

Gehring Park Swim Team

Parent Handbook



INTRODUCTION

Dear Gator Families,

Welcome to the Gehringer Park Gators Swim Team! We are a recreational team emphasizing skills development, team spirit, fair competition, and good sportsmanship. Our goals are to encourage swimmers of all levels to strive for personal success, and to provide an environment for your child to achieve, improve, and have a positive experience throughout the season.

The Gators season is filled with many exciting meets with other local swim teams, and other fun social and team-building activities. An atmosphere of encouragement and praise will be provided for the growth of your child's abilities and self-confidence.

Swimmers don't have to be fast or experienced to be on the team, they just have to want to come out and have some fun and be willing to learn! Developing quality swimmers is only one of our goals for this program. We also strive to instill team pride, sportsmanship, and respect for others. Our aim is to provide an organized, effective and fun summer swimming program designed to enhance the popularity of swimming and provide recreationally based competitive swimming between communities.

The Gators team is run by a volunteer committee of the Gehringer Park Recreation Club Board. It is the Board that permits the Gators to use the Gehringer pool, grounds and facilities. We appreciate their support! The swim team committee handles the administrative aspects of running the team, and requires parent participation to run meets and social activities. You will receive training on various jobs and in practically no time will be an expert on the swimming strokes, team equipment and swim meets.

Parent and family involvement is what makes the team run. Your enthusiasm is what makes it successful! We hope that you and your child will develop strong friendships with other Gator families that will last for years to come.

Thank you for choosing to be part of the Gators family! **Go Gators!!**



Have Fun!!!

OVERVIEW

Recreational Team

The Gehringer Park Gators Swim Team is a recreational (“rec”) level swim team. This means that our practice and competition season is limited to a portion of the year (spring and summer). We have a tradition of teaching proper stroke technique to swimmers of all ability levels, focusing on individual improvement, and cultivating a strong sense of team and good sportsmanship.

League Affiliation

The Gators are currently not affiliated with any swim league. The swim team committee evaluates league participation periodically, and may join a swim league in the future.

The Gators program offers:

- A balanced program of practice, competition and social activities.
- Instruction and training in stroke technique for boys and girls ages 4-18 in a structured, closely supervised, regularly scheduled format.
- Participation according to age and ability level in competitions to ensure fair competition in a safe setting. These competitions are open to all competitors within a given age and ability level.
- Opportunities for boys and girls from early elementary school to early post-high school, regardless of swimming ability, race, color, ethnic origin or religion.



The Gators Philosophy:

1. Work with every swimmer on the team. Everybody swims; everybody wins.
2. Work on basic skills and teach good physical fitness habits.
3. Teach fair play and sportsmanship.
4. Help swimmers set and evaluate individual goals.
5. Keep winning in perspective.
6. Build team spirit and individual self-confidence.
7. Have fun!

ELIGIBILITY

1. Any Child up to the age of 18 (as of June 15th) of a family in good standing* (Gehring Park Recreation Club dues must be paid current at the time of team registration) with Gehring Park Recreation Club is eligible to join the Gators.
2. The minimum swimming ability required is for your child to be comfortable and safe in the water and being able to follow directions. Coaches will assess new swimmers for readiness. Ability to swim across the competition pool and knowledge of each of the competitive strokes are not a requirement. Coaching of each stroke will be given as appropriate to each swimmer! Each Swimmer will receive an assessment prior to Time Trials.
3. It is our goal to have every swimmer swim in all meets; however, a child may not be entered into a meet until they can swim the length of the pool without assistance.
5. Fees are due in full by time trials. Swimmers will not be allowed to enter the water after time trials until all fees are paid. All forms must be completed and submitted prior to participation.
6. Swimmers who have competed and/or trained with a year-round USA team after December 31st are not eligible, except as follows:
 - a. Members of scholastic (high school) teams may continue to train with a USA team until the scholastic team practice begins or March 15, whichever comes first.
 - b. Members of scholastic teams may continue to train with the scholastic team through the end of its season.
 - c. USA cardholders may swim “unattached” in USA meets.
 - d. Swimmers may participate with USA and/or scholastic water polo teams.
7. Swimmers are permitted to participate in the both the City and County Championship Meets.

