

# PVSL Championships Information Winter 2024-2025

**DATES:** Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup>  
**LOCATION:** Springfield College's Art Linkletter Natatorium  
**Address:** 263 Alden St, Springfield, MA 01109

Champs Sessions are divided into the following age groups:

- **CHAMPS SESSION 1: AGES 8 & UNDER**

- Location: Springfield College
- Date: Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup>
- **Swimmer Arrival Time: 7:00 AM**
- Meet Start Time: 8:40 AM
- Admission: \$5
- Programs: TBD

- **CHAMPS SESSION 2: AGES 11-12**

- Location: Springfield College
- Date: Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup>
- **Swimmer Arrival Time: 12:45 PM**
- Meet Start Time: 2:40 PM
- Admission: \$5
- Programs: TBD

- **CHAMPS SESSION 3: AGES 9-10**

- Location: Springfield College
- Date: Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup>
- **Swimmer Arrival Time: 7:00 AM**
- Meet Start Time: 8:40 AM
- Admission: \$5
- Programs: TBD

- **CHAMPS SESSION 4: AGES 13-14 & 15-18**

- Location: Springfield College
- Date: Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup>
- **Swimmer Arrival Time: 12:45 PM**
- Meet Start Time: 2:40 PM
- Admission: \$5
- Programs: TBD

Please see the following pages for more Champs info and FAQs.

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## IMPORTANT NOTES:

- While Champs are scheduled for Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, we do have make-up dates if there are issues with weather. The make-up dates are Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup> and Sunday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please make sure that you keep these dates open in case of poor weather AND remember that if Champs is postponed, practice will continue of one more week (1/27 – 1/31).
- If your birthday is BEFORE 1/25/24 and you will be “aging up” (e.g. you are 8 and will be turning 9, 10 and turning 11, 12 and turning 13, or 14 and turning 15), you will need to compete in that new age group at Championships (by my accounting, this only impacts a maximum of two Sharks swimmers). HOWEVER, if you age up AFTER Championships, you will remain in your original age group. You can check this at the pool. If you have any questions about this, PLEASE CONTACT ME DIRECTLY!!!!

## Preparation:

- As we head into Championships, please try to do what you can to help prepare your swimmers mentally and physically, ESPECIALLY if they are a first season swimmer, but this advice will benefit EVERYONE. My goal for the Sharks is to have **NO DAY-OF SCRATCHES** for Champs!
- Physical Preparation:
  - Getting Enough Sleep/Rest: please try your best to make sure that your child is able to rest leading up to Champs. Proper sleep leading up to Champs will make it more likely that a swimmer can perform to their best abilities (and less likely that they will become ill). This is especially important the night before Champs, which can be very exciting and nerve-racking for both swimmer and parent and it can be difficult to sleep. Deep breathing exercises and listening to quiet music in a completely dark room can be helpful to help a nervous swimmer relax the night before the competition.
  - Proper Fueling/Nutrition: please try to make sure your child is eating a balanced diet leading up into Champs. Limiting sugar and junk foods can help swimmers put the final touches on all the physical preparation that they have been doing this season (and help prevent illness). Swimmers should also be **HYDRATING PROPERLY** with **WATER** (please try to avoid sugary drinks).
- Mental Preparation:
  - **Calming Nerves/Anxiety:** This is a big meet. It will make most swimmers at least a little nervous, and it can be anxiety inducing for anyone in a situation this big. This is understandable, but it is also a great learning opportunity for ALL Sharks – from the very experienced all the way to the first season swimmers. **Some swimmers may experience anxiety before Champs that is so intense that they experience physical symptoms – it is important that they push through these to learn that they can do difficult things and**

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**come out better for them.** If your child is nervous about Champs, I have some tips:

- Remind your swimmer that they are doing something they have done before – no one is swimming a new event – **they know what they're doing, even if they've never done Champs before!**
- Have them try some deep breathing exercises – breathe in through your nose, hold your breath for a few seconds, and breathe out through your mouth
- Have your swimmer remind THEMSELVES that they've got this! They are going to do AWESOME and nerves and anxiety are a natural part of competition!
- Visualize the Competitions: your swimmer knows what events they will be doing (this will also be posted at the pool this week and will be sent out via Remind). Have them think about the things that they want to do as part of their event (good start, good turn, good finish, proper technique, etc.). Visualization is also a way to help swimmers calm their nerves, because it helps them take ownership of their races. When swimmers feel like they're in control of what they're doing, they don't get as worried.
- Team Responsibility: please remember that even though many of your child's competitions are individual, the Sharks are still a **TEAM**. Please try your best to follow through with Championships – while last minute severe illness can occur and has happened in the past, please remember that almost every swimmer is in at least one relay, and for most relays, **ONE** person being scratched means that the **WHOLE** relay will need to be scratched, eliminating an entire relay for other swimmers – we don't always have enough substitutes.

## **Timeliness Issues:**

- In the past, we have had issues with people showing up late to meets and we have, unfortunately, had an issue with no-call no-shows to meets this season. We understand that life gets in the way of things sometimes. Please **CALL ME DIRECTLY if you think there is any possibility of your child being late** to the **warm-ups** of their session (this prevents us from scratching swimmers prematurely). My number is (413)455-4293.
- We are required to make scratches 30 minutes before the start of the meet. This is a **HARD DEADLINE - we do not have control over this**. We are required to scratch any swimmers who are not present before the scratch deadline. Most swimmers are in relays, so a scratch means that 3 other swimmers will lose a relay. Please keep this in consideration.
- In regards to warm-ups, we only have 20 minutes for each session and get only 1 lane, so timeliness of all swimmers ensures an effective warm-up for everyone.

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## Events:

- **Relays:** Most swimmers will be in at least 1 relay. Some swimmers are in 2 relays. However, there is a chance that not everyone will have relays. This is due to issues with numbers of people signed up for Champs. We will try our best to get everyone in a relay, but not everyone will be in one. We triple-check the entries, so everything that your child is in will be proofed multiple times before we submit.
- **Individual Events:** Event sign-ups for Champs for individual events are considered by the coaches, but they are not guaranteed. Most swimmers will be entered in events for which they sign up, **BUT** we will make changes based on...
  - system times (e.g. a swimmer signs up for 100 back but does not yet have a time for 100 back in our records - we're not allowed to make a No Time entry),
  - the ability of the swimmer (e.g. I will NOT put a swimmer in an event for which they are a major disqualification risk), or
  - on placement opportunities (e.g. a swimmer has a better chance of placing in a different event from one they selected)
- **Entries:** If you want to know what your child is swimming at champs ahead of time, we will have a list posted at the pool that has all individual events and relays for each swimmer on 1/21. I will also hand back the individual sign-up sheets for each swimmer with final events circled. These sheets list any changes that I make along with my reasoning. Please speak to me directly if you have questions about your child's events.

## Volunteering:

- As always, we need parent volunteers to help with Champs. All teams are required to supply volunteers - the meet can't function without help from parents from every team. We will need:
  - Parent volunteers to act as stroke and turn officials. If you know how to do stroke and turn judging, PLEASE step up for this position (as an added bonus, this is one of the best seats in the house for being able to see the swimmers). If you plan to officiate, you **MUST** sign-up at this link by January 21<sup>st</sup>: <https://bit.ly/3Vzdeq2>
  - We need help with keeping swimmers seated, calm, and occupied in the swimmer holding area so that we can find swimmers easily and to avoid accidents and altercations. This will be limited to 1-2 adults per session.
  - Our assigned duty at Champs this season is warm-up/meet marshal. We had this assignment over the summer and did a great job, so I hope we can continue the trend. It will also be much simpler at Springfield College since the spectator area is completely separate from the pool deck and there is much more space. Please speak to a board member if this is a volunteer duty that you are willing to

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take on (note: due to the nature of the job, meet marshals have authorized access to the pool deck).

- Please talk to the board about volunteering if you would like to help out or if you have any questions. Some of these positions have already been filled but I would like extra people just in case.

