

# **HOUSTON SWIM TEAM**

## **Handbook**

2021-2021

Website: [Mustangswimming.com](http://Mustangswimming.com)

E-mail: [houstonmustangswim@gmail.com](mailto:houstonmustangswim@gmail.com)

Serving

Houston Middle School  
and

Houston High School

*Coaches:*

Jonathan Pennington

*Your board:*

President – Cindy Guild

Vice President – Kathryn Hickey

Secretary – Jeanne Roth

Treasurer – Meggan Boston

Registration – Matt Effinger

Website/Meet Signups – Cindy Guild

## Table of Contents

Important Websites

Meet Job Descriptions

Swim Meet Helpful Hints

General Rules for Swim Meets

How to Enter a Swim Meet

Swim Meet Terminology

Frequently Asked Questions

## IMPORTANT WEBSITES

Mustang Swimming- [www.MustangSwimming.com](http://www.MustangSwimming.com)

This is your number one go-to! It has everything you could possibly want to know!!! Please check often for team and schedule updates. The meet schedule for each season is posted with sign-up information - for both swimmers and timers. This is also where you will find Meet Invitations, Psych Sheets, and other helpful information.

Shelby County Swim-[www.ShelbyCountySwim.com](http://www.ShelbyCountySwim.com)

Shelby County Swim League is the local governing body for High School and Middle School swimming here in Shelby County. This is where you will find heat sheets for each meet. These are usually posted the day before a meet.

Tennessee Inter-scholastic Swim Coaches Association (TISCA) - [www.TISCA.net](http://www.TISCA.net)

TISCA is the governing body for high school swimming in the state of Tennessee.

National Federation of State High School Associations - [www.NFHS.org](http://www.NFHS.org)

Our swim meets follow the guidelines as established by the NFHS. When no rule exists under NFHS standards, USA Swimming rules will apply.

USA Swimming - [www.USASwimming.org](http://www.USASwimming.org)

USA Swimming is the national governing body for swimming in the United States. This is the organization that sends swimmers to the Olympics. Swim times achieved at the Shelby County High School Championship and at the Tennessee State High School Championship are recorded by USA Swimming

# MEET JOB DESCRIPTIONS

The following list gives a brief description of the jobs required during each meet. Mustang Swimming will have 6 timers per meet.

**Timer**: uses a stopwatch and is responsible for timing one lane during a swim meet. A Timer's meeting for all timers (which includes an orientation for new timers) session is held prior to each session.

**Timer Coordinator**: We will have 4 timers per meet that will volunteer via website. Job will be to fill in holes and find help with replacements if necessary. Important to be at each meet early to ensure our people are there. Also print off 4 copies of heat sheet per meet.

**High School Team Captains**: help organize the swimmers during each of our Middle School meets. These volunteers make sure that younger swimmers get to their events.

**Runner**: after an event the runner picks up lane timer sheets and takes them to the computer table Officials: Requires certification by USA Swimming.

**Computer Table**: runs the touchpad console which operates the electronic board or verifies and enters official times for each event. Training is required for these positions. If interested, contact the board.

## **SWIM MEET HELPFUL HINTS**

- Arrive 30 minutes early and settle in near the team
- Print a heat sheet (available online before the meet at [www.shelbycountyswim.com](http://www.shelbycountyswim.com)) Bring a highlighter for your child's events and a Sharpie to mark those events on their arms.
- With cap, goggles, and Mustang spirit, report to the coach for warm-up instructions. It is important to warm up with team so that they are physically prepared to swim
- After warm ups, swimmers will return to their set-up area and await their first event. Have them go to the bathroom. Make sure they are fed and have had fluids.
- The meet usually starts 10-15 minutes after warm ups conclude
- According to USA Swimming rules, parents are not allowed on the pool deck unless they are serving in an official capacity. All questions regarding results, missed events, disqualifications or the conduct of the meet should be referred to the Mustang coaching staff who will pursue the matter through the proper channels.
- Swimmers are responsible for getting to their events. Listen for the events as they are called and watch the electronic board to keep up with the timeline.
- Swimmers should bring water or Gatorade, snacks, towels.
- We all stay until the last relay to cheer them on and celebrate the score together as a team.
- There will be a designated restaurant everyone has the option to going to after meets. It is a fun way to celebrate the hard work and get to know team mates and parents better.