AGE GROUPS

- A. Your child will swim in an age group based on his/her age as of June 15th of each year. Boys and girls practice together, as may different age groups, but compete separately at meets. Age groups are:

6 and Under Girls	11-12 Girls
6 and Under Boys	11-12 Boys
7-8 Girls	13-14 Girls
7-8 Boys	13-14 Boys
9-10 Girls	15-18 Girls
9-10 Boys	15-18 Boys

- B. 6 and Under, and 7-8 age groups race 25 yard individual events, 100 yard relay events (4 swimmers swim 25 yards each), and 100 yard individual medley.
- C. 9-10, 11-12 and 13-14 age groups race 50 yard individual events, 200 yard relay events (4 swimmers swim 50 yards each), and 100 yard individual medley.
- A. 15 -18 age group races 100 yard individual events and 200 yard relay events (4 swimmers swim 50 yards each).
- B. A swimmer may “swim up” in an older age group for either relays only or the entire meet. A swimmer who elects to swim up for an individual event must swim up for the entire meet, including relays. Exceptions:
- 6 and Under swimmers may swim the 7-8 Individual Medley event, without being required to “swim up” for the entire meet.
 - Some invitational meets have different rules; consult with a coach before entering events for invitational meets.

TEAM COMMUNICATIONS

E-mail

E-mail is the team's primary form of communication. Please make sure your email address is printed correctly on registration materials to receive email updates, and please check your email regularly to stay informed. Also, please add the Gator email address as a safe sender to ensure that you receive all of the team emails. GehringerGators@gmail.com and GehringerGatorsCommunications@gmail.com,

Family Folders

The Gehringer Gator Swim Team has a file box with a file folder for every family on the team. The board and the coaches put all hand-outs, meet information and other pertinent information in these file folders. Coaches also have folders in the box. Need to get information to a coach? Put a note in their folder. The file box can be found outside the team shed during all practices. It is self-serve and we recommend you check it daily.

Bulletin Boards

Team and pool record boards are located on the back wall under the covered patio. Meet results, sponsor information and medal times will be posted here. The white board is used for important team updates, schedule or meet changes and upcoming social events. Please check this board daily to stay informed.

Web Site

Our website provides up-to-date information about schedules, swim meets and other events, general team information and sponsorships. Check out <https://www.teamunify.com/team/recgpg/page/home>

Text Reminders

A text reminder may be created and distributed early in the swim season. Please double check on your personal online account and make sure your SMS phone is correct and you have listed your carrier. We will use this to send any last minute changes. Please make sure your phone number is correct.

Team Committee Members

If you have questions about the team, please feel free to contact a swim team committee member. A list of committee members and their contact information is listed on our website under coaches and committee on our home page.

Team Coaches

If you need to speak with a Team Coach, please do so outside of swim practice. The time a coach spends holding a conversation with a parent during practice is time taken away from the swimmers, and distracts their attention from the pool which poses a safety issue. If you have an immediate need, please wait until after workouts.

