

# **Welcome to the Chehalem Swim Team!**

**We are so happy to have your child join us! We hope you will find most of your questions answered in this Parent Handbook. Of course if you have any additional questions, feel free to contact your swimmer's coach or a member of the CST Board. We will do everything we can to help you navigate the world of USA Swimming!**

## **OUR HISTORY**

**The Chehalem Swim Team (CST) was founded in 1970 by the Chehalem Parks and Recreation district. The club's purpose at that time was to coach children in swimming and also prepare them for competitive swimming at the high school level. Since 1970, however, the club has expanded its goals to include establishing a comprehensive competitive program for our community for all ages. In 1995, the Chehalem Swim Team established itself as a parent run, coach led non-profit organization. CST has become recognized as one of Oregon's finest programs, and has also stepped up into the national level by virtue of its National Age-Group Qualifiers, Junior National Qualifiers, and Masters National Champions.**

## **OUR MISSION**

**To provide a safe, healthy and positive environment where our athletes can develop the character traits, technical skills and intense desire necessary for them to reach and maximize their full potential.**

## TEAM PHILOSOPHY.

The team philosophy is encompassed in the words COURAGE and PERSEVERANCE:

COURAGE is the willingness to accept risks and endure failings. Courage does not exist unless there is a situation that presents the opportunity for success. We encourage our athletes to embrace these opportunities and not fear the outcome.

PERSEVERANCE is the backbone of success in any endeavor in life. One cannot succeed at the highest levels without enduring some setbacks. These difficult times can create a lack of faith, low self-esteem and an obvious drop in enthusiasm. Perseverance is the quality that transcends these difficult times. It allows the individual to find the true strength of their character.

The Chehalem Swim Team believes that COURAGE and PERSEVERANCE developed by swimming will prepare the individual for the challenges they will face in life.

## COACHING STAFF

<b>HEAD COACH</b>	<b>Erin Fincher</b>	<a href="mailto:Erinfincher23@gmail.com">Erinfincher23@gmail.com</a>	
<b>ASST. COACH</b>	<b>Lalayna Fisher</b>	<a href="mailto:Lfisher1022@gmail.com">Lfisher1022@gmail.com</a>	
<b>ASST. COACH</b>	<b>Krista Miller</b>	<a href="mailto:millerk10823@gmail.com">millerk10823@gmail.com</a>	

## **COACHING STAFF QUALIFICATIONS**

The Chehalem Swim Team staff consists of professionally trained coaches. They are member coaches of USA Swimming and the American Swimming Coaches Association. Training from these organizations gives our coaches access to the most comprehensive training, education and certification programs for youth coaches of any sport in the United States. Certified coaches in US Swimming programs possess training and experience in technical development, physiology, and psychology of adolescents. Our trained coaching staff provide the assurance that the time your children spend on The Chehalem Swim Team will be the best it can be!

## **COACHES RESPONSIBILITIES**

Our coaches supervise the entire competitive swim program. The CST coaching staff is dedicated to providing a quality swim experience for athletes at every level of the program. Coaches teach skills and the value of working hard with their team to reach their goals.

- 1) The coaching staff are responsible for placing swimmers 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 or she will be placed in a more challenging training group by the coach.
- 2) The coaches make the final decisions concerning which Swim Meets the CST swimmers may attend. The coaching staff also makes the final decision concerning which events the swimmer is entered into.
- 3) At meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-up procedures for the team. After each race, the coaches will review the

race with them, and provide constructive feedback regarding their performance.

- 4) The placement on relay teams is the sole responsibility of the coaching staff.

## **TEAM TRAINING GROUPS**

The Chehalem Swim Team uses a progressive age group program designed to develop the child physically, mentally and emotionally in a systematic fashion. In the early stages, the emphasis of training is placed on developing technical skills and a love for the sport. In the later years, a more demanding physical routine is introduced to the training program. A progression is used to instill the love of the sport first and to enhance a swimmer's experience on the team. A steady natural progression is the best way to help each swimmer reach their full potential and maximize long term successes.

