**The Shelton Monroe Swim Team**



**HANDBOOK**

**www.smstrapids.org**

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Welcome to the Shelton Monroe Swim Team!

The Shelton Monroe Swim Team was established in 2005 by combining the swimmers from the Shelton Seals Swim Team and the Monroe Gators Swim Team. The Shelton Monroe Swim Team is a widely respected team for swimmers of all ages and ability levels. We offer programs for swimmers who have just learned to swim through college age.

The Shelton Monroe Swim Team offers swimmers the opportunity to develop personal potential through swimming. We have a phenomenal coaching staff and a superior parents’ organization.

We encourage you to take a few moments to review this handbook. It contains a great deal of information regarding swimming in general, the coaching staff, forms of communication, team and parent requirements, policies, rules and fundraising activities.

The Shelton Monroe Swim Team Mission Statement

The Shelton Monroe Swim Team's mission is to be a competitive swim program in the community providing lifetime skills to its members including physical, intellectual and emotional development. Through swimming, members learn the values of sportsmanship and teamwork.

The Shelton Monroe Swim Team's goal is to develop character, skills, and the desire necessary to achieve each individual's potential.

The Shelton Monroe Swim Team's philosophy of motivation and determination prepares swimmers to face challenges in life and teaches strength of character.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is a group of volunteer parents that are committed to providing a swim program in the community for youth swimmers. If you would like to contribute in any way please feel free to contact any of the Board members. A list of current Board of Directors as well as contact information can be obtained from the Team website ([www.smstrapids.org](http://www.smstrapids.org), Click on Boards and Committees). We hold monthly Board Meetings at the Shelton Community Center. If you have a specific comment or concern that you would like addressed, please contact the Team President and he/she will bring your comments/concern to the Board of Directors at the next Board Meeting.

**Coaching Staff**

Nothing has a greater influence on the quality of children’s sports than the excellence of the coach. Certified coaches in USA swimming programs possess training and experience in the physiology and psychology of adolescent development. Our coaching staff provides the assurances that the time your children spend in swimming will be quality time.

The coaches’ job is to supervise the entire competitive swim program. The Rapids coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program for youngsters that will enable them to develop the highest level of competitive excellence possible for every swimmer. Therefore, the coaches must be in total control in matters affecting training and competition.

1. The coaches are responsible for placing youngsters in practice groups. This is based on the age and ability level of each individual. When it is in the best interest of a swimmer, he/she will be placed in a more challenging training group by the coach.
2. Sole responsibility for stroke instruction and the training regimen rests with the Rapids professionally trained coaching staff. Each group’s practices are based on sound scientific principles and are geared to the specific goals of that group.
3. The coaching staff makes the final decision concerning which meets the Rapids will attend. The coaching staff also makes the final decision concerning which events a swimmer is entered into.
4. At meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-up procedures for the team. After each race, the coaches will offer constructive feedback regarding a swimmers performance. It is the parent’s job to offer love and understanding regardless of their youngster’s performance.
5. The building of a relay team is the sole responsibility of the coaching staff. *See relay policy.*

To see our current roster of coaches please refer to the website.

**PARENTS…..YOUR ATHLETE NEEDS YOU!**

To have a successful program there must be understanding and cooperation among parents, swimmers, and coaches. The progress your child makes depends to a great extent on this triangular relationship. It is with this in mind that we ask you to consider this section as you join the SMST Rapids and re-acquaint yourself with this section if you are a returning parent.

You have done a great deal to raise your child. You create the environment in which they are growing up. Your child is a product of your values, the structure you have provided, and the model you have been. Human nature, however, is such that a parent losses some of his/her ability to remain detached and objective in matters concerning his/hers children’s activities. The following guidelines will help you keep your child’s development in the proper perspective and help your child reach his/her full potential as an athlete.

**The coach is the coach:** We want you swimmer to relate to his or her coach as soon as possible concerning swimming matters. This relationship between coach and swimmer produces best results. When parents interfere with opinions as to how the swimmer should swim or train, it causes considerable, and often time insurmountable, confusion as to whom the swimmer should listen to. If you have a problem, concern, or complaint, please contact the coach.

**Best kind of parent:** The coach’s job is to motivate and constructively criticize the swimmers performance. It is the parent’s job to supply the love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to make the child work harder in practice, which in turn gives him/her confidence to perform well in competition.

**Ten and Under:** Ten and unders are the most inconsistent swimmers and this can be frustrating for parents, coaches, and the swimmer alike! Parents and coaches must be patient and permit these youngsters to learn to love the sport.

**Not every time:** Even the very best swimmer will have meets where they do not do their best times. These “plateaus” are a normal part of swimming. Over the course of a season times should improve. Please be supportive of these “poor” meets. The older swimmers may have only two or three meets a year for which they will be rested and tapered for optimal performance results.

**PROBLEMS WITH THE COACH?**

One of the traditional swim team communication gaps is that some parents seem to feel more comfortable in discussing their disagreements over coaching philosophy with other parents rather than taking them directly to the coach. Not only is the problem never resolved that way, but also in fact this approach often results in new problems being created. Listed below are some guidelines for a parent raising some difficult issues with a coach:

1. Try to keep foremost in your mind that you and the coach have the best interests of your child at heart. If you trust that the coach’s goals match yours, even though his/her approach may be different, you are more likely to enjoy good rapport and a constructive dialogue.
2. Keep in mind that the coach must balance your perspective of what is best for your child with the needs of the team or a training group that can range in size from 20-200 members. On occasion, an individual child’s interest may need to be subordinate to the interests of a group, but in the long run the benefits of membership in the group compensate for occasional short-term inconvenience.
3. If another parent uses you as a sounding board for complaints about the coach’s performance or policies, listen empathetically, but encourage the other parent to speak directly to the coach. He/she is the only one who can resolve the problem.

Communication

The Shelton Monroe Swim Team is a large team with multiple coaches, various age levels, staggered practice times, two pools and swim meets with multiple sessions. On a regular basis, the Team communicates with the swimmers as follows:

**Email: Our primary method of communicating with swimmers is via email.** At swimmer Registration**,** families were provided an email address where notices can be sent electronically. Emails will be limited to notification of Team events including practice changes and cancellations as well as job assignments for swim meets. It is important to inform us of any changes to your email address so that you can receive email from the Team without interruption. **Please check your e-mail daily!**

**File Folders:** Each family is assigned a file folder in the team mailbox at both the Shelton and Masuk High School pools. Handouts and various communications will be put in these folders. It is important to check your folder frequently.