WORKOUTS/PRACTICES

- A. **Workouts are an essential activity** for ongoing improvement in each swimmer's ability as well as for relay teams and Gators team as a whole. Attendance at workouts is considered mandatory, and absences should be limited to other commitments such as schoolwork, illness, religious activities, family vacations or other family emergencies.
- B. **Workouts are held rain or shine!** Only thunderstorms, facility problems, or emergencies will cancel a workout.
- C. **Team-building** - A technique used to promote team spirit during workouts is the interaction of older, more experienced swimmers with the younger, or beginner, swimmers. This interaction provides encouragement to the younger swimmers, connects "veteran" swimmers with new swimmers, and develops a sense of team.
- D. **Practice Schedules** are described at a high level in this handbook but are subject to adjustment depending upon the particular season's needs. Workouts usually begin after spring break in April and are held in the afternoon on school days. During summer vacation, workouts are scheduled each weekday morning. Availability of summer afternoon/evening practices can vary from season to season; when available, prior arrangement with the Head Coach is typically required for a swimmer to attend.
- E. **Be punctual, both arriving and leaving the pool** when the scheduled workout is completed. The Gators pool availability is limited. The Gehring Park Recreation Club is closed to the public each day and, as such, swimmers are not to be left at the pool if not participating in the workout session.
- F. **Supervision** - Only registered swimmers are allowed to participate in swim team practice. Parents are encouraged to attend practices to watch their children; however, parents are asked to not interrupt the coaches or the swimmers during practice. If you need to talk to a coach, please do so after practice.
- G. **Leaving Practice** - Please check your area before leaving the pool. Remove all personal belongings and trash. Chairs, lounges, tables, etc. must be returned to the Lifeguard shack.
- H. **Canceled Practice** - Swimmers who attend practice without an adult should know what to do if practice is suddenly called off. Please discuss with your swimmer and devise a plan. **Parents should make sure that practice is being held before leaving children at the pool!**
- I. **Food and Beverages** are permitted on the grass area only. Please restrict the consumption of food and beverages to this area. **Note: Glass is not permitted in the facility.**

WORKOUTS/PRACTICES

(continued)

Swimmers are divided into workout groups based on age and/or ability. The times described below are only a general guideline. Swimmers will be placed into their respective practice group by mutual agreement between the swimmer and the Head Coach.

Swimmers are to attend the practice time they are officially assigned to and will not be able to practice outside of their assigned time unless arranged and agreed upon by the Head Coach.

Pre-Season Practice Schedule:

Pre-season practice typically runs from mid-April through mid-June. Practice times are 3:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. and are broken down according to age group, with usually the youngest ages assigned to the earliest and typically shorter (30-45 minutes) time slots and the oldest age groups assigned later and longer practices (up to 1 hour). The exact dates and times for pre-season practice will be provided during swim team registration and/or announced via email.

Summer Practice Schedule:

Summer practice typically begins the Monday morning after the local public schools complete their year, running M-F from mid-June through early August, through the week prior to the City Meet invitational. Practice times are usually 7:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and are broken down according to age group. Summer practice sessions are usually longer by 15-30 minutes for all age groups compared to pre-season practice times. In the summer, the age group order is arranged so older swimmers are readily available to assist the younger swimmers.

The exact dates and times for summer practice can be found on our website under Swimmer Team Information. After registration is finalized, these times may be adjusted.

Additional Practice will be held for County Meet qualifiers after City Meet. There is typically no practice on July 4th and possibly before or after/ See the website for current schedule.

Practice schedules are subject to change based on the number of swimmers who join the team in each age group.

COACHING

As a team we are very fortunate to have excellent coaches. They are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and committed to the overall excellence of the swim team. Positive coaching, encouragement, and setting personal goals are emphasized. The coaches are expected to show respect and in turn are deserving of the swimmers' and parents' respect. The pool deck should be considered a special place for coaches and swimmers to interact; parents are encouraged to allow the coaches to do their jobs by not interfering on deck, unless requested by a coach to assist.

It is understandable that parents may have questions or concerns occasionally regarding coaching decisions. A communication gap can occur if a parent feels more comfortable discussing a disagreement over coaching philosophy with other parents rather than resolving it. These questions and concerns need to be brought to the attention of the member of the swim team committee over coaches, who will serve as liaison in communicating with the coaching staff.

The Gator coaches have the authority to discipline a swimmer who misbehaves, or violates the swimmer code of conduct. Discipline may include verbal warning, benching (time-out) or being removed from practice/meet entirely.