**HAMMERHEAD SHARKS 6-8yr olds** Entry-level group for first time team members. To join you must be able to swim 25 freestyle and 25 backstroke. Novice Level groups for the second season Sharks. These levels are full of fun and feel for the water. We will learn basic skills that build strong swimmers. These ages practice 2-3 days/ week learning the basic fundamentals of all four strokes and legal competition skills.

**THRESHER SHARKS 9-10 yr olds** This level can be first time swimmers, developmental, and Performance level 10 and unders. This age group will practice 3-4 days/wk. This age group starts pace clock reading. This age we will focus on learning /developing strong technique in all four strokes and keep it fun!

### **BULL SHARKS 11-12 yr olds**

This age group offers entry level first season opportunities and higher level challenges for our performance swimmers. There will be A/B/C swimmers in this group and there may be age group sectional qualifiers in this group as well. Swimmers who have been on the team a while may be at high levels and strengthening the strokes the newer swimmers are still learning.

**MAKO SHARKS 13/14 yr olds** This training group will also have a level for everyone. There will be A/B/C Senior swimmers. Your training group placement will depend on your experience, commitment, training ability and competition goals.

**TIGER SHARKS** - Entry level highschool athletes, development groups for 13 and over athletes , and a performance level for those swimmers who are sophomore and older and committed to high level swimming training and goals . The differences in placement depend on swimming experience, commitment, training, and competition goals.

## **SEASONS**

Competitions are grouped into two seasons - Short Course and Long Course. Consistent training is needed to progress through the levels of swimming and to be ready to compete at your best. It is important that each swimmer attends as many practices as recommended in order to develop from level to level and experience the full benefits of the program.

**SHORT COURSE (SEPT-MARCH)** - Short Course competitions take place in pools that are 25 yards in length.

**LONG COURSE (APRIL-AUG)** - Long Course means we compete in pools that are 50 meters in length.

Regardless of the season, all training practices are conducted at the Chehalem Aquatic Center. Our pool houses an 8 lane competition pool that can be set up for 25 yard and 25 meter events, for home swim meets and practices in the different seasons.

## **FOUR COMPETITIVE STROKES**

The four competitive strokes are:

- 1) Freestyle
- 2) Backstroke
- 3) Breaststroke
- 4) Butterfly

Events are held in all of the competitive strokes at varying distances for varying age groups. Your child will always compete at their age level, unless your coach places them into an “open” event.

In addition, there are other types of events within each meet and they are as follows:

[Individual Medley \(IM\)](#): This is when one swimmer swims all four competitive strokes within one race. This can be at varying distances 100,

200 and 400. The strokes are in the following order: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Freestyle with 1,2 or 4 lengths of each stroke.

[Freestyle Relay](#): A group of four swimmers swim Freestyle a set distance one after the other.

[Relay Medley](#): A group of four swimmers each swim a different stroke. Medley relay order is Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Freestyle.

For more swimming terminology go to USA swimming parent handbook also found on our website.

## **TYPES OR LEVELS OF SWIM MEETS**

**DUAL MEETS**: Occasionally CST will compete with one other team in a dual meet. These meets help promote team unity, but usually limit the number of events a swimmer may enter.

**DEVELOPMENTAL MEETS: ABC meets**: These meets generally do not have any qualification time standards. Each swimmer is allowed to enter from 2- 4 events per day. Athletes race swimmers from other teams who are the same age and speed.

**QUALIFICATION MEETS: A or A/B meets**: These meets have some type of qualification time standard that a swimmer must meet to enter the meet.

**STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS**: Oregon A times are needed to Qualify for state. At the end of each Short Course and Long Course season, a State Championship meet is sanctioned by Oregon Swimming. Oregon Swimming sets the qualifying time standards for these championship meets each season. Generally, the standards fall between the national "A" and "AA" time standards.

**ZONE CHAMPIONSHIPS:** After the state championships are held a swimmer may qualify to participate in Zones. Western Zone Championship times are national “AAA” times. In Short Course swimmers who achieve these times can apply for the Oregon All-star's team and in Long Course Swimmers apply for the Oregon Zones team. At both competitions swimmers will compete as a member of the Oregon Team against other LSC's on the west coast.

