*I’m new to Swimming....*

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE SMOKY HILL SHARKS?

Listed Alphabetically

All Stars

All Stars is the last meet of the season, and is when all 26 teams in the league swim together. In order to swim at all stars you must be 7-18 years old (before June 1) and have a qualifying All Star time. All Star times are published by the league at the beginning of the season. The times are posted at the pool, just inside the entry door.

Swimmers who qualify are allowed to swim the event(s) they qualified in, with a maximum of 3 events. Swimmers who qualify for more than 3 events have to choose which 3 they would like to swim. There are no relays at All Stars.

Championships

Championships are where all teams in our division attend the meet. 2 heats of each race are held at Championships. If it is a 6 lane pool there will be 12 qualifiers and 2 alternates. If it is an 8 lane pool there will be 16 qualifiers with 2 alternates.

Heat 1 is racing for ribbons. It is any child who places 7-12 (or 9-16 if 8 lanes) at prelims. Heat 2 is racing for medals. It is any child who places 1-6 (or 1-8 if 8 lanes) at prelims. Even if a child in Heat 1 swims faster than a child in Heat 2, they are still racing for whatever they qualified for at prelims. (Just remember...there is no consolation heat in the Olympics.) Medals are usually provided for Heat 2 and

Ribbons for Heat 1. Medals are usually given through 6th places for relays.

Championships: End-of-Year Party and Awards Banquet

After the championship meet the team has an end-of-year party. The coaches and Board hand out awards and thank yous. After a potluck dinner everyone can jump in the pool for a relaxing end to the day.

Dry-run Meet

Is a practice meet held before the first Dual Meet of the season. Time permitting it is held the first Saturday of the season or the Thursday before the first Dual Meet. The meet will test the meet setup, meet processes, equipment, scoring and officiating. It also is an opportunity for returning and new swimmers to run thru the meet and try each stroke.

Fundraising

The Smoky Hill Sharks are recognized non-profit organization, 501(c)3, and run by parent volunteers. To help maintain the quality of the team we have various fundraising functions to support the Smoky Hill Sharks program; including purchasing the equipment, supporting the coaching staff and funding operations (pool costs, etc.). We have a variety of fundraising options, which are optional activities. Many of these activities are centered around building teamwork and spirit. Some of the events include:

**Swim-a-thon:**

This is our main annual FUNdraiser! This event is a great way to have FUN and earn great prizes at the same time!! Swimmers are limited to a MAXIMUM OF ONE CONTIUOUS HOUR in the water. Each swimmer will swim as many pool lengths as possible during this one-hour period, with pledge amounts by number of laps or flat amount - 64 lengths of the pool equals 1 mile.

**Shark Gear:**

Show your team spirit. See the swimmers in their SHARK LOGO GEAR... You too can look awesome in your very own SHARK LOGO GEAR.

**Swim-a-thon Pancake breakfast and Pizza dinner:**

Great way to reward the swimmers with some nourishment after an hour swim and provide a meal for the families.

**Slightly Used Swim Gear Sale:**

Need a practice suit? Great place to purchase or donate slightly used swim equipment for those kids that keep growing.

Heat Sheets

Heat sheets are a list of events (program of the meet) within each event there are heats which list the swimmer and lane in which they are swimming. They are posted on the gate (Home Meets) or near the assigned team area (Away Meets) on the day of the swim meet. Check these sheets (or your child’s check-in sheet from the coach) to see what events your child is swimming.

Heating

Heating is the area where swimmers pick up their event cards and get organized in lanes and heats per event. Once swimmers have been delivered to heating and picked up their cards, volunteers are in charge of getting swimmers to their races.

Coaches will usually help with the younger/newer swimmers if they need it. Coaches (or in some cases, parent “wranglers”) will also help make sure 8 & under relays are at the correct end of the pool for their leg of the race. Every team runs heating a little differently.

**First Call:** Start getting ready to get to heating.

**Last Call:** Swimmers should be in heating with their goggles & caps

IM Strong

A program that encourages each swimmer to try all 4 strokes (Free, Breast, Back and Butterfly) plus the IM (Individual Medley) once during the season. The team tracks progress for each swimmer and once they have legally swam the goal of all 5 events, they will receive an award from the team. In the past the awards have included an IM Strong T-Shirt and IM Strong Cap. A swimmer is credited for completing the event once he/she has legally swam the stroke in one of the meets.

**6 & Under Wonders:** In conjunction with the IM Strong program the 6 & under swimmers complete the three 6&U events (Free, Back and Breast). 6&U swimmers can participate in the IM Strong program instead by swimming the Butterfly & IM (medley) 8&under events.

Meet Requests–Event Signup

Dual Meet entry requests are due on-line or at the pool by TUESDAY!