- A. The coaches are available by appointment to speak to anyone who may have a concern. Please do not discuss an individual swimmer's problem or concern with a coach during team practice. The coaches are required to focus on the pool and swimmers in the pool during practice. You may leave a note in the folder of the Head Coach or the coach in question.



SUGGESTED GATOR GARB & GEAR

A. Swimmers

1. **Team Suits:** Team suits are not mandatory but are highly encouraged. Team suits are available for purchase at various sporting goods/ online retailers. Team suits should be worn only at meets. If you choose not to purchase a team suit, please wear a plain black suit.
2. **Practice Suits:** To save wear and tear on your team suit, swimmers should wear a different suit for practices. Girls must wear a one-piece suit.
3. **Swim Caps:** Must be worn by long-haired swimmers during practice and meets. No restriction to color, design, etc. Print swimmer's name on it in indelible ink.
4. **Goggles:** May be purchased at any sporting goods store. Print swimmer's name on them with indelible ink.
5. **Sweats:** To wear between races. You may purchase sweats with Gator graphics through the team. Write the swimmer's name on tops & bottoms.
6. **Towels:** Two large beach size towels with names on them are recommended.
7. **Fins:** Coaches may require a specific type. If you buy fins, be sure to write the swimmer's name on them.
8. **Hand Paddles:** Used by 11 and up are also used.
9. **Parka:** Not required, but available online, you can also use a comfy, warm bathrobe!
10. **Swim Bag:** To hold all the gear.

B. Parents

1. **Folding Chairs:** Useful at some meets where no seating is provided.
2. **Snacks:** Should be easily digestible carbohydrates: fruit, crackers, muffins, bagels, sandwiches, etc. Greasy foods such as hamburgers or hot dogs are not recommended for swimmers.
3. **Drinks:** Water or sports drinks (Gatorade, Propel, etc). Soda is not recommended for swimmers.
4. **Sun Gear:** Hats, sun block, sunglasses, umbrellas and/or sunshades. Meets last 3 – 4 hours and there is often little shade.
5. **Night Gear:** Warm coat or jacket, blankets and/or sleeping bag. Evening meets are often cold and/or windy.
6. **Miscellaneous:** Games, books, crayons, markers, etc. are suggested to occupy swimmers between their races.

Anything brought to a meet should be marked with the swimmer's name. Nothing that would be sorely missed if broken, lost or stolen should be brought to a meet. The Gehring Park Gators Swim Team is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

PARENT WORK ASSIGNMENTS

Many hands lighten the load! Your hands are needed!

Parents are the backbone of our team. Swim meets and team activities (the fun stuff!) simply won't happen without the involvement of parents. If all of us do a little, none of us will have to do a lot! Here's how the work works:

1. When you signed up for the swim team you agreed to lend a hand with the work needed to run meets and activities, and you were asked to sign up for a specific number of jobs. If you choose not to select your jobs, the Jobs Coordinator will assign jobs to you and produce a work schedule for each meet. Every effort is made to accommodate your preferences, however sometimes this is not possible.
2. If you are unable to fulfill a job for which you have been assigned, you must find your own substitute and notify the Jobs Coordinator. **If you or your substitute fails to fulfill a job anytime during the season, you will be assessed the full \$200 work deposit, your swimmer will be put on hold for swim practice and swim meets until you pay an additional \$200 work deposit fee.** If you do not fulfill your assigned jobs at two or more meets, your swimmer may be restricted from participating in the swim team with no refund of registration fees.
3. Most jobs require only a few minutes of training such as Timers, Recorders, Runner, Ribbon Labeler, Computer Assistant, Shepherd, Snack Shack, Set-up and Clean-up.
4. A few jobs require more training time such as Stroke & Turn Judges, Starters and Referees and Computer Operators. Full training is provided for all jobs.
5. If you have experience running organizations like a swim team, and you have the time and willingness, make your interest known to the Swim Team Committee. Talented and willing parents may be reluctant to step forward. We need you – don't be bashful!
6. Invitational Work Assignments – You will only be assigned a job on the day your swimmer is scheduled to race.

