

SWIMMERS SAFETY BRIEF

- All entrants must complete a Pre-Exercise Review form prior to taking part in BestFest. These will normally be available during initial registration, but they will also be available immediately prior to each event at the registration desk. Make sure you have filled one in – if you answer ‘YES’ to any of the health related questions you **MUST** hand the form in to the registration desk before you take part in any events.
- In addition to completing a Pre-Exercise Review form all entrants should ensure they are fit, healthy and able to take part before the start of each event entered. If in doubt **DO NOT SWIM!**
- Bags of belongings should be clearly labelled/identifiable and may be placed in the secure bag drop area. For events with a different start/finish point, bags should be placed into the Best Centre minibus at the start point for transport to the finish. Bags can be collected from the secure area immediately following completion of your swim. Avoid leaving valuables!
- Some events require swimmers to wear a timing chip. These will be issued at registration and **MUST** be worn according to the instructions given by the timing team. Swim hats provided by HUUB/BESTfest **MUST** also be worn throughout each swim.
- Swimmers should take time to familiarise themselves with each event course. Details are available via the BestFest website, contained within the BestFest programme and will be displayed prior to the start of each event. The course direction, layout and distance will be confirmed by the race director as part of a beachside safety brief immediately prior to each event.
- BestFest course buoys are orange or yellow, 2 types are used; cylindrical and tetrahedron. Their positions are marked on the available course maps, though they may be subject to change based on prevailing weather conditions. Pre-event beachside briefings will confirm any changes made.
- Colonia Classics start/finish procedures will be as follows;
“.....an ‘in the water’ start for all categories and an ‘on the beach’ finish. The ‘in the water’ start will require all swimmers to be in physical contact with the start line prior to the Starters signal. This is likely to be a high visibility floating line fixed between two points; confirmation will be given during the pre-race briefing. Swimmers will be called to enter the water and to take up their start position (in physical contact with the start line) approximately 5 minutes prior to the race start.”
- Non-Colonia Classics events will use ‘on the beach’ starts and finishes. Entrants must enter and exit the water with appropriate care & attention; beaches and waterlines may have unseen and unexpected hazards and the nature of sand is such that it can be unstable underfoot.
- All finishes take place under the orange & black inflatable finish arch.

What to do if you experience difficulties

- Each event is closely patrolled by safety kayaks and motor boats. These are present to ensure swimmer safety and if necessary evacuate individual swimmers and/or groups to a safe exit point and medical attention.

- All safety vessels carry bottled water and energy gels. Should you need either of these during a swim you should attract the attention of a kayak/boat. It is recommended that you use the same method to attract attention as explained below for an 'emergency'.
- **In the event of an emergency** (unable to continue swimming, medical emergency, etc etc) the swimmer must;
 - **Roll onto their back.**
 - **Raise an arm/arms in the air.**
 - **Shout loudly for assistance to attract the nearest kayak/boat.**

A kayak/boat will approach and offer the opportunity for the swimmer to hold on/maintain buoyancy, take water/energy gels, gain medical attention and/or be removed from the water.

In the event of 'removal' the swimmer will be evacuated by boat to the nominated safe exit point and met by a member of Bestfest/medical team staff.

- Swimmers should not exit the water independently other than at the official finish point, however, should this occur then the swimmer MUST report to the finish point to register their non-completion. This is to ensure that the organisers can accurately track all swimmers in/swimmers out of the water and avoid unnecessary 'lost swimmer emergencies'.
- **Remember;** each event is different, water depth and temperature can vary – swimmers must ONLY swim within their capabilities, but this responsibility lies with the individual!

Mid Event Cancellation/Emergency

- Should the organisers feel the need to halt or abandon an event whilst swimmers are in the water, the following will apply;
 - Safety staff will use whistles to attract the attention of all swimmers.
 - Swimmers must stop and take directions from the safety staff.
 - This may include a phased or full evacuation to land.
 - All swimmers MUST report to the finish point for an entrant roll-call.

IF IN DOUBT, PLEASE ASK.
YOUR SAFETY IS OUR PRIORITY!!