



Germantown Gators Team Handbook

Welcome

This handbook was created to provide information regarding policies of the Germantown Gators Swim Team. Information is subject to change.

The Gators Team is a non-profit, family-oriented recreational team. The team exists to share the joy of recreational and competitive swimming.

The Germantown Gators Swim Team is a member of the Southern Ohio Swim League. Although some of the swimmers in the league compete year round, the main objective of the league is to provide a place for ALL swimmers, regardless of ability.

We are happy that you have chosen to have your child swim with the Gators. We appreciate your cooperation and patience as we try to create the best program possible.

Connect with us at www.facebook.com/GermantownGators, on our website at GermantownGators.swimptopia.com, or via email at germantowngators.web@gmail.com.

The Germantown Gators Board

Code of Conduct

Swimmers' Commitments

Swimmers will:

1. Conduct themselves with dignity and respect for others and for the property of others.
2. Be on time for practices and meets.
3. Comply with all team rules.
4. Leave the pool area in a neat & clean condition at the conclusion of each meet or practice session.
5. Practice and teach good sportsmanship.
6. Promote positive team spirit and morale.
7. Offer congratulations and encouragement to opponents.
8. Support teammates at practice and at competition.
9. Follow verbal directions of and be respectful to the coaching staff.
10. Respect the rights and space requirements of other groups using the swimming facility.
11. Follow the Code of Conduct at home as well as at away meets.

Prohibited Behavior:

1. Use or possession of any illegal substance (i.e. alcohol, drugs, tobacco).
2. Destructive behavior.
3. Inappropriate or unruly behavior, including fighting or striking another athlete.
4. Inappropriate language (swearing or derogatory comments) or lying.
5. Stealing and vandalism.
6. Bullying or isolation of another swimmer.
7. Interference with the progress of another swimmer during practice or at any other time.

This code shall be enforced for all Gators swimmers during practice, during swim meets, and at events. Disciplinary actions can range from, but are not limited to: reprimands, being sent home from practice or meets, expulsion from the team, being barred from competition, or receiving any other disciplinary action that the Board deems necessary if a member fails to adhere to the Code in part or in whole.

Parents/Guardians' Commitments

Gators Parents will:

1. Practice teamwork with all parents, swimmers and coaches by supporting the values of discipline, loyalty, commitment and hard work.
2. Refrain from coaching the team or any swimmer at a practice or meets (from the stands or any other area) or interfering with coaches on the pool deck.
3. Demonstrate good sportsmanship at meets & practices.
4. Enjoy involvement with the Gators Swim Team by supporting the swimmers, coaches & other parents with positive communications & actions.
5. Direct questions or concerns regarding any aspect of the program to the coaching staff and/or the Gators Board.

The Gators Swim Team would not exist without support from parents and family members. In addition to volunteer assignments, assistance is needed during set-up and tear-down of meets, on various committees, and for donations of fresh food for the concession stand. Swim team can be a wonderful experience for the entire family!

League Information

Rules

The Southern Ohio Swim League follows the current US Swimming Rules, with the exception of allowing one false start and not disqualifying 6 & Under swimmers for stroke violations in their age group events.

All swimmers must be able to swim 25 meters unassisted in a safe manner for all events other than Event 0, the assisted swim. No floatation devices are allowed.

Swimmers must compete in three league meets to be eligible for Championships.

A swimmer may not compete in more than three individual events at any meet.

Swimmers may move up an age group to complete a relay.

Age Groups

Eligibility for participation in league meets is restricted to swimmers 18 years of age and younger.

Age groups are determined by age as of June 1. Groups are divided as follows: 6 & Under, 8 & Under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15 & Over.

The 6 & Under age group has its own events for Backstroke and Freestyle only. Swimmers in that age group may compete in the 8 & Under events for Butterfly and Breaststroke.

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Types of meets

Dual Meets - All league meets are dual meets involving our team and one other league team. Our meets are scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday evenings during the season. Meets will not be scheduled on July 4.

Invitationals - Our team may be invited to Invitationals, or multi-team meets, during the season. These events are not mandatory for our swimmers to attend, and usually take place on Saturdays. Swimmers and their parents determine if they will attend Invitationals and which events they will enter. Each event requires an entry fee.

Championships - The season culminates in a meet that brings together all the teams of the Southern Ohio Swim League. All participants must have competed in at least three league meets to be eligible. Championships are a fun way to end the season and help determine our final rank in the League standings.

Team Organizational Structure

Coaching Staff

The coaching staff is composed of a head coach, assistant coaches, and coaching trainees. Prior to each season, the Board creates job descriptions for each position and posts the available positions publicly. The head coach is hired by the Board, and then the head coach participates in the hiring of the assistant coaches and trainees. All coaching positions are paid in two installments mid- and post-season.

Board

The Germantown Gators Board is composed of volunteer parents and/or community members. The term for each position is one year, and Board elections are held post-season. Board Positions are as follows, and position job descriptions can be found on the Gators website:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- League Representative

Other Positions

Several other season-long positions are held by other volunteers as well. These positions are as follows, and position job descriptions can be found on the Gators website:

- Volunteer Coordinator
- Concessions Coordinator
- Officials Coordinator
- Spaghetti Dinner Coordinator
- Clerk of Course Coordinator

Volunteer Roles

It Takes a Village to Run a Swim Meet!

168 volunteers are required for each home meet, and 66 are required for each away meet. In order to meet this demand, each family is required to work a certain number of shifts during the season. The particular number will be determined each year based on the number of families involved with the team. A deposit of \$150 is required upon registering for the team and will be returned at the end of the season if the family has completed its required shifts.

Meets are divided into two shifts, with first-shift workers on duty during events 1-40 and second-shift workers on duty during events 41-80. Always make sure to check in with the volunteer coordinator at the beginning of each shift so you get credit for having worked!

