



McFarland Spartan Sharks 2021–22 Fall/Winter Session

Important Information & Frequently Asked Questions

(Updated 8.9.21)

MSS is pleased to offer a safe, high-quality Fall/Winter swim session at the Angie O’Donnell Aquatic Center (AOAC) at McFarland High School. We are incredibly grateful for the ongoing support from our MSS families and our partnership with the AOAC and the McFarland School District.

*The McFarland Spartan Sharks’ Coaches and Board of Directors look forward to a return of the MSS Home Swim Meet this November, along with participation in other local and regional swim meets. We also recognize that MSS families may have questions regarding our club practices this coming Fall and Winter as we reinstate swim meets and frame out a full season of practices and activities. This document is designed to provide transparency to our MSS business operations as well as programming. **We apologize for the length, but we strongly encourage families read this document in its entirety prior to registering your swimmer.***

Registration, Swim Evaluations, Payment Processes and Fees

Q: When does online registration open and how are *current and returning swim families* defined?

A: Online registration will open for *current and returning MSS families* on **Sunday, August 15, 2021 at 7 a.m.** and will close on **Tuesday, August 17, 2021 at 9 p.m.** Current and returning families are defined as those families who had swimmer who swam with **MSS between September 2020 and July 2021.** Current and returning families may also register new swimmers in this first wave of registration as long as your **new swimmer has had a swim evaluation or specific group placement recommendation from Coach Neil Weiss.** (See information regarding Swim Evaluations below.)

If spots remain in swim groups, MSS will reopen the registration portal for families new to MSS on Thursday, August 19, 2021 at 7 a.m. and will close registration on Saturday August 21 at 9 p.m. (See information regarding Swim Evaluations below.)

Q: How do swim evaluations work and who should participate in a swim evaluation with MSS?

A: MSS recommends swim evaluations for swimmers who are new to the swim team experience and for swimmers who have not swam with a swim team for a period of time. MSS conducts swim evaluations to make certain that all swimmers have a good experience in the pool and are ready for the swim team experience. ***All swimmers who are new MSS (including swimmers considering transferring from other swim teams and siblings of current MSS swimmers) should consult with Coach Neil Weiss about the need for a swim evaluation.*** Evaluations are free, fun, take about 15 minutes to complete and are held at the Angie O’Donnell Aquatic Center at the McFarland High School. **Coach Neil will be available for swim evaluations on the following dates: August 3, 4 and 5 from 12-2 p.m. and August 7 from 8-10 a.m. Please email Coach Neil at neilweiss@spartansharks.com to sign up for a swim evaluation.**

Q: Is MSS anticipating room for new families this session? How do MSS waitlists work?

A: Not all the MSS Fall/Winter Swim group sizes are at pre-pandemic levels, but they are greatly expanded from our 2020-21 Fall/Winter Season. At this time, we are unable to say what our capacity will be for new swimmers in every swim group, but we strongly encourage families who are interested in swimming with MSS this session to contact Coach Neil Weiss at neilweiss@spartansharks.com to discuss potential swim placement and set up a swim evaluation if needed. If swim groups are full, families have the option of registering to a waitlist at no charge.

Q: What is included with the MSS Registration? Do swimmers need to bring their own equipment?

A: Registration includes a MSS swim cap and new this session a MSS T-shirt! (Please note your swimmer's shirt size in the online registration process.) *All swimmers will need to have goggles, a mask and ziploc bag for their mask at each practice.* Swimmers can purchase a team suit from our online store by the start of the session. Senior 13/14 and Senior 1 swimmers should talk with their coach about purchasing other equipment to bring to practice.

Q: I understand that MSS Board members are able to sign up their swimmers ahead of the scheduled registration time. Is this true, and if so, can you please explain the rationale behind this practice?

A: Yes, MSS Board members are able to register their swimmers ahead of the opening of registration. MSS bylaws require that Board members are a family member of a current MSS swimmer in order to be on the Board. The early registration ensures that Board members meet this bylaw requirement. It is also the means by which our club tests our registration system as we do not have a test site available for this purpose. MSS will not allow anyone outside the Board to register prior to the scheduled opening of registration.

