard to safety.
4. I acknowledge that at open water swimming training and events, Oxford Triathletes, British Triathlon Federation or any body affiliated thereto, Dorchester Sailing Club cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to personal belongings and that I must take all reasonable steps against any such loss and damage.
5. I hereby agree to abide by and be governed by the rules of the British Triathlon Federation and all other laws and regulations applicable.
6. I acknowledge that I have read, understood and will comply with the club Open Water Swim Rules for swimming at Dorchester Sailing Club.

MEMBER DETAILS

Name: Oxford Tri Membership Number:	
Details of any Injury and/or Medical condition(s) which may affect your swimming ability:	
I have read, and will abide by, these guidelines and I confirm acceptance of the disclaimer	
Signature:	Date:

EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS

Name:
Relationship to member:
Contact phone number(s):