

St. Peters Rec-Plex Sharks

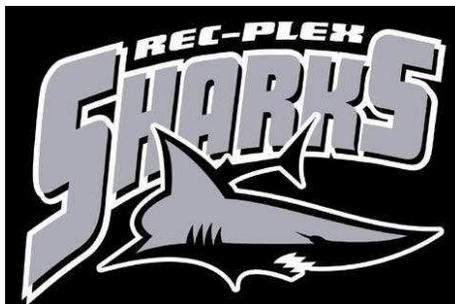


Team Handbook

PREFACE

The Rec-Plex Sharks swim team Handbook was developed to provide parents and swimmers with information about U.S.A. Swimming and the Sharks Swim Team. If you require additional information about U.S.A. Swimming, the Sharks, or both – contact the Head Coach (Erik Strom), the Team Administrator (Karen Butz), or a member of the Parent’s Association. The names of the current Board members are listed on the Shark’s website at www.recplexsharks.org.

Welcome To Shark Infested Waters!



Sharks Swim Team Mission:

The mission of the REC-PLEX Sharks Swim Team is to provide a comprehensive swim program (novice through Olympic levels) for all ages and abilities that encourages each individual to reach their fullest potential in the sport of swimming. The coaching staff attempts to achieve this mission in a supportive teaching environment that focuses on individual goal setting, discipline, teamwork and good sportsmanship.

Aquatic Center Philosophy:

The REC-PLEX Aquatic Center swimming programs provide quality educational experiences. Recognizing the wide range of interests, needs, and abilities in our population, it is the goal of these programs to accommodate those needs and interests. In addition, the REC-PLEX aquatic Center will cooperate fully with various agencies in our community to insure proper use of the Aquatic Center by the general population of the area. All levels of instruction, competition, and recreation will be aimed at with the promotion of a safety conscious attitude while fostering an enjoyment of aquatic activities.

The Coach-Parent Relationship:

Please refer to USA Swimmings parent section:

<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1503&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>

There is a wealth of information for swim parents on this site.

Rec-Plex Sharks Swim Team Handbook

Table of Contents

Preface

Chapter 1 – About Us

- 1.1 - Introduction
- 1.2 - Rules of the Facility

Chapter 2 - USA Swimming

- 2.1 - Introduction
- 2.2 - Purpose
- 2.3 - Organization
- 2.4 - Programs
- 2.5 - Team Registration
- 2.6 - Eligibility Requirements

Chapter 3 - Team Structure

- 3.1 - Organization & Structure
- 3.2 - Practices & Conduct

Chapter 4 – Entering a USA Swimming Meet

- 4.1 - Introduction
- 4.2 - How to find out about swim meets
- 4.3 - How to get entered in the meet you choose
- 4.4 - Relay Information & Selection
- 4.5 - Meet Cancellations
- 4.6 - Swim Meet Rules & Coach's Expectations

Chapter 5 – Payment of Fees

- 5.1 - Bimonthly Swim Team Fees
- 5.2 - USA Registration
- 5.3 - Parents Association Fees

Chapter 6 – Rec-Plex Sharks Parents Association

- 6.1 - Introduction
- 6.2 - Organization
- 6.3 - Parent Responsibilities

Chapter 7 – Hosting a Swim Meet

- 7.1 - Introduction
- 7.2 - Profits & Expenses
- 7.3 - Meet Operations

Alphabet Soup of Swim Terms

CHAPTER 1



1.1 - INTRODUCTION.

Welcome to the Rec-Plex Sharks Swim Team! The Rec-Plex Sharks are the premier USA swim team in St. Charles County. Our team has 240+ year-round swimmers. We participate in 20 local and away meets per year. We host 4 regular meets and 1 championship meets per year. Our general registration is held in August, but swimmers may join the team at any time.

1.2 - RULES OF THE FACILITY.

