

GREENWOOD FOREST BREAKERS

SWIM TEAM HANDBOOK

2021



TO THE WALL!

www.gwfbreakers.com

A WORD FROM YOUR SWIM TEAM OFFICERS

Hello, and welcome to the Greenwood Forest Swim Team Association (the “Breakers”). We are members of the Northwest Aquatic League (NWAL). This league is organized to foster competitive swimming and good sportsmanship in the youth of this area. It maintains standards for competition, qualifies officials, sets schedules and preserves the neighborhood character of its program. Your Greenwood Forest Swim Team Association Board of Directors is committed to providing your family an enjoyable and rewarding summer swimming experience within the guidelines of this league. NWAL publishes a rulebook, which can be seen on request or may be viewed on the NWAL website. (www.nwal.org) Should you have any comments or suggestions or would like to volunteer your services to the team please feel free to contact one of the board members listed below. We have been working diligently to get this season off the starting block and into the fast lane! We look forward to meeting you and working with you as our 2021 swim season races to the wall!

President:	Amber Stepanik	astepanik@gmail.com
Team Rep:	Laura Bell	lbell@hp.com
Treasurer:	Tricia McAdow	sunshyn68@hotmail.com
Volunteer Coordinator:	Christine Potowski	cmp32273@gmail.com
Concessions Coordinator:	Mandy Ramirez	mandy85ram@yahoo.com
Sponsorship Coordinator:	Rebecca Scullark	rebecca.scullark@gmail.com
Events Coordinator:	Sarah Socias	gatheringplacetexas@gmail.com

For specific up-to-date information on the Greenwood Forest Breakers visit our website at www.GWFBreakers.com

TO THE PARENT

Please read this guide carefully. You will find information about The Greenwood Forest Swim Team program, mission, and coaching philosophy. You have responsibilities as a parent of a swimmer and those are outlined here as well. Practice and meet schedules, calendar of events, volunteer opportunities and answers to frequently asked questions are found in the next few pages. However, should you have any further questions please feel free to contact one of the board members listed in this handbook. Thank you for enrolling your child with our team. We look forward to a fun filled and rewarding season!

TO THE SWIMMER

Welcome to the Greenwood Forest Breakers! You are now an official member of a great Greenwood tradition. . . Swim Team! We want this to be a fun experience for you and your teammates. Whether you are a first-time swimmer or a returning veteran this guide will tell you what to expect from this year’s team and what the team expects from you! Remember, there are three things that make our team terrific.

Exceptional Parental Support
Excellent Coaching
And Most Importantly, **YOU!**

If you have any questions, talk to your coach or any swim team board member listed above. We are here to help you have a fun swim season. Good Luck!

SWIM TEAM GOALS & MISSION

This swim team stresses fun, friendship, fitness, and good sportsmanship. We strive to provide a well-balanced program to incorporate these ideals with a dose of healthy competition. We want to provide the best possible swim team experience for our children. Our practices and meets demand group involvement and team spirit. Competitive swimming is a team sport. However, our program contains strong individual rewards, too. Improving your personal best swim time for a stroke is just as important as where a team might finish in a race. Our coaches want to help you improve your times and will give you the necessary instruction to help you meet this goal.

OUR COACHING STAFF

We are happy to welcome Head Coach Justin Turet & Assistant Coach Brad Small

COACHING PHILOSOPHY

I personally believe that swimming should be a fun experience where everyone can learn and grow. One of the enjoyments in swimming is having success. This can be accomplished in many ways from having a better dive, improving your time, finishing a race for the first time, or by winning your race. You will always hear or see me doing all that I can do to help you to improve. I feel that one of my main jobs is to help encourage and teach you to get better. Then we all can have a fun time as we enjoy watching each other improve.



WHO CAN JOIN

Girls and boys, ages 4 through 18 years old (as of May 31) are eligible to swim. The team is open to all Greenwood Forest subdivision residents and extended family who are in compliance with their neighborhood association dues.

EQUIPMENT YOU WILL NEED

The most important equipment is the team racing suit. Keep in mind that a racing suit needs to be snug to be effective. Wearing the suit only for swim meets will keep it in suitable (no pun intended!) condition. For

workouts, any old practice suit is fine. The team suit is not required but highly recommended for team spirit and recognition.

