

2008 Gator Handbook

<http://www.gatorswim.org>

We are excited that your family has chosen to be a part of the **GATORS SWIM TEAM** this summer. This is a tremendous opportunity for our children to have a great swimming experience and meet new friends. Swimmers will gain a sense of team participation, pride and confidence that will stay with them for a lifetime.

Within this handbook, you'll find information on the following:

- Practices
- Meets
- Helpful Hints
- Coaches Guidelines
- Parent Involvement

League Goals

The Austin Aquatic League was formed to create a friendly atmosphere for the benefit and personal satisfaction of our children. The league offers an opportunity for children and young people to challenge themselves, to learn and think in a positive manner, to be part of a team and to enjoy the experience of competition and good sportsmanship.

Eligibility

Children of members or staff of Great Hills Golf Club, Jester Club, or Lakewood Homeowners Association between the ages of 4 and 18 prior to June 1, who can swim the length of the pool, are eligible to become members of the GATORS SWIM TEAM. **Children who are NOT members of the above named clubs can join Gators for an additional fee of \$50.** The child must be able to swim the length of the pool prior to the first meet. The first two weeks of practice (May 5-May16) is probationary for beginner swimmers. Coaches will have final determination of a swimmers readiness. Children who are unable to continue after the first two weeks (May 16th) will be offered a refund for registration.

Information

The GATORS web site has also been expanded and improved. You can find late breaking information at <http://www.gatorswim.org>. We will be using the website as our principal form of communication. **Please visit the website where you will find a link to join the yahoo mail group "gatorswim".** This will be our main method of communication for the season. Broadcast emails will be sent out via the gatorswim yahoo mail group for important team updates.

Practices

Practices are an important component of the swim season. Practice is the swimmers opportunity to improve under the guidance of the coaches. Practices can be tedious and at times difficult, particularly for young swimmers. However, without attending practices on a regular basis, it will be hard for the swimmer to improve in meets. **League rules require a swimmer to attend at least two practices in the preceding week in order to be eligible to compete in the meet.** We encourage each swimmer to attend more if possible.

Please note: Official supervision is provided only during the swimmers' own practice time and at meets. Therefore, children must be supervised at all times other than the child's specific practice time by a parent or guardian. Children are not permitted in the pool except during their scheduled practice time.

It is important that the coaches be able to focus all their attention on the practice. If you have any questions or concerns about practice, please contact the Team President or Meet Director, or contact the coaches after all practices have ended.

Practice Schedule: (also posted on website)

Apr 30 & May 1 New swimmer clinic @ Jester (Mandatory) and New Parent Orientation:

8 & Under	4:30-5:00 p.m.
9 & Up	5:00-5:30 p.m.

May 5-June 4 All Swimmers Monday – Thursday @ Jester (No practice Friday)

6 & Under	4:45-5:20 p.m.
7 & 8	4:00-5:00 p.m.
9 & 10	5:20-6:20 p.m.
11 & Over	6:10-7:15 p.m.

June 5 –June 27 All Swimmers Monday-Friday @ Great Hills Pool

6 & Under	10:30-11:00 a.m.
7 & 8	8:25-9:15a.m.
9 & 10	7:40-8:35 a.m.
11 & Over	9:15-10:30 a.m.

Monday Afternoon Practice: June 9, June 16 & June 23

There will be 3 afternoon practices on Mondays at Great Hills Pool. Due to time limitations, this practice is only for those swimmers who are unable to attend regular morning practice due to camps or working parents.

8 & Under	5:15-6:00 p.m.
9 & Up	6:00-7:00 p.m.

Thursday Afternoon Practice: June 12, June 19 & June 26

There will be 3 afternoon practices on Mondays at Lakewood Pool. Due to time limitations, this practice is only for those swimmers who are unable to attend regular morning practice due to camps or working parents.

8 & Under	5:15-6:00 p.m.
9 & Up	6:00-7:00 p.m.

