



## **GREEN MEADOW SWIM TEAM Handbook Greater Knoxville Area Interclub Swim Association (GKAISA)**

Welcome to Green Meadow Swim Team. This handbook includes frequently asked questions about summer swimming, rules and guidelines for both Green Meadow Swim Team and GKAISA, practice and meet schedules and other important information about team participation.

### **PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE**

We are a family-centered, competitive team that is operated by a staff of coaches, a volunteer advisory board, and many other parent volunteers. We enjoy working and playing together and making new friends in the process. We stress the value of every swimmer on the team. This is a team for swimmers of all levels of ability. We want all swimmers to feel a sense of TEAM unity and spirit.

### **COACHING PHILOSOPHY**

We believe that each swimmer is important to the team and we work hard to assure that each swimmer knows this. We know that by participating on a swim team, a child learns how to set individual and team goals, how to be a responsible team member and how to accept victory and defeat. We hope to teach each swimmer something new about stroke technique, conditioning, and competing during the season. We strive to motivate each swimmer in a positive way, and in the process, increase their confidence and belief in themselves. We work hard in practice, but we try never to ask more of a swimmer than they can give. Swimming is one of the very best forms of exercise and it's a sport that one can enjoy for life. Our goal is for each swimmer to have a fun, low pressure, positive experience. This is a competitive team and, of course, we strive to win. Yet there is an important place on this team for every swimmer.

### **GMST RULES AND ETIQUETTE**

Swimmers, please remember to:

1. Be on time. There are important announcements and stretches before we get in the water.
2. Come to as many practices as possible. We don't want your swimmer to miss the day we are working on a new skill.
3. Come to practice with a good attitude; be ready to work hard and be cooperative.
4. Bring your workout equipment to each practice. (Kickboards, fins, goggles, etc.)
5. During the season, try to eat a healthy diet and get plenty of rest.
6. If you have a problem with a teammate or with the practice, please talk to your coach first.
7. Always ask questions or let your coach know if you don't understand something.
8. Do not sit, stand or pull on the lane ropes. They will break!!!
9. Always let your coach know if you need to leave the pool for any reason.
10. Be respectful of coaches and teammates. If you disrupt practice, it hurts everyone. If the problem persists, you will be asked to sit out of practice.
11. Don't get in the pool during the meet unless you are swimming a race. This can cause our team to be disqualified.
12. Stay under the tent or in our designated team area and pay attention to when you are supposed to be swimming your event. We don't want you to miss your event.
13. Leave our pool and other pools better than how you found it. Clean up after yourself.
14. Stay and cheer for your relay until the last team member finishes.
15. Be a good team member; cheer for your teammates and treat them like you would like to be treated.

## **GREEN MEADOW SWIM TEAM BOARD**

Green Meadow Swim Team is led by coaches and supported by parents. We have a Board of Directors comprised of a group of parents, past volunteers, and who coordinate team activities, run the finances of the team, and provide overall oversight and direction for the team as a whole. These special volunteers help with the numerous details needed to keep the team running as smoothly as possible. These people will be asking for many other parent volunteers to help with various activities, including running meets as it takes a minimum of 60-80 volunteers to run each meet.

## **PARENTS**

**One parent from each family is required to work one shift at each meet their child participates in.** Please sign up on the website at the Volunteers page and be willing to help when asked. This will make our meets run as efficiently as possible. If you don't fulfill this requirement, you will be assessed a fee of \$25 per meet.

Even though we are swimming at a country club, please remember that GKAIISA has a strict rule against alcoholic beverages on deck during a meet.

## **PRACTICE SCHEDULE:**

A GKAIISA swimmer release form must be signed via the website before a swimmer is eligible to participate in a practice or meet. This GKAIISA rule is also strictly enforced.

We have practice Monday - Friday mornings and Monday - Thursday evenings. We have a short season so we practice unless there is lightning or stormy weather. There will be no practice on July 4. Practices begin on Memorial Day with our kick-off Pancake Breakfast.

**Morning Practices** are held on Monday – Friday; 11 and Over from 9:00 - 10:30 a.m., 10 and Under from 10:15 - 11:30 a.m.

**Evening practices** (for swimmers who have school, work, camp in the a.m.) are held on Monday – Thursday; 11 & Over from 5:00-6:00 p.m. and 10 & Under from 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Note: If there is a scheduled meet during evening practice time, there will not be practice!!!