Swim caps are encouraged, particularly for anyone with long hair. Just like a racing suit, a cap reduces drag in the water. Swim caps may only be decorated with the Breakers team name or with a corporate logo (i.e., Nike, Speedo, etc.). This season we have silicon caps available for sale with the Breakers logo stamped on the side!

Goggles are also recommended to help swimmers to see underwater and reduce eye irritation.

The team suit may be purchased from D&J Sports, located at 11407 Spring Cypress Road, Tomball, TX 77377. Be sure to mention you are with the “Breakers” to get your team discount. Check out the calendar to see when the swim shop will come to our practices. Swimmers may purchase their suit at that time, too. You will avoid paying sales tax when you purchase on that day.

Here are a few suggestions that will make swim meets more enjoyable!

- Slather on the sunscreen
- Wear a hat
- Wear cover-ups/ team T-shirt between races
- Bring extra towels
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Bring healthy snacks to nosh and concessions takes card payments
- Face Masks for swimmers and spectators

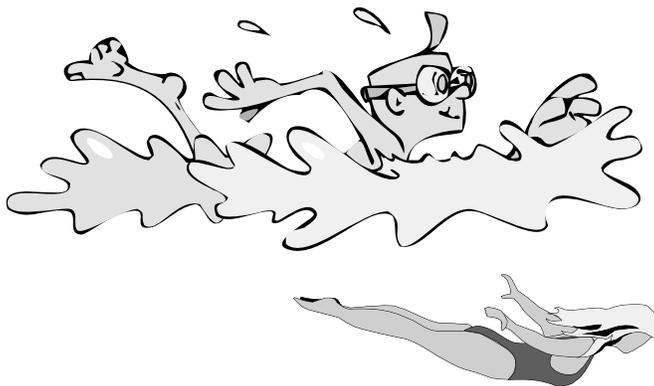


Many of our swimmers and parents also bring travel games, cards, books, pillows, beach chairs/folding chairs, coolers and other diversions to pass the time between races.

WHAT SWIMMERS SHOULD EXPECT AT PRACTICE

The goal of swim practice is to improve your skills as a swimmer. In order to have a productive practice Coach Justin & Coach Brad expects everyone to follow these important steps:

1. Listen and follow directions
2. Try new skills and learn different drills
3. Improve on your swimming skills
4. Have fun



ATTENDANCE

PRACTICE:

Workouts are designed to develop strength, speed, endurance, and technique. We encourage swimmers to attend all of their practices each week.

SWIMMERS: Be on time for your practice. The coaches design each session, from beginning to end, with specific objectives for your age level.

Come to practice prepared, with your swimsuit, cap and goggles, ready to swim.

If you arrive early, please wait quietly under the covered patio until your age group is called. Only those swimmers scheduled to practice should be in the water at that designated time. Please NO climbing on fences and lifeguard chairs. NO throwing of balls or impromptu baseball games around the pool or clubhouse area. We want all of our swimmers to be safe and go home after practice in one piece!

PARENTS: If you wish to speak to the coach about your swimmer, please make arrangements to discuss matters outside of practice. The coach is responsible for the safety of all children in the pool and surrounding area. It is not fair to the coach or the other swimmers if his attention is distracted by your inquiries.

If you see swimmers engaged in inappropriate/dangerous behavior (i.e., running in the parking lot, horsing around the pool or baby pool) please remember it sometimes takes a village! Please step in to prevent an accident from happening!

Please make arrangements to have your child picked up promptly following the conclusion of their practice. Swimmers need to leave the pool area once their practice has ended.

MEETS:

Attendance at all meets is expected. However, some conflicts are unavoidable and it is the swimmer's responsibility to advise the coach by filling out a vacation form (available at the pool, in the weekly newsletter and on the team website). This form should be turned in no later than the Tuesday practice before the meet in question. This is extremely important because teammates, especially relays, count on each other. It is just as important to remain at the meet to swim all of your scheduled events.

SUPERVISION-ALL SWIMMERS AGE 8 AND UNDER *MUST* BE SUPERVISED BY A PARENT OR CAREGIVER AT ALL SWIM TEAM PRACTICES AND MEETS. Parents: If you are unable to stay for a workout or meet, please assign an adult, who is present, to be responsible for your child.

