

Swim Team Survival Guide

"If I have but one day left to live, let it be a swim meet day because it will last forever."

Anonymous Author

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Sharon Johnston Swim Team (SJST)

Sharon Johnston Swim Team (SJST), a member of the Rocket City Swim League (RCSL), is commonly called a "summer" league as our swim season is from the end of May until the middle of July when the city meet is held. There are three divisions ("A", "B", and "C") in the RCSL. The "A" division comprises the highest scoring teams, then "B" and finally "C." The points scored at the city meet places each team in the appropriate division for the next year.

SJST is called the tornadoes. We chose this name when a tornado destroyed the Sharon Johnston pool in 1997.

According to the Webster Dictionary: *plural tor·na·does or tor·na·dos*

GO TORNADOES!

Coaches

Head Coach: Glenn Carr

Assistant Coach: Jenny Barrett

Board

President: Kellie Krause

Vice President: Diana Cook

Secretary: Kathy Zeigler

Treasurer: Lynn Strunk

Committee Heads:

Certified Officials: Jenny Barrett

City Meet Heat Sheet Ads: Farrar Pell

City Meet Volunteers: Farrar Pell

Computer Program: Lana Wethington-Nagy

Dual Meet Volunteers: Jennifer Hill

End-of-Season Party: Jodi Brown

Fundraisers: Lisa Lozier

Merchandise: Stephanie Hudson

Home Meet Director: Kellie Krause

Ribbons: Victoria Myers

T-Shirts: Lisa Smith

Webmaster: Diana Cook

Terminology

Age Groups: division of swimmers by age that determines the events in which they are eligible to participate. RCSL rules specify the following age groups:

6 & Under, 8 & Under, 9-10 year olds, 11-12 year olds, 13-14 year olds, and 15-17 year olds.

Anchor: The last swimmer in a relay.

Bull pen: Staging area at a meet where swimmers gather to receive their heat and lane assignments.

City Championship Meet: End-of-season meet between all swimmers from all teams in the Rocket City Swim League.

Clerk of Course: Responsibilities vary, but can include: making sure all swimmers are in the correct heat/lane prior to their race, seeding all heats, processing scratches, and posting heat/lane assignments.

Competitive Strokes: The four competitive strokes are (1) freestyle, (2) breaststroke, (3) backstroke, and (4) butterfly.

Competitor's Age: The swimmer's age that determines the "age group" in which the swimmer is placed during a meet. In the RCSL the eligibility of a swimmer in a particular age group will be determined by his date of birth. A swimmer will be placed in the appropriate age group on the anniversary of his date of birth. In instances such as the City Championship Meet when competition extends over two or more days, a swimmer's age shall be fixed by his age on the day the meet begins.

Course: The designated distance over which the competition is conducted. The standard for individual events is 25 yards/meters for 8 & under swimmers and 50 yards/meters for 9 & up swimmers. Relay events will be 100 yards/meters for 8 & under and 200 yards/meters for all other age groups.

Deck: The area around a swimming pool reserved for swimmers, coaches, and judges.

DQ: Disqualification from the event. A swimmer can be disqualified for various reasons.

Dual Meet: Any competition between two clubs.

E, H, L: The order of information most swimmers write on their arms and legs before a meet begins. For example, 49-2-4, then 69-1-7 means this swimmer is first swimming in Event 49, Heat 2, Lane 4, then later in the meet Event 69, Heat 1, Lane 7.

Event: Any race or series of races in a given stroke and distance for a specific age group and gender. Example: Girls 8 & Under 25 yard Freestyle.

Exhibition: Swimming event (freestyle) that allows all swim team members to participate in the swim meets (dual and city). Exhibition events do not count in the total point score for any team, but usually the swimmers are provided with a participation (exhibition) ribbon.

Diving well: A separate pool or a pool set off to the side of the competition pool. This pool has deeper water and diving boards/platforms. During a meet, this area may be designated as a warm-down pool with proper supervision.