1. Parents and visitors must use the spectator areas for viewing practice.
2. Swimmers are expected to check in at the front desk with their team identification card prior to each practice.
3. No outside food, drink, or coolers are permitted in the Rec-Plex, per the City of St. Peters. Items purchased from the concession stand are permitted in the spectator area only. No food or drink is permitted on the pool deck. No Smoking laws are in effect and smokers are required to smoke outside the building.
4. At no time will cell phones with video recording or video recording devices be permitted to be used in the locker room areas.
5. A lifeguard must be present before entering the pool. Keep all trash picked up.
6. Do not go, or let children go, in any **UNAUTHORIZED** areas. **The following areas are off limits: Gymnasium, Ice Rink, Weight Room, Jacuzzi, Sauna, Leisure Pool.**

PLEASE REMEMBER: The Rec-Plex Sharks swim Team is a guest of the Aquatic Center. Please help us take care of the pool and the building.



CHAPTER 2 – USA Swimming

2.1 – Introduction.

USA Swimming is the major organization for competitive swimming in the United States. It is a non-profit organization made up of very dedicated volunteers that donate their time, energy, and expertise at every level from the National Board of Directors to the local swimming clubs. USA Swimming was established in 1978 with the passage of the Amateur Sports Act, which specifies that all Olympic sports would be administered independently. The National headquarters for USA Swimming is located in the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

2.2 – Purpose.

As the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming in the United States, USA Swimming is a 300,000-member service organization that promotes the culture of swimming by creating opportunities for swimmers and coaches of all backgrounds to participate and advance in the sport through clubs, events and education. Our membership is comprised of swimmers from the age group level to the Olympic Team, as well as coaches and volunteers. USA Swimming is responsible for selecting and training teams for international competition including the Olympic Games, and strives to serve the sport through its core objectives: Build the base, Promote the sport, Achieve competitive success.

2.3 – Organization.

- International - USA Swimming is organized into international, national and local level governing bodies. At the international level; USA Swimming is affiliated with the Federation Internationale de Nation Amateur (FINA) through the United States Aquatic Sports (USAS). USAS is made up of the four aquatic sports: swimming, synchronized swimming, diving, and water polo. At the national level, USA Swimming is a Group A member of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC). It has voting representation in the USOC House of Delegates.
- National – Within the United States, USA Swimming is divided into fifty-nine Local Swimming Committees (LSCs). Each LSC is responsible for administering USA Swimming activities in a defined geographic area. Each LSC has its own set of by-laws under which it operated. A House of Delegates with representation of athletes, coaches, members of the Board of Directors, and clubs is responsible for managing the business affairs of their local LSC. They meet once a year at the annual USAS Convention and determine the rules and regulations for swimming for the following year. Between annual meetings, elected USA Swimming Board

of Directors are charged with the responsibility of making decisions for the Corporations.

2.4 – Programs.

USA Swimming operates programs to develop swimmers up to and including the Olympic level. The USA Swimming Age Group Program, of which the Rec-Plex Sharks is a member, is a twelve (12) month program consisting of Fun/Novice, Invitational and Championship meets for swimmers up to the age of eighteen (18) years.

USA Swimming has two pyramids of achievement. One is through the National Age Group Time Standards. The other is attained by qualifying for participation in various championship meets. The National Age Group Time Standards is a system of progressive achievement based on meeting time standards. The levels from the slowest to the fastest are: B, BB, A, AA, AAA, AAAA, Top 10 Reportable. These time standards are subject to change every 4 years. These time standards are available on our website at www.recplexsharks.org.

The Rec-Plex Sharks Swim Team is a USA Swimming sanctioned team. A Sharks swimmer is able to participate in a unique and well-organized program, providing group competition ranging from dual/novice meets to A-B-C meets, Invitational meets, Ozark Championships, Zones (AAA times required), Sectionals, Junior Nationals, and Senior Nationals.

1. Ozark Championships is open to all USA Swimming registered swimmers in the Ozark LSC who have achieved the qualifying time. These times will be listed in the meet invitation for each meet. The LSC covers eastern Missouri and southwestern Illinois. The standard format includes preliminary events for all swimmers who qualify with the top 16 swimming in finals, top 8 for 10 & under. Individual, age group, and team awards are presented to the winners.
2. The Central Zone Championship or “Zones” is an age group meet open to any USA Swimming registered swimmer, age 14 and under, who qualifies and whose club is located in the Central Zone (Midwest). The qualifying times are equivalent to AAA times in each age group. The swimmers compete as members of their LSC Team (OZARK). Swimmers compete within their own age group in events for which they are qualified. Individual and team awards are presented.
3. Sectionals is open to any registered USA Swimming swimmer who qualifies and whose club is located in Region VIII. Any age swimmer meeting the qualifying times may compete.
4. Junior Nationals is open to any registered USA Swimming swimmer who qualifies. Any age swimmer meeting the qualifying times may compete.
5. Senior Nationals is open to any registered USA Swimming swimmer who qualifies. Any age swimmer meeting the qualifying times may compete.