Gator Gear

Team identity and spirit are encouraged. Team members are asked to wear team swim suits. These can be purchased at:

Lane 4 Swim Shop
183 and Burnet in the Crossroad shopping center
Phone: 836-5152

Cost for suit is \$47 for girls suit and \$30 for boys suit. Be sure to mention "Gators Swim Team" to get this discounted price.

T-shirts and caps: Swimmers will receive swim cap during the first week of practice and a Gators t-shirt before the first meet.

Additional t-shirts can be purchased for \$7.50 ea.

End of Season Awards Ceremony

Following the Championship Meet (see schedule below), we will end our season with a banquet and ceremony. This year's award ceremony and banquet will be held on Sunday, June 29th at Great Hills. This ceremony provides one last time for the entire team to get together and acknowledge the contributions made by our swimmers.

Swim Meets

Our team will swim 4 dual meets during the season. In addition, an intrasquad (Gator only) meet will be held and a championship meet will be held at the end of the season with all league teams participating.

- May 24th at Balcones Woods (Arrive at 7:15 a.m.)
- June 2nd Intersquad at Great Hills (Monday, arrive at 5:00p.m.)
- June 7th at Westover (arrive at 7:15a.m.)
- June 14th at Great Hills w/Twin Creeks (Arrive at 6:45 a.m.)
- June 21st at Great Hills w/Forest Creek(Arrive at 6:45 a.m)
- June 29^h Championships at UT Jamall Swim Center (Sunday)

What to bring to each meet

- Plenty of towels per swimmer (2 to 3)
- Warm clothing (mornings are cool)
- Chairs or blankets (to sit on)
- Cooler (for fruit, juices, etc.)
- Visors and sunglasses, Gators T-shirt, swim cap, goggles.
- Sunscreen or sun block (watch the nose and shoulders)
- Money for concessions as they are available at each meet (provided by home team)

When to arrive

- Warm up time for HOME MEETS will be Saturday at 7:00 am. Late arrivals may miss warm ups and may be scratched from relay teams.
- Warm up time for AWAY MEETS will be Saturday at 7:30 a.m. All meets begin **promptly at 8:00 a.m.!**
- **PLEASE ARRIVE 15 MINUTES PRIOR TO WARM UPS**

What to eat

- The night before the swim meet any type of pasta, steak, potatoes, veggies, bread, and salad.
- Breakfast before the meet should be light. No sodas!
- Bring fruit, fruit roll-ups, fruit juices, granola, sandwiches (eat sparingly), veggies, and bagels. No junk food!

Swimmers are encouraged to attend all meets. Team members enjoy hearing the cheers from their parents and friends on the team. At certain meets parking may be a problem (sometimes finding the pool may be an even bigger problem). Supporters of our team are encouraged to car pool where practical. For meets in the south be sure to allow yourself plenty of time for travel, parking, and getting lost.

When swimmers arrive at the meet they need to find their age group area and check in with the age group parents. This is particularly important for young swimmers. Failure to do so may result in a child's inability to participate in one or more events.

Swimmer Marking for Events:

The morning or evening prior to the meet, use a permanent “Sharpie” marker to mark your child's event schedule on their right forearm in the following order: Event | Heat | Lane. **Do this for all events EXCEPT the relays.** Refer to Heat sheets to find your swimmers events. For Example, assume Jennifer Bouvier is the swimmer with the following events on the heat sheet:

Event 19 Women 11-12 50 SC Meter Freestyle

Lane Name Age Team Seed Time

Heat 1 Finals

- 1 Loockerman, Amber 11 WO 1:06.76
- 2 Condon, Tessa 11 WO 59.08
- 3 Koenig, Riley 11 GJ 50.72
- 4 Haddad, Sandra 11 GJ 52.13
- 5 Loockerman, Coral 12 WO 59.77
- 6 Cantu, Jacqueline 11 GJ NT