False Start: A swimmer moves in his position once the starter has called "take your mark."

Flags: Triangular pennants alternating two or more contrasting colors suspended on a line stretched over each lane; short course yard pool they are 15 feet from the wall, in a meter pool they are 5 meters from the wall. Used primarily to notify backstrokers that the wall is coming.

Flip Turn: A type of turn used in front crawl (freestyle) and backstroke. As the swimmer approaches the wall, they tuck their body into a somersault, roll toward the wall and push off with their feet.

Flutter Kick: The alternating kick used in backstroke and front crawl, usually 6 kicks per cycle.

Heat: A division of an event used to cut the number of participants, when a single race to determine the winner would mean too many swimmers competing at the same time.

Heat Sheet: The program for the meet, showing all the "heats" or races in chronological order, including swimmers' names and seed times. Heat sheets are generally available at the entrance of the pool for a nominal fee.

Lane: The section of a pool, distinguished by lane lines, in which a swimmer is assigned to swim. At Sharon Johnston, lanes are numbered from 1 to 6, with lane 1 being the lane closest to the scoring table and lane 6 being the lane closest to the diving well.

Lane Rope: The easily breakable, floating markers attached to a line that stretch from the starting end to the turning end to separate each lane.

Lap: A lap is actually 'down and back' to the original point, thus making it two lengths. At the Sharon Johnston Pool this is 50 yards.

Length: A length is from one side of the pool to the other. At the Sharon Johnston Pool this is 25 yards.

Lead-off: The swimmer to execute the first leg of the relay (Medley, Mixed, and Free).

Leg: The part of a relay event swum by one individual swimmer.

Meet: The swimming equivalent to a "game." Summer league dual meets are usually held on Wednesday nights.

Medley Relay: Medley relay is swum by four different swimmers, each swimmer swimming one of the four strokes. The medley relay is swum in the following order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and freestyle.

Mixed Relay: A relay composed of boy and girl swimmers.

Start Position: The position taken by the swimmer at the beginning of the race. The swimmer is required to have at least one foot at the front of the starting block and remain motionless until the start signal sounds. The most common position has the swimmer bent over, knees bent and feet shoulder width apart. Some swimmers prefer a track start with one foot forward and one foot back. During dual meets the starts are performed from the side of the pool (not from the starting blocks).

Scoring: Dual meet scoring is as follows:

RELAY: ("A" Relays ONLY)	1st place - 7 points
	2nd place - 0 points
INDIVIDUAL EVENTS:	1st place - 5 points
	2nd place - 3 points
	3rd place - 1 point

Scratch: To withdraw from an event.

Seed: To assign a swimmer to a heat or lane according to their times. In most cases, the fastest swimmers are in the final heat of an event.

SJST: Sharon Johnston Swim Team

Stroke & Turn Judge: A trained swim official that judges the swimmers' legality for the event being swum. If a stroke & turn judge finds that the swimmer's stroke is not legal, he/she notifies the referee who can then disqualify the swimmer.

RCSL: Rocket City Swim League

Relay Exchange: The exchange between the swimmer in the water finishing the leg and the next swimmer on the relay team. A smooth exchange requires the finishing swimmer's hand to touch the wall prior to the next swimmer leaving the deck (block).

Time cards: A card that is either handed to the swimmer in the bull pen or given to the timer behind the lane. Cards usually list the swimmers name, event number, event description, and the lane and heat number the swimmer will swim in.

Touch: Can be at turns or finishes. See swimming strokes for proper touch technique(s) at turns and finishes.

Touch pad: Part of an automatic timing device placed on wall of each lane that will register the time when the swimmer completes the distance. The unit is activated when touched by whatever part of the body that hits first, be it the hand, head, or foot.

Warm-Up, Warm-Down: The beginning (warm-up) or ending (warm-down) section of a practice or meet where the effort is not on speed or distance, but rather to gently familiarize the body to exercise. Very important piece of any workout as it assists in preventing injury.