Volunteer Roles

Timers

Using a stopwatch, times swimmers at the end of the race. Generally, there are three timers per lane (two from the home team; one from the visiting team). One of the timers at each lane will need to record each of the finish times on a sheet of paper after the race. No experience necessary.

Starter/Referee

Acts as lead official. Responsible for starting each race heat and overseeing the meet. This position requires training and experience.

Official Stroke & Turn Judge

During a heat, monitors swimmers' strokes and their turns. If a swimmer is performing an illegal stroke or turn, the judges are responsible for disqualifying them from the race. This position requires formal training. Please let the Volunteer Coordinator know if you would be interested in being trained for this position, we are always in need of judges.

Lane Slip Runner

After the timers record swimmers' times on a sheet of paper, the runner is responsible for quickly collecting all the slips of paper and taking them to the Timer's Station. This requires someone who can move quickly and keep the pace of the meet on schedule.

Scorer

Responsible for recording the time of the swimmers, after each heat, into our computer scoring system.

Concession Stand

Assists with the set-up, sales and clean-up of the concession stand. The 1st shift will need to be available early, prior to the meet for set-up. Concession stand only operates at home meets. No experience necessary.

Ribbons

Assists with placing labels of swimmers' names and finish times on the backs of ribbons during the second half of the meet. Ribbons are distributed to the swimmers at the year-end awards banquet.

Clerk of Course

The staging area where swimmers are lined up in their lanes before they swim their events. An organized Clerk of Course is the key to a well-run, efficient meet! These volunteers ensure swimmers are in their proper lane, heat, and event.

Surviving a Swim Meet

What to Pack

- Swim suit
- Goggles (bring a spare)
- Towels (at least 2)
- Swim cap (bring a spare)
- Dry clothes for after the meet
- Sunscreen
- Sharpie permanent markers - *It is helpful to write your child's race number, heat number, lane number, and name on them somewhere visible to them and to the volunteers at Clerk of Course.*
- Highlighter & Pen/Pencil - *Makes life much easier if you have highlighted your child's name and event in your Heat Sheets/Program.*
- Seating - *Folding chairs/towels/blanket.*
- Cash - *You will need cash to purchase heat sheets/programs and to use at the concession stand. Additionally, t-shirts or vendors with suits, goggles, etc. are present at some larger meets.*
- Food - *Please bring snacks and water for your athlete. Items that are easy to eat, easy to digest, and easy to access are ideal.*
- Entertainment for athletes AND spectators (especially siblings!) - *Swim meets are several hours and we recommend bringing books, coloring, games, activity packs, etc. Just know that items are often left unattended in areas with tons of people. And regarding electronics - remember that everything gets wet at a swim meet!*

What to Do While You're There

- Be Informed. Make sure you know when and where swimmers should be for warm ups. Check the heat sheets to see what events your swimmers are in, and write them on their arms or shoulders.
- Arrive 10-15 minutes before warm-ups.
- Set-up camp - *Find a place for you and your family in the location reserved for the Gators. You can bring pop up tents, chairs, coolers, activities - everything on the "What to Pack" list.*
- Warm-up - *Get in the water at the assigned time and warm up.*
- Listen for events - *Events are announced throughout the meet. It is the swimmer's responsibility to get to the clerk of course or to their blocks at the required time.*
- Report to the Clerk of Course - *At the Clerk of Course, swimmers will be seated and escorted to the pool when it is time to swim.*

- Relays are the last events of the night - *Check with a coach to see if your swimmer is scheduled for a relay before you leave the meet! Relay participation is often determined at the swim meet.*

Inclement Weather

Swim team practices and meets take place rain or shine. In the case of severe weather or thunder/lightning, meets/practices will be delayed. Should the severe weather continue, they may be canceled. Please be on the lookout for calls from OneCallNow with the latest updates.

Communication

In any organization, communication is a key issue. Most problems can be avoided or handled more efficiently if there is clear and timely communication between the involved parties.

The Germantown Gators Swim Team encourages open and frequent communication between its swimmers, parents, coaches and board. To facilitate these efforts, all Board members, committee chairs and coaches are available for contact by phone, e-mail, or in person.

Nearly all Gators communication is handled via e-mail or OneCallNow. If a your e-mail address or phone number should change, please notify the Board immediately by sending an email to germantowngators.web@gmail.com.

The Gators maintains a team website, www.germantowngators.swimtopia.com, which contains contact information for all coaches and board members. The website is updated with current team news and information, as well as other resources.

The Gators Board meets monthly to address team business. These meetings are open to attendance by all Gators parents. Meeting times and places are subject to change, so call a board member to verify the meeting time and place. Proposed agenda items must be submitted to the club president a minimum of one week prior to the meeting.

Glossary

BLOCK

The platform where the swimmer starts the race. Often swimmers will line up in the lane behind the block.

CLERK OF COURSE

The master organizer/team that puts swimmers in order prior to their event. Often this is bull pen/corral with seats/bleachers. Swimmers are lined up by heat and lane. The swimmers are progressively moved through the seats and out to the pool deck remaining in order.

DQ

Disqualification. Infraction of the swim association rules during competition. Examples: illegal kick, extra stroke on flip turns, false-start. Be prepared for your child to get DQ'd. At some point it will happen. The officials will try and explain to your swimmer what they did wrong, but also have your child talk to the coach after every race.

HEAT

In most races, there are more competitors than there are lanes to swim in, and the race is broken out into heats. A heat is an extension of the one race. Ultimately, the swimmer with the fastest time across all heats is the winner. Some meets will have heat winners as well.

HEAT SHEET

The printed program for the day's event. Typically lists the order of events as well as the swimmers assigned to each heat.

MEET

Competitive swimming event.