

SWIM TEAM ELIGIBILITY

1. A swimmer must be a resident of Cinco Ranch I Subdivision who is in good standing with the homeowners association.
2. A swimmer must be at least 4, but not older than 18 years of age as of May 1 of the year for the current swim season.
3. A swimmer must be a novice swimmer as defined by the West Houston Aquatics League: If a swimmer has current TAGS time in any stroke in his/her age group, he/she must swim that stroke up one (1) age group. If a swimmer has a Sectional time in any stroke, they are precluded from swimming that stroke in a meet. Please refer to the WHALe Policies and Procedures for penalties associated with violation of these rules. A swimmer cannot have swum on any college or university swim team.
4. Cinco Ranch Swim Team follows all Policies and Procedures of the West Houston Aquatic League (WHALe). They can be found at www.swimwhale.com.
5. A swimmer must be comfortable remaining in the water independently. Coaches may not be in the water and swimmers may not hold onto the ropes or side of the pool; nor touch the bottom of the pool during the swim test, two weeks after practice commences.
6. A swimmer must have competed in a minimum of 50% of the scheduled intra-league dual meets. (i.e. 2 of 4, or 3 of 5) to be eligible to swim in the Meet of Champions.

ASSISTED SWIMMER POLICY

CRST will allow assisted swimmer(s) provided that the child has been diagnosed with a special need that prohibits him/her from swimming unassisted across the pool. In order to receive these accommodations, the child must have a qualifying diagnosis of "special needs" through the Texas Department of Education and are significantly more dependent on other people to complete activities than children of their age. Qualifying dependence on other people for age appropriate activities would be the inability of the child to participate in or complete those activities without either verbal prompts or physical assistance despite having sufficient instruction to complete those activities.

The swimmer will swim the freestyle stroke assisted by a CRST swim coach prior to the start of the meet and will receive a "blue ribbon" for their effort. If a special needs child is able to swim across the pool unassisted, the individual will be placed in his or her appropriate heat.

It is not possible for CRST to provide someone to be with the child at all times while they are at swim team practices. Therefore, it will be the responsibility of the child's family to provide someone to be in the water and at practices at all times when the child is present.

REFUND POLICY AND RELEASE FORM

CRST REFUND POLICY is as follows: A portion of the registration fee may be refundable. If a swimmer chooses not to swim for any reason AND notifies the REGISTRAR in writing PRIOR to May 1st, a \$50 refund will be available upon request. On May 1st, all fees become non-refundable except for swimmers unable to swim the length of the pool by the scheduled "Swim Across the Pool" day of practice, as determined by the team's Head Coach. Swimmers who are unable to swim the length of the pool will be eligible to request a refund of \$25. All written requests for refunds must be received by the Registrar by June 1st. Absolutely no refund requests will be considered after June 1st.

RELEASE AND CONSENT FORM: All swimmers must have a signed Release and Consent Form before beginning swim practice. No swimmers may enter the water to practice without having turned in this completed signed form.

SAFETY, BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE AND SWIMSUIT POLICIES

Safety Policy

1. **General. During practices and meets, the wading pools and all water features are closed.**
 - a. Parents are responsible for and are expected to control any child they bring to practices or meets. **No one** is allowed in the pool, except for swimmers that are swimming at their designated practice time, or their scheduled event at a meet. Thus, it is strictly prohibited for any waiting friends or family members (including parents, toddlers, non-participating swimmers, etc.) to enter or partially enter any **wading pool or water feature**. No one is allowed to climb on any equipment, including all water features, diving boards, lifeguard stands, swim ladders leading in/out of the pool, chairs, lounge chairs.
 - b. There will be absolutely no running on the pool deck. Skateboards, roller blades/skates, scooters and bikes are prohibited inside the pool deck.
 - c. CRST defines the Pool Deck, itself, as **anything** inside the gates of the pool area.
2. **Weather Delays/Cancellations.**
 - a. **Practice Only** – The coaches will make the call to suspend or cancel practice due to thunder or lightning. If this occurs, everyone will be removed from the pool deck and will wait 20 minutes before returning. If the weather has not cleared by that time, it is at the coaches' discretion to cancel practice for that particular age group for the day. If it is only raining, practice will continue unless it is raining so hard you cannot see the bottom of the pool. Each age group's practice time will be treated separately. (Example, just because the first group's practice was canceled due to weather, this does not mean that all of the practices are canceled for the day.) The coaches will take it hour by hour. If unsure there will be practice, a good rule of thumb is to show up for practice and let the coaches send the swimmers home if they determine practice will not continue due to inclement weather conditions. Coaches will not be making phone calls about practice cancellations.
 - b. **Dual Meets** – If the lifeguards hear thunder or see lightning, then the meet will be suspended for 20 minutes. Everyone must go outside the pool deck gates immediately. All gates, at each pool, will be open for easy access. It is each family's responsibility, after exiting the pool gates, to determine what course of action your family will take for your family's safety. Once the all clear sign is given, an announcement will be made and everyone will be allowed back inside the pool gates and onto the pool deck. This will be done one age group at a time, starting with the youngest swimmers first. Parents and/or spectators will be allowed in, only after all swimmers have made their way back to their tents. All events through the 15-18 year old Breaststroke must be completed, for a meet to be official. If it is determined, by both teams' league reps, that the meet cannot be continued that day, an announcement will be made of that decision. An additional announcement will be made when a make up day, location and time has been determined (not necessarily at the meet). **If you were working a volunteer job, you will be required to resume that responsibility on the day of the make up meet.**