Swimming

Freestyle

In the freestyle, the competitor may swim any stroke he or she wishes. The usual stroke used is the Australian crawl. This stroke is characterized by the alternate overhand motion of the arms and a flutter kick. Each swimmer's head must surface within 15 meters of the start of the race. Finish, just get to the wall.

Breaststroke

A stroke performed while body is kept on the breast and both shoulders in line with the water's surface. The arms shall move simultaneously and in the same horizontal plane. Hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast on, under, or over the surface of the water. Picture yourself drawing an upside down heart. During the kick, all movements of the legs shall be simultaneous; feet must be turned outward during the propulsive part of kick. Sometimes called the "frog" kick. After the start and after each turn, the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs. The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke. After the start and each turn, a single butterfly kick, which must be followed by a breaststroke kick, is permitted during or at the completion of the first arm pull. Following which, all movements of the legs shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement. A scissor, flutter, or downward butterfly kick is not permitted except as provided herein. At the turn and finish of a breaststroke race, the hands must touch the wall simultaneously and the shoulders must be in line with the surface of the water.

Backstroke

Stroke performed while on the back. The shoulders can not rotate past the vertical toward the breast except during a turn in which some part of the body must touch the wall before pushing off the wall. Once the body has rotated past the vertical toward the breast for the turn, a continuous single arm pull or a continuous simultaneous double arm pull may be used to initiate the turn. The swimmer must have returned to a position on the back upon leaving the wall. Each swimmer's head must surface within 15 meters of the start of the race. During the finish the swimmer must touch the wall while on their back.

Butterfly

Swimmer's shoulders shall be in line with the water surface. Both arms are brought forward over the water and pulled back together. The kick is usually an up and down motion similar to that of a dolphin. Any movement of the legs and feet must be simultaneous. No flutter kicking is allowed. At the turn and finish, the hands must touch the wall simultaneously and the shoulders are level with the surface of the water. Each swimmer's head must surface within 15 meters of the start of the race.

Medley Relay

In the medley relay, all four strokes are swum by four different swimmers. No swimmer may swim more than one leg of the relay, which is swum in backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and freestyle order.

Mixed Relay

Relay that consist of 2 boys and 2 girls in that age group. Can be swum in any order.

Freestyle Relay

There are two freestyle relays – 100 and 200 yards. 8 & Under swim the 100 yard freestyle relay (25 yards per swimmer) and 9 & up swimmers swim the 200 yard freestyle relay (50 yards per swimmer). In the freestyle relays, four swimmers each swim one fourth of the total distance. As in the medley relay, no individual may swim more than one leg of the relay.

Starts and Turns

Many races are lost in poor starts and turns. In the start, the swimmer is called to the starting position by the starter who visually checks that all swimmers are in the down positions and still. Then, once the starter is satisfied, the race is started by an electronic tone. Quick turns are essential to a good race. In all events the swimmer must touch the wall, but in the freestyle and the backstroke, the swimmer may "somersault" as he or she reaches the wall, touching only with the feet. In the other two competitive strokes, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously before executing the turn.

Swim Meets: Swimmers & Parents

What to Bring:

1. Team suit, caps and goggles (including an extra pair for lost or broken goggles during the meet).
2. Water bottles or sports drinks and healthy snacks such as fresh fruit, energy bars, bagels, sandwiches etc. (Candy and sodas are not good snacks for your swimmer).
3. Sunscreen for first part of swim meet before sun sets.
4. A black sharpie, a highlighter, and a pen/pencil.
5. Several towels.

6. Sweats, t-shirts or a deck coat for a cold, wet swimmer.
7. Whatever toiletries and clothing your child may need for changing after the meet.
8. Whatever medication (such as inhalers) your child may need during the meet.
9. Cards, games, books, or whatever your child may want to do to pass the time between events.
10. Comfortable folding lawn chair to sit in/on.
11. Money for heat sheet and concession stand.

