

**FARMERS BRANCH
BULL SHARKS
SWIMMER/PARENT
HANDBOOK**



WELCOME

We are pleased that you and your child(ren) have decided to participate in the 2018 City of Farmers Branch Bull Sharks summer swim team. As a member of the Texas Amateur Athletic Federation (TAAF), we are able to provide children with the opportunity to experience recreational competitive swimming during the summer. We will be swimming in TAAF Region 7. The teams in our division are Allen, Carrollton, Cedar Hill, Commerce, Denison, DeSoto, Farmers Branch, Frisco, Garland, Grande Prairie, Irving, Lancaster, McKinney, Mesquite, Metroplex Aquatics, Midlothian, Paris, Plano, Rowlett, Safe Splash, and Terrell. The season consists of circuit swim meets with a small number of these teams each weekend and the regional and state meet at the end of the season.

MISSION STATEMENT

Farmers Branch Bull Sharks is an amateur youth swim team competing under TAAF (Texas Amateur Athletic Federation). We are a not-for-profit group managed by parent volunteers.

It is the mission of the Farmers Branch Bull Sharks organization to promote the sport of swimming to the youth of our community by offering a summer league program with quality instruction. We value the education of our youth, the development of their skills in swimming, and the positive support of the families involved in their growth.

ELIGIBILITY

Any child, who is between 4 and 18 years of age on June 1, 2018, and a novice swimmer, is eligible to join the swim team. A swimmer will swim in the age group that he/she is in as of June 1.

TAAF rules define a summer only swimmer as any swimmer (12 or younger) that has not participated in clinics that exceed 90 minutes per week from April 1-30, 2018.

TAAF swimmers may not have participated in a USA swim meet after January 1, 2018.

VOLUNTEERING

Parents, our swimmers NEED your help!! Running TAAF swim meets requires the participation of a minimum of 67 volunteers. Although we will not be hosting a swim meet this year, we will be required to provide volunteers at the circuit meets. We need help from all of you; please consider volunteering in one of the following volunteer positions: (Training will be provided for each of these 😊)

Ready Bench: *Assists in getting swimmers in correct order or getting them to starting block.*

Runner: *Walks cards from swimmers to timers to score table during meet.*

Heat Ribbons: *Hand out heat ribbons at end of the race to age 10 and under swimmers.*

Award Labels: *Apply award labels to back of ribbons during the meet.*

Timer: *Time swimmers during the meet. (We always need lots of these.)*

GENERAL INFORMATION

TEAM COMMUNICATION

The primary method of communication from the team is via email, Facebook and team website. We MUST have the proper email address for your family. If you are not receiving emails, please let one of the board members know.

Team website: swimbullsharks.com

This website will be used for registering swimmers for swim meets, signing up to volunteer, making announcements, posting meet results, and generally keeping everyone informed.

Public Facebook page: [FarmersBranchBullSharks](#)

Note: This is our public page and only general information will be posted here.

Private Facebook page: [bull.sharks.90](#)

This page is only for team members and their parents. We will post more personal information here and pictures of swimmers throughout the summer.

Text Notification: Text “@fbsharks” to 81010

This is a one way text notification that allows parents/swimmers to receive important notifications regarding changes to practice schedules, reminders, meet information, etc.

TEAM PICTURES

Smile for Bull Shark Pictures: No regular practice on this day. We will have a day for pictures and this will be posted on the website. Individual pictures are optional but being present for a team picture is required.

TEAM UNIFORM

TEAM SWIM CAP: The team swim cap is provided with the registration fee.

TEAM SWIMSUIT: The team swimsuit is an optional purchase and is available in the team store. If you choose not to purchase the suit, a plain black suit is recommended.

TEAM T-SHIRTS: Team T-shirts are optional and will be available for purchase in the team store.

GOGGLES: All swimmers need to have goggles. If your swimmer needs to borrow goggles, please see coach before practice begins. Goggles are available for purchase from the team store.

FINS: Fins are optional for purchase. Coach will have some fins at practice for those who do not want to purchase their own. Fins are available for purchase from the team store.

PRACTICE TIMES

Swimmers must attend the practices within their skill comfort level. Swimmers can move up levels during the season with recommendations from the coach.

PRACTICES

Green: First time competitive swimmers and all under 6.

Blue: Swimmer has understanding of all four strokes but not 100% proficient.

Navy: Legal in all four strokes/experienced competitor.

MAY: Every Tuesday and Friday

6:00pm-7:00pm – All levels

JUNE/JULY: Monday Through Friday

9:00am-9:50am – Green

9:40am-11:00am – Blue

9:00am-11:00am – Navy

Location:

Farmers Branch Natatorium

1334 Valwood Parkway, Carrollton, TX

Other opportunities for Stroke Work:

JUNE/JULY: Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday

6:00-6:45pm - Green

6:30-7:30pm - Blue and Navy

Location:

The Colony Aquatic Park

5580 N Colony Boulevard

The Colony, TX 75056

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

Swimmers age 8 and under are required to have a parent at practice.

