

Rhonewood Sharks Handbook

Managers: Ashley Palmer and Angie Rose

managers@rhonewoodsharks.com

Coaches: Teresa Paden

coaches@rhonewoodsharks.com

General Information

General questions about the team can be addressed to managers@rhonewoodsharks.com this account is checked daily and we will respond as soon as possible.

Most information is communicated via email. If you are not getting regular email updates - they usually come out on Wednesdays or Thursdays throughout the swim season - please check your spam settings and make sure they are not being blocked. If that is not the case, please login to your account and double check that the email address is correct. Lastly, email managers@rhonewoodsharks.com and let us know you are not receiving the email communications.

If you need to get in touch with the coaches, please contact them at coaches@rhonewoodsharks.com. This is the best way to communicate with them and the email is checked regularly. **Please refrain from talking to the coaches during practice - their focus needs to be on the swimmers at that time and we greatly appreciate everyone's cooperation!**

Practice Etiquette

It is our intention to provide each and every member of the swim team with the opportunity to develop and grow as a swimmer. Our Coaches are committed to giving our best at practices and helping everyone improve throughout the course of the season. We are committed to being a family-friendly, fun environment and hope that your participation with the Rhonewood Sharks creates a lifetime of good memories! Here are things we ask of our swimmers and families to assist us in achieving these goals:

SWIMMERS:

- Attend as many practices as possible.
- Be on time to practice - being on time means you are ready to get into the water at the start of practice; sunscreen on, cap on, goggles ready. Long hair should be tied back and up in a cap.
- Give the coaches your full attention.
- Do not distract other swimmers from giving their full attention to the coaches.
- Give your best and try your hardest - you will see results - remember, you race like you practice.
- There is no rough-housing or horseplay during practice (unless the coaches have set up some silly game).

FAMILIES:

- Please refrain from coaching your child. If you have a suggestion or question about what they are doing in practice, please communicate this with the coaches via email; coaches@rhonewoodsharks.com.
- If you have other children with you they must be supervised at all times. It is a good idea to bring things for them to do. There is never any running on the pool deck allowed. We also ask that they do not play with the pool furniture (setting up forts/obstacles), play in the bathrooms or over in the bathroom area, or climb trees.
- No one may be in the wading pool during practice time.
- Make sure children are also not talking to swimmers in the water or distracting the swimmers or coaches from their workout.
- Children will not be allowed to remain at the pool unsupervised for more than 10 minutes before or after practice.
- ANY touching or climbing on the handicap accessible chair will result in immediate expulsion from the team.

Swimmers or Family Members impeding the productivity of practice will be approached by a coach or manager to resolve the issue.

Team Buddies

All Sharks have the opportunity to have a Big or Little Buddy. This is designed for our older and younger swimmers to get to know one another, learn from each other and to engender team spirit. The only real requirement is that you make the effort to support your buddy at swim meets - find out what your buddy is swimming and cheer them on! Sometimes buddies make small gifts for one another or bring special snacks to a meet for them, but this is certainly not an expectation or requirement. ***If you know you are not going to swim at many dual meets or you do not want to participate, please do not sign up for a buddy.***

Time Trials

Time trials are basically a mock meet where our swimmers swim against each other and get their first times of the season. This is a good way for new swimmers to get some experience hearing the starter and racing the different strokes that they have been practicing in practice. For all swimmers it is a good opportunity to get their first times of the season which will serve as a starting point for their progress throughout the season as they try to beat their personal best times.

Signing Up for Swim Meets

Sign ups are done online through our website and can be done anytime but **MUST** be done by Tuesday at noon before a Saturday meet and Sunday at noon before a Wednesday meet. Every swimmer needs to indicate **YES or NO** whether or not they will be swimming in the upcoming meet. The lists are exported for the coaches at 1pm on the due date, any sign ups after this time will not be accepted. **It is your responsibility to sign up for each meet.** You can commit your swimmer for meets as soon as your Team Unify account is active on the website. We suggest that you commit to all meets that you plan to attend as soon as possible, just remember to change your commitment if your child is ill or you cannot make it. If you forget altogether, you may or may not be able to swim in the meet - it is up to the coaches, managers and the other team.

Friday Night Meetings/Social Events

Every Friday night prior to a swim meet we will hold a Parent/Athlete meeting and social event. This has been a tradition with the Sharks since the inception of the team and serves to communicate information about the upcoming meet, build team cohesiveness and spirit, and help all our families get know one another and have fun!

