

## St. Mary's Loch Swims - Information sheet

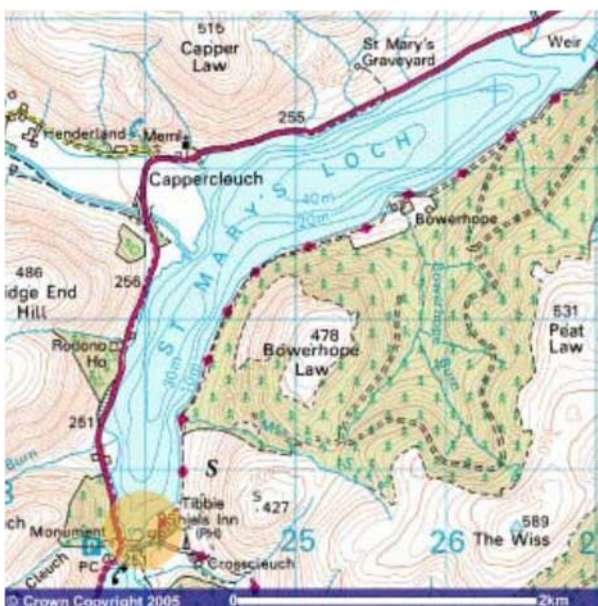
The Association has held swims on this site since 2010. It is a remote environment, and as with all our swims, safety is paramount. Although the distance is relatively short, those entering must embrace the fact that this a Scottish Loch at the end of the season, where weather conditions may be adverse and unforgiving.

**Please be realistic about what you can achieve.**

**Every swimmer entering the 3.25 and 6.5 mile events must have a personal escort craft with them, sourced by themselves.**

We use the facilities of the Tibbie Sheils Inn, where there is a basic camp site and sometimes catering and Bed and Breakfast facilities. The Inn does not function as an Inn anymore, but the owners Alistair and Eleanor are very helpful and accommodating.

The venue is between Moffatt and Selkirk on the Scottish Borders, about 15 miles from the M74 on the A708. Postcode TD7 5LH.



**Timings:** Registration is from 8-30 am on the day of the swim, usually in or around the First Aid Tent near the jetty on the edge of the loch.

Briefing for the 1,2,3, 4 and 5km events will be at 9am with a start time of 9-30am. This will be swum in 1km circuits adjacent to the Tibbie Sheils Inn.

Briefing for the one- and two-way events will be at approximately 11 am, with a start time of 11.30 am for the two-way event. The start time for the one-way event will be approximately 1300 hrs and is dependent on the briefing taking place on time and all swimmers and officials reaching the Selkirk end of the loch for a timely start.

The Loch is 3.25 miles long, and is not easily accessible from other points, so all activity is centred around the Tibbie Sheils camp site. It is not possible to leave a car at the Selkirk end, so transport to the start of the one-way event is provided. There is some access from the roadside for launching kayaks, but this is not easy and involves carrying equipment.

The road does however provide spectator access at one side of the loch and there is a footpath at the other side for those wishing to take a 7-mile panoramic walk.

### **Time Limits.**

There are no time limits, but this may mean some flexibility on start times, depending on entry numbers and the speed of swimmers in the circuit events.

### **Costs.**

Event entry fees are set to cover costs of organisation, safety cover, certification etc. This is an expensive swim to organise, and doesn't usually make a profit, but any profit made is paid back into organisation funds to support other swims.

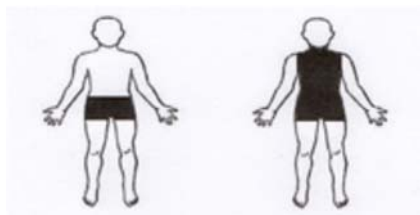
### **Age Limits**

There are no age limits, but entrants should be mindful of the demanding nature of this swim.

## **Dress for swimmers**

The BLDSA is primarily a non-wetsuit organisation with swimmers only wearing a costume or trunks that doesn't extend onto the arms and legs. One non-neoprene cap and a pair of goggles may also be worn.

However, we do now accept swimmers in wetsuits and any other safe swimming attire, and this will be recorded on your certificate.



## **Water Temperature**

This cannot of course be guaranteed but can be between 11 and 16 degrees C in Scotland in September.

## **Accommodation**

As mentioned above, there is a campsite at the start of the loch and possibly Bed and Breakfast at Tibbie Sheils if booked well in advance.

There is also the possibility that those without camping gear wanting a budget weekend can sleep in the large First Aid tent, which will be there all weekend. Please mention to the organiser in advance.

There is no other accommodation for several miles, but there is a roadside cafe a couple of hundred yards away.

**Basic refreshments are always provided at this swim because of the remote nature of the site, (drinks, soup, bread biscuits etc. but entrants are advised to also bring their own.**

## **Certificates and trophies.**

In line with all other BLDSA events we no longer present trophies, but certificates will be presented for each event at suitable times throughout the day, recording everyone's personal achievement.

## **Rescue Boats and First Aid**

You should plan to be self-sufficient, with a towel, clothing and footwear in your escort boat, along with any medication and refreshment you might need. The BLDSA rescue boats will be on the Loch and will take any retiring swimmers to the Tibbie Shiels end. All retiring swimmers MUST report to the First Aid personnel, even if their services are not required. In the event that you need to retire, and the rescue boat is not immediately available, you should follow the instructions of your escort, who may decide to take you to the road side of the Loch, to await rescue, hence the need for towel and footwear.

**YOU MUST DECLARE ANY PRE-EXISTING MEDICAL CONDITIONS ON YOUR ENTRY FORM OR TO THE FIRST AID PERSONEL, BEFORE YOU ENTER THE WATER.**

We will not disclose this information to anyone who doesn't need to know but consider it essential that you tell us in order that we can look after your safety. Medical conditions do not necessarily prevent you from entering, but the organiser's decision will be final.

## **Useful websites**

<http://www.visitmoffat.co.uk/attraction-finder/st-marys-loch>

<http://www.stmlsc.org.uk/index.htm>

<http://tibbieshiels.com/>

## **And finally.....**

Please come to the swim to enjoy the day, and indeed the whole weekend if you can spare the time.

If you have questions, please contact the organiser: Janet Wilson, 20, Padgett Court, Ben Rhydding Drive, Ilkley, West Yorkshire.

LS29 8JU. Tel Mobile 07957 348328. E-mail [janetwilson22@aol.com](mailto:janetwilson22@aol.com)