2.5 – Team Registration.

To join the Rec-Plex Sharks Swim Team and to compete in USA Swimming sanctioned events, a swimmer must be a USA Swimming registered swimmer. The team registration form must be completed by the parent or guardian and approved by the team. With a check or money order for the appropriate amount, your application will be processed, and a member ID Card with your swimming registration number will be returned to the swim team. The swim team keeps all swimmers USA cards.

Swim meets are a highly motivational and rewarding experience.

2.6 – Eligibility Requirements.

- a. Members and parents/guardians must complete, sign and return the Membership form before an athlete can participate in practice.
- b. Members must meet the minimum swimming requirements as set for the by the coaching staff. The coach will determine which group or level a swimmer is in during the tryout period.
- c. Members must be registered with USA swimming by paying membership or transfer fees prior to competing in any meet scheduled throughout the year.
- d. Members must maintain a positive balance in their accounts for all training and entry feed.
 - (1) There are two separate accounts for participating swimmers. Training fees are paid to the City of St. Peters RECPLEX. Meet entry fees are paid to the REC-PLEX Parent’s Escrow account.
 - (2) Swimmers will not be allowed in the pool unless all past and present fees are paid or prior arrangements have been made with the appropriate team officials.
- e. Members must abide by all rules and regulations of the Rec-Plex Aquatic Center and USA Swimming, Inc.

CHAPTER 3 - Team Structure

3.1 – Organization and Structure.

The team is organized into six practice groups: Tiger, Mako, Hammerhead, Leopard, High School Leopard, Great White Junior Varsity, and Great White Senior Varsity. Each group has unique practice times, duration, and qualifications. These groups are outlined on our website, www.recplexsharks.org.

3.2 – Practices and Conduct.

- a. Swimmers are expected to be on deck and ready to swim at least ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled start time. Start times for practices are distributed via e-mail weekly and posted on the team website.
- b. A practice may be cancelled for inclement weather. In this case, an e-mail will be sent out to the team with notice of cancellation. You may also call the Sharks phone line at (636) 939-2386, extension 1636.
- c. Etiquette. As with any sport, proper etiquette is a **MUST**. Be sure to follow the coaches' instructions for completing an orderly practice.
- d. As a basic rule of thumb, *common sense* and *respect for the rights and feelings* of others will help create a better workout atmosphere.
- e. **PRACTICE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR SWIMMING TRAINING!** Come in with the attitude, "I am gong to make the most of each workout I attend."
 - (1) Listen to the coaching staff. Perform to the best of your ability during each practice.
 - (2) Have all necessary swimming equipment ready for practice (e.g. goggles, fins, swim cap, towel, etc.)
 - (3) Finally, **BE ON TIME FOR WATER ENTRY!**

CHAPTER 4 – Entering a USA Swimming Meet

4.1 – Introduction.

In USA Swimming, there are two competitive swimming seasons each year. The Long Course Season begins in early May and usually runs through mid-August. The Short Course Season begins in late September and runs through mid-March. USA Swimming swimmers usually compete with their own age group and gender. Standard age groups include: 8 and under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-18 and Senior or Open Division.

Look for meet information to be posted on the team website, www.recplexsharks.org and on the Sharks Team bulletin board. The bulletin board is located inside the Rec-Plex Natatorium on the wall at the beginning of the seating area. Every effort is made to keep information updated regularly.

4.2 – How to find out about swim meets.

- a. A schedule of meets will be posted on the team website. The Schedule will include information about:
 - The groups the meet is offered to.
 - Time qualifications (if any).
- b. Choose the meets you want to attend. A swimmer may swim as many or as few meets as they desire. The coaching staff recommends attending one meet per month. There will be occasions where a group or the team will attend more than one meet per month.

4.3 – How to get entered in the meets you choose.