MEET SEEDINGS

Meet seedings and relay selections are based on ability, team depth, practice attendance and the coach's judgment regarding how each swimmer can contribute most to the team. Whenever possible the coach will consider individual preferences. **SWIMMERS:** Put your request in writing and turn it into your coach at the Monday practice before the meet. NWAL policy limits the number of events in which each swimmer may participate. NWAL rules state that a swimmer may compete in 3 individual events and not more than 1 freestyle relay and 1 medley relay. Entry times for heat placement for the first dual meet will be determined at our first practice meet also known as Time Trials.

PRACTICE MEET / TIME TRIALS

SWIMMERS: This meet is really a series of time trials where you get to establish initial seed times for individual and relay events. (You will swim all individual events at this practice meet) It also establishes a benchmark for measuring improvement. For new swimmers, there are the added benefits of becoming familiar with the operation of a swim meet and experiencing competitive conditions.

PARENTS: This is a chance to practice hosting a meet before the real season begins. This is especially helpful for those who are taking a first turn at scoring, timing, and other critical jobs. The times from these events are essential for establishing a basis for seeding the first official meet of the season. The meet also provides a great opportunity for everyone to get comfortable with their responsibilities and to get acquainted with their co-volunteers.

DUAL MEETS

Dual meets are swimming events in which two teams from the same division compete. The order of events is regulated by NWAL policy with a total of 80 events. Boys will swim the first event in an age group followed by the girls from the same age category. For instance, 9-10 boys will swim the backstroke followed by the 9-10 girls backstroke swimmers followed by the boys 11-12 backstrokers. Each event is made up of a series of heats. Heats are groups of swimmers who swim in the water at one time (one swimmer per lane). Heats are organized by combining swimmers with similar racing times.

The first race of the day is the 100 Freestyle for 13 & Up swimmers. The 6 & Under Free Relay is next followed by the 8 & Under Medley Relay in age ascending order. Then its Freestyle, Breaststroke, 6 & Under Backstroke, 10 & Up Individual Medley, 7 & Up Backstroke, 8 & Up Butterfly, 7 & Up Free Relay.

DIVISIONAL MEET

**** Due to Covid there will be no Divisional meet this year ****

The Divisional Meet brings together all of the eligible swimmers from every team in a division for one last competition. Dual meets act as the training ground for the “big one.” To be eligible, swimmers must have participated in two dual meets during the current swim season, not including time trials or exhibition meets. This will be our final meet of the season and the scores from this meet will determine division rank.

INVITATIONAL MEETS

Throughout the swim season you will hear about meets that are held outside of our regular dual meet schedule. These meets are optional and swimmers must make qualifying times to enter. Check the schedule and newsletter for Invitational Meet dates. Qualifying time requirements will be posted on the bulletin board at the pool and on the team website.



MEET ETIQUETTE

SWIMMERS: You are expected to arrive by 7:00 a.m. for warm-ups at Home meets. (7:15 for Away meets). Sign in by circling your name on the event listing.

Write each of your event numbers on the back of your hand with the pen provided.

Report to your adult volunteer "Gatherer" so he/she knows you have arrived.

Good behavior is required at all times, but particularly around the ready benches and starting blocks. Everyone needs to remain quiet for the start of each race.

PARENTS: Arrive at your scheduled post on time and remain until the next scheduled person arrives. Please help us enforce the NWAL No Smoking or Vaping Policy around the pool deck and ready bench area. NWAL policy also prohibits the consumption of alcoholic beverages during the meet.

EVERYONE: The Greenwood Forest Breakers' coaches and association are proud of our tradition of good sportsmanship. We encourage enthusiasm, cheering and wearing of team colors. Arguments with officials or other team personnel and use of profanity are unacceptable.

SCORING & TIMES

Volunteer timers on deck report an unofficial time to the swimmers after each race. The scorekeeper administers rules to identify an official time, which is normally the middle time of 3 timers' stopwatches. The team retains every swimmer's time. If the time recorded is a personal best, it then becomes the swimmer's new entry time for that event. (Entry times are used to designate heat placement.) Computer print outs will be posted throughout the day of the meet so that you can check your official times.

In a dual meet there may be several heats of the same age group for each event. The 6 fastest swimmers in each individual *event* score points on a 7- 5 -4 -3- 2 -1 system. Relays are worth 5-2 points for 1st and 2nd. A team may only score relay points for one place. If the team wins 1st and 2nd then the only 1st place points (5 points) shall be awarded.