Heat 2 Finals

- 1 Niemann, Madeleine 12 WO 48.90
- 2 Sandall, Caroline 12 WO 48.19
- 3 Herbert, Shelby 11 WO 46.60
- 4 Stapper, Sierra 11 WO 47.49
- 5 Cavanaugh, Caroline 11 GJ 48.76
- 6 Knox, Rachel 11 WO 50.39

Heat 3 Finals

- 1 Evans, Erika 11 WO 43.31
- 2 Burkhardt, Savannah 11 GJ 42.74
- 3 Gottardi, Anna 12 GJ 41.55
- 4 Bouvier, Jennifer 11 GJ 42.70**
- 5 Searcy, Hanna 11 WO 43.21
- 6 Krause, Yareli 11 WO 44.66

Event 39 Women 11-12 50 SC Meter Backstroke

Lane Name Age Team Seed Time

Heat 1 Finals

- 1 Cantu, Jacqueline 11 GJ NT
- 2 Niemann, Madeleine 12 WO 1:10.90
- 3 Evans, Erika 11 WO 1:01.82
- 4 Loockerman, Amber 11 WO 1:10.90

- 5 Loockerman, Coral 12 WO 1:11.26

Heat 2 Finals

- 1 Sandall, Caroline 12 WO 58.88
- 2 Bouvier, Jennifer 11 GJ 57.20**
- 3 Krause, Yareli 11 WO 52.91
- 4 Shaw, Sara 12 WO 55.28
- 5 Knox, Rachel 11 WO 57.80
- 6 Close, Natalie 11 GJ 1:00.18

Event 51 Women 11-12 50 SC Meter Breaststroke

Lane Name Age Team Seed Time

Heat 1 Finals

- 2 Schallenberg, Megan 12 GJ NT
- 3 Searcy, Hanna 11 WO NT
- 4 Evans, Erika 11 WO NT
- 5 Haddad, Sandra 11 GJ NT

Heat 2 Finals

- 1 Chacon, Isabel 11 GJ NT
- 2 Close, Natalie 11 GJ 1:05.75
- 3 Loockerman, Coral 12 WO 1:02.28
- 4 Herbert, Shelby 11 WO 1:04.51
- 5 Knox, Rachel 11 WO 1:08.36
- 6 Cantu, Jacqueline 11 GJ NT

Heat 3 Finals

1 Bouvier, Jennifer 11 GJ 57.09

- 2 Gottardi, Anna 12 GJ 55.89
- 3 Ballee, Tricia 12 GJ 54.33
- 4 Stapper, Sierra 11 WO 55.79
- 5 Krause, Yareli 11 WO 56.91
- 6 Cavanaugh, Caroline 11 GJ 1:01.79

Markings on arm for swimmer Jennifer would be:

E | H | L
19 | 3 | 4
39 | 2 | 2
51 | 3 | 1

Where E=event, H=Heat No., L=Lane No.

Do not mark the relay events as the Age Group Parent will do this prior to warm ups!

Also, Mark swimmers name on upper right back shoulder in the format Last Name, First Name.

Marking swimmers prior to meet saves the age group parents a lot of time prior to the start of the meet.

Meet Sign Up Procedure

Each week parents must sign up their swimmer(s) for the swim meet by Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. If you will be out-of town please select this on the website. A broadcast email will be sent to all parents on Monday reminding them to confirm that their child is signed up for the upcoming meet. If your child is not signed up by the deadline, your child will not be able to swim in the meet. The meets are seated on Wednesday and cannot be changed. You may sign up for meets at the beginning of the year if you know which events your swimmer likes to swim.

Swim Meet Process

A swim meet is composed of 78 events. Each event groups swimmers together by gender and age. Within each event several heats are held proceeding from slowest to fastest. Swimmers will be placed in a heat with comparable swimmers of the same gender. At the coaches discretion a swimmer may "swim up" and compete with older swimmers. This is generally only done with older swimmers.