- a. For each meet a swimmer wishes to enter, a Meet Entry Form must be completed. These forms can be found on our website.
- b. Complete the Meet Entry form with all the required information and fees.
- c. Deposit your entry form, with payment, in the bin on the coach's door.
- d. The coaching staff reserves the right to select the events your child will swim.
 1. Most swimmers, especially those new to the sport, select only those events which they feel confident. The coaching staff has established goals for each swimmer. To insure that each swimmer maximized their full potential, the coaches must have an opportunity to observe swimmers competing in all events.
 2. Each swimmer has worked hard to improve stroke technique for every event. The reward for this hard work is successfully competing in these events.
 3. The team's goal is to train well-rounded competitive swimmers. Your child should be encouraged to swim all strokes and longer distances when these events are offered.

4. The Head Coach must approve changes to the events your child is scheduled to swim. PARENTS: Please discourage your child from scratching any event. The coaching staff frowns upon swimmers scratching from events. However, in the case of an emergency or illness, it is understandable that swimmers may not be able to swim all events.

4.4 – Relay Information and Selection.

Relays are a fun and enjoyable part of a swim meet. They are usually held at the end of a session during a meet. Relays can be the most exciting part of any swim meet.

- a. There are two typed of relays: free and medley. All four swimmers in the free relay swim freestyle. In the medley relay, each swimmer swims a different stroke in the following order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and freestyle.
- b. Relay teams are selected based on a swimmer's times. Relays are considered a privilege. The coach can create several relays depending on the number of swimmers available in an age group. Relays will be announced after warm-ups and posted after the first cycle of events. Please do not leave a meet until you are sure you have not been placed on a relay team. If you leave the swim meet and you were on a relay, you will be liable for the entire cost of the relay, if the relay must be scratched from the meet.
- c. The coach chooses the order of swimmers and stroke selection for the medley relay. If you have any questions or concerns about your selection for a relay or the stroke you are asked to swim, see the coach.

NOTE: *Swimmers who transferred from another USA Swimming Swim Club cannot participate in relays for 120 days (4 months) from the effective date of your last USA Swimming competition with the previous team.*

4.5 – Meet Cancellations.

There are circumstances in which swimmers may be required to cancel their entry in a swim meet after the entry deadline. As a general rule, once the meet entry has been submitted to the host team, there is NO REFUND of meet entry fees.

It is the parent's responsibility to maintain sufficient funds in the escrow account of each swimmer.

4.6 – Swim Meet Rules and Coach's Expectations.

Swim Meets are the individual swimmer's reward for hard work in practice sessions. They are a rewarding experience.

Here are some basic guidelines that swimmers should follow at meets:

- a. Swimmers should arrive at the facility no less than fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled start of the warm-up session. Report to the team area or bullpen as designated by the host team.
- b. Follow the CHECK-IN procedure, if there is one, for meets or events that require a positive check-in. If a swimmer fails to check-in (when required), the swimmer may be scratched from competition for events or a session.
- c. Heat Sheets are usually available for sale. Should you purchase one, this booklet may include heat and lane assignments or a psych sheet for the events. Some times this information will also be posted during the meet.
- d. **All swimmers are expected to do an organized warm-up.** The host team will assign warm-up lanes, and a Rec-Plex coach will supervise the warm-up. No diving is authorized during the warm-up period. Part of the warm-up period is the sprint session. This session allows each swimmer to practice dives from the starting blocks.
- e. **All swimmers are expected to wear team caps during competition.** Coaches must be able to identify Rec-Plex Shark swimmers at a glance to be able to properly critique a swim.
- f. Following warm-ups, all swimmers should return to the team area for a Team Meeting. At this time, the coaching staff will provide last minute words of encouragement adjust relay teams and identify any changes in the meet.
- g. Once a swimmer has completed a race, the swimmer should report to a Shark Coach on deck. Do not leave the pool deck without reporting to a coach. Coaches will typically provide feedback and encouragement to the swimmer; cool down instructions, and direction on how to prepare their next event.
- h. Swimmers are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. Any act, including, but not limited to booing, foul language, and vandalism may result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include suspension from the remainder of the meet or suspension from the team for an undetermined period of time.
- i. A good faith effort must be given in all events!

CHAPTER 5 – Payment of Fees

5.1 – Bimonthly Swim Team Fees.

These are the fees associated with your child’s participation in the swim team.