**Individual Events-Dual Meets:**

Swimmers can select UP TO 3 individual events. Note the coach may decide to adjust one of the races for a swimmer in order to fill out all events for team scoring or to challenge a swimmers in a different event. If the swimmer cannot swim a specific event or is working a specific goal (All Stars, IM Strong, moving up a relay) please note it in the signup comments area. If for some reason the top three events cannot be accommodated, coaches will substitute events with ones they feel the swimmer can swim. Coaches have the final decision on all event entries.

**Relays-Dual Meets:**

Coaches are responsible for putting relays together - they have the best knowledge and data. Please note if a swimmer is available for relays on your form! (Any swimmer may “swim up” to fill out a relay provided at least one swimmer on the relay is in the correct age group.) Every effort is made to place the top 4 swimmers in an age group into the “A” relay and rotate the remaining swimmers into the “B” & “C” relays. This rotation includes; times, improvement, team work, dedication to team (attending practice, encouraging others, etc.) If your swimmer is only able to attend part of a meet, it is important that you communicate this information on the Meet Entry Form. Please be specific on arrival or departure time.

THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT YOUR CHILD WILL BE ENTERED IN A MEET IF THE MEET ENTRY FORM IS NOT TURNED IN BY TUESDAY EVENING).

**Individual Events-Prelims/Championships:**

While the goal is to have a balance of events, we want the kids to have confidence with their selections. We do not want to push a kid into events they are not comfortable swimming during championships. For any “proposed changes”, the coaches will consider if the swimmer has a better chance of making the championship, thus helping themselves and the team.

In this situation, the coaches will attempt to have a discussion with the swimmer to guide them or inspire them with confidence that they can make championships with that event.

**Guidelines:**

1. The swimmers pick their events without having them changed unless the coaches consider it in the best interest of the swimmer and discuss with them
2. Part of the consideration is this might be the swimmer’s last chance to achieve that “Goal Time”, All Star time, or place in the championship meet.
3. For relays, same policy as for dual meets. Coaches should put together the best possible “A” foursome. Then make the best possible “B” team with the remaining swimmers, etc...

Pool Size - Meter/Yard

Some pools are 25 METER pools, and some are 25 YARD pools. We are a meter pool. To convert times:

•Yards Time (in seconds) x 1.11 = Meters Time (in seconds)

•Meters Time (in seconds) /÷ 1.11 = Yards Time (in seconds)

Prelims

Prelims are held the week before Championships, usually in the morning. Prelims age groups are assigned by the league board. They try to split them as evenly as possible, but each year is different. Your child must swim prelims and qualify in order to swim individual events in Championships. They do NOT have to swim/qualify at prelims in order to swim in relays. Please let a coach know if they would be interested in swimming relays.

Preseason Clinic

An optional opportunity for swimmers to get prepared for the summer swim season.

Clinic is set for May and runs two weeks prior to the start of the summer season. These can be held in the evenings either at a local high school or the Smoky Hill Metro Pool (our pool for the summer).

Team Building

A great aspect of the Sharks is the team spirit. The Sharks provide multiple ways to build connections between the swimmers and families:

**Big Shark / Little Shark –**

Coaches pair older swimmers with younger swimmer to support them during meets, help with getting to events, cheering during races, etc.

**Tie-Dye night–**

Swimmers bring a plain white t-shirt (or other item) and the team supplies the tie-dye supplies.

**Movie & Smoothie day with the Coaches-**

The Coaches setup a day when the team watches a movie together then grabs a snack afterwards.

**Parent Meet & Greet-**

Opportunity for new families to be introduced to the team and returning families to reconnect to other families.

Team Captains / Junior Team Captains

Swimmers on the team that also spend practices and meets helping the coaches with the other swimmers. This is a great opportunity for kids to gain coaching and leadership experience. These positions require yearly interviews.

Team Philosophy

Swimming, especially competitive swimming offers numerous benefits for the children such as building self-esteem, teamwork and physical conditioning. Children can develop skills and set goals that they are comfortable with. Coaches are dedicated to providing each swimmer the best in instruction and motivation. Year after year, the swimmers, parents, and Swim Team Board of Directors strive to provide a first-rate social and athletic environment for everyone involved. Everyone plays a specific and significant part in the success of our team. The swimmers, win or lose, rain or shine, give it their all. It's also up to the parents to give their all, because each swim meet requires dozens of volunteers in order to run smoothly. All parents are required to volunteer at every meet, whether at home or away.

Team Pictures

Team pictures are taken and then available for order. Individuals and buddy pictures may also be taken at this time. Swimmers should wear their team suits and bring their best smiles.

Warm-ups

At both away and home meets, warm-ups are a chance for swimmers to check out the blocks, the lane lines, and the turn markings (the stripes on the bottom of the pool). After warm-ups, coaches give out any remaining slips from check-in with children’s races/heat/lanes. It’s their way of taking last minute attendance. If you miss warm-ups you may have an early morning wake-up call in order to make sure you are coming, or your child could be scratched from the meet. See FAQs for typical warm-up times.