Q: I see that registration is online and payment is requested via credit card. How will credit card billing work? Is there any way I can pay by check instead?

A: MSS is not able process personal checks or receive cash at this time. Our registration system, TeamUnify, allows for credit card payment, and the system will ask for permission to bill your credit card, not just for this payment but for upcoming fees as well. Session fees and monthly payments are detailed on the payment information listed under the Registration tab on the website. The USA Swimming fee and the family fundraising fee will also be collected during the online registration. A portion of the fundraising fee may be recouped by participating in MSS fundraising events. Any meet splash fees (fees for meet participation) for participating swimmers will also be charged to the credit card on file. Please note: Any outstanding splash fees from end of the 2021 Summer session will be collected as part of the Fall/Winter Registration.

Q: How do refunds work?

A: MSS will grant a refund for the month's payment if a swimmer is injured, or has another health-related reason that prevents them from completing the session. We are unable to refund USA Swimming fees or the Family Fundraising fee.

Swim Groups

Q: I see that Travelers and Extreme are offering 3-day per week practice options, but the November 1 start option does not seem to apply to 3-day practice groups. Is this true?

- A: We apologize, but MSS is not able to offer 3-Day Travelers or Extreme options with November start swimmers. It is simply too challenging to manage the groups safely and ensure that swimmers starting in November learn and master the needed skills during the remaining session time.
- Q: Are there specific practice days for the Travelers and Extreme 3-Day groups?**
- A: Travelers and Extreme 3-Day registrants may select the 3 days of the week they wish to attend practice.
- Q: Is there a November start option for Minis?**
- A: MSS is not offering a November start for the Minis group. With only two practices per week, this group needs the time to build foundational skills and become oriented to the swim team experience (and have lots of fun 😊).
- Q: How do I know if my swimmer is supposed to move up to the next swim group during the 2021 – 2022 Fall/Winter Session?**
- A: Please check in with your swimmer’s coach if you have any questions about swim group placement for your swimmer. Coaches will do their best to communicate with both swimmers and parents about any recommended swim group changes prior to registration.
- Q: What is the difference between the HS Boys and HS Girls groups and the Senior 1 group?**
- A: The HS Boys, HS Girls and Senior 1 groups practice together and do all the same workouts. The only difference between the groups is that the HS Boys and the HS Girls take a break from the MSS Fall/Winter Session to practice and compete on their HS teams.
- Q: How can I find out who is coaching each swim group this Fall/Winter Session?**
- A: MSS is in the process of updating our coach and assistant coaching information on our website for the Fall/Winter Session. In the meantime, any questions about swim group coaches can be directed to Head Coach Nick Weiss at nickweiss@gmail.com or Head Age Group Coach Neil Weiss at neilweiss@spartansharks.com.

Practices

- Q: Will MSS swimmers be able to use the locker rooms to change or will they be using the changing stalls?**
- A: At this time the AOAC is allowing up to 8 swimmers in the locker rooms at a time for a maximum of 8 minutes. The changing stalls are available to MSS swimmers as well. MSS and the AOAC are requesting that locker room usage be minimized as much as possible. Swimmers who are able to arrive “swim ready” and depart the pool without using the locker room will be encouraged to do so.
- Q: Can swimmers hang out at the High School before and/or after swim practice?**
- A: At this time the AOAC is asking that swimmer arrive and depart **no more than 10 minutes before or 10 minutes after practice**. For everyone’s safety we ask that families adhere strictly to this guideline.
- Q: Will parents be able to watch practice?**
- A: At this time MSS is unable to allow spectators on deck during practices. Our coaches will reach out to families if and when spectators can attend practices.

Q: Is MSS able to offer bus transportation from McFarland Conrad Elvehjem and Waubesa Intermediate School this Fall/Winter Session?

A: Yes! MSS is pleased to offer bus transportation for our Minis, Kickers and Travelers swimmers from McFarland's elementary campuses. Please see the bus information sheet under the Registration tab for more information. One important note: bus sign up will take place **AFTER the online registration** via families MSS accounts. We apologize but there is not a way to include the bus sign up as part of the online registration.