AWARDS

At each meet, younger swimmers (10 and under) receive heat ribbons with their unofficial time written on the back.

Place ribbons are awarded, on Monday of the week following a meet, to the top six swimmers in each individual event and to first place relay teams.

An improvement of 3% over a swimmer's previous best time is rewarded with a Personal Achievement Ribbon. These ribbons will be awarded on Monday of the week following the meet in which the improvement was made.

Coaches will identify swimmers throughout the season who they deem worthy of special recognition such as Swimmer of the Week or other categories of the coaches' choosing. These recognitions will be determined by the coaching staff and awarded at a time they deem appropriate.

Award Medals will be presented to all swimmers at our Awards Dinner, date to be determined.



WEATHER



Meets and workouts may be interrupted, postponed or canceled due to storms or cold temperatures. The health and safety of our swimmers is our first concern. **Swimmers must have a place to go if practices are dismissed early.** When in doubt, check our website, www.gwfbreakers.com, to see if the event has been canceled. Please do not call the Club Office for a weather bulletin. If time permits, a notice will be posted at the pool entry gate.

The decision to cancel or stop a meet is the sole responsibility of meet officials. You will be contacted by phone if notice of a meet cancellation is received sufficiently in advance.

HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS

Many colleges and universities consider student applications based, in part, on community service hours acquired during your high school years. Since there is reduced fee for our 15-18-year-old swimmers we encourage these swimmers to “give back” to the team by helping out at one of our non-meet events. These volunteer hours also qualify for service hours required by area schools. Please read over the non-meet event list to choose an area that interests you and volunteer today!

PARENTAL ROLE

The key to a successful and affordable program is parent involvement and support. Your most important job is to provide encouragement and support to your child. Our swim team parents carry a wonderful reputation for supporting all of the team members. Let’s continue that tradition by telling our swimmers how well they did and how proud of them you are. We have hired a most capable and proven coaching team and we ask that you encourage your swimmer but please, leave the coaching to the coaches!

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

It takes over 100 adult volunteers to run a dual swim meet every week. Each meet is divided into two shifts that are based on event numbers for the meet. The first shift is event 1-39, and the second shift is event 40 – 80. This year we are starting a new procedure for volunteering where we will have sign-up online prior to each meet and earn points for filling various volunteer positions. Each family will be required to earn **40 points** over the course of the season**. Some volunteer lead & official positions will be assigned for the duration of the season, all others will be posted on the website each Monday at 12pm (noon) and each family will have until Thursday at 5pm to sign up for their volunteer position for the meet. If you are unable to attend a meet, please email our Volunteer coordinator: Christine Potowski cmp32273@gmail.com. If you have not signed up for a position by 5pm on Thursday, or emailed our Volunteer Coordinator, you will be assigned to one of the remaining positions need to run the meet. There will also be volunteer opportunities throughout the week if you cannot attend one of the weekend meets. All families are encouraged to “buddy up” with another swim team family of their choosing to cover for vacations and emergencies. In the event you do not fulfill your assigned positions, penalties will be enforced:

- **First Missed Shift:** You lose \$50.00. Your \$100 check is cashed and \$50 will be held until remaining obligations are completed.
- **Second Missed Shift:** You lose your remaining \$50 balance.
- **Third Missed Shift:** At the discretion of the board, your child may be asked to leave the team. In that event, no refunds will be awarded.

If you fail to fulfill two positions at one meet you have missed two shifts.

**The board will work with single parent families and working parents who have Saturday conflicts in order to accommodate their needs on a case-by-case basis.

***** Involvement Buy-Out Option*****

We know that some parents have work and care-taking schedules that prohibit them from completing parent involvement positions on a regular basis. **For those family we offer a buy-out option for \$400 for the season.** The monies are used to hire people to fill the required positions.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Here is a list of positions needed to run a swim meet. You are responsible for your position throughout the entire swim season. It is your duty to find a replacement in the event you are unable to attend a meet.