**SPEEDO/USS JUNIOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP:** One of the highest levels of achievement CST swimmers strive for is the participation in the Junior National Championships. US Swimming sponsors a Junior National meet each season. CST swimmers meeting qualifying time standards for this meet travel to different locations throughout the U.S. to compete against the best 18 & under swimmers in the nation.

**USS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS (SENIOR NATIONALS):** Other than the Olympic Trials and the World Championship Trials, each of which is held every four years, the highest level of competition for our senior swimmers is the USS National Championships. As with the Junior Nationals, CST swimmers meeting the national qualifying time standards travel to various cities throughout the US to compete against America's best swimmers. Swimmers can qualify for national teams that represent the US in international competition by their performance at Senior Nationals.

## **LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT**

### **As mentioned above**

There are seven different age group classifications recognized by USA Swimming. 8 & Under, 10 & Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18 and senior.

Within each age group there are different nationally recognized levels of achievement based on times. All swimmers start as “C” swimmers. As they improve, they advance from “C” to “B”, “BB”, “A”, “AA”, “AAA”, and ultimately “AAAA”. The times required for each level are published each year by USA Swimming. This provides fair, yet challenging competition on all levels.

## **PRACTICE AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

- 1) Each training group has specific attendance requirements appropriate for the objectives of that group. As a general rule, the least possible interruption in the training schedule will produce the greatest amount of success. As a swimmer moves into higher groups the expectations increase for more dedication to practices.
  - a) Hammerheads 8 and unders and Threshers 9-10 are expected to be at practice 2-3 times a week.
  - b) Bull Sharks 11-12 are expected to participate 3-4 times a week.
  - c) Mako Sharks 13-14 are required to be practicing 3-6 times a week.
  - d) Tigers Sharks are 4-8 times a week.

\*\*These are recommendations to improve skills and endurance and provide progressions to each level.
  
- 2) Swimmers should arrive at the pool approximately 15 minutes prior to their workout time. They should also be picked up no later than 15 minutes after their practice is over. Swimmers should be ready to swim and on deck 5 minutes prior to the start of their practice.

- 3) In the event a swimmer is late or going to miss practice, it is our hope that the parents will notify the coaches via email, texting or calling. Please note that if you attempt to notify them during practice or another groups practice (4:00 - 6:00) they will not be able to take your call or reply back to you as they are working with their team in the water. Please refer to the contact names listed under the coaching staff. The contacts can also be found on our website, [www.cstsharks.com](http://www.cstsharks.com)
- 4) At times, the last part of practice can be very informative. Usually there are announcements made at the end of each practice. It is recommended that parents attend the last part of practice frequently.
- 5) While on pool grounds, swimmers are the responsibility of the coaching staff.
  - a) During practice sessions, swimmers are only allowed to leave the pool area with the coach's permission.
  - b) If a swimmer needs to complete homework before or after practice, he or she must do their homework on the pool deck or bleachers so the coaches will know where they are until a parent arrives.

Taking breaks: Swimming is a year round activity. The club does recognize and encourage younger swimmers to participate in other activities in addition to swimming. Many families have taken "breaks" for soccer, basketball, baseball, lacrosse, you name it. Swimmers are encouraged to swim as many practices to keep skills up if possible. If that is too much and a full break is needed, just email your child's coaching staff and notify them of you and your child's plans. When your child is ready to come back, just email them again. There is no need to re-register unless the break is past the current swim season (either short or long course).

## **MEET EXPECTATIONS**

Each season's meet schedule is distributed at the outset of each season. Please visit our website frequently for the most up-to-date information, as it can and will change as needed.

- 1) The meet schedule has been established with the expectation that swimmers attend every meet available at their classification level. We do not schedule a meet unless we feel it is important to participate.
- 2) On average, we want all team members who are competing to compete once every three to four weeks. The meet schedule is established with this in mind. At times there may be meets scheduled close together within 2 weeks of each other. This is only done when there is no other alternative.

## **SWIMMER'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1) It is expected that each swimmer comes to practice with the mindset that they will be working hard to participate to the best of their abilities.
- 2) Each swimmer is expected to be respectful of their teammates, their coaches and each facility they practice or compete in.
- 3) Swimmers are required to bring specified training accessories dependent upon their level. Please refer to the chart under "Training Gear" to determine what the team provides and what you will need to provide.
- 4) It is the swimmer's responsibility to make sure these items are properly adjusted and spares are readily available should breakage occur.