Parents may watch practice in the spectator stands upstairs.

- Non-swimmers will not be allowed on the benches downstairs (this is distracting for the swimmers and disruptive to the coaches).

Trust the Coach

- Avoid giving your child instructions during practice and swim meets.
- Our goal is to provide each swimmer with what they need to reach their own potential.
- If you disagree with a coaching decision, you can discuss that in private after the meet or after practice.

Support your child and the team in a positive manner.

- Cheer for your child and the team, not against the opposing swimmer or team.
- Offensive language and profanity is prohibited during practice and swim events.
- Stress goals and improving times, not beating other swimmers.
- Praise your swimmers for improving their skills no matter the outcome of a swim event.
- Show appreciation by recognizing a great swim by any swimmer.

Bring your swimmer to practice on time, ready to swim. Swimmers should have goggles, swimsuit, and towel.

Register your swimmer for the meets on time.

Bring your swimmer to meets on time.

SWIMMER CODE OF CONDUCT

Arrive at practice on time and ready to swim. That means: you should have your goggles, swimsuit, and towel—please do not ask to borrow these from the coaches. We recommend bringing at least 2 pairs of goggles.

- **Check In Procedure**

The team roster will be at the table as you enter the Natatorium. When you arrive, find your name on the list and place a check mark in the column for that day.

- Trust the coach and understand there is a clear developmental progression to success. If you need to talk with the coach, you may address that AFTER PRACTICE, not during practice.
- Have a positive attitude toward coaches and teammates.
- Offensive language and profanity is prohibited during practice and swim events.
- Swim fins are for use in the pool only (no walking on the deck in swim fins).
- Respect the facility. Take care of the equipment you use and put it back in the proper place at the end of practice.

SWIM MEET INFORMATION

WEEKLY MEET INFORMATION: Check the Bull Sharks webpage each week for information about the upcoming meet. You will find directions to the pool, check-in information, an estimation of the length of the meet, and any other details that may help your family for the upcoming meet.

MEET ENTRIES: All parents will need to enter their swimmers into their specific events by Tuesday of each week. Failure to enter your swimmer will result in them not being able to participate in swim meet for that week. Event registration will be sent in a link each week. Each swimmer may only enter up to three individual events per TAAF rules. The coaches will have final say over entries and will decide relays. If your child does not select events for the meet, coach will select the events for them.

Relay Selection (Circuit Meets): The A Relay at each meet will be selected by the Computer Best Times List. If a swimmer chosen for the A Relay plans to miss the meet or scratches, the coaches will make every effort to move up the next highest seeded swimmer. The B and C Relays will be chosen by coaches each week. Swimmers will be selected based on attendance at practice and meet availability. Every effort will be made to get all swimmers into at least one relay during the season.

Relay Selection (Regional Meets): Coaches will use the computer, practice attendance, student work ethic and swimmer availability to put together the most competitive relay to take to the regional events. You must let us know by June 1, if your swimmer will not be available to swim at either regional meet.

At any meet, if a swimmer does not show up 30 minutes before a relay event is

scheduled in the meet, that swimmer will be replaced in the relay for that meet and subject to suspension for relays in the next meet that they participate in.

CHECK-IN PROCEDURES FOR MEETS: Check-in for meets begins at 7 a.m. and all swimmers must be checked in by 7:30a.m. When you arrive, the first thing you must do is check-in at the check-in table. If you have not checked in by 7:30 a.m. you will be scratched from any relay that has alternates available. You must honor the check-in time. Each swimmer will need to write their event numbers with a permanent marker on their arm before warm up.

WARM-UP: All swimmers are encouraged to participate in a short warm-up to get use to the water, especially at away meets, to practice starts, turns and finishes. Encourage your swimmer to find coach and ask her what she would like for them to do for warm-up. Even for the youngest swimmers, it is important to get in and swim a lap or two. Warm-ups for the swimmers usually begin at 7:15 a.m.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE MEETS: Lots of participants, noise, heat, excitement, food and fun. Remember to bring something for your children to do (cards, games, books) and something to sit on and under while they wait for their events. Food and drinks may be purchased at most of the meets, or may be brought from home. We recommend bringing water or something to drink, chairs and some kind of tent for shade.

- All swimmers should get a good night's sleep the night before a meet and eat breakfast the morning of the meet.
- Bring/purchase healthy snacks for your swimmers during meets. Limit unhealthy snack and sodas. What the swimmer puts in their body DOES affect the way they swim.
- Bring sunscreen and shoes. Some waiting areas are outside.
- Please help watch your children. We want a safe environment for everyone, so we ask that there be no running, wrestling, throwing things or rowdy behavior in the team waiting areas.
- We are proud of our team and need to take extra pride in keeping our areas clean at both home and away meets. Please be responsible and pick up your own garbage before leaving a meet.
- All swimmers should stay in the team area whenever possible. Parents are responsible for getting their swimmers to the ready bench when their event is called.
- All swimmers should see their coach before and after each race at the meets. Please encourage your swimmer to do this.
- Please never leave a meet without notifying your coach. You may be leaving

before the last event or your swimmer may be needed for a relay.

