

Stuart Heights Sharks Team Handbook

Welcome to the Stuart Heights Swim Team! We are so glad that you are joining us for a summer of swimming, competition and F-U-N! Becoming a part of a swim team can be both exciting and a little overwhelming, and we are sure that you will probably have some questions. This handbook serves as a general reference for you and your family.

Competitive swimming is a fascinating and rewarding sport. Learning to swim competitively takes time, and swimming well requires endurance. As a result, the summer swim team experience does require a significant time commitment from athletes and their parents/guardians. But we are sure you will find the rewards your swimmer reaps well worth the effort, and you will be shocked by the improvements made in such a short time.

The season begins the Tuesday following Memorial Day and concludes with our seasoning ending banquet following City Meet. Swim practice is held in the mornings Monday through Friday and in the evenings on Tuesday and Wednesday. Your athlete does NOT need to attend all practices offered! Of course, the more practices attended, the quicker improvement occurs. Meets are held most Monday and Thursday evenings. **Please see the calendar on the website for the complete schedule.**

Each practice, your swimmer will learn and practice proper stroke mechanics to help build endurance through different conditioning exercises. During dual meets, we will compete against other teams from the Chattanooga Area Swim League (CASL). We will travel to their pool for half of the meets, and the other half will be hosted at our home pool located at 3218 Social Circle. In addition to the eight regular season dual meets, our team is host to Emily's Power for a Cure Pink Meet. We conclude the season with the CASL City Meet, where all teams and divisions of the Chattanooga Area Swim League compete for both individual and team awards.

Our experienced swim coaches strive to create a challenging yet nurturing team environment, where ALL athletes have the chance to grow, learn and work toward their full potential as swimmers, while having fun and enjoying their summer!

Throughout the season, if you have any questions, concerns or would like to get more involved, please feel free to contact any Stuart Heights Swim Team Board Member, in person or by email at sthswimteam@gmail.com. The coaches are always willing to answer questions, as well, during designated times after practice.

We look forward to seeing you on the pool deck for a great season! GO SHARKS!

#sharks4life

Stuart Heights Sharks Team Handbook

WHO CAN JOIN

The swim team is for children and teens through high school age. Seniors graduating from high school in this Spring must be no older than 19 on June 1 to qualify for competition.

All team members are required to be able to swim at least one width of the pool (25 yards) without stopping or touching bottom and be comfortable doing it. They should also be comfortable swimming in water over their heads. Swim team instruction is geared toward helping children who know how to swim refine their strokes and become stronger. Children who join the team to learn to swim can benefit from the experience, but may not enjoy the competitive aspect. If your child is not a swimmer when he / she joins the team, supplementing our coaches' instruction with outside stroke lessons may help your child progress more quickly. If you wish to pursue this option, the coaches (including junior coaches) can provide you with names of possible instructors.

New swimmer evaluations will be held during the first practice. This will be for first-time swimmers only, to give the coaches an opportunity to assess the swimmers' abilities in the water.

STH RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

1. Follow directions quickly
2. Respect your coach, teammates, the pool and yourself
3. Follow ALL the pool rules
4. Do not enter the water until instructed
5. Do not climb on lifeguard stands
7. Notify your coach if you have to leave practice early.
8. Cheer on your teammates and have F-U-N!!!

WHAT DO I NEED TO HAVE FOR MY CHILD TO SWIM? (EQUIPMENT/TEAM STORE)

***Swim suit** - Please contact Front Runner Athletics located at 4251 Hixson Pike, Chattanooga, TN 37415 for fittings.

***Cap** - Your swimmer will receive 1 STH cap; the team cap is the ONLY cap that may be worn for CASL meets. Your child may want a different cap to wear during practice.

***Goggles** - competition goggles are best for competitive swim

Stuart Heights Sharks Team Handbook

****Helpful Tips:** Label all of your child's belongings and place in a carry bag. Purchase an extra pair of goggles and cap, and place them in their bag. You never know when something might break.

TEAM SUITS

Team suits can be purchased at Front Runner Athletics located at 4251 Hixson Pike, Chattanooga, TN 37415

PRACTICES

Monday - Friday mornings:

ages 8 & under 8:30-9:30 a.m.*

ages 9 & up 8:00 - 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday evenings clinics

Topics TBA ages 8 & under 6:00-7:00 p.m.*

ages 9 & up 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday evening

ages 8 & under 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.*

ages 9 & up 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

*Please note that some of the youngest swimmers will need to work up to a full hour of practice, so times for the 8 & under age group may vary at the start of the season.