**MOST IMPORTANTLY, HAVE FUN!**

## GENERAL RULES FOR SWIM MEETS

- Always keep quiet when the coach is talking
- Be on deck and ready to begin BEFORE start times
- Be courteous, use proper language and tone of voice including no negative comments during any meet
- Be respectful and be on time
- No splashing, dunking or horseplay
- Don't throw caps, goggles, or other equipment ☒ Do not hang on lane lines
- Never push another swimmer under any circumstances ☒ NO RUNNING
- Always check with your coach before you leave
- Take care of every facility - and treat it the way you would want your home treated.  
This includes no vandalism in the locker rooms
- Abide by the Mustang Code of Conduct at all times
- Coaching staff decisions at swim meets are final. All discussions will be held after swim functions, not during.

## HOW TO ENTER A SWIM MEET

The meet information will be posted on our website and you should receive an email from your team when the entry deadline is approaching. Some meets will have a short turnaround so please get your entries in by the posted entry deadline.

Our meet schedule is set by Shelby County Swim League. Participation in swim meets is not required but is highly encouraged. Meets are used to evaluate swimming performance, training accomplishments, improvement and motivation. Familiarize yourself with the meet invitation so that you and your swimmer will know what to expect. Be sure to ask the coach if anything in the meet invitation is unclear.

Things to look for in the meet invitation

- Location of the meet (St. Georges, Bartlett, or Germantown Aquatic Center)
- How the sessions are scheduled
- When the entry deadline is - keep in mind that the coach will set your deadline a few days earlier so that he or she has time to approve all the entries

Mustang Swimming does all meet entries through our website ([www.mustangswimming.com](http://www.mustangswimming.com)). The process is

simple. Sign into your account on the Mustang Swimming website. Click “Meets and Events” and choose the meet for which you wish to commit your swimmer. Once you’ve arrived at the meet page, you will click on a box in the upper right-hand corner that says “Edit Commitment”. If you have more than one child swimming you will see them listed on this page.

### Here are the steps if you ARE GOING:

- Click on the Signup Record pull-down and select Yes
- Once yes is selected, you will see the events your child MAY be eligible to swim
- You will also see the best times inserted into the Entry Time field and highlighted in yellow
- Check the Checkbox to the left of the name for 1 event you would like to swim, the coach will select your other events.
- Please take careful notice of the time standards that must be met in the right-side columns
- Once you have finished, click on the Save Changes Button in the lower right
- Repeat the process for additional swimmers

You will notice that Coach Approval column will indicate Pending after you submit. Please pay careful attention to the Maximum Event Entry Limitations IF PRESENT. (Click on the “View if present”.) Add any notes that you want the Coach or Administrator to see (for instance, if you only want your swimmer to swim the freestyle, indicate so here. OR if you can only attend one day of the meet, this is the place to communicate that.)

### Here are the steps if you ARE NOT GOING:

- Click on the Member Names [they default to Not Committed]
- Then click on the Signup Record pull-down and select No
- If No, just click on the [Save Changes] button to save the changes
- If you have more than one child, repeat the same task as listed above

Your coach or team administrator will review your declaration and APPROVE or REJECT your request. Once they submit the final choices you will be able to review the entries by going through the same process as above. Look at the Coach Approval column for the events that you have been confirmed to swim.

Relays are determined by coaches. Period. All swimmers are required to check with the coach prior to leaving to determine if they are on a relay. **Leaving without checking with your coach could mean missing out on the opportunity to swim and denying three of your teammates that same opportunity.**

# SWIM MEET TERMINOLOGY

**Anchor** - The final swimmer in a relay.

**Backup Plunger** - Pushed by a timer at the end of a race to stop the electronic timing system in case of touch pad failure

**Bell Lap** - The part of a 500 yard freestyle (high school swimming only) when the lead swimmer has two lengths to go. The starter rings a bell over the lane of the lead swimmer when the swimmer is at the backstroke flags.

**Blocks** - The starting platforms located behind each lane.

**Deck** - The area around the swimming pool reserved for swimmers, officials, coaches and timers. Only these individuals are allowed on deck.

**Deck Entries** - Accepting entries into swimming events on the day of a meet.

**Disqualified** - A swimmer's performance is not counted because of a rules infraction. A disqualification is shown by an official raising one arm with open hand above their head. (Also called DQ) Coaches are given DQ slips that explain the infraction.

**Entry** - An individual, relay team, or club roster's event list in a swim competition.

**Entry Limit** - Each swimmer is limited to a specified number of events (s)he can swim in any given meet. In addition each team is limited as to how many swimmers can swim a given event.