- a. Fees are established by the City of St. Peters and are due no later than the 10th of each month.
- b. Checks should be made out to the “City of St. Peters”. They can be mailed to the address listed on the bill or placed in the Shark’s drop box located by the registration desk in the lobby.
- c. Your cancelled check is your receipt for all fees paid by check to the City of St. Peters. For those who pay in cash, always make payments directly at the front desk. They are equipped to provide you with a cash receipt.
- d. Extended absences from practice sessions are often unavoidable. Family vacations and illnesses can prevent swimmers from attending practice for a period of time. With proper notification, arrangements can be made to place your swimmer on an extended leave of absence. Families should address a letter to the Head Coach requesting a credit to your account for expected and emergency absences where swimmers will miss two or more weeks of practice.

5.2 – USA Registration.

- a. ANNUAL REGISTRATION FEE: This fee is payable annually for swimmers to compete in any USA sanctioned swim event. This fee is payable during the registration period each year.
- b. TRANSFER FEE: Swimmers who transfer from one USA Swim Team to another must complete a USA Swimming Transfer Form. Both the former coach and the new coach must sign the form. This form should be turned in to the Head Coach with the appropriate transfer fee.

NOTE: Transferring swimmers have competition requirements they must follow for a period of 120 days from the date of the last competition with the former club. Please check with the coaching staff for these rules.

5.3 – Parent’s Association Fees.

Listed below are some of the fees required to be paid through the Parent’s Association.

- a. ANNUAL REGISTRATION FEE. The Board of Directors determines a reasonable fee to be paid annually for all members to join the Parent’s Association. The funds collected from this fee are used to offset costs of day-to-day operations of the swim team outside the basic services provided by the Rec-Plex. The fee is established for the first swimmer. Additional swimmers within a household are charged a discounted fee.

- b. MEET ENTRY FEES. These are the fees required to enter USA Swimming meets. During the registration period, each family is encouraged to pay a fee to their swimmer's escrow account. There are 2 ways to maintain your swimmers escrow account.
- (1) Some families may elect to pay for each meet as they enter their swimmer(s). In this case, each entry form must include a check, payable to the "Rec-Plex Sharks Parent's Escrow", for the total amount of the entry fees your child will require to enter the meet.
 - (2) Some families may elect to keep funds in their escrow account to be used for later meet entries.
 - (3) Escrow accounts must be maintained with a positive balance. Parents have the responsibility to ensure their children's escrow accounts are replenished. Swimmers failing to maintain a positive balance may be declared ineligible to enter a meet in which entry fees have not been paid for in advance.
 - (4) Escrow account statements will be mailed to parents several times during the year.

CHAPTER 6 – Rec-Plex Sharks Parent’s Association

6.1 – Introduction.

The purpose of the Parent’s Association is to support, with volunteer assistance, the operation and development of the Rec-Plex Sharks Swim Team. Most sports teams require a booster club or other type of organization to help run their events. This responsibility rests with the Parent’s Association. The Parent’s Board coordinated the day-to-day activities of the swim team so that the coaching staff can concentrate on its primary mission, coaching each swimmer.

6.2 – Organization.

The Parent’s Association is the governing body of the Rec-Plex Sharks Swim Team. It consists of Board Members that carry out the business of the team. A list of current Board Members can be found on the Sharks website.

- a. The Board positions are as follows: President, Vice-President/Treasurer, Meet Director, Assistant Meet Director, Secretary, Communications, Entertainment, Apparel/Hospitality, and Fundraising.
- b. The Board’s Executive Committee consists of President, Vice-President/Treasurer, Meet Director and Secretary. The other five Board Members act as heads of the major committees responsible for operating the team.
- c. The Board of Directors is elected annually during the general membership meeting, which is usually held at our awards banquet in April each year. Board members are elected to serve a two-year term.
- d. The Head Coach is not a voting member of the Board of Directors; however, the Head Coach is invited to all Board meetings and is an integral part of Board operations.
- e. All Board members are VOLUNTEERS. They are elected by the general membership to guide the team in the direction that the parents want it to go. Voice your concerns to them, as they are your elected officials.
- f. The Team Administrator is a contracted position with the Sharks Swim Team. The Team Administrator is responsible for all day-to-day activities required to keep the Sharks functioning properly. The Team Administrator is not a member of the Board, however, the Team Administrator attends all Board Meetings to provide monthly financial reports to the Board and to alert the Board to other team operational issues that require the Board’s input. The Team Administrator should be your first point of contact for all non-swimming questions you may have about the Sharks, registering for swim meets and any other concerns.