**Team Website: The Team website is located at** [**www.smstrapids.org**](http://www.smstrapids.org)**. Team information is posted under the following sections on the Team website. This website is updated on an ongoing basis. Please check for updates regularly.**

* SMST News: Notices are posted in this section. Check this section of the website daily.
* Events: A list of USA Meets and other meets both local and national that our team will be attending, Meet announcements, Team entries, Meet results, directions and a list of timing assignments are posted here.
* Team Information: Information such as practice groups, practice schedules, team handbook, group descriptions, swimmers development, team requirements and team skills.
* Calendar: What is upcoming and/or changes to the normal schedule.
* Directions: Directions to pools where meets are held are posted here.
* Team Records: Team records are posted here
* Rapids in college: We have an extensive list of swimmers who have gone on to participate in college. Also information for those swimmers looking to swim in college.
* Articles: Informative article **ALL** parents should read.
* Other Information: Look here if you can’t find it elsewhere.
* Links: Helpful, useful and interesting swimming related links.
* Coaches: A list of Team coaches and their background is posted here.
* Registration: The tab used for registration in the fall and in the spring.
* Boards and Committees: A list of the Team’s Board of Directors, contact and committee information is posted on the coaches’ page under the coaches’ information.

**Shelton Community Center Hotline:** In the event of bad weather (lightning, winter storms, etc.) you may call the **Community Center hotline at 203-331-4120** to see if the Shelton pool is open. Generally if the pool is open, we will hold practice (or a Swim Meet, if that is the case). The pool is closed **½ hour** following any lightning or thunder. Do not drop swimmers off for practice without checking to make sure that practice is “on.”

**Monroe Parks and Recreation Hotline:** In the event of bad weather (lightning, winter storms, etc.) you may call the **Monroe Parks and Recreation Hotline at 203-339-6106** to see if the Masuk pool is open. Generally if the pool is open, we will hold practice (or a Swim Meet if that is the case). The pool is closed **½ hour** following any lightning or thunder. Do not drop swimmers off for practice without checking to make sure that practice is “on.”

Team Requirements

The Rapids are a Speedo sponsored team.  This means that all our apparel has the Speedo logo on it and the majority of our equipment will be Speedo.

**Team suit**– Practice suits are required to be worn at all practices. A team racing suit is required at all Meets. Swimmers have the option of purchasing a Solid black Aquablade with the team logo or the traditional team suit. It is a good idea to purchase several practice suits for the season. Team suit orders are taken at the beginning of the Fall/Winter season.

**Championship Suits:** Championship suits are not required, although the coach may encourage older swimmers to wear championship suits at higher level meets. Championship suits may***not***be worn at meets unless specified by the coach as a focus meet or championship meet. If a child chooses to wear a championship suit for focus meets, we recommend Aquablade for 12/U. 13/O may select a technical suit of their choice as long as it complies with FINA regulations.

**Team cap** – Caps are required to be worn at both practice and Meets for all swimmers with long hair. Team caps are required at Meets. Caps are optional for swimmers with very short hair. Team caps are available in both latex and silicone styles. Orders are taken at the beginning of the Fall/Winter season.

**Team Warm Up Jacket –** A Speedo warm up jacket is required for Junior, Senior and National swimmers to be worn at Meets. The jacket is an optional purchase for Sophomore, Freshman and Developmental swimmers. Team Warm up Jacket orders are taken at the beginning of the Fall/Winter season.

**Goggles** – Goggles are required for practice and Meets. Goggles can be purchased at Olympia Sports, Blanchettes Sporting Goods, Dicks Sporting Goods, Sports Authority, Metro Swim Shop, and at USA Swim Meets.

**Swim fins** – Swim fins are required for Developmental, Freshmen, Sophomore and Junior practice groups. They may be purchased at the Metro Swim Shop in Westport where you may have the swimmer’s foot fitted for the correct size fins. You may also purchase them at Dick’s Sporting Goods and Sports Authority. Fins may also be offered for sale on the bulletin board by swimmers who have outgrown them. **Please put your swimmers name on with permanent marker, a lot of fins do look alike.**

Parent Requirements

The Shelton Monroe Swim Team is dependent upon parental support. A well-run Swim Meet requires 30-40 parents to officiate, time, score, ribbon write, assist in parking and run concessions. Throughout the year, parents will be assigned jobs for Intersquad, Dual and USA Meets on a rotating basis. These assignments are not optional. You will be notified via email of your job assignment prior to a Meet. If you are unable to fulfill your assignment, you are required to find a replacement. If we do not fulfill our Team assignments at a Meet, our Team will be fined. We appreciate your cooperation. See also, Timing Assignment Policy.

* Parents are responsible for their swimmers before and after practice. Parents should walk their swimmer into the building and be sure the swimmer arrives on the pool deck before the parent leaves the building. For the safety of your swimmer, parents should arrive to pick up their swimmer before the end of practice. **Coaches are not responsible for swimmers before or after practice.**
* Parents should check your mailbox folder and e-mail frequently.
* Please make the commitment to get your child to practice on time.
* It is vital that the swimmers arrive to meets on time for warm-up. At meets, coaches are required to notify Meet officials of scratches 45 minutes prior to start of a Meet.
* If you need to communicate with your swimmer’s coach, you can email them, call them on the telephone or speak to them **before or after practice**. Please do not approach the coaches during practice or at Meets.

Timing Assignment Policy

As a parent of a child participating in Intersquad, Dual or USA Meets, you are required to provide assistance to the Team. As described above in the Parent Requirements section, throughout the year you will be assigned certain tasks on a rotating basis along with parents of swimmers who also participate in Meets. Families with an active USA Official are exempt from timing assignments. (Officials are required to spend an entire Meet on the pool deck. When our Team provides officials at a Meet the host team will usually reduce the number of timers we must provide). Our parent coaches are also exempt from timing assignments.

