



NYP NORMAL OPERATING PROCEDURE (NOP)

OPEN WATER SWIM RULES

RIPON RACECOURSE LAKE

COVID-19

Please note that NYP will adhere to the latest BTF Guidelines.

INTRODUCTION

Open water swimming is an exhilarating and liberating experience, but club swimmers must understand that it has some serious safety implications. Please read and abide by these rules to ensure a safe and enjoyable swim. In addition, NYP Tri has permission to use Ripon Racecourse Lake on the understanding that we adhere to the rules outlined in this document so please help us to maintain good relations with Ripon Racecourse by swimming responsibly.

UNDERSTANDING THE RISK



It is important to understand that the lake is an unsupervised open water venue. Unsupervised open water swimming is significantly riskier than a supervised pool session and as such, NYP Tri will ensure that every club member fully understand these risks before being permitted to swim at Ripon Racecourse Lake. However, all swimmers agree to swim entirely at their own risk and in the unlikely event of injury, accident, loss or damage suffered, regardless of however it may be caused, no responsibility whatsoever shall be attached to the organisers, landlords, or any persons involved in the organisation of the open water swimming at Ripon Racecourse Lake.

TOPOGRAPHY

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, although the lake is used by anglers and therefore a risk of fishing line. 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.

CLUB OPEN WATER SUPERVISOR

Every OW session will be managed by a Club Open Water Supervisor (COWS). The role of this person is to administratively manage each session; it is important to note that they have no direct safety function and are not responsible for swimmers once they enter the water. The main duties include:

- a) ensuring that swimmers are current club members
- b) ensuring that swim sessions stick to the times allocated
- c) ensuring that the OW rules are adhered to

Please note that COWS give up their time voluntarily and without them, swimming at Ripon Racecourse Lake would not be possible so please make their job as easy as possible and help them in any way possible.

RULES

1. All swimmers must:
 - a) Hold an in year NYP Tri Membership Card. This signifies that they have completed a club Open Water (OW) Induction and have declared their health and swim ability.
 - b) Be 10 years old or over.

2. Swimming is only permitted when all the following apply:
 - a) Between 1st May and 30th Sep each year.
 - b) The water temperature is over 11°C (13°C for 10 to 17-year olds); the COWS will take the water temperature at each session.
 - c) Designated swim session time (Swim sessions are detailed on the club website).
 - d) There is a Club Open Water Supervisor present.

3. **Sign in & Out:** Swimmers must always sign in and out of the water with the COWS – and exchange membership card for a swim band. Immediately upon exiting the water the member is responsible to exchange the swim band for the membership card. This is vital as it indicates to the COWS that all swimmers are accounted for.

4. **Children:** Child NYP Tri members are only permitted to swim with a supervising Adult in the water with them, on a 1:1 ratio and within 5m of each other. The recommended distances for each age group are:
 - a) 10-year old – Max 200m
 - b) 11 to 12-year old – Max 300m

- c) 13 to 14-year old – Max 350m
 - d) 15 to 16-year old – Max 750m
 - e) 17-year old – Max 1,500m
 - f) **Wetsuits are mandatory**
5. **Entry and exit:** Only enter and exit the lake via the jetty.
 6. **Wetsuits:** Wetsuits are mandatory (**unless you are a skin swimmer or the temperature exceeds BTF guidelines**). This will keep you warm and will act as a buoyancy aid.
 7. **Temperatures:** If the temperature exceeds 23 degrees, wetsuits are not mandatory. However, it is at members discretion and it is advisable to swim with a buddy and/or tow float. At 23 degrees, Skins swimmers can swim without a tow float.
 8. **Orange coloured swim hat:** Members have the option to wear a 'orange swimming hat' this signifies that they are not confident with OW swimming and would like to swim with another club member. They should go no further than the first island and stay in front of it.
 9. **Always swim clockwise:** Please swim a clockwise direction to either the first or second island and always around the outside of the club buoys.
 10. **Swim with a buddy:** For Competent Juniors and Adults Members, it is strongly recommended that you swim with at least 1 other person and that you stay within 10m of each other. If you swim alone, you must understand that you have almost no chance of getting assistance if required.
 11. Weak or anxious swimmers should use a **tow float** when OW swimming, this provides them with an immediate buoyancy aid, and **whistle** to attract attention, and should be easily recognisable to other swimmers/COWS and spectators.
 12. **Skins Swimmers are strongly advised to use a tow float; Youth & Competent swimmers can ONLY swim with a tow float and it is preferable they swim with a Buddy.**
 13. Skins Swimmers can only swim when the temperature is 14 degrees and above.
 14. **Responsible swimming:** There are some very simple measures that will dramatically reduce your chance of having an incident.
 - a) Swim within your limit – the loop around the first island is 800m and the further island is 1,450m
 - b) Do not swim if you are feeling tired, feel unwell or under the influence of drugs or alcohol
 - c) If you feel like you are struggling, attempt to swim to shallower water or the shore
 - d) If you cannot reach the shore, roll onto your back and if possible, raise your arm and wait for help

HYGIENE ADVICE

1. Minor cuts and abrasions must be covered with a plaster. If you have any deep cuts it is recommended that you do not swim.
2. Try not to ingest any water. After swimming it is good practice not to eat until you have washed hands in fresh water. Take a shower at the earliest opportunity.

3. If you are unwell after open water swimming and suffering with flu-like symptoms or severe headaches, consult the NHS help line and state that you have been swimming in OW. 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 OW swimming.

SAFEGUARDING

There are currently no changing facilities at the lakeside. TriStars' (children) sessions have been made aware adults will be getting undressed at the lakeside and that they may be in a state of undress and to avoid observing the area during swim times. Adults at the lakeside please be aware of other users including, and particularly, minors on the racecourse area and try to avoid nudity.

Updated: 16/02/2021 16:19