What to wear:

1. You should dress in layers. At the beginning of the meet it can be very warm and then become quite chilly after the sun sets. See #6 above.
2. Team suit.
3. Swim cap. Swimmers with hair that hangs below their chin should wear a swim cap or their hair up in a ponytail. Team caps can be purchased for a nominal fee. If you do not want to wear the team swim cap at the RCSL Championship City Meet then the swimmer's cap must be a solid color.

What to do:

1. Do not skip the warm up. It is important, and important things happen during that pre-meet time.
2. Swimmer Check in. Check in with the coach so he knows you are there and ready to swim.
3. Find the team and sit together. It's always a good idea to have extra towels, blankets, or lawn chairs to sit on/in. SJST sits behinds the scoring tables and next to the concession stand area for home meets. At away meets, look for your coach and team.
4. Buy a "Heat Sheet." They are usually about \$1.00. Find your child's event numbers, etc. Some people write their child's event, heat, and lane on the child's arm or leg with the sharpie. It helps the child to find where he or she is supposed to be.
5. Encourage your swimmer, but don't coach him or her. Let the coach critique the swim; your kid doesn't need to hear it from you! What he or she needs from you is cheering, lessons in positive attitudes, congratulations for a good effort, and an example of good sportsmanship.
6. Volunteer Check in. All volunteers signed up to work the meet should check in with the Meet Coordinator at the scoring table as soon as they arrive at the pool so the coordinator knows you are present. The Coordinator will then call all volunteers to the scoring table just prior to the start of the meet to go over assignments and answer any questions you may have.
7. Keep your child (and yourself) hydrated with plenty of water.
8. Ask questions. You won't learn how a meet works very quickly unless you ask a lot of questions. Other swim parents, even those from other teams, are happy to answer and help. Get one to teach you the ropes, and by your second or third meet you'll be the old pro helping out the newcomers.

Events:

Dual Meets events are swum in the following order from youngest to oldest (girls before boys):

Medley Relays

Freestyle (including Freestyle exhibition)

Breaststroke

Mixed Relays

Backstroke

Butterfly

Freestyle Relays

Swim Meet Survival Tips:

Prepare your swimmer for their swim meet: Swim meets are very busy and exciting, but they can be overwhelming for young swimmers and those who are new to competition. Here are some pointers to help get them (and you) through the meet.

1. Practice pays off. Encourage your swimmer to get to practice as often as they can and work hard during those practice sessions.
2. Get enough rest: Some of the meets go late into the night. Make sure your swimmer gets enough sleep before a meet and stays out of the sun on the day of the meet.
3. Feed your swimmer: Swimmers are working hard and burning lots of calories in the water. Make sure they eat well before and during the meet.
4. Know where and when you need to be for the meet. Away meet pool directions are posted on the website.
5. Set the scene: We compete in a variety of pools around the RCSL area. At each meet, the host team will set up a "visitor area" for swimmers and their families to park their gear (lawn chairs, blankets, coolers, etc.). All swimmers are to remain with the team during the swim meet. This promotes team "spirit" and helps prevent your swimmer from missing their event.
6. Do your best: Swim meets are competitive, but the main purpose is to show the swimmers that all their hard work at practice is paying off for them personally. The best thing parents can do for their swimmer is support them, no matter how they perform at a meet. Some will get great times, others not so great, and everyone gets disqualified (DQ'd) at least once in their swimming career. Just hug them and be proud of them for getting out there and doing their best.
7. Ask another parent: If you have questions about what's happening at a meet, please ask a "veteran" parent or one of the board members. They'll be happy to try and help. Please refrain from asking the coaches any questions during a meet. The coaches are trying their best to "coach" your swimmers to do their best.

Swim Meet Volunteers

Parent Volunteers:

The key to a successful swim program is the parent volunteer. Without each volunteer, the program does not exist. It takes approximately 30 volunteers to host a home swim meet. Each family is expected to volunteer to work at least one dual meet. In addition, if your child swims in a competition/scored event at the RCSL Championship City Meet, you **must** volunteer to work at least one session during the two day event. It is very important that you meet your volunteer obligations. All positions are essential, whether you are handing out cards to swimmers or judging strokes and turns. If you cannot make a dual meet shift, it is your responsibility to find a replacement several days in advance and notify the "dual meet volunteer coordinator". You must also be sure that you work another meet if you switch and inform the meet coordinator.