When our Team is entered into a Meet, the Team hosting the Meet will notify us of the number of timers we are required to provide. The number of timers that teams are assigned is based on the number of swimmers from each team in each session. The Rapids USA Timing Chairperson will assign families to time based upon the swimmers entered into a meet. Usually, three pairs of timers are assigned per session. For a USA Meet, each timing assignment is shared by two timers who each time ½ of the session because USA Meets tend to run 3 to 4 hours. For Dual Meets, we generally assign 1 person to fulfill each timing assignment because these meets are shorter. Sometimes, a family will be assigned to time, but don’t end up timing because they are not needed. A family will only receive credit for timing if they actually timed.

Timing Assignments are emailed to assigned timers prior to the meet and will be posted on the Team website (usually posted on Wednesday for weekend meets). Assignments are based on the meet entry; if you are scratching your child from the meet you must notify the USA Timing Coordinator of the scratch in addition to the coach. If the USA Timing Coordinator received notification of the scratch after the assignments have been emailed you will be required to find a replacement.

To access the timing assignments, from the SMST website homepage click Events and scroll to find the proper meet/event, a list will be provided on the meet page allowing you to view a list of timers per meet. If you are unable to time, **you will need to find your own replacement**. **Timing assignments are not optional.** All phone numbers and e-mail addresses can be found on the Team Roster which is emailed to each family at the beginning of each swim season and can also be accessed from the team website when you are logged in.

In the list of timing assignments, you will note that one of the timers listed will have the letters “TC” next to the timer’s name. The TC signifies that this timer is the Timing Coordinator for the Team timers for that session. If you are listed as a timer for a Meet, you are to check in with the Team’s Timing Coordinator at or around the start of warm-ups. They will coordinate with you and all assigned Team timers when you will time (first half of Meet or second half of Meet). The Timing Coordinator will sign in for all of the Team timers. It will be the Timing Coordinator’s job to be sure that the Team’s timing assignments are filled for that session. They will also make sure that we do **NOT** supply more timers than our Team is required to. It is also the Timing Coordinators job to email the USA Timing Chairperson the names of timers that actually timed as well as those timers who did not check in with the TC. Timing Coordinators are required to time as well as fulfilling their responsibilites as TC.

It is most important to note that if you are scheduled to time and your child scratches from the meet, you must find a replacement. The USA Timing Chairperson uses the latest entry list as posted on our website to assign timers. Every family should check each USA entry when it is posted to make sure that your swimmer was not entered in error. Even if you tell the coach that you are scratching from a meet, if your swimmer is on the entry, you may be assigned to time and you are responsible for finding a replacement. A family is given credit for timing only if they actually time. **Timing assignments should be taken seriously**. All parents are expected to fulfill their share of Meet-related jobs such as timing.

**If your swimmer qualifies for Championship finals (i.e. Seniors, Age Groups) – you will be expected to time and these timing assignments will not be posted.**

In past seasons, many families did not fulfill their assigned timing assignment(s), did not find a replacement timer and other families that were not assigned had to fill the timer requirement for our team. After much consideration, The Shelton Monroe Swim Team instituted a policy that will fine any family that does not fulfill their assigned USA meet (only) timing requirement or find a replacement timer as follows:

* $25 for the 1st missed USA meet timing assignment;
* $50 for the 2nd missed USA meet timing assignment;
* $75 for the 3rd missed USA meet timing assignment; and
* $100 for the 4th missed USA meet timing assignment

The fine will be added to your swimmer’s account. If a swimmer’s account is not paid in full, the swimmer will not be allowed to register for the next swim season.

If you have any questions about our Timing Assignment Policy, please feel free to contact Cara Noccioli, Timing Chairperson (email: nocc6@yahoo.com)

**Please do not ask our coaches about timing assignments. They are at Meets to coach our children.**

**RAPIDS TEAMS**

The Shelton/Monroe Swim Team uses a “progressive” age group program designed to develop the child physically, mentally and emotionally in a systematic fashion. A well-defined, long term approach of gradually increasing degrees of commitment is essential to reach peak performance levels during a swimmer’s physiological prime. The emphasis in the early stages of participation is placed on developing technical skills and love for the sport. In the later years, a more demanding psychological challenge is introduced to the training program.

In addition to emphasizing long-term rather than short-term results, it is also important that we establish training groups of swimmers who are compatible in respect to abilities, commitment levels and goals. At each level, the goals and objectives are specific and directed toward meeting the needs of the swimmer. The long-term goal of total excellence is always in mind. As each child is different, he/she will progress at his/her own rate. The coaching staff recognizes this fact by making team assignments based on a swimmer’s physical, mental, and emotional level of development.

**NOVICE TEAM**

**DEVELOPMENTAL GROUP**

**Ages:**   6-9 yrs. old

**Pre-requisites:**  Ability to swim a 25 yard (1 length of pool) freestyle (proper rotary breathing) and backstroke.

**Group Description:**  The youngest level of the Rapids program with an emphasis on building a strong foundation of all four competitive strokes – butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle – along with starts.  Rapid swimmers will learn the importance of correct body position along with the importance of having strong kicks for all four strokes.  Swimmers are in this group until they gain the skills necessary to practice at the Freshmen level.

**Event Focus:**  50 free, legal 25’s of each odd stroke, and 100 IM.

**Attendance Recommendation:**  2x/week

**FRESHMEN GROUP**

**Ages:**   9/older

**Prerequisites:**  Ability to swim a 50 yard (2 lengths of pool) freestyle (with proper rotary breathing) and backstroke.  Swimmers who are 8 years old with 4 legal strokes will be considered for this group.

**Group Description:**  Swimmers is this group will be strengthening their foundation of the four competitive strokes, starts, turns as well as being introduced to interval training and reading a pace clock.  Swimmers just starting out will focus on building a strong foundation of all four competitive strokes – butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle – along with starts and turns.  Rapid swimmers will learn the importance of correct body position along with the importance of having strong kicks for all four strokes.  Swimmers are usually in this group for 2-3 years.

**Event Focus:**  50 Free, 50’s of each odd stroke, and 100 IM.

**Attendance Recommendation:**  3x/week

**AGE GROUP TEAM**

**SOPHOMORE GROUP**

**Ages:**  10/older

**Prerequisites:**  Swimmers in this group must be legal in all 4 strokes, have shown a willingness to compete and have the ability to swim a 100 of every stroke and 200 IM.