Timer & Scribe:	Stands at end of the pool & keeps time for swimmers in the lane. (stopwatches provided) & records times reported by timers.
Computer Room Runner:	Collects scorecards from Scribe and “runs” the cards to the computer data operator. Also posts race results on board.
Gatherer:	Is responsible for gathering all swimmers in one age group and getting them to the ready bench prior to their event.
Pool Watcher:	<i>(This is an additional responsibility and is mandatory of all parents with swimmers in the 6 and Under age groups.)</i> Assist the coaches during practice by standing or sitting poolside and watching swimmers in the water.
Ready Bench:	Places swimmers on a bench in order of their heat assignments. Benches are located at the starting block area of the pool on the lattice-covered patio.
Ready Bench Assistant:	Assists the Ready Bench Managers by helping lead relays to the opposite end of the pool, and carries the mask caddie for younger swimmers.
Facilities Attendant:	Keeps restrooms clean, make sure trash cans are emptied throughout the meet. Also makes sure toilet paper and paper towels are replenished during the meet and sprays down counters & surfaces every 30 minutes.
Set-up:	Is responsible for setting up tents and tarps for home and away meets. For home meets this committee also sets up the starting blocks, flags, lane ropes, electronic starter. Usually set up is done the night before the meet.
Tear-down:	Opposite of Set-up. Tear-down occurs immediately following the meet.
Concessions:	Works in the kitchen preparing and selling food during home meets.
Ribbons:	Prepare team ribbons for distribution to swimmers by the coaches at Monday practices. Usually requires weekend time after the meet results have been tallied.
End of Meet Clean-up:	At the end of meet picks up trash from grounds, take all trash out to the dumpster. Gather up lost and found items.
Announcer:	Provide clever commentary and Meet information throughout the event. Announce our sponsors and swimmer shout-outs throughout the meet.

The following positions require NWAL certification. For more information about these positions contact **Mike Stepanik (mstepanik@gmail.com)**

Clerk of Course: Computer Operator
Officials: Referee; Starter; Stroke & Turn

The following events occur outside of dual meets. Volunteers are needed to go above and beyond the required meet position assignments to make this team successful and fun for our children. Please call a board

member today and sign up to work on one of these committees! This year some of these events will have positions where you can earn volunteer points.

Fun Fridays: This committee is responsible for providing special treats and fun activities for the entire team following the Friday practice. There is a budget for the treats!

Awards Dinner: This committee organizes the end of year banquet that includes the meal, trophies, and, with the help of the team photographer, a slide show presentation.

Swim Team Spring Cleaning: Help get the pool areas ready for the season.

Swim-a-thon Fundraiser: Sit at the end of the pool and count laps for swimmers during the Red Cross Swim Across. This occurs during a regular practice day in June. Prepare pancakes in the club kitchen for the swimmers as they complete their laps.

Fourth of July Parade: Organize transportation and chaperone swimmers as they march along Champion's Forest Drive for the annual neighborhood parade.

Fourth of July Party: Help organize and volunteer in many positions available depending on the activities being held.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication is a vital aspect to the success of this team. You will find directions to away meets, vacation forms, announcements, pictures and other pertinent information on our website www.gwfbreakers.com and in our team newsletter. This newsletter is published weekly and is distributed by the Board at the pool on Thursdays. Extras are left in the box attached to the wall by the Swim Team Office.

Also, a regular Swim Team column appears in the monthly Greenwood Forest Newsletter, too.

CALL-EM-ALL

During swim season, we use a Call-Em-All phone tree to broadcast recorded messages and reminders about swim team. Be sure to include your preferred "call-em-all" number on your registration form as we try to keep the team up-to-date on any last-minute schedule changes.



If you wish to talk to the coaching staff, please make arrangements with the coach to speak outside of team practices. As always feel free to contact any Swim Team Board member with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you may have. (see list on page 1) If you are not on our e-mail list please contact Amber Stepanik, astepanik@gmail.com

SPONSORSHIP INCENTIVES

To encourage financial donations, your Swim Team Board of Directors is offering an incentive to all members who collect sponsorship donations. You will earn 10% of the total of any sponsorship you collect or secure for the team. This percentage will be applied to your own registration fee up to 100% of your fee. To learn more about this program or receive sponsorship forms, please contact Rebecca Scullark: rebecca.scullark@gmail.com

REFUND POLICY

Refunds for registered swimmers unable to participate, for any reason, will be made up through May 14, 2021. If you were issued a T-shirt and it is returned in "like new" condition a full refund of your registration fee will be allowed. If the T-shirt is not returned \$15.00 will be withheld from your refund.