Competition

Q: Does MSS anticipate any competitive swimming or intersquad meets this fall and winter? What swim meet commitment is required for MSS swimmers?

A: Meets are strongly encouraged but not required for MSS swimmers. MSS is finalizing the Fall/Winter Meet schedule, and it will be posted on the website in the next few weeks. **Mark your calendar! MSS will be hosting our home swim meet Nov 19-21!** All MSS families are asked to assist with our home meet (more info below). MSS is also planning to hold a **Mini Meet** for our younger swimmers later in the season.

Family Service Hour Obligation

Q: What is MSS's Family Service Hour Obligation?

A: MSS is a not-for-profit swim club that relies on volunteers in order to execute our mission and offer a high-quality swim program for all of our swimmers. Although we need and appreciate volunteers in a variety of roles, we require a volunteer commitment for our home swim meets as follows:

- Each MSS family is required to work 8 hours during the meet. Job shifts may be either 2- or 4-hours in length. You can combine shifts, if available, to meet the total 8-hour obligation.
- Each 4-hour shift worked in a premium job role will be counted as 8 hours (and you are automatically entered for a raffle prize). **Premium job roles are: Timer, Head Timer, Colorado Operator, and Hytek Operator. (Training required for Colorado Operator.)**
Fun Fact: In appreciation for **each** shift worked beyond the family 8-hour requirement, you will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win raffle prizes!

Families that absolutely cannot assist with a volunteer shift during the meet can request to volunteer for another task to assist in preparing for the meet. Please reach out to our Jason Kraemer, MSS's Volunteer Coordinator, at Jason.kraemer2021@gmail.com as soon as possible if you know your family will have challenges meeting the volunteer shift commitment at the MSS Home Meet.

Q: Is there a penalty for not meeting the family service hour commitment per family at the home swim meet? Can my family make a donation to MSS in lieu of volunteering?

A: MSS greatly appreciates any and all donations to our club, but we are unable to take donations in lieu of a volunteer/family service hour commitment as we need people to attend to necessary meet tasks in order to ensure a safe and fun experience for all participating swimmers. Your service hour obligation can, however, be fulfilled by another swim family, family member such as grandparent, or friend. Please communicate to the Volunteer Coordinator if you have others filling your job shifts on

your behalf. If your 8 hours per family requirement is not fulfilled, your family will not be considered in good standing with the club. This means that during the next MSS registration, your family will NOT be able to participate in priority registration as a current or returning MSS family. Your registration will be accepted along with new families if spots are available within the swim group.

MSS is looking into the possibility of creating additional volunteer opportunities outside our home meets, but we have not solidified those plans at this time.

Safe Swim and the Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy *(Updated Item: 7.31.21)*

- Q: What is “Safe Swim”? Will there be any other requirements of my swimmer or family throughout the swim season that have not been addressed elsewhere in this document?**
- A:** Yes. MSS is a *Safe Sport Designated Club* and as such there is **Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP)** training that will be mandatory for **all parents of athletes**, as well as all **Minor Athletes ages 12-17**. Please keep an eye out for an email coming soon, from our Safe Sport Coordinator, with details about how to complete this mandatory and brief 30–40-minute training, **before Thursday, 9/30/2021**.

Meeting the Coaches and Other MSS Activities

- Q: Will there be any opportunity to meet the coaches before the first practice?**
- A:** MSS is hoping to host a brief welcome to swim and pool session just prior to the start of the Fall/Winter Session. Watch your email, the MSS Facebook page, and our website for more information!
- Q: Does MSS offer any other team building or social opportunities for swimmers or parents besides swim meet participation?**
- A:** Yes, prior to the pandemic MSS swimmers gathered for pizza and watched the McFarland HS swim teams, held an annual Halloween party and hosted a fun laser tag fundraiser for our member families. At this time, the board welcomes thoughts and feedback from our membership about safe activities that they would enjoy. **Fun fact: MSS will be celebrating our 40th anniversary in 2022!** Our Club is working to find all sorts of creative ways to safely celebrate this great milestone. Stay tuned!