- 5) Equipment breakage is not accepted as an excuse to stop and go home from practice early.
- 6) If a swimmer is having a bad day, they may be asked to go home.
- 7) Swimmers who damage property or are repeatedly disrespectful may be asked to go home, or be dismissed from the team if severe.

## **TEAM UNIFORM**

### **(Required at all Swim Meets)**

The team colors are Royal Blue and medium yellow.

Three team items are required at all meets -

- 1) CST Swim Racing Suit (you provide)
- 2) CST Swim Cap\* and goggles
- 3) CST T-shirt\* plus warm clothes to stay warm between events.

\*Your swimmer will be provided with two swim caps and a team t-shirt upon registration.

All swim gear, including team suits are available for purchase on our website . Each season you can measure your swimmer for a for a new suit. Arena has given us a fit kit and a link to our vendor is on our website.

## **TRAINING GEAR**

### **(Required at practices)**

Each member of each training group is required to bring their personal training gear. Listed below is a chart that indicates the gear needed to participate in each group. Gear may be purchased conveniently through our website through Arena Swimwear (our team gets a portion of the proceeds from each sale).

<b>GROUP</b>	<b>FINS**</b>	<b>Kick-Board**</b>	<b>Snorkel</b>	<b>Paddles**</b>	<b>Pull Buoy**</b>	<b>Shoes</b>
Hammer/ Thresher	X	X				
Bull	X	X	X	X	X	
Mako	X	X	X	X	X	
Tiger	X	X	X	X	X	

\*\*Provided by CST.

In addition, it is recommended to bring a Swim Bag for your child to bring his or her gear in. This gear gets naturally soaked, and you will want a bag that dries quickly after the gear gets thrown in after practice.

# COMMUNICATION

CST utilizes various methods of communication to broadcast information to the team.

## **WEBSITE - [www.cstsharks.com](http://www.cstsharks.com)**

CST uses Team Unify, a swim team management online platform for the team website. The CST website is utilized for all of our day-to-day operations. It includes:

- Billing monthly dues, meet fees
- Meet information and entries
- Practice Calendar and group practice times
- Fundraising and service hours tracking
- Events- information and contacts
- News- updates and pictures to celebrate our team

## **ON DECK APP -**

This allows parents and swimmers to view all meet results, time standards, news and more. You can find ON DECK on the Google Play or Apple Store for free.

## **EMAIL/WEEKLY UPDATES -**

The team provides a weekly email update and sends reminders for upcoming meets, meetings and events this way.

You can always email the coaches or board members if you have any questions or would like to set up a meeting.

## **FACEBOOK and Instagram**

The team has a private, members only Facebook page.

### **BULLETIN BOARD -**

The bulleting board may provide general information about upcoming events.

### **DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH COACHES -**

Talking to the coaches directly is welcome, but please save your conversations for before or after practices, not during.

### **IF PROBLEMS ARISE -**

If there are issues or concerns that come up, please reach out to your child's coaching staff to discuss these issues. The coaches strongly urge you to discuss problems with them directly so they can address your concerns. Please keep in mind the following:

- 1) Your coach does have the best interests of each child in their heart, even if you may have a disagreement of coaching style.
- 2) The coach is always balancing the needs of your child with the needs of each team member for a positive group experience.
- 3) If another parent comes to you with a complaint, please encourage them to bring it up with the coaching staff.

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

Transportation is provided by parents. There is no shuttle or bus to take the team to events. All liability is waived and CST nor the board will not be held responsible for transportation issues. Any liability for any arrangement

for carpooling, etc will be purely the responsibilities of the private parties involved.

## **CST BOARD MEETINGS**

As a parent, you are welcome to attend any CST Board Meetings. They are held once a month after swim practice during the week. Please feel free to join us and find out what is being planned for the CST.

## **LAST THOUGHTS**

Please do not hesitate to reach out for answers to your questions. Many parents and swimmers have been through what you are going through before. The CST membership is a friendly and encouraging one. Reach out to your swimmer's coach, CST Board members or other swimmers. Everyone on the team will be happy to help.  
Welcome Aboard!