Behavior/Discipline Policy

- 1. The pool and homeowners association rules will be enforced.** Any swimmer whose behavior is disruptive, unsportsmanlike and/or dangerous will be asked to sit out of practice the rest of the day, or be sent home. This includes pushing others in the pool, bad language, making fun of others, not paying attention to coaches' instructions, talking while coaches are talking, or doing anything that causes harm or ill feelings towards others in the pool. Depending on the severity and/or frequency of the misbehavior, the swimmer may be suspended for several days or expelled from the team with no refund. The parents will be contacted if there is a frequent problem. Any decision to suspend or expel a swimmer will be made by the coaching staff and team board.
- 2. All swimmers must have a signed Safety/Discipline Policy on file with his/her team.** This Policy must be read and signed by each CRST family before registration may be completed. All policies begin on the first day of practice. Violating any of these policies may result in suspension or dismissal from Cinco Ranch Swim Team.
- 3. Parents will also be respectful of other parents and swimmers** on the pool deck and not allow their behavior to be disruptive or unsportsmanlike. Parents will not coach or instruct the team or any athlete at a practice or meet. There will be no discussions, concerning your swimmer or swimmers, with coaches while practice is occurring. If you have anything to discuss with the coach, please arrange a time, after practice, to discuss the matter with them. Anyone causing disruption of practice and/or meet, using bad language or not conducting themselves in a proper manner may not be allowed on the pool deck the rest of the season, including meets.
- 4. The team's elected members of your respective CRST will enforce this policy.** These include Team Director(s), League Representative(s), Member(s)-at-Large and Volunteer Coordinator(s). If any of these individuals are not present at the time of the incident, but another parent witnesses the incident, a meeting will be held to determine the facts and course of action that will be taken. This may be appealed to the CRST Board for a separate hearing.
- 5. Communication.** The swim team will have hanging files at the practice pool with a file for each family. Swimmers should check these at least once a week for information. Also, there will be a white board at the pool. Please check this daily for announcements. It is the swimmer's responsibility to check the files and the board in order to keep up with any changes. Time sensitive matters such as rainouts or meet re-schedule information will be communicated via email. Please be sure to check the email address you registered with CRST frequently for such time sensitive announcements.

Swimsuit Policy

It is mandatory that each family purchase the current suit of the team for which they are registered. All swimmers must wear their designated Cinco Ranch Swim Team suit for all dual meets, team pictures, Meet of Champions and All Star Meets. A swimmer will not be allowed without wearing his/her team swimsuit.

ATTENDANCE

Swimmers are expected to attend all practices except due to illness or extenuating circumstances. We realize that during May there are several other extra-curricular activities that conflict with swim team practice. By offering practice five days a week, it is hoped that swimmers will make the effort to attend as many as possible during this time.

REPORTING EMAIL ADDRESS CHANGES

It is the practice of CRST to utilize e-mail to disseminate Pre-Registration Information. Thus, it is imperative that the REGISTRAR be made aware of any changes to your email address. Should your email address change, please notify the registrar of the change promptly. Email address changes should be reported to: **registrar@cincoranchswimteam.org** . In the body of the email, you **MUST** include the following information with any request to change your email address:

- 1) The full names of ALL your swimmers
- 2) The current CRST Team on which your swimmers are/were registered
- 3) Your NEW email address

Should you fail to update your email address with the Registrar, you will not receive Pre-Registration documents for the following swim season. Please note that while we can store information regarding alternative email addresses in your swim team records, we can only send registration related emails to one primary email address per swim family.