**Group Description:**  Swimmers in this group have developed their skills and are prepared for training beyond the freshmen group while showing the commitment necessary to move beyond freshmen group goals.  The focus for this group is on stroke skill and technique development while introducing endurance training for longer swims.  The practice direction, structure and intensity will be designed for the long-term development of all strokes and swimming all events.  Emphasis is placed upon further development of swimming knowledge and skills, increased endurance and competitive race planning.  Swimmers are usually in this group for 2-3 years.

**Event Focus:** 200 Fr, 200 IM and 100’s of each odd stroke

**Attendance Recommendation:**  3x/week

**JUNIOR GROUP**

**Ages:**  11/older

**Prerequisites:**Swimmers need to have achieved multiple 9/10 age group cuts and shown the ability to swim 100’s of every stroke and the 200 IM.  Junior swimmers must compete in the majority of our USA Swimming meets working towards their goals of higher level cuts and meets.

**Group Description:**The focus for this group is furthering their technique development, speed training and advanced race strategies.  The practice direction, structure and intensity will be designed for the long-term development of all strokes and swimming all events.  Emphasis is placed on more sophisticated physiological and psychological preparation.

**Event Focus:**200’s stroke, 400 IM, 500 Free

 **Attendance Recommendation:**  4x/week

 **SENIOR TEAM**

**SENIOR GROUP**

**Ages:** 13/Over

**Description:**  The Senior Group is a training group with high practice and meet expectations.

**Focus:**  This training group is for swimmers aspiring to train at a higher level and prepare for higher competition (Age Group Finalist, Senior Championships, Zones, Sectionals).  Swimmers in this group are introduced to a more intense aerobic and anaerobic training than they experienced in the Age Group program.  Additional stroke development and refinement are incorporated into their training.  Senior swimmers must be willing to work hard at practice and must compete at meets throughout the season.

**Prerequisites:**

* Age 13/Over
* Has shown the desire to become committed through good attendance and practice habits.
* Ability to learn new training techniques which will take them to the next level
* Ability to swim all 4 competitive strokes for 200 yds/m, 200 IM, 1000 free
* Ability to swim 10x100 on 1:20
* Ability to kick 10x50 on 1:00

**Requirements:**

* Must complete in a minimum of 2 meets during the regular season (short course and long course) and represent the Rapids in championship meets if COTs are achieved.
* Maintain a 75% monthly practice attendance record throughout the season (short course and long course, high school season excluded)
* Attend all scheduled dryland sessions

**NATIONAL GROUP**

**Ages:** 14/Over

**Description:**  The National group is the highest level of training for the Rapids Swim Team and has very high practice and meet expectations.

**Focus:**  Swimmers in this group develop their individual technical and racing skills in order to advance in their sport.  This is the highest training level with in the Rapids Swim Team and places more responsibility on its members than any other training group.  Members of this group dedicate themselves to training, racing, and their swim team.  Athletes understand that being in the National group makes them role models for the younger swimmers on the Rapids Swim Team.  Swimmers commit to excellence in their sport and achieving high-level results in state and national meets.

**Prerequisites:**

Age 14/Over (*highly*exceptional 13 year olds MAY be considered at the coach's discretion)

* Has shown commitment to the sport in the pool as well as outside of the pool.
* Has shown a steady practice attendance of 85% or more on the season (short course and long   course) and attends all dry land practices when they are offered.
* Swims all four competitive strokes for 200 yds/m, 1650 freestyle, and 400 IM
* Ability to swim an intensive 2-2 ½ hour training session both mentally and physically.
* Ability to listen well to coaching and apply what has been given
* Ability to swim 10x100 freestyle on 1:15 (short course)
* Ability to kick 10X50 on: 50
* Must have achieved a minimumof 4 CT Senior Championship COTs

After all above prerequisites have been met, admission to this group is ultimately dependent on Head Senior Coach’s Approval

 **Requirements:**

* Must maintain an 85% monthly practice attendance record throughout the season (short course and long course, high school season excluded)
* Must attend all dryland sessions (unless in an alternative training program approved by coach)
* Required to attend all meets entered by the team noted “mandatory” for National group swimmers (conflicts excused at coach’s discretion only)
* Required to volunteer at all swim meets hosted by the Rapids for the younger swimmers (conflicts excused at coach’s discretion only)

**HIGH SCHOOL PREP GROUP**

**Age:**  Must be either a current high school student or going into their freshmen year in the fall.

**Focus:**  This training group is designed for the high school swimmer who wants to develop his or her strokes and endurance while having little focus on competing.  Focus of this group will be developing proper stroke technique for all four strokes and increasing endurance levels while having fun doing it.  Option to compete is available but not required.

**SWIMMER PROMOTION GROUP TO GROUP**

Usually done twice a year (August & March)

1.      Prerequisites for the higher group met.

2.      Physical ability to train in the higher group.

3.      Maturity level of swimmer as it relates to practice skills.

4.      Space availability in higher group.

5.      Coach’s discretion at all times.

 National

 *SENIOR TEAM*

 Senior B

 Juniors *AGE GROUP TEAM*

 Sophomores

 Freshman NOVICE TEAM

 Developmental

The following “human” factors were considered in the development of this training model:

* Maturity level of participating swimmers
* Skill level of participating swimmers
* Social needs, as it relates to the grouping of participating swimmers
* Motivational needs of participating swimmers
* Individual goals of participating swimmers

***Ongoing stroke development and refinement is one of our top priorities!***

Practice Policies

* Parents are responsible for their swimmers before and after practice. Parents should walk their swimmer into the building and be sure the swimmer arrives on the deck before the parent leaves the building. For the safety of your swimmer, parents should arrive to pick up their swimmer before the end of practice. **Coaches are not responsible for swimmers before or after practice.**
* Attendance at practice is essential.
* Swimmers must be on deck and on time for practice and dry land sessions with all the proper equipment.
* Swimmers should plan to stay for the entire practice session.
* Swimmers should notify the coach before practice begins if they need to leave early.

**Philosophy of Competition**

The SMST Rapids participate in two types of swim competition. Dual meets and USA swim meets. The following principles apply to all competitions.