**Electronic Timing** - Timing system operated on DC current (battery). The timing system usually has touchpads in the water, junction boxes on the deck with hook up cables, buttons for backup timing, and a computer-type console that prints out the results of each race. Some systems are hooked up to a scoreboard that displays swimmers.

**Event** - A race or stroke over a given distance.

**False Start** - When a swimmer leaves the starting block before the horn or gun. One false start will disqualify a swimmer or a relay team, although the starter or referee may disallow the false start due to unusual circumstances.

**Fastest to Slowest** - A seeding method used on the longer events held at the end of a session. The fastest seeded swimmers participate in the first heats followed by the next fastest and so on.

**Heats** - All of the swimmers entered in the event are divided into heats, or groups of swimmers. The results are compiled by the times swum, after all heats of the event are completed.

**Heat Sheet** - The pre-meet printed listings of swimmers' seed times in the various events at a swim meet.

**IM** - Individual Medley. A swimming event using all four of the competitive strokes on consecutive lengths of the race. The order must be: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle. Equal distances must be sum of each stroke. Distances offered: 100 yards & 200 yards

**Lap Counter** - Set of plastic numbers used to keep track of laps during the 500 free.



**Leg** - The part of a relay event swum by a single team member.

**Marshall** - The official who control the crowd and swimmer-flow at a swim meet. **Meet Director** - The official in charge of the administration of the meet.

**NT** - No Time. The abbreviation used on a heat sheet to designate that the swimmer has not swum that event before.

**Officials** - The certified adult volunteers who administer the events and ensure all rules are followed. Officials include the Meet Referee, Starter and Stroke and Turn Judge. All officials are certified by USA Swimming.

**Psych Sheet** - An entry sheet showing all swimmers entered in each individual event, listed from fastest to slowest.

**Qualifying Times** - Published times necessary to enter certain meets, or the times necessary to achieve a specific category of swimmer. High School swimmers must meet qualifying times to compete at the Shelby County Championship and at the Tennessee State Championship.

**Referee** - The head official at a swim meet in charge of all the events.

**Relays** - A swimming event in which four swimmers participate as a team. Each swimmer completes an equal distance of the race. There are two types of relays: 1.) Medley relay - One swimmer swims Backstroke, one swims Breaststroke, one swims Butterfly, one swims Freestyle, in that order. 2.) Freestyle relay - Each swimmer completes an equal distance of the race.

**Scratch**- Withdrawing from an event during competition.

**Seed** - Assign the swimmers heats and lanes according to their submitted times.

**Split** - A portion of an event that is shorter than the total distance and is timed. (i.e.) A swimmer's first 50 time is taken as the swimmer swims the 100 race. It is common to take multiple splits for the longer distances.

**Starter** - The official in charge of signaling the beginning of a race and insuring that all swimmers have a fair takeoff.

**Stand-up** - The command given by the Starter or Referee to release the swimmers from their starting position.

**Step-Down** - The command given by the Starter or Referee to have the swimmers move off the blocks. Usually this command is a good indication everything is not right for the race to start.

**Stroke & Turn Judge** - The official positioned at each end of the pool, monitoring the swimmers during each race. If the Stroke & Turn Judge sees something illegal, they report to the referee and the swimmer may be disqualified. .

**Time Standard** - A time standard set for a meet that a swimmer must achieve to qualify for competition in that meet. (Also called "cuts") The only meets that have time standards are the County Championship and the State Championship.

**Timer** - The volunteers sitting behind the starting blocks/finish end of pool, who are responsible for getting watch times on events and activating the backup buttons for the timing system

**Touch Pad** - The removable plate (on the end of pools) that is connected to an automatic timing system. The swimmer must properly touch the touchpad to register an official time in a race.

**Warm-down** - The recovery swimming a swimmer does after a race. Coach will instruct swimmers on the proper warm down.

**Warm-up** - The practice and "loosening-up" session a swimmer does before the meet or their event is swum.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS...**

Most questions will be answered from reviewing this handbook and the website, however, here are a few that we encounter at each meet:

- How important are deadlines? **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT.** This is true for signing up your swimmer and signing up to volunteer.
- What do I need to bring to a meet? Your swimmer will need healthy snacks, plenty of fluids, extra towels, clothes and something to occupy them while waiting for events. Bring a highlighter to highlight your swimmer's events, a Sharpie to mark your swimmer.
- Where do I ask questions that may not be addressed in this handbook? Check the website first and foremost as it has almost all info that could possibly be available. If you can't find your answer, email [houstonmustangswim@gmail.com](mailto:houstonmustangswim@gmail.com)