

Tara Tarpon Swim Team Q&A

Below are frequently asked questions and answers about the Tara Tarpon Swim Team.

Practices

Can my child be on the team even if they do not swim well? Children not able to meet the minimum swimming requirements for safety will not be allowed to swim at practice or at meets until the requirements are met. The coaching staff will evaluate new swimmers during the first few practices they attend. Generally, a child should be able to swim safely at least half the length of the pool. If after evaluation a child does not meet the minimum standard, the coaches will recommend that the child discontinue swim team practices until he/she can meet the minimum standards. Parents are encouraged to enroll the child in private lessons to improve the child's swimming abilities. Many of our coaches offer private lessons. Once the child's swimming has improved the coaches will re-evaluate the child regarding his/her participation on the swim team.

When do swimmers practice? Practices are everyday Monday through Friday. Practice for ages 10 and over is from 8:30 a.m. until 9:30 a.m. Practice for ages 9 and under is from 9:30 a.m. until 10:15 a.m. Evening practice is 5:30 pm-6:30 pm M-W.

My child can't make morning practice. Is it okay if he/she misses practice? While we encourage swimmers to attend morning practice every day, we understand that there may be times it may not be possible. Tara is proud to offer afternoon practices for all ages that are unable to make morning practices. Afternoon practices will run on Monday- Wednesday, evenings from 5:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m.

My young child cries when I leave him. Should I stay at practice? We know it is not easy to leave a crying or a nervous child. However, we don't mind parents leaving us with a crying child. Our coaches have found it easier to deal with an apprehensive child when the parent is not in sight. Therefore, if your child has a hard time separating from you, we ask that you at least leave the pool deck during practice. Our coaches are good at working with young children. Typically, once the parent is out of sight, it does not take long for the coaches to divert the child's attention and make him/her feel at ease.

Do swimmers practice the day of a meet? There is no practice the day of a meet.

How do I communicate with my child's coach about his/her development as a swimmer? We encourage you to e-mail your child's coach regarding any questions, concerns, and positive feedback you may. We will be using e-mail as our primary method communication. In fact, it is extremely important that at registration you provide us with at least one e-mail address that is viewed at least once a week. The Tara Tarpon coaches will be e-mailing you throughout the season with information concerning meets, practices, and social events.

Swim Meets

We will be out of town for a swim meet. Should I tell the coach? If you cannot make a meet you must notify your coach via e-mail as soon as possible. This is vitally important so the coaches know in advance how to fill swim meet slots with available swimmers. While we encourage you to use e-mail to communicate meets you will miss, you will still be able to use the manual scratch list on the Tara Tarpon Swim Team board. It is presumed unless you tell the coach otherwise that your child(ren) will make every meet. Repeated violations of this policy may, at the discretion of the coaches, restrict your child's participation in future meets.

What events can my child swim? Children six & under all participate in two events. Each child will swim one lap of the pool in the freestyle and the backstroke events. Once these events are finished they may leave or may stay and cheer on the team. Children seven and older will be scheduled to participate in three of the individual stroke events, including freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly. They also may participate

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in the freestyle and medley relays. Ten year olds and older also can participate in the individual medley as one of their three individual events.

How do I know what events my child is swimming in? The coaches before the meet will post the swimming line-up. They will post the line-up for the four strokes and IM races and they will have a separate poster made with the relay line-up. Also heat sheets stating the line-up and order of events can be purchased at the meets. It is important that parents know the events that their child is swimming. While the coaches try their best to have all swimmers ready for their event, it is helpful if parent's aid in making sure their child doesn't miss an event.

Does my child get a ribbon if he/she places in a race? The swimmers whose times come in 1st through 6th place in their event will get a ribbon. Often swimmers will get ribbons for their participation in relays. Since most of our relays place, we recommend that swimmers stay to the end of the meet so they can participate in the relays. Heat ribbons will be given to the winner of each heat providing there is more than one heat for the race. Swimmers eight and under who do not place during the meet will receive a participation ribbon. Ribbons are typically handed out at practice a day or two after the meet.

How long do swim meets last? Swim meets last several hours. While afternoon meets typically start at 4:00 p.m., they are often not over until 8:00p.m. At the home meets, the snack bar is open and will provide its usual fare. Try to discourage the swimmers from eating too close to their event.

How do I know how my child did at the meet? As we get results at the meet, we post them. All the results will be posted at the next day's practice.

What is the City Meet? Every swimmer should participate in the City Meet. This is a very important meet for us. At the City Meet, all the swim teams in the River City League compete over a 3-day period. We get points for each swimmer that places. The team with the most points is the league champion.

Why do we need so many volunteers? It takes a lot of people to make a meet run smoothly. During the home meets, we need two timers for every lane to time the race. Away meets we need one per lane. Home meets we need volunteers for the Clerk of Course. These individuals line up the swimmers according to their event, heat, and lane. We also need help with completing the ribbons the swimmers won. This is a job people can help with at the morning practice after the meet. We always need people to help operate the computer. This job is in air conditioning! If you like to grill burgers and hot dogs, then the snack bar is always welcome to volunteers. However, one must be 18 years of age for this duty. No experience is necessary for any of the swim meet jobs and no matter where you volunteer, you will be able to watch your child swim at the meet.

If you are unable to help at a meet, we have other volunteer activities you might be able to help with. Ribbons are completed during morning practices. And we always have a need for people to chair or help with our social events.