

PCY Tigersharks Practice Level Descriptions

Short Course 2025-2026

Age Group Level Program – Ages 6-13

These groups will be coached in a team approach but attendance and developmental goals will be monitored by a designated coach. The goal of each level is to successfully prepare for the next progressive level.

Level I – Tigershark and Gator Divisions

This is the first age group level swimmers who are learning all four competitive strokes. The emphasis is on developing the fundamentals of the strokes, starts and turns by means of drills and games in an enjoyable atmosphere for instruction. Swimmers learn the basic rules of competitive swimming.

Commitments

Practices Eligible to Attend – 5 practice sessions

Practices Goal to Attend – 2-3 practice sessions, no Saturday practice

Meets – At least three YMCA meets

Championship Meet Participation – A Champs, AA Champs

Level II – Tigershark and Gator Divisions

This is the second age group level. Improving stroke, start and turn techniques will be the primary emphasis in this level. It will serve as an introduction to higher levels of age group swimming. Mild distances and endurance work will be introduced in training.

Commitments

Practices Eligible to Attend – 5 practice sessions

Practice Goal to Attend – 3 practice sessions, no Saturday practice

Meets – At least three YMCA meets

Championship Meet Participation – A Champs, AA Champs, YMCA Zone

Championships

Level III – Tigershark and Gator Divisions

This is the top Age Group level. Emphasis is placed on technique refinement with a stronger conditioning experience. General distance and IM work is also emphasized along with an introductory dryland component and general body strengthening. Racing strategies and mental preparation are also introduced.

Commitments

Practices Eligible to Attend – 6 practice sessions

Practices Goal to Attend – 3-4 practice sessions, including the required

Saturday Practice

Dryland is a required component of this group, incorporated into practice sessions

Meets – At least three YMCA meets are required before Junior High Meet participation.

Championship Meet Participation – A Champs, AA Champs, Zone

Championships, or YMCA Nationals Championships if the time standard is achieved

Senior Level Program – Ages 13 & Older

These groups will be coached in a team approach, but attendance and goals will be monitored by a designated coach. Athletes will swim daily in lanes selected by speed and ability, regardless of age.

Level IV – Tigershark and Gator Divisions

This is an introduction to senior swimming for athletes in Junior High or Middle School. The focus will be on technique refinement IM, distance training and speed development. Swimmers must have the ability to handle the physical demands of rigorous training.

Commitments

Practices Eligible to Attend – 8 practice sessions

Practices Required to Attend – 4 practice sessions, including the required Saturday Practice

Dryland is a required component of this group

Meets – At least three YMCA meets are required before Junior High Meet participation.

Championship Meet Participation – A Champs, AA Champs, Zone Championships, or YMCA Nationals Championships if the time standard is achieved.

Level V – Tigershark and Gator Divisions

This is the first commitment level for athletes in high school. The focus will be IM, distance training and speed development with technique refinement. Swimmers must have the ability to handle the physical demands of rigorous training. This level is also for high school athletes who swim seasonally, are multi-sport athletes or who desire to swim to be involved in the sport.

Commitments

Practices Eligible to Attend – 8 practice sessions

Practices Required to Attend – 5 practice sessions, including the required Saturday Practice

Dryland is a required component of this group

Meets – At least three YMCA meets are required before High School Meet participation.

Championship Meet Participation – A Champs, AA Champs, and YMCA Nationals Championships if the time standard is achieved.

Level VI – Tigershark Division Only

This is the second commitment level for athletes in high school. Training is geared to YMCA National competition and beyond. The emphasis is on high levels of endurance, strength and speed conditioning with technique refinement. Training includes longer distances, IM work, interval training, aerobic base development and preparation for a stronger emotional commitment, working toward the YMCA National level.

Commitments

Practices Eligible to Attend – 8 practice sessions

Practices Required to Attend – 6 practice sessions, including a required morning and Saturday Practice

Dryland is a required component of this group

Meets – At least three YMCA meets are required before High School Meet participation.

Championship Meet Participation – A Champs, AA Champs, and YMCA Nationals Championships if the time standard is achieved.

Level VII – Tigershark Division Only

This is the third commitment level for athletes in high school. Training is geared to compete at the highest level, physically and mentally. Practices include high-level endurance, strength and speed training, technique refinement, and conditioning. The objective of this level is to prepare and compete in the YMCA Nationals and USA National and collegiate levels and beyond.

Commitments

Practices Eligible to Attend – 8 practice sessions

Practices Required to Attend – 8 practice sessions, including two mornings and a required Saturday Practice

Dryland is a required component of this group

Meets – At least three YMCA meets are required before High School Meet participation. USA Winter Junior Nationals participation prior to High School Meets if the time standard has been achieved.

Championship Meet Participation – A Champs, AA Champs, and YMCA Nationals Championships if the time standard is achieved.