1. We emphasize competition with yourself. Individual improvement in time or skill is more important than your place in the race.
2. Consideration for fellow teammates, opponents, officials, and parents are just as important as how you swim. We encourage support for others; positive attitudes and good meet behavior.
3. We encourage swimmers to learn to set reasonable and logical goals and to strive for excellence even when they experience short-term setbacks.

## Swim Meets/Competition

(The IN’S and OUT’S of swim meets)

The Shelton Monroe Swim Team is a USA Swimming Team. This means that we compete in meets organized the United States Swimming Association. Participating in any Meet is voluntary, depending on your own personal schedules and responsibilities. Some swimmers choose not to swim in many meets, some swim only one weekend day, while others swim in every Meet.

The Rapids swim team competes year round in numerous leagues offering a variety of competitive experiences to swimmers of all ages. It is important that your child attends at least one meet per month so that his/her coaches can assess their progress. Swim meets are also a great social gathering allowing friends to be made or friendships to be strengthened.

**It is important to note that if your swimmer is signed up for a Meet and is unable to attend, please notify his/her coach as well as the USA Timing Chairperson as soon as possible. In addition, if you are assigned to time at a meet, please find a replacement. See Timing Assignment Policy.**

USA MEETS: All members of the Shelton Monroe Swim Team are members of Connecticut Swimming Inc. (CSI) which is the local organization of United States Swimming Association. Each swimmer is eligible to compete in the USA scheduled meets upon recommendation by their coach. USA swimming is for every swimmer as long as he/she has “legal” strokes. USA Meets are officiated and the coaches do not recommend participating until at least 2 strokes are “legal,” which means done correctly. If you are not sure if this is for your child, please discuss it with your child’s respective coach.

The greatest advantage of participating in USA meets is that it provides more evenly matched races because the Meet is pre-programmed by computer and each swimmer is seeded (placed in a race) by his/her time and will be swimming against other swimmers with similar times. 90% of a swimmer’s best times come at a USA Meet.

USA meets are usually held on Saturday and/or Sunday, with an occasional Friday evening session and are differentiated by age and ability level. Typically, 10-15 teams compete at a USA Meet and they are always officiated. The USA rules state that swimmers compete in the age group based on their age on the first day of the Meet.

**Dual Meets**– Usually between 1 or 2 other teams, this is a low key setting and a good introduction to a swim meet. These meets usually last between 2-3 hours and are typically held on a weeknight.

**AA Meet** – This is a senior level USA meet meaning that you have to meet the qualifying times for the meet. There is only one age group at this meet and it is swum in a trials and finals format. Swimmers of any age who have met the qualifying times may compete.

**Invitational Meet** - An invitational meet is a meet with many more teams and swimmers than a dual meet. The term "Invitational" comes from the fact that for a team to attend this type of meet, a team had to be invited to attend from the host team, but now is a general catch-all term for this style of meet (although there are still occasional invitation-only meets.) Meets of this variety generally have hundreds of swimmers, many teams, and many different events. Most meets of this style have no limits as to the number of swimmers that a team can enter, and only limit the number of times a swimmer can swim in order to make the flow of the meet manageable. Meets of this style can be at any level of swimming since all of the higher level meets use this style of meet with just more restrictive rules applied. Meets of this style usually do not have entry time standards, but can have them to either reduce the size of the meet, or raise the competition level.

**Zone Meet** – This is a qualifying meet at the end of championship season (March & August). Connecticut is part of the Eastern Zone. Other LSC’s that are part of the Eastern Zone are: Adirondack, Alleghany Mountain, Maryland, Maine, Metropolitan, Middle Atlantic, New England, New Jersey, Niagara, Potomac Valley and Virginia. During Long Course season you must meet a qualifying time in order to qualify. In the winter Short Course season you must be top 3 (12/under) or top 2 (13/over) in an event to qualify. Please check the ctswim.org or easternzoneswimming.org web sites for more information.

**Sectional Meets** – These are meets that our developing senior swimmers should strive to and successfully compete in. The meet is usually held in March and July and for many athletes this meet is a primary chance to qualify for other regional and National caliber championship meets. The country is divided into 4 sections, Eastern, Southern, Central and Western.

**Trials & Finals Meets** – The Rapids compete in many meets during the year that are trials and finals meet. At these meets 12/over swimmers will swim in preliminary heats in order to make the finals. Usually the top 16 or 18 from each event will come back for finals in the evening. All high level senior meets are held in this format and it is the expectation of the Rapids coaching staff that while not mandatory all swimmers who qualify for finals will swim in the finals.

**Short Course vs. Long Course** – Short Course is training or competing in 25 yard or meter pools, while Long Course is training or competing in 50 meter pools. Most indoor pools in the USA are set-up as 25 yard pools so most of the times younger athletes become familiar with early on are Short Course Yard (SCY) times. Since these meets are held in the winter months, our Short Course competition season starts in September and culminates with championship meets in March. The Long Course competition season begins in April and continues through July and August depending on the highest-level championship meet a swimmer can qualify.

**RELAY POLICY**

Relays will be formed based on the combination of the four fastest swimmers per relay, per age group. B, C and other relays will be chosen based on the next combination of the four fastest swimmers pre relay, per age group. This may include swimmers that are not specifically entered in the meet but are considered relay only swimmers. Relay only swimmers will be chosen based on their time or at the coaches discretion. Swimmers will not be considered for relays if they do not meet their training group requirements for the team. It is the swimmers responsibility to know his/her place on a relay and to make arrangements to be at championship meets

* Relays are an integral part of team building and will be entered in all possible meets.
* Relay swimmers at Championship meets are mandatory.