Swim meets consist of the following events in this order:

Event	Age Group
Freestyle Relay	6 & under only
Medley Relay	7 and older
Freestyle	All age groups

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Back Stroke	All age groups
Breast Stroke	All age groups
Butterfly	All age groups
Individual Medley	9 and older
Freestyle Relay	7 and older

Events are swum in age group order, starting with the 6 & under girls followed by the boys 6 & under except as noted above for the freestyle and medley relays and the individual medley.

For individual events, swimmers in age groups 10 & under swim single 25-meter laps. The age groups, 11 & older, swim 50-meter individual events. The individual medley event is swum as a 100 meter total, one 25-meter lap for each of the strokes.

For the medley and freestyle relays, age groups 12 & younger swim single 25-meter laps. Age groups 13 & above swim 50-meter laps.

Swimmers are required to swim "legal" strokes in competition. Stroke and turn judges may disqualify, "DQ", a swimmer if their stroke is improper.

Ribbons are awarded in dual meets for the fastest six swimmers in each individual event, and for the three fastest relay teams in each event. Points are awarded to the team for each event as follows:

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Individual	5 pts	3 pts	1 pt
Relays	5 pts	0	0

The dual meet winner is the team with the most points for all events.

Please do not talk to the coaches during swim meets. The coaches' responsibility is with the swimmers. Refer all questions to the Meet Director during meets. You are welcome to talk to the coaches after practices/meets or email questions.

You need not stay for the entire meet. However, please check with age groups parents before leaving to ensure that the swimmer has no more events for the day.

Helpful Hints:

The following are a few rules for parents and swimmers to remember:

1. Young swimmers may feel cold especially in the mornings at the beginning of the season. They should dress warmly and bring extra sweatshirts or jackets to stay dry between their events.
2. Label towels and all personal belongings. Check the lost box in the storeroom at the Jester/Great Hills Pools for lost items.
3. Avoid heavy meals before meets and practice. Swimmers can be refueled later.
4. Sometimes eyes are irritated by chlorine. Swim goggles are an excellent protection and can be purchased at local swim shops. Visine eye drops or cool boiled water may also help.
5. Children with long hair should wear a cap. This keeps hair out of the face, helps the child swim, and keeps the pool cleaner.
6. It is very important to dry ears well after swimming. If necessary, ask your doctor about ear drops. To help prevent swimmers ear, use a solution of half vinegar and half alcohol after swimming.
7. Coaches oversee swim team members **ONLY DURING PRACTICE** and at stroke clinics in the enclosed pool area. Swimmers who remain at the pool afterwards are the responsibility of their parents or guardians.
8. Due to liability, we ask that children not swim unless it is during their scheduled practice. Also, siblings are not covered in our insurance and must stay out of the pool at all times.

Coaches Guidelines

1. Each swimmer must attend at least two practices per week to swim in the following Saturday's meet. If a swimmer will not be in attendance at two practices during a given week, the head coach must receive a valid written excuse.
2. To help our meet run smoother and faster, it is imperative that the coaches be informed of anticipated absences from swim meets. Please call one of the coaches at your earliest opportunity for unannounced absences. Please help keep the coaches informed! This is critical especially for the relay events.
3. Coaches will time swimmers frequently during the season to measure progress on strokes as well as using this as a guideline for seeding swimmers in meet events. Team members are encouraged to request a time on any event they would like to swim in upcoming meets.
4. For the relay events (freestyle and medley) coaches will select relay members. Selection to a relay is typically based on individual times. Although we will try to have all children swim in a relay, if not enough children are present to make a full

- relay team it is possible your child will not swim. Substitution for relays are performed early the day of the meet for children that are not present. Be sure to arrive by the warm up time and make sure that the age group parent knows your child is present, otherwise your child may not swim in a relay.
5. Swimmers may participate in only three of the four individual events (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and individual medley) at each meet. Swimmers may only participate in an event if the coach feels that the child has a legal stroke. The swimmer must sign up online by Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. the events that they will compete in at the upcoming meet during practice. Requests after this time cannot be allowed. Coaches may at any time change a swimmer's events if they need more swimmers in a specific event.