## **Final Tips for Champs Participants**

- The spectator seating at Springfield College is completely separate from the pool deck. Spectators are NOT allowed to access the pool deck. There is extensive seating, but early arrival will help you get a better view.
- If you have a spectator with mobility issues, please let us know ASAP so that we can discuss accommodations with the league.
- Admission is \$5.00 per person and Programs are TBD each.
- Bring extra equipment – malfunctions with suits, caps, and goggles happen frequently, so having extras of everything will ensure that there are no big issues during Champs (we had a swimmer miss an event many years ago at winter Champs because his suit ripped and he did not have a backup). **Please double check your child's bag to make sure they have packed what they need!**
- **All swimmers – male and female – should wear a Sharks cap while competing – the coaches will have extra just in case, but please bring your own as well.**
- It's a good idea to bring something to do - there will be extended periods of time between your child's events. Champs is a long meet, so bringing a tablet, a puzzle book, or reading material can help pass the time (for both swimmers and parents!). **Please be careful about sending electronic devices with your child** - we have had swimmers lose expensive items in the past, and I cannot account for other teams (with whom we must share the bullpen), only our own. If your child is absent-minded, please do not let them use an electronic device without supervision from a responsible person. **SSSC is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged property! The bullpen volunteers are not responsible for taking care of swimmers' belongings – that is the responsibility of each swimmer. If it is valuable, please do not risk bringing it!!**
- Talk to your child about where they will be spending the meet - the Sharks area will be on the pool deck and swimmers will be separate from their spectators. **I expect swimmers to be remain on the pool deck for the duration of the meet** (the Sharks will have our own designated area to sit). Please **DO NOT** allow your child to stay with you in spectator seating during their meet. If you must meet with your child, please call coach Teresa to set up an escort. It is tremendously difficult for coaches to find children in the stands, so please make sure that your child knows that they are to stay with the rest of the team in their designated area so that no one misses their events. **Please also remember to check out with a coach before you leave the meet so that there are no issues with the final relays –**

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**please assume that your child will be swimming in a final relay unless/until told otherwise DIRECTLY by a coach.**

- There will be a concessions stand that serves food and drinks, but I strongly suggest sending your child with snacks or food packed ahead of time. Definitely make sure your child has water and Gatorade so that they stay hydrated (remind them that they must eat food and drink Gatorade in the **designated areas only!**) **I expect my swimmers to pick up after themselves!!**
- Please remember to bring cash! Admission, programs, and concessions will be cash only. There will also be a vendor selling clothing items.

## **Post-Season**

- Our **LAST** week of Sharks activities/practices for the winter season is the week of 1/21 – 1/24 **unless** there is a weather postponement for one or both of the Champs dates. After that, we will not be doing any swimming or practice until the start of the spring/summer season. The start of pre-season activities will be Monday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025 – please stay tuned to the website, Facebook, and TeamSnap email for updates on swim lessons and clinics. Regular season spring practices will begin, as usual, on the week following April vacation (Monday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025 will be the first official day of regular practices, but there will be pre-season lessons and activities prior to that date).
- We will be having our **end of season party on the evening of Monday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at Sci-Tech.** All are welcome, but please be aware that, due to numbers, ONLY Sharks COMPETITIVE swimmers will be allowed in the pool (NO swimmers from lessons or non-Sharks friends/family). Please make every effort to attend – we not only distribute Champs awards but also team awards as well! It is our way of celebrating all of the hard work the swimmers and families have put in all season!
- The party schedule is as follows:
  - 5:30-6:45pm: pool time (for Sharks competitive swimmers ONLY) AND food. Please note that food will be distributed to swimmers first before families to ensure that there is enough to go around. Food will be kept in the hallway to limit cleanup and keep the pool area clean.
  - 7:00-8:30pm: Team awards, medals and ribbons from Champs, meet attendance medals, and best-times ribbons. This portion of the celebration will take place inside the pool area to allow for swimmer recognition.
  - PLEASE RSVP for this celebration on TeamSnap – you can add notes for numbers of people. This will allow our board a better estimate for food. We are likely to run out of food if we don't have an accurate head count, so please make sure you RSVP!