MEET INFORMATION

There are typically four dual meets during the CRST Swim season, and, if your swimmer qualifies, one Divisional Meet of Champs and the WHALe All Star Meet during the season. Swimmers must check-in and be in their respective age group area fifteen minutes before the scheduled warm-up. Warm-ups for Saturday home meets begin promptly at 8am. Warm-ups for Saturday away meets begin promptly at 8:30am. Warm ups for weeknight home meets begin promptly at 5pm and warm-ups for weeknight away meets begin promptly at 5:30pm. Morning meets start at 9am and evening meets start at 6pm. Meets will last for about three and a half hours depending on the number of swimmers participating.

All swimmers will sit with their teammates in assigned areas according to age groups. Please check in with your "Ready Bench Parent" when you first arrive. "Ready Bench Parents" must know the whereabouts of all swimmers assigned to them at all times, because they are responsible for getting swimmers to the right heat benches for their events. The 6 & under swimmers finish early, so please pick up your child after their last event as there will not be any parent supervision for the 6 & under after backstroke. Swimmers should bring a towel, blanket or folding chair to sit on during the meet. It is important that each child have some quiet games to play. Please label all items. Send healthy snacks such as fruit, juices, nuts, raisins or bagels for munching. Swimmers are asked to wait until they've finished swimming for the day before consuming "junk food". These unhealthy snacks can seriously hamper the swimmer's performance in his/her events! Swimmers are not allowed to play in/or around wading pools or water features during meets. Likewise, siblings, friends or other family members may not use the wading pools or water features during the meets.

Each Cinco Ranch swim meet consists of 73 events. Swimmers compete only against their own age group unless they have been asked by the Head Coach to swim in an older age group event or have a TAGS time, which requires swimming up. There may be several heats for an event. Swimmers are seeded by their best times during the season (allowing for coaches' discretion), with the fastest swimmers in the first heat of an event. All swimmers can swim freestyle and backstroke. A limited number of swimmers will be asked to swim breast and butterfly. Each swimmer (aged 7 and up) who can perform the stroke legally, as determined by the Head Coach, will be given at least one opportunity during the season to swim breast and butterfly in a meet. It is the coaching staff's decision as to which events each swimmer will be entered. It is also the Coach's decision as to who swims relays. Questions regarding meet entries should be addressed to the coaches after practice and NOT during a meet.

REPORTING MEET ABSENCES

A meet attendance form was included in your team supplement. Please complete this and bring it to the pool by the "Swim Across the Pool" date. It should be turned in to the hanging file folder marked **Meet Attendance Coordinator**. Any changes or other anticipated absences must be reported to the **Meet Attendance Coordinator**, not to the coaches or the board members. We realize that it is impossible to anticipate illness, but please email the attendance coordinator as soon as possible after it becomes clear that the swimmer cannot participate at a meet.

SCORING AND AWARDS

Points are awarded for the first heat in each individual event for each age group. In relays the two teams in the middle lanes receive points. Ribbons are awarded in all heats of the dual meets. Timing will be used to determine places.

WHALe MEET OF CHAMPS (DIVISIONAL)

All of the teams competing in the West Houston Aquatic League (WHALe) participate in their divisional meet to culminate the season. This meet will be held at a date, time and location TBD by WHALe. Teams are allowed limited entries per event. Entries per age group are limited to (8) Freestyle, (4) Back, (4) Breast, (4) Butterfly and (3) entries for the IM. A swimmer must have participated in at least 50% of the scheduled intra-league dual meets (i.e. 2 of 4, or 3 of 5) to be eligible to swim in the Meet of Champions. All parents of children participating in the Meet of Champs are required to volunteer at that meet. It is the coach's decision as to who swims each event.

WHALe ALL STAR MEET

The top 1 swimmer from each of the WHALe divisional Meet of Champs and the next top fastest swimmer times will participate in the All Star Meet at a date, time and location TBD by WHALe. Medals will be awarded to the top 8 swimmers in each event.

END OF SEASON AWARDS

The end of year awards will be presented at the team party held at the end of the season. Every swimmer participating in at least 50% of the scheduled intra-league dual meets (i.e. 2 of 4, or 3 of 5) will receive an end of year participation trophy. Meet of Champs and All Star Meet earned medals will also be presented.

VOLUNTEER POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Background for Volunteers

It is a requirement that each family of a Cinco Ranch Swim Team swimmer volunteer to help with the swim meets for the Cinco Ranch Swim Team. The following are the requirements, policies and procedures for all volunteers.

Minimum Requirements

Each family must volunteer a certain number of times during each of the meets during the swim season based upon the number of swimmers in that family:

- 1 Swimmer = 2 volunteer requirements
- 2 Swimmers = 4 volunteer requirements
- 3 or more Swimmers = 5 volunteer requirements

Each family is required to commit to their volunteer duties at one of the two registration dates. All families must attend one of the two registration dates and sign up for the appropriate number of positions.