**The pool is open to the membership in the evenings so our space is very limited. Please attend mornings if at all possible.**

## **PRACTICE TIPS FOR PARENTS**

If you have questions or need to discuss other matters, please check with one of the coaches before or after practice. The coaches' time with the swimmers is limited and his or her attention needs to be devoted to practice.

Generally, there are between 3 and 10 swimmers per lane during practices. Each coach may have 1-3 lanes that they are coaching, depending on the age of the swimmers and their skill levels. Please keep in mind that coaches will be teaching skills and giving swimmers tips on improving their strokes throughout the course of the summer, but swim practices are not meant to be one-on-one swim lessons. Coaches are working on a variety of skills, including endurance, strength, breath control, and stroke technique. The level of individual instruction your child receives in one practice will vary based on the needs of the swimmers and the response to the skills being taught. If you have questions on the amount of instruction your child is receiving, please discuss it with their coach before or after practice.

If you would like your child to receive more instruction that what can be provided during practice, private lessons and swim clinics are available through the coaches. Private lessons are a great way to get more individual time with a coach and for learning a new skill or working on specific techniques that may need more attention than can be given during practice.

Practices will be easier in the beginning of summer and will become gradually harder and longer as swimmers build their endurance and can swim for longer.

## **SWIM MEETS:**

As part of GKAIISA, we have the following meets each year, which are scheduled in late March and posted in the Meets section. All fees and expenses to enter and run the meets are covered with your fees.

- Interclub meet- "Green & White Meet" to prepare for the season.
- Dual meets with other teams in our league- There are 5 other teams in our league. Meets are generally held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, with warmups around 4:30 and the meet beginning at 5:30.
- Smoky Mountain Invitational Meet- held at Springbrook Pool, this meet is an all-day meet on Saturday for 11 and over and Sunday for 10 and under. Only swimmers who have not participated in a USA Swim meet for the last 12 months can participate in this meet.
- GKAIISA City Meet Championship Meet- This is the championship meet and last meet of our season. A great way for swimmers to show off their skills and improvements from the season. It is held at the end of July at the Allen Jones Aquatic Center on UT's campus. Swimmers must swim in 2 other meets during the season to qualify to attend. We encourage all swimmers to swim in this meet.

## **SWIM MEET SIGN-UP PROCEDURES**

We post swim meet sign-ups on the website and also have sheets on the bulletin board prior to each meet. Each swimmer can sign-up for every meet. The sign-up sheets will be up on the board until at least 4 (four) days before the meet. Then the coaches will take them down to prepare the meet entry. We want each child to swim in as many meets as possible. But, if you have not signed up, the coaches will assume that you are not swimming. Late entries are taken on a lane available basis. If you are not swimming, make sure your name is not on the sheet or that it has been marked off.

Please understand that our meets are a team effort. The coaches spend many hours preparing the entries for each meet. Working from the sign up sheets, they attempt to place each swimmer where they are most needed for the best team result. They also try to assure that each child has an opportunity to participate. If you have signed up for a meet, we are counting on you to attend. Since each swimmer is usually entered in several individual events as well as relays, it is extremely difficult to reschedule events once we are at the meet **If you sign up for a meet and find you will not be able to swim, it is very important that you let the coach know as soon as possible.**

Once a meet entry is prepared, it is very difficult to make changes. The meet entry sheets must be redone, relays must be refigured and the entry cards must be rewritten to reflect the changes. If changes happen on the day of the meet, errors and omissions are far more likely.

## **SWIM MEETS**

The coaches ask that you stay out of the sun and rest as much as possible the day of meets. Do not stay at the pool after practice these days. Drink plenty of fluids and be rested and ready to swim your best when you get to the meet.

Please get to the pool at least 15 minutes before your scheduled warm-up. This will allow time for announcements, getting caps and goggles on and getting in the pool on time. Our warm-up time is very limited so don't be late! In dual meets, swimmers can swim in no more than 3 individual events and 1 relay or in 2 individual events and 2 relays. Not every swimmer will be in this many events.