Awards

An essential part of the swim program is recognition of the swimmer achievements. This recognition takes place in several forms.

Verbal recognition by Coaches & Parents

By far the most significant recognition that our swimmers will receive will come from our parents and coaches. The coaches will point out areas where swimmers can improve but just as important the coaches will strive to provide positive feedback to swimmers for a job well done. Parents can help tremendously here, provide praise to your swimmers for any accomplishment, no matter how small, and leave the criticism of swimming technique to our coaches.

Swimmer of the Week Award

Each week during the swim season coaches will recognize one swimmer from each boy and girl age group who exhibits an outstanding enthusiasm for the team. Coaches will take into consideration attendance at practices and attitude exhibited at practices and meets.

Heat Ribbons

At swim meets swimmers are allowed to compete in one or more events. Within each event, swimmers are "seeded" into different heats based on speed. Within a heat a swimmer will be competing against swimmers of similar capability. The heat winner will receive a ribbon.

Best Time Ribbons

While competing against other swimmers gives our meet such excitement, the real measure of accomplishment comes from each swimmer trying their hardest to better their performance. To acknowledge these swimmers are awarded a ribbon whenever their time

is a personal best time. Since a swimmer's ability improves throughout the season, if practices are attended, it is not unusual for younger swimmers to receive at least one best time ribbon for each meet. Best time ribbons are distributed at practice of the following week.

Event Ribbons

Event ribbons are awarded to swimmers with the fastest times in each event. In addition, event winners earn points for the team that will determine the outcome of the dual meets.

Season Trophies

At the end of the swim season swimmers will be awarded a trophy to acknowledge their participation in Gators. Trophies are awarded to any swimmer who is a member of Gators. We hope that the trophy serves as a tangible reminder of the enjoyable time with the Gators swim team.

Parent Involvement

The GATORS SWIM TEAM gives parents and swimmers a unique opportunity to be involved in a meaningful working relationship. The more active you are as a parent, the more interested your child becomes. Swimming is more rewarding with parental support.

In order to run an efficient swim meet, 30+ parents are necessary. Key officials require some experience: training/clinics are provided by the league or individual team. Parent interest and reliability are the only qualifications for most meet jobs. Each parent is expected to participate in a minimum of three meets --age group parents are asked to volunteer every week so that they may get to know their age group swimmers. Following, is a list of volunteers we must provide for each swim meet:

Position	Number
Meet Director	1
False Start Tech	1
Starter	1
Timers & Watchers	12
Announcer	1
Stroke/turn judges	3-6
Age group parents	8-12
Runners	4
Ready Bench	3
Scoring	2
Hospitality	2
Ribbons	2

Please volunteer when you can. Help is always needed for age group parents, timers, and runners. If your plans don't allow you to be at the whole meet, it is possible to split a job with someone else. With your help we can make meets go faster and smoother.

Swim Team Board

The GATORS SWIM TEAM Board organizes the swim season each year. We typically start in February and meet once a month until the beginning of swim season. If your child has a positive experience in Gators we encourage you to help us next year by volunteering. We will ask for volunteers at the award banquet but feel free to talk to a board member at any time during the season to find out more. Without your help we cannot continue. Below is a brief description of the positions.

AGE GROUP PARENTS

Assist ready bench workers by gathering swimmers for events and getting them to the ready bench prior to the event. Ideally, age group parents should work the entire season with a specific age group in order to become familiar with swimmers. Also, this position insures all children in their group are entered in the appropriate number of events, and that all swimmers are present and aware of their events. They notify the ready bench and coaches of any scratches and changes which will need to be made to the time and relay cards.

ANNOUNCER

Must arrive early to set-up the broadcast system, become familiar with the schedule, and announce activities before the actual start of the meet. This position also sets up the team photo.