All practices are optional, but coaches advise you attend at least 3 practices per week to see improvement in your swimming times. We seek to build a great team atmosphere where the kids know one another, and the great swimmers can serve as an example to the new swimmers. So we encourage all swimmers to come enjoy practices at Stuart Heights.

Practice will be held in the rain as long as lightning does not occur. Wet is wet.

Covid-19 restrictions: Parents will not be allowed on the pool deck during practice. Please observe practice from the hillside.

NOTE: Parents are welcome to observe during practice times, but the coaches request you follow the guidelines below:

1. Avoid distracting the coach or swimmer during practice. If you need to speak to the coach, please do so before or after practice.
2. Leave the coaching to the experts. The coaches were hired to coach because of their expertise and knowledge of the sport.

Stuart Heights Sharks Team Handbook

3. Have reasonable expectations. Our summer program is NOT a replacement for swim lessons. Although you will see some instruction and improvement, a beginning swimmer will benefit from small group or private swim lessons.
4. Be willing to help out when you are needed or when asked.
5. Be supportive and respectful of all swimmers and coaches at the meets. Keep in mind the coaches spend a lot of time putting the line up together – trying to balance competition and participation. Please do not undermine their decisions.
6. All parents are expected to display sportsmanlike conduct during every meet. Any questions or complaints about the actions of the officials or opposing team must be directed to the team Pool Representative, who will replay the question or complaint to the referee. CASL rules prohibit parents or swimmers from approaching judges and/or referees directly. Disregarding this rule could cause the team to incur sanctions or prompt removal from the competition.

DUAL MEETS AND THE NEED TO RSVP

Each dual meet consists of 62 events and will last anywhere from 2 – 3 hours. The order of the events is always the same:

1. Freestyle
2. Breaststroke
3. Medley Relay
4. Individual Medley
5. Backstroke
6. Butterfly
7. Freestyle Relay

**** Announcement of the Winning Team!****

Swim meets can be very hectic – especially with the younger swimmers. Experienced parents should help make sure all of our new parents comprehend and understand what is happening at the first few meets.

Swimmers need to check in with the designated coach as soon as they arrive at the pool for the swim meet. Please RSVP to all meets. We need to know whether or not your child will be attending. Substitutions cannot be made at the meet per CASL rules. We do not want any empty lanes that cost us points. Swimmers and parents need to

Stuart Heights Sharks Team Handbook

listen to the announcer and keep up with which events are coming up. Swimmers need to be behind the starting blocks and be ready to swim two events before the event they are swimming. – This means having goggles ready and swim cap on. (Our Sharks and Deck Parents will help with this too.)

CASL provides two meet officials who conduct and oversee the events. Each swimmer can be entered in a maximum of three individual and two relay events. The assignment of swimmers to various events is the responsibility of the coaching staff. To be able to compete in an event, the swimmer must be able to complete the stroke correctly. Incorrect execution of a stroke results in disqualification (DQ) and the loss of points for the team.

The staff recognizes dedication to practice and reliability of the swimmer. **The coaching staff must try to balance participation with the best lineup for the team's benefit.**

A swimmer's age for purposes of competition is their age on June 1. A swimmer does not change age groups during the season.

At meets, swimmers compete against other swimmers of the same sex and age group. There are six age groups:

6&U - freestyle and backstroke only

7 & 8

9 & 10

11 & 12

13 & 14

Seniors (15-18)

A meet includes competition in seven event types. There are five individual events: Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Individual Medley. There are two relays: Freestyle Relay and Medley Relay. Each age group participates in each event except those swimmers under age 9 do not swim Individual Medley. (See chart on next page.)

Swimmers are limited by CASL rules to three individual events per meet and up to two relays. The final heat of each dual meet event is the scoring heat. Exhibition heats are timed, and improvements in these times will mean the swimmer may be swimming for points in the next meet.