Family Delegate at Registration

In the event that a family is unable to attend one of the two registration dates, they may send a delegate to sign up their family for volunteer positions; **however, their delegate may only sign up the family during the designated delegate times**, which are either:

1. the final hour of registration on the first date of registration; or
2. at any time during the second date of registration.

On the first registration date, each family will ONLY be allowed to sign up their own family during the first two (2) hours of registration. After, in the final hour of registration, delegates may then sign up their respective delegate families. All delegates may sign up their respective delegate families at any time during the second registration date. This policy is new due to the issues in the past of one family signing up several other families while others are waiting in line for their turn. Due to the time spent by most families waiting in line at registration, it is not fair or equitable to the other families to allow one person to sign up several other families who are not attending registration.

Registration Number System

Volunteer Positions will be selected by families at registration using a number system. While standing in line, each family will be given a color coded number. Volunteer Coordinators will pass out numbers sequentially starting at the front of the line. You will be asked what team you signed up for and reminded that you are only able to sign up your own family during the first two (2) hours of registration. Once inside the registration area, numbers will be called by the individual teams (i.e. Greenway, Highland Park, North Lake or South Ranch) to facilitate volunteer signups. Numbers will be called sequentially and all others waiting their turn are required to do so **AWAY from the sign up tables**. Due to issues in the past with cutting, shoving and unsportsmanlike behavior, the number policy has been implemented to ensure that families that have waited in line for hours get the opportunity to sign up first.

Incomplete Volunteer Requirements

If a family is unable to complete their volunteer requirements as scheduled and signed up for at registration, **it is the responsibility of that family to find a substitute for their volunteer position and to notify the volunteer coordinator of this change prior to the meet.** Failure to do so will result in a family not receiving credit for that volunteer position. In the case where a true emergency prevents a family from completing their volunteer requirement at one meet, the Volunteer Coordinator will determine appropriate steps for the makeup of that requirement.

If a family is signed up for a meet that gets postponed, cancelled, or rescheduled, you are expected to serve at the makeup meet in the same capacity as originally scheduled. If the family is unable to do so, then it is the responsibility of that family to find a substitute for their volunteer position and to notify the volunteer coordinator of this change prior to the meet. Failure to do so will result in a family not receiving credit for that volunteer position.

A family that has not fulfilled their volunteer requirements will be suspended from participating in the Cinco Ranch Swim Team activities for one year with the option to appeal to the Executive Board. Specifically, if all family volunteer commitments have not been fulfilled by the last regular swim season meet, then the family's swimmer(s) will:

1. NOT be eligible to participate in the Meet of Champions for the current season, and
2. NOT be eligible to register to swim on any Cinco Ranch Swim Team the following year.

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

6 & Under Ready Bench

All 6 & Under Ready Bench Volunteers must have a 6 & under swimmer and cannot have children in any other swimming age bracket. For example, if you have a 6 & under swimmer and a 9 & 10 swimmer, you may not volunteer as a 6 & Under Ready Bench. Due to the 6 & under swimmers completing their swimming earlier in the meet, this guideline is to help those parents with only 6 & under swimmers be able to leave with the younger swimmers.

Assistant Coordinators

Each Volunteer Coordinator may select Assistant Coordinators for the following volunteer positions to act as the supervisor of all volunteers in their area at each meet. For example, the Bench Boss Assistant Coordinator is in charge of training and supervising all bench bosses at all of the meets for that season. The qualifications for becoming an Assistant Coordinator for any of the following positions are the completion of one previous Cinco Ranch Swim Team season in which the family volunteered in the specific area and the willingness to do so for all meets in the season.

1. Timer
2. Ribbons/Scoring/Runner
3. Bench Boss
4. Ready Bench
5. Judges
6. Setup/Clean up
7. Concessions

Each Assistant Coordinator of the above should agree to work in this role for all of the meets in the season and is responsible for providing training to those families signed up to volunteer in their area. Completion of this role in a swim season will satisfy that family's volunteer obligations. In the event of any issues, the Assistant Coordinator should alert the Volunteer Coordinator.

Stroke/Turn Judge, Meet Director, Scorekeeper and Starter Volunteer Positions

The qualifications for signing up as a Stroke/Turn Judge, Meet Director, Scorekeeper and Starter Volunteer are the completion of one previous Cinco Ranch Swim Team season, attending certification classes provided by the WHALe League, as applicable, prior to the start of the swim season, attending any training provided by the Team Director, and the willingness to do so for all meets in the season.

All Other Positions

There are no pre-qualifications for the remainder of positions. Each family that signs up is required to attend any training offered by the Assistant Coordinator prior to the first meet.

Thank you for your commitments to support the Cinco Ranch Swim Team!