**Swimmers must be on time for warm-ups (15 min. early is better) at USA meets because scratch sheets must be submitted shortly after warm-up begins. Scratch sheets list the names of swimmers from each team who are not in attendance at the Meet. Please be on time or your child’s name will be handed in as a “scratch” and he/she will not be allowed to swim.**

**USA Meet Entry**: If it has been agreed by the coach and the parent that a swimmer is ready to compete in USA Meets, you will receive an email from the team approximately 6-7 weeks prior to a USA Meet informing you that our Team will be participating in a meet and that registration for that meet is now open. Please go to our events section of the website which will contain all the information for that particular meet, including dates, location, schedule of events, directions, etc. It is important to note that **all swimmers that wish to participate in a scheduled USA Swim Meet must register through the website by the date indicated registering for the days you will swim. If you do not enter the meet by the date indicated, you will not be entered into the meet.**

**USA Meet Entry Fees:** There is a fee to swim in a USA Meet. The approximate cost per event is $5.00 and each swimmer will be registered to swim 3 or 4 events per day. Relays cost more but that cost is split between the 4 swimmers on that relay. Once you have committed to attending a meet and the host team has been paid for our team’s entry, your entry fees are non-refundable. You will receive an invoice monthly for these fees.

**USA Meet Cancellations**: USA Meet cancellations rarely occur due to weather including snow or rain (even if it is an outdoor Meet). However, in some cases, our coaches might decide to scratch from a Meet in severe weather. In the case of severe weather, always check your email and the Team website for cancellation information before leaving for the Meet. We will post whether or not we will be going to the Meet as a Team (with coaches) in severe weather as soon as we make that decision.

Any swimmer who is signed up to swim in a USA Meet can swim whether or not his/her coach goes to the Meet. Upon arrival at a Meet without Team coaches, the swimmer should register at the timers/officials’ table and inform them that he/she is from the Shelton Monroe Swim Team, that the coach could not make it, and that he/she would like to swim. The swimmer will be placed with another team’s coach and can swim his/her events.

The coaches would like to be notified if a swimmer cannot attend a Meet so that scratch sheets can be completed. In the case of severe weather, swimmers who do not arrive at the Meet will be scratched after a reasonable amount of time.

**USA meets that are offered:**

**8/Under Meets**

* One day meets held once per month
* 8/Under Championships held at the end of the season

**Age Group Meets**

* One, two or three day meets held 1-3 times per month
* No cutoff times. All swimmers are eligible
* Competition is age grouped.

**Invitational**

* Two or three day meets often with cutoff times.
* Cutoff times are usually National A or AA times.
* Trials and final with medal and/or ribbon awards.

**Championships**

* Regional Championships are usually a three-day Meet held at the end of each season (February for Fall/Winter Season and July for Spring/Summer Season) for swimmers who achieve a minimum cutoff time but have not qualified for CT Age Group Championships. No minimum qualifying times for 12/U 50-yard events or 13/O 100-yard events.
* Age Group Championships is a four-day Meet held after Regional Championships (March for Fall/Winter Season and July for Spring/Summer Season) with cutoff times. Age grouped(10/U, 11/12, 13/14, 15-18). Trials and finals with medal and ribbon awards.
* Senior Championships is usually a four-day Meet held in March and July with cutoff times. Competition is open-no age grouping. Trials and finals with medal awards.
* Eastern Zone Championships is based on selection of swimmers by Connecticut Swimming to represent the State of Connecticut in Eastern Zone Championships. Competition is age-grouped. Winter selection is based on the fastest 2 swimmers per event (with at least AA times) and Summer selection is based on cut-off times. Held a few weeks after Age Group Championships.
* Sectionals are region-based meets with very difficult cut-off times.
* Junior Nationals Open Competition with cutoff times for 12-18 year olds.
* Senior Nationals/ Olympic Trials Open competition with cutoff times for 12 and overs.

Pool Rules

**Pool Rules (Apply to both the Shelton and Monroe pools, unless otherwise noted).**

1. All swimmers must shower before entering the pool.
2. **No adults are allowed in the Shelton Community Center gallery while swim lessons are in session. Failure to comply will result in swimmer being ejected from Practice.**
3. Swimmers must check in at the pool desk with the Shelton Community Center staff prior to entering the locker room. Swimmers are only allowed access to the pool during swim practices during the swim season.
4. No food or drink is allowed on the pool deck, in the stands or in the locker rooms (with the exception of water bottles only).
5. No street shoes are allowed on deck.
6. Swimmers’ bags should be in lockers with a lock.
7. For Safety Purposes it is imperative that all parents escort their children into and out of the building, making sure that their swimmers are on the pool deck or in the water before they leave. Parents are to supervise their swimmers in the locker room. Any complaints received by the Shelton Community Center or Masuk High School of unruly behavior will result in the immediate loss of locker room privileges.
8. Swim Meet Parking—Due to heavy patron usage, the Shelton Community Center generally requires us to find alternate parking lots for our Swim Meet parking for Meets held on Monday through Thursday. (Meet parking in the CC lot is not allowed on those evenings. Local church parking lots are utilized.)

Swimmer’s Code of Conduct

The Shelton Monroe Swim Team has adopted a Swimmer’s Code of Conduct. Each swimmer is expected to abide by such Swimmer’s Code of Conduct. At time of registration, **each** **swimmer and a** **parent/guardian** **must sign the Code of Conduct** to acknowledge receipt of the same and to agree to abide by its terms in order to prevent any misunderstandings.

1. Swimmers will treat coaches, officials, parents, volunteers, and other swimmers with respect. (For example, no talking back);
2. Swimmers will not use abusive or threatening language or gestures towards coaches, officials, volunteers, parents, or other swimmers;
3. Swimmers shall not engage in fighting or other physical acts toward coaches, officials, volunteers, parents, or other swimmers;
4. Swimmers shall not damage property at the Shelton Community Center or Masuk High School, or other pools or the personal property of any swimmer;
5. Swimmers shall not lie;
6. Swimmers shall not steal;
7. Swimmers shall not use or possess tobacco, drugs, or alcohol. The Shelton Monroe Swim Team has a zero tolerance policy;
8. Swimmers shall not commit acts of bullying in any form; including by not limited to sexual harassment;
9. Swimmers shall not engage in any unsafe behavior. (For example: running on the deck, climbing on equipment); and
10. Swimmers shall refrain from unsportsman-like conduct.

Discipline Policy

The Shelton Monroe Swim Team has adopted the following Discipline Policy. The purpose of this policy is to provide the proper framework for appropriate behavior. All swimmers need to understand what is expected of them. The behaviors listed above in the Section entitled “Swimmer’s Code of Conduct” will not be tolerated and can be subject to removal from practice, competition or dismissal from the Team based on the coaches’ discretion.