Most of the Friday meetings start at 7:00 pm and last about an hour (we do want our swimmers to get a good night's sleep!). There are a few exceptions to this (like the carbo-load potluck event and the talent show). Start times for all Friday Night Meetings are indicated in the Calendar section of the site.

Things that are typically covered at Friday Night Meetings are:

- any announcements specific to the next day's meet, i.e. parking, dress code
- time to arrive and warm up times by age group
- volunteers are confirmed for the meet and any spots that must be filled are handled
- swimmers learn the cheer for the next morning and meet briefly with the coaches
- fun is had!!

Dual Meets

Please call either Angie or Ashley **immediately** if your swimmer is not going to be able to make it to the meet.

At Dual Meets we will be competing against another team in the Valley Swim League (specific info is in the Calendar section of the site). For those new to the swimming world, we like to describe swim meets as well-orchestrated chaos - because this can feel a little overwhelming to the uninitiated, here are some tips to help everyone be prepared. Once you get the hang of it (and it won't take long!), it is great fun!

- Swim Meets generally run from 8:00 until 2:00 in the afternoon - we have had a few go later - but that's the typical time frame.
- Be on time - Absolutely nothing is more stressful for our swimmers than if you are running in at the last minute. Most of the pools where we swim allow our families to come in to set up at 7:00 am. Warm-ups start for the 15-18 age group shortly thereafter. One final word on being on time - if you are an Age Group Coordinator, we ask that you absolutely arrive at 7:00 - all swimmers are looking to check in and it will make your job easier if you are there early.
- Bring some sort of shade structure and chairs. If you own a pop-up or EZ-up it is a great idea to bring it, or arrange to sit with a family you know who has one and is willing to share space with you. We will undoubtedly be swimming in some 100+ degree weather and even if it doesn't get that hot, it will be in full sun for most of the morning and into the afternoon. Shade is your friend.
- But prepare to be chilly too. It can be quite chilly in the mornings - plan on layering, bringing blankets both to bundle up in and to lay on the ground which can be damp first thing in the morning.
- Bring lots of sunscreen and reapply throughout the day.
- Be ready for your events - check in with your Age Group Coordinator (AGC) first thing upon arrival and let them know where you are sitting, find out where they are sitting at the meet, and where they have asked you to meet to line up for your swims. AGCs will not come find you during the meet, it is the parent's responsibility to make sure their child is at the meeting point at the prescribed time.
- Try to rest in between events and stay out of the sun. Bring quiet activities to occupy yourself in between swims. Portable board games, cards, etc. are great ways to pass the time.
- Stay hydrated and eat healthy snacks. Bring lots of water and stay hydrated - it can be easy for swimmers to forget about drinking water. At all our meets there are reasonably-priced snack bars. Most offer things like nachos, burgers, various meal-sized salads, cup of noodles, fruit, bagels, donuts, some candies. They also have water, coffee, hot chocolate and sodas. A family of four can usually get by on about \$30.00 if they eat exclusively from the snack bar. Most families bring food and supplement with the snack bar.
- Be a good sport. One of the things the Sharks pride themselves on is our sportsmanship. We ask that our swimmers stay in the water until the last swimmer from their heat comes in and shake hands with the swimmers next to you at the end. Always encourage each other to swim your best whether they are on our team or not. Absolutely no trash talking or negative comments to other teams or your teammates will be tolerated. The Valley Swim League Code of Behavior is in effect.

Ribbons from Dual Meets

Typically on the Wednesday following a dual meet a Sharks Ribbon Box will be available at the Gate Checker Stand at the Rhonewood Pool. Ribbons are placed in envelopes in alphabetical order by last name (one per family) and are left out during practice for you to pick up. Every swimmer will receive a ribbon for the place they received for each event they swim. A label with meet info, event, heat, place and time will be on the ribbon. The only exception is if a swimmer is DQ'd for a rule infraction. If you do not find a ribbon for an event you swam, talk to your coaches. If the information on the ribbon is incorrect, please contact the managers.

Volunteer Jobs

Running a successful summer recreational swim program requires a small army of dedicated volunteers! With the exception of our coaching staff, everyone is a volunteer here, and you will find that the Sharks have the best parents around. There are many different types of volunteer opportunities - if you are new to the team, we suggest signing up for different types of jobs so you can find out what you enjoy the most - we want everyone to have a good time and feel good about their contribution to the team!