Volunteer Meet Jobs:

The following outlines the jobs that are required to run a meet including a brief description of what the jobs entail, the training required, the time frame required, and the number of volunteers required per meet to fill that job. A "session" starts at the time of warm-up and ends after the last event. Please note that some jobs require that you be available to work before a session begins or after it ends.

Swim Meet Coordinator:

Organizes the meet and assist the Meet Referee the day of the meet to ensure that everything runs smoothly and efficiently.

Training: Must have at least two years experience with the working of a dual swim meet.

Time estimate: 1 hour prior to meet plus meet session.

Number required per meet: 1

Assistant Swim Meet Coordinator:

Assist Meet Manager. Often, this person is in training to become a Meet Coordinator.

Training: Must have at least one year experience with the working of a dual swim meet.

Time estimate: Same as Meet Coordinator.

Number required per meet: 0

Meet Referee:

Responsible for running the meet once the warm-up session has started. Gives instructions to other officials working the meet. Knows the rules, asks for both sides of any disputes and is the final say in any disagreement about procedure or rules enforcement. Must be a certified RCSL Referee/Start official.

Training: Requires at least one year of Stroke and Turn officiating experience/certification.

Time estimate: Meet session.

Number required per meet: 1

Starter/Recall:

Reports to Referee. Identifies the event that is being swum, gives the command to the swimmers to take a starting position and provides the signal that begins each race. Must be a certified RCSL Referee/Start Official.

Training: Requires at least one year of Stroke and Turn officiating experience/certification.

Time estimate: Meet session.

Number required per meet: 1

Stroke & Turn Judge:

Reports to Referee. Watches a specific area of the pool during each event and identifies any violation of rules that might occur. Rules violations are signaled by a raised hand. Must be a certified RCSL Stroke and Turn official.

Training: Requires at least two years of competitive swimming experience.

Time estimate: Meet session.

Number required per meet: 4

Computer Worker:

Responsible for running the swim meet computer program. Includes, scratches, heat lane assignments and retrieving results from the timers and printing event results.

Training: Training on the computer is required; length of training is based on an individual's understanding of the program and comfort level in operating the computer at a meet.

Time estimate: Meet session plus pre-session preparation time and post-session completion of results.

Number required per meet: 1

Computer Worker Assistant:

Assist Computer person as required including sorting papers, checking results, etc.

Training: Should be in training, or already comfortable with computer system.

Time estimate: Meet session plus pre-session preparation time and post-session completion of results.

Number required per meet: 1

Head Timer:

Responsible for stopwatch and lane assignments of timers. Also serves as “Back-up” timer and assists runner as required.

Training: Should have at least one years experience timing a dual meet.

Time estimate: Meet session.

Number required per meet: 1

Timer:

Starts a stopwatch when the Starter gives the signal and stops it when the swimmer touches the wall then records the time on the time card.

Training: On the job training on how to operate the stopwatch and record swimmers time on the time card.

Time estimate: Meet session.

Number required per meet: 6

Runner:

Collects all place judge forms and time cards after each event and delivers them to the Scorekeeper.

Training: none

Time estimate: Meet session.

Number required per meet: 2

“Bull Pen” Supervisor:

Responsible for assisting swimmers prepare for their events and makes sure that they leave the “bull pen” in time for their event.

Training: None

Time estimate: Meet session.

Number required per meet: 2

Place Judge:

Watches the finish of the race and verbally states the order of finish for all six lanes.

Training: None

Time estimate: Meet session.

Number required per meet: 2

Scribe:

Writes down what the Place Judge says onto the official finish form.