6.3 – Parent Responsibilities.

The Sharks Swim Team is proud to host numerous meets throughout the year. Meets hosted at the Rec-Plex are among the most popular and best attended in the Ozark LSC. *Your active involvement helps make that happen!* Home meets are a major source of income for the Sharks, and thus help lower the cost of swimming for everyone. Accordingly, we require all Sharks families to make a minimum investment of time and effort to ensure their success. We require all families to sign a worker commitment form when they register each year. We expect families to do their part! These guidelines apply only to Sharks hosted swim meets.

- a. If one or more children of a family are entered in a meet, then one family member will be scheduled to work **each session that they have a swimmer(s) swimming.** If a family member does not show up on time or does not work ALL of the assigned session, the family's escrow account will be assessed \$50.00 for each missed session. **Swimmers will not be entered in any future meets until the assessment is paid.**
- b. If unavoidable circumstances occur and a family cannot work their entire scheduled sessions, then they may: Ask another family or person to substitute for them. Or explain the circumstances to the Meet Director and reach a resolution at least 2 days prior to the meet.
- c. **If your child does not compete in ANY meets during the season, your family must still fulfill a minimum work duty equivalent to one full day of one home meet during the 2009-2010 season. One full day means two sessions, served consecutively on one day of competition, or split between two days. If this obligation is not met, the family's escrow account will be assessed \$50.00 for each unfulfilled session.**

CHAPTER 7 – Hosting a Swim Meet

7.1 – Introduction.

A major source of income for USA Swimming teams is derived from hosting swim meets. The Rec-Plex Sharks is proud of the facility provided by the City of St. Peters. However, there are financial responsibilities associated with hosting a swim meet.

7.2 - Profits and Expenses.

USA Swimming swim teams conduct swim meets to earn money for the operation of their clubs and to provide swimmers with incentives for continuing this disciplined sport. Sources of income include meet entry fees, heat sheet and t-shirt sales, and percentage of vendor sales. Unlike most USA Swimming teams, the Sharks have financial responsibilities other teams do not incur.

- a. Pool rental. The Sharks must rent the natatorium for swim meets. Depending on the meet, the north and south pools must be rented separately. The team is charged for the fair market value as determined by the City of St. Peters and the Rec-Plex Aquatic Director. This fee is the same fee charges to all outside swim teams using the facility.
- b. Meet Entry Fees. The Ozark LSC has authorized the Rec-Plex Sharks to charge entry fees to offset some of these costs. Currently, the team is not charging an entry fee and does not anticipate charging entry fees for any of its regularly scheduled meets.

7.3 – Meet Operations.

Hosting a swim meet requires the support of every family. It takes numerous volunteers and an enormous effort required to host a successful swim meet. As outlined in the meet service requirement, a family member will be expected to work each session they have a swimmer swimming.

- a. The Meet Director will assign a worker position to each family that has a swimmer participating in each session of a meet. These positions include timer, security, heat sheet/t-shirt sales, awards, runner, bullpen and announcer. A list of worker assignments will be e-mailed to every family and will be available on the website.
- b. Families will be assigned a hospitality donation to donate to the meet's hospitality room. These donations are used throughout the meet for coaches, officials and those volunteers who must work the entire day. We rely on every donation to keep the cost of running our meets down and menus are planned accounting for every donation. Please bring your donation to the hospitality room during the first session your swimmer is participating in.
- c. Board members are expected to be available to work the majority of each meet.

ALPHABET SOUP OF SWIMMING

Glossary of commonly used swim terms

AGE GROUP CHAMPS – This is a USA Swimming event which determines the individual, age group, and team championships of Ozark LSC. A swimmer must meet the qualifying time for each event in order to participate. A swimmer is limited to enter seven (7) events during the meet and no more than one (1) relay each day.

AGE GROUP QUALIFICATION – Your age group is determined by your age on the first day of the meet in which you are participating.