BANQUET

Sets up awards banquet and orders food and drink.

COMPUTER

Sets up software, enters times and merges information from the opposing team starting on Thursday. Heat Sheets must be prepared before the meet.

GATOR GEAR

Orders, organizes, and sells items of clothing or equipment for the team. Swimsuit selection is also part of this job.

G H LIAISON

Works closely with the Great Hills Country Club to schedule all events.

HOSPITALITY/CONCESSIONS

Coordinates concessions with the Great Hills Country Club for home meets. Also serves volunteers drinks during the home meets.

MEET DIRECTOR

Is in charge of the conduct of the meet, makes copies of heat sheets and is in charge of setting up pool for home swim meets.

PRESIDENT

Insures all board positions for the season are filled. Keeps team informed on all important events. Checks with Volunteer Coordinator to make sure Team is covered for volunteers for each meet. Works with Treasurer to set a budget for each season. Hires Coaches with a set contract. Works with Great Hills Manager and GH liason throughout the season to insure the season runs smoothly.

PRESIDENT-ELECT

President for the following season. Takes on President duties when president not available for current season.

PUBLICITY/COMMUNICATIONS

Consists of preparing necessary updates and notices to parents; preparing and distributing recent newsworthy events to the Great Hills, Jester, and Lakewood newsletters..

READY BENCH

Consists of aligning swimmers by heat and lane assignment and insuring they get to the proper lane for each heat. Additionally before the meet, this position sorts and groups swimmer time cards to be given to the timers. Relay cards are prepared for distribution to age group parents before the meet.

REGISTRATION

Prepares and mails all registration materials. Additionally, this position prepares the handbook and other data needed for the registration party.

RIBBONS

Volunteers coordinate sorting and labeling of ribbons for the swimmers. Ribbons are given to coaches for distribution.

RUNNERS

Pick up completed cards from timers after the event and deliver completed cards to the scoring table. Runners must also pick up DQ slips from the stroke/turn judges and deliver them to the scoring table.

SCORING

Works closely with the computer personnel in scoring. Scorers determine the order of finish for an event after all heats have been swum. Organization and extra time after the meet are required.

SOCIAL DIRECTOR

Will work with the coaches in organizing team motivational events such as the banquet, pep rallies, Schlitterbahn and other activities for the swimmers.

STARTER

Shall begin each event by advising swimmers, judges, and timers of the specific event by name, heat number, and/or appropriate order of strokes. Announcements may also have to be made about combining of heats or other changes occurring during the meet.

STROKE/TURN JUDGE

Must be certified by the AAL by attending a stroke clinic. Judges observe strokes, turns, finishes, and relay exchanges to determine if the swimmer is in compliance with the AAL guidelines. Disqualification slips must be completed correctly and initialed by judges in order to track the infraction(s) and to be valid disqualification.

TEAM LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVE

Shall represent the Great Hills Gators during meets for disputes or other matters that arise concerning conduct, scoring, etc. This person works closely with the Meet Director.

TIMER

Will recruit lane timers for swim meets. And make sure stop watches are ready for home meets. Head timer shall run two watches for back up of malfunctioning watch or should a timer not start properly. Timers should obtain accurate recording, checking swimmers name and club on EVERY heat, before recording the time.

TREASURER:

The Treasurer shall care for and record all fees and assessments and provide a detailed accounting of all funds. Works with Board to set a budget for the season

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based on the number of registered swimmers. Reimburses the board for any Gator related expenses. Pays coaches per contract. Manages Gators bank Account (checking).

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Shall create a volunteer sign-up sheets for registration. Shall contact each committee chairperson by Thursday prior to a meet confirming all necessary volunteers and arrangements: ready bench; stroke/turn judges; starters; announcer; scoring; ribbons. Creates name tags for all volunteers for each meet.

WEBMASTER

Maintains gator team website: www.gatorswim.org