Training: None

Time estimate: Meet session

Number required per meet: 2

Scorekeeper:

Evaluates the place judge forms and time card information, assigns the official order of finish and awards points for each event. Also keeps a running total of the overall meet score and performs an audit at the end of all events to verify that the score is correct.

Training: None

Time estimate: Meet session

Number required per meet: 1

Heat Sheet Seller:

Sells heat sheets before home dual meets. In addition, sells team caps and team magnets.

Training: None

Time estimate: 30 minutes to 1 hour prior to start of dual meet.

Number required per meet: 1-2

Questions and Answers

Q. What is a swim meet, and how many are there?

A. A swim meet is an organized competition between swim teams in a given category of the RCSL ("A", "B", or "C"). These are called dual meets. At the end of the season, a RCSL Championship City Meet is held over a two day period that includes all teams in the league.

Q. When are swim meets?

A. Except for the championship city swim meet, our swim meets are on Wednesday nights. Warm-ups start at 5:30 and the meet begins at 6:30. We will have time trials before the dual meets start to give all swimmers the opportunity to swim all of the events. The coach will usually schedule one or two additional ("candy" or "B") meets during the season that are held on Saturday mornings and are not for points, but allows all swimmers to swim all strokes (except for relays).

Q. How is a swim meet organized and how long does it last?

A. A dual meet consists of 42 events. For example, event 1 is the 8 & Under Girls 100 yard Medley Relay. Individual events may have several heats (races) since there are often more swimmers swimming than there are lanes. In our pool, we only have six lanes, so if 10 swimmers are swimming in an event, there will be two heats. It usually takes about 3-4 hours to complete a swim meet.

Q. Do we have an official swim suit for meets?

A. Our official swim suit can be purchased from First Place Athletics at 805 Regal Dr. SW #2, Huntsville, AL 35801 (256) 536-4770 (behind Parkway Place Mall facing L & N Drive). Just tell them you swim on the SJST.

Q. How do I know when my child is supposed to swim?

A. You can purchase a heat sheet for \$1.00 at dual meets.

Q. What's a heat sheet?

A. List of the events and swimmers at a meet. The "program" for the meet.

Q. What swimming events are there?

A.

- 8 & under 100 Medley Relay
- 9 – 10 100 Medley Relay
- 11 – 12 200 Medley Relay
- 13 – 14 200 Medley Relay
- 15 – 17 200 Medley Relay
- 6 & under 25 Freestyle
- 6 & under 25 Freestyle Exhibition
- 8 & under 25 Freestyle
- 8 & under 25 Freestyle Exhibition
- 9 – 10 50 Freestyle
- 9 – 10 50 Freestyle Exhibition
- 11 – 12 50 Freestyle
- 11 – 12 50 Freestyle Exhibition
- 13 – 14 50 Freestyle
- 13 – 14 50 Freestyle Exhibition
- 15 – 17 50 Freestyle
- 15 – 17 50 Freestyle Exhibition
- 8 & under 25 Breaststroke
- 9 – 10 50 Breaststroke
- 11 – 12 50 Breaststroke
- 13 – 14 50 Breaststroke
- 15 – 17 50 Breaststroke
- 8 & under 100 Mixed Relay
- 9 – 10 200 Mixed Relay
- 11 – 12 200 Mixed Relay
- 13 – 14 200 Mixed Relay
- 15 – 17 200 Mixed Relay
- 8 & under 25 Backstroke
- 9 – 10 50 Backstroke
- 11 – 12 50 Backstroke
- 13 – 14 50 Backstroke
- 15 – 17 50 Backstroke
- 8 & under 25 Butterfly
- 9 – 10 50 Butterfly
- 11 – 12 50 Butterfly
- 13 – 14 50 Butterfly
- 15 – 17 50 Butterfly
- 8 & under 100 Freestyle Relay
- 9 – 10 200 Freestyle Relay
- 11 – 12 200 Freestyle Relay
- 13 – 14 200 Freestyle Relay
- 15 – 17 200 Freestyle Relay

Q. What is a mixed relay?

A. A mixed relay consists of 2 girls and 2 boys

Q. What is a Medley Relay?

A. A Medley Relay is a relay with 4 swimmers where each of the swimmers swims different strokes. Think of a vegetable medley with 4 different types of veggies. The first swimmer swims the Backstroke. The next swimmer swims the Breaststroke, then the next swimmer swims the Butterfly, and the final swimmer swims a really fast Freestyle. Each member of an 8 and under relay swims 1 length of the pool. In all of the other age groups each swimmer swims a 50 of their stroke.