Any violation of the above mentioned behaviors during practice will be subject to the coach’s discretion and may result in:

* Suspension from practice;
* Removal from future competition; and
* Temporary or permanent dismissal from the Team.

If a swimmer, during competition, is in violation of the above-mentioned behaviors, the coach on deck will have the power to remove the swimmer from competition.

If a coach or Board Member is informed of any of the above-mentioned violations after they occur, discipline will be subject to the Board of Directors and Coaching Staff’s discretion.

Job Assignments/Descriptions

The Shelton Monroe Swim Team relies heavily on the participation of parents. The following is a list of job assignments that you may be asked to volunteer for and/or you may be assigned to do.

## Board of Director Positions (Volunteer Positions)

**President**: The President is an official representative of the Team and a member of all committees. The President presides over all meetings and supervises the business affairs of the Team.

**Vice President**: Works closely with the President, preside at meetings when the President is unable to attend and act in the President’s absence.

**Secretary**: Keeps complete records of all Board of Directors Meetings including distribution of Minutes. Handles all Board of Directors’ correspondence and sends out notifications.

**Treasurer:** Collects and deposits all Team funds and provides monthly financial reports at Board of Directors Meetings. Prepares budget and maintains written records of physical assets of the Team.

## Meet-Related Activities/Jobs (Volunteer and Assigned)

**Colorado System Operator**: Responsible for the Colorado timing system.

**Hy-tec Operator**: Responsible for all computer needs for meets. Provides all support for Swim Meets, including scratches, printing heat lane assignments and pulling results from the Colorado System.

**Concession Food Coordinator**: Responsible for the purchase and sale of food items at Home Meets.

**Head Timers**: Assign timers to lanes and distribute Team watches.

**Timers**: Manual watch timing per official instructions.

**Ribbon Writers**: Prepare place ribbons by filling in information on back of ribbon. Sits with scorer on deck during a meet. Assists with determining place finishers.

**Scorers:** Determine top finishers and keep running total of points scored by each team.

**USA Officials**: Provide fair evaluation of technical rules for swimming (requires certification after clinic completion).

**Marshals:** Monitor pool deck and locker rooms.

**Safety**: Provide basic first aid, make sure deck is kept safe, free of hazards.

**Runners:** Collects cards from the timers from all lanes at Home Meets after an event is completed. Cards are then brought to the scorers’ table promptly in lane order.

**USA Timing Coordinator:** Assigns timers for all Intersquad, Dual and USA Meets. Tracks credit received for timing assignments and notifies of any missed assignment fines.

**Timer Coordinator (TC):** Meets with all timers assigned 45 minutes prior to the start of the Meet. The TC makes sure that all Team timing assignments are fulfilled and that we do not over supply timers. The TC also makes sure that timers sharing an assignment know when relief will take over the timing assignment, which lane they are assigned to, and whom they are relieving. The TC reports back by phone or e-mail to the USA Timing Chairperson, Cara Noccioli, all who timed that session.

**Parking lot attendants:** Direct cars to lots for Swim Meet parking for Home Meets.

## Team-Related Activities/Jobs (Volunteer)

**Team Apparel**: Organize sale of Team swimwear and other Team apparel, primarily at the beginning of each season.

**Banquet/Party Planner**: Responsible for the scheduling, planning, and organizing annual banquet and team parties, including coordination of food and volunteers. Send out invitations and track responses.

**Fundraising**: Organize and oversee fundraising projects.

**Team Picture**: Responsible for organizing photographer to take Team picture. Prepare notification and ensure posting on website.

**Solicitation, Donations & Corporate Sponsors:** Solicit Team support from businesses.

**Slide Show/Photography:** Take pictures during practices, Swim Meets, Championships, parties, Team activities and organize the photos contributed by other parents. Prepare slide show on DVD or CD for sale and presentation at our annual banquet.

Explanation of Fees

A breakdown and explanation of the fees that are paid at time of Registration are as follows:

1. **Registration fees** pay for coaching costs, Team expenses, Team equipment, lifeguard fees, pool rental (when necessary), Nutmeg and CSSL Entry fees, pool membership fees, etc. (***You should note that the Pool Membership provides swimmers access to the pool during swim practices during swim season(s) only. The Pool Membership is not a full year, unlimited membership.)***
2. **USA Swimming membership/registration fee**
	1. Provides our Team with liability insurance coverage for each swimmer;
	2. Entitles swimmer to swim in USA Swimming/CT Swimming-sanctioned meets.
3. **Championship fees** covers awards/trophies given at our end-of-season League Championships whether or not the swimmer decides to swim in the Championship(s).
4. **Concession Assessment** covers start up supplies for our Concession Stand.

**Refund Policy** - If during the first 2 weeks of the season you feel that you have made the wrong decision in joining the Team, you may receive a refund of your registration fee less a $25.00 handling fee and the USA Swimming Registration fee. After the 2-week trial period, there is NO REFUND.

Fundraising

## Rapids Club

The Rapids Club recognizes individuals and companies for their donations to support the Shelton Monroe Swim Team. By donating to the Rapids Club you can sponsor a swimmer. Any **business** donations, $50 - $499, you will receive a credit of 50% of the donation to your swimmers account. Any **business** donation $500 or greater you would receive 60% of the donations towards your swimmers account.

Below is a chart of the various levels of giving and additional benefits:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Donor Level** | **Dollar Amount** | **YearbookAd Size** | **Additional Recognition** |
|  |  |  |  |
| Rapid | $50 | Business Card Ad | Certificate of Appreciation |
| Rapid Assistance Coach | $51 - $499 | 1/4 page Ad | Certificate of Appreciation |
| Rapid Coach | $500 - $999 | 1/2 page Ad | Team Plaque |
| Rapid All American | $1000 - $1999 | Full Page | Team Plaque |
| Rapid All American MVP | $2000 or greater | Full Page | Team Plaque |

**Annual Fundraising:**

Each year the Board of Directors will assess the needs of the team and determine if fundraising is necessary to raise funds for large equipment purchases or unexpected needs.