Working meets and other activities is a great way to get to know other Gator parents, which makes the team fun for all! The happiest team has the most people working!

Parents Signature: _____

THE MEETS

What is a Swim Meet?

A swim meet is like a big party centered around a swimming competition. Swim meets are held for the enjoyment of the kids, but are just as much fun for the adults! The meets help to teach the Gator swimmers good sportsmanship, discipline and team spirit while helping to develop their swimming skills. The Gators participate in Dual Meets (Gators vs. one other team) at home or at the other team's pool. The Gators also participate in Invitational Meets competing against numerous other teams at once, at the host team pool or a large regional swim center.

The following will help describe the typical home dual meet, held at Gehringer Park Recreation Club pool, plus touch on some aspects of "away meets".

A. Facilities:

1. The Pool: The six-lane competition pool (formerly known as the "Blue Badge" pool) is used.
 - a. All other pools are closed. Diving pool may be used for 15-18 only warm down
 - b. The diving boards and lifeguard stands are off limits.
2. Equipment set Up: Set up workers arrive 2 hours prior to meet start time.
 - a. Lane Lines: Stored on a large spool on the pool deck and should be put in place first.
 - b. Starting Blocks: Stored in a large storeroom, and should be put in place.
 - c. Backstroke Flags: Stored in the team equipment room. Four standards are set in receiving sleeves near each corner of the pool. Flags are strung across the pool next so swimmers can practice backstroke turns during warm-ups.
 - d. False Start Cord: Stored in the team equipment room. Installed on shorter standards at mid-pool similar to the backstroke flags.
 - e. Computer/Ribbon Tables: Stored in a large storeroom.
 - f. Canopies: If needed. Stored in both the team equipment room and large storeroom. Set-up over the computer/ribbon table and timer/recorder area as needed.
 - g. Starter's Equipment: Stored in the team equipment room.
 - h. Chairs: For timers, recorders, head timer, starter and computer/ribbon table.
 - i. Snack Shack: Tables, barbeque, supplies. Set up near the gate shack.

B. Warm Ups:

1. Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm up time to find your spot and get settled.
2. For home meets: Swimmers are to be in the water warming up 60 minutes before meet start time. Warm up period is 30 minutes. The visiting team will warm up for the 30 minutes preceding the start of the meet.
3. For away meets: Gator swimmers are to be in the water 30 minutes preceding the start of the meet.
4. Invitational meets will assign our team to a specific warm up time.

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C. Event, Heat and Lane Assignments:

1. Meet Entries:

The Head Coach will enter (assign) each swimmer to a series of individual and relay events. Those events, heat number and lane numbers will be posted. Check the posted event sheets to determine what your child will be swimming.

If you are a parent of a young swimmer, it is extremely helpful for you to be aware of when your child is due to swim. Write down the event, heat and lane numbers on a piece of paper and keep it with you, and write the information on your child's hand with a Sharpie, then bring your child to the shepherds' gathering area when the shepherds call for his/her age group.

For swimmers who are capable of competing in more than one stroke, the Gator team policy is to enter each swimmer in a minimum of 2 events in dual meets. The maximum number of entries allowed per swimmer in dual meets is 3 individual events and up to 2 relay events, or 5 total. Thus, in a given dual meet, a swimmer may have anywhere from 2 to 5 swimming assignments. The coaches make every effort to exceed this minimum of 2 entries for each swimmer whenever possible so that swimmers gain maximum meet experience in both individual and relay events; however, meet heat limits, facility time constraints, and insufficient available swimmers to make multiple relay teams often prevent this.

Assignments on the "A" relay team of each age/gender group for a given meet are determined by the coaches, who aim to put together a squad from the available swimmers that will make the most competitive relay entry for our team. When not constrained by meet entry limits or lack of sufficient swimmers, "B" and "C" relay teams will also be entered to give as many swimmers as possible of all abilities relay experience. As swimmers' times improve over the course of a season they can typically expect more relay assignments. Occasionally swimmers will be assigned to "swim up" on the relay team of an older age group to allow the team to have an entry for that age group and to give more swimmers a relay experience during the meet.