Each family is required to sign up for jobs equaling 3 points per swimmer. Only one job per family can be at a Friday Night Meeting/Social Event - all other jobs MUST be at a meet. All families must meet or exceed their point requirement in order to be eligible to swim next season.

Order of Events at all Valley Swim League Meets

Each event is numbered 1-80 - girls events are odd numbered, mixed (boys) are even. All events start with 6&U girls, alternate girls/mixed, and go up through the age groups, finishing with the 15-18 mixed. Girls are allowed to swim in the mixed events and this does happen if needed to fill out a relay team.

Medley Relay (back, breast, fly, free) - 100 yards for 6 & U, 7-8s and 9-10s; 200 yards for 11-12s, 13-14s, and 15-18s.

Freestyle - 25 yards for 6 & U and 7-8s; 50 yards for 9-10s and up

Butterfly - 25 yards for 6 & U, 7-8s and 9-10s; 50 yards for 11-12s and up

Breaststroke - 25 yards for 6 & U, 7-8s and 9-10s; 50 yards for 11-12s and up

Individual Medley (fly, back, breast, free) - 100 yards for 9-10s, 11-12s, 13-14s and 15-18s.

Backstroke - 25 yards for 6 & U, 7-8s and 9-10s; 50 yards for 11-12s and up

Freestyle Relay - 100 yards for 6 & U and 7-8s; 200 yards for 9-10s, 11-12s, 13-14s, and 15-18s

Championship Team

The Championship Team is chosen by the coaches. To be eligible, members must swim in at least two meets, have good practice attendance, and be one of the fastest swimmers in an event. Only those selected (and alternates) will practice the week before the meet - a minimum of three practices during this week must be attended. ALL TEAM MEMBERS are invited and encouraged to come to the Friday night meeting before Champs to paint your nails blue and show support for their teammates. Be sure to come to the Championship Meet on Saturday and cheer for your team!

End of Season Party

In the evening, after the Championship meet we will have our End of Season Party and Awards Ceremony. Everyone is invited and encouraged to come celebrate another wonderful year of swimming with the Sharks! A dinner (usually pizza, salad, dessert and drinks) is provided and there is no additional charge for this. We do ask for people to sign up and let us know how many in their family will be attending so we can have enough for everyone - an email will go out towards the end of the season and announcements about this will happen at Friday Night Meetings. After dinner, participation and special awards - including a favorite Sharks tradition, the paper plate awards - will be given out. Details on these awards are below. We usually end the night with a screening of a video highlighting the season.

Participation and Special Awards

All swimmers who swim in a minimum of two dual meets will receive a Participation Trophy. The Special Awards are described in detail below and all recipients are selected by the coaches.

Coaches' Award - In each age group, one boy and one girl are selected to receive the Coaches' Award. The Coaches' Award is given to those swimmers who have demonstrated an exceptional work ethic throughout the season. These are swimmers who are a joy to coach, who consistently listen, who truly give their best effort at every practice, and who are role models to the other swimmers in their age group.

Special Achievement - In each age group, one boy and one girl are selected to receive the Special Achievement Award. One of the most rewarding things about swimming is the opportunity it provides for swimmer's to set very specific goals and achieve them. This award is given to a swimmer who has clearly set a challenging goal for themselves, communicated that goal to the coaches, and worked hard all season toward achieving that goal. Whether it is breaking a team or league record or just being able to consistently swim an event at a personal goal time - this award serves to recognize those individuals who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to their personal goals.

Most Valuable Swimmer - In each age group, one boy and one girl are selected to receive the Most Valuable Swimmer Award. In addition to demonstrating all the qualities that make up a great Shark - work ethic, coachability, good sportsmanship, team role model - the Most Valuable Swimmer recipients consistently have some of the top times in multiple events.

Matt Klotzbach Award - The recipient of the Matt Klotzbach Award is truly the Shark of the Year. This is a perpetual award given in honor of Matt Klotzbach, a young Shark, who was killed in a drunk-driving accident. Like Matt, this is a swimmer who embodies in every way what we consider to be a top Shark and who could easily be considered for all of the special awards given by the coaches.

Paper Plate Awards - These are certainly one of the highlights of our end of season celebration. The paper plate awards are those especially funny moments we want to recall to commemorate the season - those things that only happen when you put a bunch of sleep-deprived teenagers in a pool at six in the morning or when someone says or does something ridiculously absurd.