	6 & Under	7 & 8	9 & Over
Freestyle	25 Yards	25 Yards	50 Yards
Breaststroke		25 Yards	50 Yards
Butterfly		25 Yards	50 Yards
Backstroke	25 Yards	25 Yards	50 Yards

Stuart Heights Sharks Team Handbook

	6 & Under	7 & 8	9 & Over
Individual Medley (IM)			100 Yards
Freestyle and Medley Relays		100 Yards (4 swimmers x 25 yards each)	200 Yards (4 swimmers x 50 yards each)

Bill Caulkins City Meet

The CASL City Swim Meet is a two-day Championship swim meet. Swimmers from teams in all three CASL divisions will compete in the meet. City Meet is a fun and exciting experience for both new and experienced swimmers. It is also one of the few meets for which swimmers have the opportunity to select their own events. The meet is divided into 2 preliminary sessions (10 & U in the morning with 12 & Up in the midday), and the top 16 swimmers of each event per age group return for finals that evening. Finals are scored, so those finals determine the points a team/individual receives. All league teams compete in this meet for top honors in each division. It is an exciting meet that you want to be a part of each season! *Your swimmer's registration fees have already paid for the City Meet.* Details and the registrations forms will be distributed later in the season.

PINK MEET

This is an optional, yet fun meet that we host each year. It will be one Saturday morning here at the Stuart Heights Pool. Your child will get to choose their own events, so it is a great way to swim a new event. All proceeds benefit Emily's Power for a Cure. More info TBA.

WHAT TO BRING FOR A MEET

SWIMMERS:

1. Team suit, team cap and a pair of goggles (We suggest always having a backup pair of goggles.)
2. Warm clothes (it can get cool as the sun sets), a change of clothes, a hat
3. Cards, games, etc. to pass the time
4. Sunblock, eardrops, bug spray, etc.
5. A small cooler with healthy snacks and plenty of drinking water

Spectators:

1. Chairs or blankets to sit on
2. Golf umbrella for shade
3. Sunscreen and bug spray
4. Keep in mind that you will there several hours. Concession stands (of varying quality) are typically available, but you, too, may prefer to bring your own cooler of snacks or picnic dinner.
5. Lots of water to stay hydrated

Stuart Heights Sharks Team Handbook

WE NEED YOU!

Swimming is a volunteer heavy sport. It takes a lot of people to run a meet. We will need timers, judges, score keepers, runners, kid pushers, etc. There are many opportunities to participate, and no position is too difficult. We have plenty of people ready to help teach you! Jump on in so that the kids can make a splash!

TEAM COMMUNICATION

Summer swim is short and fast paced season with lots of moving parts. Communication is key...and a two-way street! We use many different forms of communication:

1. Email - the team email is sthswimteam@gmail.com; this will reach the board
2. Social media - follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter
3. Rained Out - we will send out info on how to "opt in" shortly after registration closes
4. RSVPs - this is for ALL swimmers for ALL meets. This is critical for building a meet properly. Please make sure to RSVP Yes or No to ALL meets.
5. Coaches are always happy to meet with you after practice. Please do not attempt to meet with them during practice. We need them to be attentive to all of our kids.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Swimming is a wet sport, so YES, we still swim in the rain. Wet is wet, right? Parents, for you that means bring a rain coat. The swimmers will already be wet, but will want something for warmth out of the water.

We do NOT swim if there is thunder and/or lightening in the area. The CASL rule for this is a 30 minute delay for each thunder and/or lightening strike. During a meet, this may mean only a delay, where we must clear the pool deck. Please wait in your cars until a decision is determined.

Make sure to opt in for Rained Out messages.

TIPS FOR A GREAT SEASON FOR ATHLETES AND PARENTS

- Athletes should give their best at all times.
- Athletes should be proud of their best effort regardless of their time or team score.
- Be a humble winner and a gracious loser. Shake hands after meets.
- Help your child learn discipline by getting him/her to meets and practices on time – and arriving promptly for pick-up.
- Your child's commitment to swim team will be only as strong as your own commitment.
- Athletes will be on time and ready to practice/compete if you are enthusiastic about their sport.
- Ask your child what he/she learned at practice and what he/she hopes to do better the

Stuart Heights Sharks Team Handbook

next time.

- Give all the positive support you can. You are there to love and praise them. Please let the coaches coach.
- Learn the rules of competitive swimming – don't guess at them. Watch swimming videos with your child. Ask a more seasoned swimmer or parent.
- Encourage your child to communicate directly with the coach; don't become a middleman.
- Support the coach even if it means disappointing your child.
- Prepare nutritious meals – especially before meets.
- Always be positive at meets.
- With your words and actions, attempt to relieve the pressure of competition, not increase it.
- Never abuse a referee or judge, or question their calls. Teach your child to accept and cope with the decisions of the officials.
- Model fair play always – don't wink at unfair play even if it may benefit our team.
- Please do not openly criticize any athletes, parents, or coaches.
- Praise other people's children from the sidelines and after meets.
- Stuart Heights pool lifeguards are not connected with the swim team. They will not be able to answer your swim team questions.