HELPFUL HINT: Buy a heat sheet for \$3 to guide you through the meet. This will give you all the events, heats and times of each swimmer. The times in the heat sheets are the swimmers' fastest legal time not necessarily the most recent time. The first time the event is swam in a meet, the time is either from last year or it is a time established by the coach at practice.

TIME FRAME: Swim meets are held on Saturdays. Warm-ups for the swimmers begin at 7:15a.m. The meets usually begin at 8:15a.m. and end around 1p.m. The regional meet will be divided into sessions and these will be released closer to the event date. Parents are responsible for getting swimmers to and from the meets on time. If there is a time conflict, please notify the coaches. Parents are also asked to help during the meets. It takes approximately 76 volunteers to run one swim meet, so any and all help is greatly appreciated!

LOST AND FOUND: All items left behind at practices and swim meets (home and away) will be placed in the Lost and Found baskets at the pool. If not claimed, the items will be donated to charity every week during the swim season. Please remember to label everything taken to practices and meets.

RESULTS: Swim meet results will also be posted on the team website.

DISQUALIFICATION: Swimmers will only be allowed to swim strokes that they are legal in prior to each meet. Coach will let you and your swimmer know if there is a stroke they are not ready to compete in. At some point during the season, a swimmer might be disqualified during an event. This means the swimmer has not properly performed the stroke sometime during the race. A "DQ" can be emotional for any swimmer, but is especially hard on the younger swimmers. A Stroke and Turn Official will try to explain to the swimmer what was done incorrectly. All swimmers should be encouraged and take this as a learning experience. Even the best swimmers have been disqualified at some point! If a swimmer is disqualified, no official time is recorded, so an award can't be earned. Some common errors leading to a disqualification are the following:

Relays: Leaving early before the previous swimmer touches or doing the wrong stroke.

Freestyle: Walking on the bottom or pulling on the lane lines (hanging onto the lane line is fine).

Breast Stroke: Two underwater pulls during start or turn; not touching with two hands simultaneously at the turn or the finish, or using an incorrect kick (often

times a scissor kick).

Butterfly: An incorrect kick (often times a flutter kick instead of a dolphin kick; not touching with two hands simultaneously at a turn or finish, or both hands not coming out of the water at the same time.

RIBBONS & AWARDS

MEET RIBBONS: Each swimmer has the opportunity to win ribbons at each meet. Ribbons will be distributed the following week at practice.

Also, every individual event that a Bull Shark swimmer improves his/her time, the swimmer will receive a “Personal Best” Ribbon labeled with the swimmer’s name, date, event and time. The swimmer must earn an official time in a meet and then Personal Best Ribbons can be earned on improving those times. Personal Best Ribbons will be awarded after a swimmer has legally swum an event two times. The first time they swim the event will establish their time, the second time will show the improvement.

Heat ribbons will be awarded at the end of their race and at all regular season circuit meets. At the regional and state meets, awards will only be given to the top participants in each age group race and no heat ribbons are awarded.

AWARDS: At the end of the season, there is an awards ceremony during which awards will be issued at the coaches’ discretion.

2018 SWIM MEET SCHEDULE

DATE	LOCATION	DEADLINE FOR SIGN-UP	LINK TO POOL
June 2, 2018	CARROLLTON	May 29. 11:59pm	Rosemeade Rainforest Aquatic Complex 1334 E Rosemeade Pkwy, Carrollton, TX 75007
June 9, 2018	FRISCO	June 5. 11:59pm	Bruce Eubanks Natatorium 7411 First St, Frisco, TX 75034
June 16, 2018	ALLEN	June 12. 11:59pm	Don Rodenbaugh Natatorium 110 Rivercrest Blvd, Allen, TX 75002
June 23, 2018	DENISON	June 19. 11:59pm	Denison Waterloo Pool Address: 1501 W Brock St, Denison, TX 75020
July 7, 2018	ALLEN	July 3. 11:59pm	Don Rodenbaugh Natatorium 110 Rivercrest Blvd, Allen, TX 75002
July 14, 2018	FRISCO	July 10. 11:59pm	Bruce Eubanks Natatorium 7411 First St, Frisco, TX 75034
July 21, 2018	DENISON	July 27. 11:59pm	Denison Waterloo Pool Address: 1501 W Brock St, Denison, TX 75020
July 26-29, 2018	COLLEGE STATION	July 14. 11:59pm	Student Recreation Center 797 Olsen Blvd, College Station, TX 77845

Board Members

Houtan Mojdeh - **President**

Veronika Ramirez - **Treasurer, Secretary**

Jenny Bessonette - **Communications Director**

Coaches

Joyce Curry - **Head Coach**