BACKSTROKE (BACK) – This stroke consists of a flutter kick with bent arm pulls while the swimmer remains on their back. A legal touch is made when any part of the body touches the end wall.

BLOCKS – The raised starting point for all swim races. Swimmers have the option of starting from the block or the pool deck.

BREASTSTROKE (BREAST) – This stroke consists of an arm pull, kick, and glide. A two-handed simultaneous touch is required at all the turns and the finish. Shoulders must remain level during the performance of the stroke and turns.

BULLPEN – The waiting area where swimmers are organized into heats immediately prior to an event. When required, swimmers must report to the bullpen. From that point, they will be escorted to the pool deck for their race.

BUTTERFLY (FLY) – This stroke consists of a simultaneous and symmetrical double arm pull with a dolphin (feet together) kick. The touch at turns and finish is made two-handed simultaneously as in the breaststroke.

CIRCLE SEEDING – Used only in the prelims of Championship meets with events that have “prelims and finals”. This affects only the top 24 seeded swimmers (8 lane pool) which compete in the last 3 heats. All other heats are regular seeding. Circle seeding goes like this: The fastest seeded swimmer will be in the last heat in lane 4. The second fastest swimmer will be in the second to last heat lane 4. The third fastest swimmer will be in the third to last heat lane 4. The fourth fastest swimmer will be in the last heat lane 5 and so on.

CONSOLATION HEAT – During championship meets, the 8th through 16th place finishers in preliminary events compete for points and final results.

CUT-OFF TIME – A time standard that a swimmer must attain in order to be allowed to swim a particular event in a meet.

DECK ENTRY – The practice of entering an event at a swim meet without a prior application. The cost is usually double that of the initial event cost and is not permitted at most meets.

DECK – The area around the pool. During a meet, this area is reserved for swimmers, meet officials and workers (timers, etc)

DQ – This is an abbreviation for “Disqualification”. This means that the swimmer used an illegal kick, arm pull, turn, start or finish, which is not approved by USA Swimming regulations. The swimmer or coach should receive a form with the reason for the disqualification from the stroke judge immediately after the swim.

FALSE START – A false start occurs when a swimmer moves after the starter calls for swimmers to “Take your mark”, and before the starting signal is given. It is signaled by multiple whistle or gun blasts or other distraction, which stops competing swimmers from completing the event.

FINALS – During a PRELIM/FINAL swim meet, the top eight (8) swimmers from the preliminary heats of each event compete for the first eight places and team points posted in final results. The top eight (8) swimmers will swim this event twice during the meet, normally on the same day.

FLIP TURN – The fastest method to make a lane reversal; used in the Freestyle and Backstroke events.

FREESTYLE (FREE) – The arms and legs are used alternately to pull the swimmer through the water. Technically, any combination of leg and arm movements can be used to get the swimmer to the end. Swimmers are normally only disqualified for missing the wall on a turn or not completing the event.

HEAD TIMER – The Timer assigned to start two watches at the start of every race. They are to give their watch to any timer who missed the start of a race.

HEAT – A group of swimmers in one event that puts swimmers in certain lanes of the pool.

HEAT SHEET – This is a complete listing of the order of events, the names and teams of all entered swimmers, and the complete listing of seed times for each event.

HOSPITALITY AREA – An area designated for meet coaches and officials to take a break from their duties. In this area, the host club provides limited refreshments and/or food and seating for meet officials, coaches and worker who run the meet.

INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY (IM) – An event in a swim meet in which the swimmers swims an equal number of lengths of each stroke in the following order: FLY, BACK, BREAST, and FREE.

LONG COURSE – A swim meet held in a 50-meter pool (as opposed to short course yards) where the minimum swimming distance is 50 meters.

LSC – Local Swim Chapter. The Sharks’ LSC is OZARK SWIMMING. The United States is divided into 59 of these governing bodies.

NO RE-CALL FALSE START RULE – In meets where this rule is in place, swimmers are disqualified if they false start.

NON-AWARD WINNER – Those swimmers having met or exceeded the time standard for the next division (BB to B, B to A) sometimes do not qualify for place awards in the division entered. These swimmers are generally listed on the results as non-award winner.

