

Crocs:

Soon you're going to be seeing and hearing talk about Invitationals, Ponderosa times, red times and blue times. Our veterans already know what that is, but for newer team members, it can be a little confusing. Here's what we're talking about.

In summer league, an Invitational is an extra meet that swimmers can qualify for. It's kind of like an All-Star game in other sports. It's an honor to qualify, and a lot of fun for the swimmers who participate. They get an extra chance to swim with their friends and compete with other teams in an exciting venue - there are usually 20+ teams represented, and there is a team competition where each team competes for overall championship trophies for that meet. The Invitationals are normally held at High School Natatoriums with scoreboards and stands for the spectators - it's where the high school teams compete. And one of the best things for the parents - you can setup indoors, **in the air conditioning!!!!!!**

So please consider signing up for the Invitationals your swimmer qualifies for. They're a lot of fun for the kids, and the Crocs need you to help compete for that team trophy and all those relay medals!!!!

The Invitationals are run similarly to other meets except that there are many teams, swimmers usually have to qualify by swimming a certain time, there are generally no limits on the number of events per swimmer, and there is a small fee usually (\$5) per individual event to enter. There is also a fee for relays, but the Crocs pay that. The parents are expected to pay the Crocs for the individual event fees, then the Crocs pay the meet hosts. **Please note that, once the fees are paid, they are non-refundable to the Crocs, therefore, they are not refundable to the parents either, even if something happens and the swimmer can't be there.**

The team normally participates in three Invitationals each season. The first will be Summer Thunder. This meet will be held at Klein High School on the first Sunday and Monday in June. All 10 and under events will be on Sunday afternoon and evening. 11 and ups will swim 100 yard events on Sunday evening, and 50 yard events and relays on Monday evening. As always, an Entry Deadline will apply – you will need to go on the website and enter your kids before the deadline. This meet is always a lot of fun for the kids that participate. For more information and qualifying times, please go to Events on the website and click on the Meet Announcement link. All 13 and ups are welcome and encouraged to participate in Summer Thunder with no qualifying times required.

The other two Invitationals are post season Invitationals to be held the weekend after Divisionals. These are the Red, White and Blue meet and the Ponderosa Invitational. It's easier to explain these by talking about Ponderosa first.

Ponderosa is the All-Star Championship meet of NWAL's summer league. It is billed as the best of the best of NWAL, and has the most stringent qualifying times of all the meets. In short, it's an opportunity for the best swimmers in summer league to meet and compete. Only about 10% of the Crocs will qualify for an individual event at Ponderosa, and many very good swimmers never qualify, so it's quite an accomplishment to be proud of when your swimmer makes "a

Ponderosa time." We will also have our many of our A Relay teams at Ponderosa to help compete for the team championship by winning Relay points and medals, so many Crocs get to participate in Ponderosa as part of a relay team, even if they don't qualify in an individual event.

Red, White and Blue is an event that is held at the same time as Ponderosa. This is a favorite meet of many of our swimmers. If a swimmer has a "red time" or a "blue time", but not quite a Ponderosa time, they qualify to swim at RWB in that event. Only about half of the Crocs team qualifies for at least one individual event at RWB, so it is definitely something to be proud of when a kid qualifies for this meet. Swimmers with Ponderosa times in an event can't swim that event at RWB, so it's a great chance for many of the swimmers to be very competitive at a meet, have a lot of fun, and hopefully win some medals!

For more information on all these events, including qualifying times, just log into the website, go to Events, and open the Meet Announcement link for the meet you're interested in.

If you have questions, please email info@colescroc.org, and Go Crocs!!!