Q. How do I get on a parents relay?

A. Excellent question. Ask one of the coaches to be on a parent relay.

Q. How can parents help?

A. We need lots of parent help. We need volunteers to help time, start, referee, record times, print ribbons, and collect cards from timers, etc. Kids are very proud of their parents when they see them participating in their swim meets. Parents can also help by being supportive and encouraging of their child. Hopefully our kids will develop a life long love of swimming not just for competition, but also for health.

Q. Will my child get to participate in the City Meet?

A. Not all of our swimmers will get to swim a stroke other than freestyle in the city meet. Unfortunately, we only are allowed a limited number of slots at the city meet except in the exhibition freestyle event. At the city meet they have a freestyle exhibition and award ribbons for places 1 – 16.

Your child must swim in 2 dual meets in order to compete at the city meet. The top three swimmers in each stroke will swim that stroke in the city meet.

Q. Why isn't my child swimming in a relay?

A. This is probably best explained by an example. Take the freestyle relay, for instance, in which four swimmers participate. If there are only three swimmers in your child's age/gender group, then there are not enough to make a relay team. If there are more than four swimmers, but less than eight, then there are only enough swimmers to make one relay team. In the latter case, the swimmers with the top four individual freestyle times are chosen for the relay team. Only "A" relays from each team is awarded points during a dual meet.

Q. Does it matter what order the medley relay is swam in?

A. Yes, the medley relay must be swum in the following order: back, breast, fly, and free.

Q. How can we tell who wins the meet?

A. All swimmers swimming in a competition event are placed and scored. Swimmers swimming in an exhibition event are not scored or placed. A place judge for each team sits at the finish line and decides which swimmer was first, second, and so on. Points are assigned based on place (see "scoring" terminology for points awarded) and tallied up by the scorekeepers as the meet progresses. At the end of the meet, the team with the most points wins. Dual Swim Meets results can be located on the Rocket City Swim League website at <http://www.swimrcsl.org>. These results are usually posted within 48-72 hours after the meet.

Q. How can I tell what event we are on?

A. The official (starter) with the bullhorn that starts each race will announce the event and heat before each race.

Q. Why do we have exhibition swimmers?

A. Each team is limited to three swimmers in each competition (scored) event. A freestyle exhibition event allows every swimmer on the team an opportunity to swim in a dual meet. Exhibition events are important because they allow your swimmer to improve their time and it helps the coaches track their progress. Please help you child understand that they should watch for and celebrate "best times," which are their personal

records in this stroke. Their times will be on the exhibition ribbons that are given out a few days after each meet.

Q. My child got DQ'd. What is this about?

A. For some of the strokes there are technical things that they legally can and cannot do. For example, in butterfly and breaststroke, they must touch the wall with 2 hands and simultaneously during the turn and finish of the race. If the official notices that a child is doing something illegal for that stroke, they can get disqualified or DQ'd. The coach can find out exactly what they did wrong so they can work on it for the next meet. Try not to make a big deal about this. All swimmers are DQ'd at least once during their swimming career.

Q. How do I find out about practice schedules, swim meet dates, and other important events?

A. Our team relies heavily on our website for communication. All of our scheduled and last minute events (weather cancellations) are posted on our team website. Parents are reminded to check the website daily for practice schedule updates. All scheduled swim meets are posted on our website with maps to away meet pools. The website link is <http://www.sjst.org>.

I don't see my question here. What do I do?

If you have any more questions ask a coach or a board member/committee head.