NO TIME or NT – A swimmer that has not established time for an event. All swimmers with NT times are seeded with the slowest swimmers entered in the meet, usually in the first heats. Once legally completing the event, the swimmer has established a seedtime for future meets and will not be entered as a NT swimmer.

OVERACHIEVER – A separate award category established by USA Swimming to recognize swimmers having achieved established time standards. When a swimmer swims a faster time than the cutoff time for the A, B, BB category, the swimmer may be recognized with a certificate for his/her achievement. Swimmers receiving an “Overachiever Certificate” do not normally receive PLACE (1st, 2nd, etc) awards in the lower division.

OZARK SWIMMING – The teams that make up Ozark Swimming are Bridgeton Swim Club (BSC), Caruthersville Tigersharks (CVTS), Centralia Recreation Complex (CRCY), Clayton Shaw Park (CSP), Edwardsville YMCA (EDWY), Flyers Aquatic Swim Team (FAST), Gator Swim Team (GATR), Hannibal Hurricanes Swim Team (HHST), Heat Swimming (HEAT), Love Swimming (LOVE), Matthews-Dickey Swim Club (MDSC), Parkway Swim Club (PKWY), Poplar Bluff Polar Bears (PBPB), Rec-Plex Sharks Swim Team (RPLX), Rend Lake Aquatics YMCA (RLAY), Rockwood Swim Club (RSCA), Rolla Fins Swim Club (RFSC), Saint Louis Tsunami Swimming, Saluki Swim Club (SALU), South East Aquatic League (SEAL), St. Charles YMCA Stingrays (SCCY), TCAY Tidalwaves, Team Genesis (LOVE), University City Swim Club (UCSC), YMCA of Southern Illinois (YOSI) .

PRELIMINARIES – A series of heats conducted to determine finalists for the consolation and final heats of a championship meet.

PSYCH SHEET – A listing of swimmers, ordered with their times, and listed fastest to slowest in an event.

PYRAMID SEEDING – A practice of ranking all swimmers and seeding each swimmer so that the fastest swimmer is in the center of the pool and the slowest in the outer lanes. This procedure is normally used in championship meets so the finalists do not compete against each other in the preliminary heats of the meet.

QUALIFYING TIME – The time a swimmer must attain to swim in a meet requiring qualifying times, normally championship meets. Swimmers not meeting the qualifying time at these meets will be required to prove they attained the qualifying time during the current season. Swimmers are subject to monetary fines and disqualifications from the remaining events unless proven.

REFEREE – The senior official of each meet. He/She is responsible for making decisions on the conduct of the meet and reconciling conflicts in judgment calls of the other meet officials.

RELIEF TIMER – The timer(s) responsible for giving any timer a short break.

RUNNER – The person responsible for posting final results during the operation of a meet.

SCRATCH – A swimmer's desire to not swim a particular event he/she entered. A swimmer must officially scratch from the event or be subject to the penalty listed in the meet invitation.

SCRATCH-OFF – A check-in procedure used by many swim clubs to determine which swimmers are present for the meet and verification they intend to swim the events they have entered. Failure to check in or scratch off could disqualify the swimmer from the rest of the meet.

SEED TIME – The best time a swimmer attains for a particular event. This time is used to rank swimmers in each event so they swim with other swimmers of similar ability.

SHORT COURSE – A meet held in a 25 yard or 25 meter pool. These meets are normally held indoors during the months of September through April.

STROKE JUDGE – Officials positioned around the pool to determine if swimmers are swimming the strokes legally. When a swimmer violated USA Swimming rules in stroke technique, the Stroke Judge informs the swimmer of the reason for disqualification. Often, a stroke judge will signal a violation by raising his/her arm in the air at the lane the disqualification occurred.

TIMED FINALS – A type of swim meet where the final finishing order of each event is determined by the time each swimmer attains.

TIMER – The workers at the finish end of the pool that are responsible for recording the times for the swimmer in their lane on the event sheet. There are normally two timers assigned to each lane to record back-up times.

TURN JUDGE – The meet officials responsible for determining if each swimmer's turn and finishes are legal. Stroke judges also perform these duties.

ZONE – The Rec-Plex Sharks are part of the Central Zone. The United States is divided into four Zones. The LSCs that make up the Central Zone are Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Lake Erie, Michigan, Midwestern, Missouri Valley, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Ozark, South Dakota, and Wisconsin