**GLOSSARY OF SWIMMING TERMS**

Alternate In a prelims/finals meet, after the finalists are decided, the next two fastest swimmers other than the finalists are designated as the alternates. The faster of the two being first alternate and the next being second alternate. If a finalist cannot compete, the alternates are called to take their place, often on a moment’s notice.

Anchor The final swimmer in a relay.

ASCA The American Swim Coaches Association, the professional organization for swim coaches throughout the nation. Certifying coaches and offering many services under coaches’ education and career advancement.

Blocks The starting platforms located behind each lane.

Bonus heat The first or slowest heat of finals, at swim meets where three heats of finals are swum.

Button The manual timing system stopping device that records a back up time in case the touch pad malfunctions. The button is at the end of a wire, plugged into a deck terminal box. There is usually one button per lane. It is the timer’s responsibility to push the button as the swimmer finished the race.

Circle swimming Performed by staying to the right of the black line when swimming in a lane to enable more swimmers to swim in each lane.

Consolation heat The first, or slower, of two heats of finals at a championship meet.

CSI Abbreviation for Connecticut Swimming Inc., the Connecticut administrative organization for USA Swimming.

Dual Meet. A meet conducted between two teams, usually with a limitation on the number of entrants from each team.

DQ. Disqualification, a swimmer is usually disqualified when he performs a stroke, touch or turn incorrectly or when he enters the water before the start (false start).

Dryland The exercises and various strength programs swimmers do out of the water.

Entry An individual, relay team, or club roster’s event list into a swim competition.

Entry Fees The amount per event a swimmer or relay is charged. This varies depending on the LSC and type of meet.

False start When the swimmer enters the water before a race or moves during the start, he may be charged with a false start. This results in disqualification, since USA has a “no false start” rule.

FINA The international rule making organization for the sport of swimming.

Finals The session of a meet where qualifying rounds were held previously to determine the finalists. Usually there are 1-3 heats of finalists and their order of finish determines the ultimate placement in a given event.

Flags Pennants that are suspended over the width of each end of the pool approximately 15 feet from the wall. Backstroke flags placed 5 yards (short course) or 5 meters (long course) enabling backstrokers to execute a backstroke turn more efficiently by counting their strokes.

Gallery The viewing area for spectators during the swimming competition.

Heat The group of swimmers who swim a race at the same time. Several heats may be held in a particular event.

Heat sheets Printed listings of all swimmers by event number and entry time. These are also called “psych sheets.”

IM. Individual medley, the event where a swimmer swims butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle stroke in that order.

Lap Two lengths of the pool.

Lap counter The large numbered cards used during freestyle events 500 yards or longer. Counting is done from opposite the starting end. The numbers on the cards are “odd numbers” only with the final lap being designated by a bright orange card.

Length One length of the pool.

Long Course A type of competitive pool which measures 50 meters or 55 yards in length. The standard size for all international competition and all world record swims are in the 50 meter course.

LSC Local Swimming Committee, one of several regional groups such as Connecticut Swimming charged with the conduct of all USA activities in that region.

Marshall The adult(s) who control the crowd and swimmer flow at a swim meet.

Medley relay Four swimmers on each team swim one fourth of the total prescribed distance in the order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle.

Meet Director The official in charge of the administration of the meet. The person directing the “dry side” of the meet.

OVC Official Verification Card, issued by meet officials to swimmers achieving a Junior National or Senior National time.

Pace clock The large clocks with highly visible numbers and second hands, positioned at the ends or sides of a swimming pool so the swimmers can read their times during warm ups or swim practice.

Paddles Colored plastic devices worn on the swimmers hands during swim practice.

Prelims, or Trials In certain meets, the qualifying rounds for each event to determine the finalists.

Pull buoy A floatation device used for pulling by swimmers in practice.

Pyramid seeding In trials or preliminaries of trials-finals meets, the swimmers in the top 3 heats are intermingled so that the fastest three swimmers are in the middle lanes of the last 3 heats, the next 3 in the lane next to that in each of those heats, and so forth. This is also called **circle seeding**.

Relay An event where 4 swimmers are part of a single team orientated event.

Referee The USA official who has the final authority over all other officials at the meet, he makes all final decisions and sees to the efficient running of the meet.

Scratch To withdraw from an event after having declared an intention to participate. Some meets have scratch deadlines and specific scratch rules, and if not followed, swimmer can be disqualified from remaining events.

Seed times The times a swimmer uses to enter a meet. These times appear on the heat sheet and the entry cards and determine the swimmer’s heat and lane assignments in a meet.

Seeding The process of assigning swimmers to lanes and heats by time. In general the swimmers with the slower seed times swim in the earlier heats. The order of swimming in the final heats depends on the type of swim meet.

Senior meet A meet with only one age group called “senior.” Swimmers of any age who have met the qualifying times may compete.

Straight seeding Swimmers are assigned to lanes in heats from slowest to fastest. In any given heat, the fastest swimmers swim in the middle lanes and the slower ones in the outer lanes.

Split The time a swimmer achieves in one or more laps of his race. Coaches use these times to help instruct swimmers in pacing.

Starter The USA official responsible for starting each heat and calling the swimmers to the blocks.

Stroke & turn judge A USA official, who determines the legality of swimmers’ strokes, turns, and finishes and disqualifies those who do not conform to USA rules.

Swim off In a prelims/finals type of competition, a race after the scheduled event to break a tie. The only circumstance that warrants a swim-off is to determine which swimmer makes finals or an alternate, otherwise ties stand.

Taper The resting phase of a swimmers’ workout at the end of the season before a championship meet.

Time standards A set of times developed by USA swimming to assist swimmers in performance planning. They are based on percentiles of the 16th fastest time in each stroke in each age group.

Top 16 A tabulation of the top 16 times in the US in each age group and stroke. These are published annually in Swimming World Magazine. The “consideration” times that may be eligible appear in the USA rulebook and on the CSI website.

Touch pad An electronic pad which stops a clock when the swimmer touches it at the end of the race. This is usually the official time, although corrections are made if the swimmer misses the pad.

Unattached The status a swimmer receives when changing from one USA club to another. A swimmer must swim unattached for 120 days from the dates of the last USA meet he swam for the previous club. During this time they may compete individually, but not be entered in relays. Connecticut high school swimmers compete unattached for their USA clubs during the high school swim season.