## CLERK OF COURSE MEET PROCEDURES AND SUGGESTIONS

Arrive at the meet prepared - Parents who want to be assured of a place to sit should bring lawn chairs. Swimmers will have time between their events and may want to bring a book or game to play. It is a good idea to bring an extra towel or sleeping bag to sit on and an extra swimsuit - just in case! Swimmers will need their team suits, goggles, swim caps and a waterproof pen or marker for writing down their events. You may want to pack a sweatshirt, as it can get cool for the swimmers when the sun goes down. **MAKE SURE THAT YOU LABEL ALL ITEMS WITH YOUR NAME.**

Upon arriving at the pool, find the sign in table. It is very important that we know that you have arrived and are ready to swim. There will be a sheet on the table with your child's name and a place to check in. There will also be a copy of the meet entry sheet so that you can find the event and heat numbers of your swimmer's events. Write these down for your swimmer and yourself. A lot of parents write the event number, heat number and lane number on their swimmer's hand with a waterproof pen or marker so that they can easily look and see what they will swim next.

Find your swimmer a spot under the team tent. There will be tent parents present to assist you and your child. Tent parents will be helping to keep order and see that swimmers get to their events. It is important that all swimmers be under the tent prior to the beginning of warm-ups to hear team announcements and instructions from the coaches.

**CARDS & FINDING YOUR LANE:** All event cards for 11 and Over swimmers will be placed in order by event number in a designated spot for 11 and over swimmers. Swimmers need to go to the event board before their event and pick up their card. The swimmer will then line up behind the starting block in their assigned lane.

All 10 and Under swimmers will receive their entry cards when they check in at arrival at the pool. Parents are responsible for ensuring their swimmers know what events they are swimming and getting them to the clerk of course designated area prior to their swims. The swimmer will then be escorted to the rows of chairs behind the starting area to get lined up for their event. . The coaches and parents will help them find their designated chair behind the blocks, but will not be responsible for chasing swimmers down around the pool.

The 8 and Under as well as the 9 and 10 age swimmers start their 25 meter individual events from the "turn end" of the pool. When the swimmer is lined up behind the blocks with his or her card, a parent will ensure they are in the right spot and take their cards. Swimmers 11 and older are responsible for picking up their cards from the board, getting behind the blocks and giving their entry card to the timer in their lane.

**Please check with a coach before leaving if the meet is not over.** We may have made changes during the meet and your swimmer may have additional events. Also, please help pick up trash and belongings near your swimmers area before you leave.

Ribbons will usually be ready and in your file the day after the meet.

## TEAM ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATION

We want everyone to stay informed about any team activities, events, and announcements. Our bulletin board is located next to the Pool Office and is updated as we have information. Please check it regularly. Meet Sign-up Sheets are also posted there. We also communicate important information by email so please put your e-mail address(es) in your registration information online. You may want to list the Parent(s) as well as the swimmers e-mail addresses. You can email the coaches at [gmstswim@gmail.com](mailto:gmstswim@gmail.com) or you may also call the pool anytime during operating hours with questions or for information.

**Awards Banquet:** We hold an awards ceremony at the end of each season. The date and time will be posted on the bulletin board and announced via e-mail.

## **SWIM TEAM FEES:**

Our swim team is financially supported by swim team fees and fund raising. We are privileged to be able to swim in one of the finest facilities in the Greater Knoxville Area. The Team is responsible for all expenses including coaching salaries, pool rental from Green Meadow Country Club, supplies and equipment to run our swim meets such as starting equipment, team computer and software, scorekeeping supplies, award ribbons, purchase and repair of our team tent, meet entry fees, paper and copy supplies, and items for team parties and pep rallies. Fundraisers are used to help keep fees to a minimum. 100% of dues and funds raised through fundraisers are used to operate the team and provide the best possible experience for your swimmer.

Since our expenses are sizeable, we have several sources of funds. Team fees are our primary source of income. We have a couple of fund raising events such as our Memorial Day Pancake Breakfast. We also sell sports drinks, bottled water, and baked goods at our home meets. We also offer team sponsorships for businesses and individuals. The team runs a small swim shop at the pool for your convenience and all proceeds go to the Team. Of course, 100% of dues and funds raised are used to operate the team and provide the best possible experience for your swimmer. We have these other activities to keep our fees as reasonable as possible.

These resources allow us to have a very talented coaching staff. Most of them have grown up in the Green Meadow program and other USA Swimming and High School Programs. We have at least 4 -6 coaches on deck at most practices. We strive to provide your swimmer with good technical instruction while building strength and endurance. Our coaches spend approximately 10 - 12 hours a week outside of practice times planning and writing Workouts and doing Meet Entries.

We offer 9 practice sessions most weeks and plan and carry out many other activities to build team unity, spirit, and just plain FUN!

**Welcome to Green Meadow!**