D. Order of Events:

2. Gehringer home meets follow the order below, with youngest age group swimming first, girls then boys:

- ◆ Medley Relay
- ◆ Individual Medley
- ◆ Freestyle
- ◆ Breaststroke
- ◆ Butterfly
- ◆ Backstroke
- ◆ Freestyle Relay

The order of events can vary from the above at "away" dual meets and Invitational Meets. The most common variations at dual meets include swimming Backstroke before Butterfly and/or swimming IM as the final individual event. Never make assumptions about event order--be sure to check the event order postings at each meet.

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3. Heat Assignment:

When an event has more swimmers entered in it than lanes of the pool, multiple heats of the event will be run. A swimmer's heat (and lane) assignment is based upon the swimmer's seasonal best time achieved in that event at the time the entries were submitted, known as "seed time." The assignment of heat and lanes is called "seeding the meet" and is done according to the host team's seeding policy, the parameters of which are set up in their meet software, with the goal being to match swimmers from opposing teams of similar abilities in the same heat. Gehringer follows the most common seeding policy for dual meets in our area and seeds the heats "fast to slow." With a 6-lane pool, this means the three swimmers with the fastest seed times from each team are assigned to heat 1, the next three fastest from each team are assigned to heat 2, etc.

As swimmers' times improve over the course of the season, their improved time in an event may earn them a seeding assignment in the "fast heat," which at dual meets is typically the scoring meet (see "Scoring" section below).

Occasionally, the host team at an "away" meet seeds their dual meet heats "slow to fast" in which case the last heat of the event will be the fastest heat and typically the scoring heat. Invitational meets are often seeded in a variation of slow to fast as well.

4. Lane Assignment:

Generally the home team swimmers are assigned to even number lanes, the visiting team the odd numbered lanes. Lane 1 is the lane closest to the starter. Swimmers are assigned specific lanes within their heat according to their seed times, with the faster times being assigned the middle lanes and then working outward with the slowest seed times in the outer lanes.

5. Combining Heats:

Swimmers and parents need to be aware that, for the sake of meet efficiency, it is common for several heats each meet to end up being run "combined," when the Starter sees opportunity to do so, at both home and away meets. It is important to pay attention to the meet to hear if heats will be combined so that your swimmers do not miss their race. For example, if Heat 1 of an event has a couple of open lanes due to one of the teams not entering many swimmers in the event and/or assigned swimmers not showing up, and Heat 2 only has two swimmers entered, the starter may ask the heat 2 swimmers to step up and fill in the open lanes, swimming Heat 2 at same time as Heat 1.

(Though run at the same time, this is still considered running two separate heats. Scoring and awards, explained below, remain based on the original heat seeding, i.e., Heat 2-assigned swimmers who swim a combined race with Heat 1 swimmers are still Heat 2 swimmers ineligible to score regardless of the place they finish in the combined race.)

6. Curfew:

On weekday evening meets, there is a 9:00 curfew at our pool, and similar constraints are in place at most "away" meets. No stroke event (youngest age group) may *start* after 9:00 pm. The meet director will make the event cancellation decision should it become necessary; however, as long as an event is *started* prior to 9:00pm the whole event usually will be finished. The Head Coaches of the competing teams by mutual agreement

THE MEETS

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may elect to drop one of the events from the meet (usually the Individual Medley or Freestyle Relay) should the time constraint become a factor.

Saturday morning meets also must end in time for Gehringer Park to be open for use by its general membership by 1:00pm; depending upon the number of heats seeded for later events, we typically are not able to start new events past 12:15pm. The meet director, in consultation with coaches, will determine if any events are to be canceled for late-running Saturday morning meets.

E. Meet Scoring:

The home team determines the scoring rules for a meet. When we host, our team uses a dual meet scoring standard common to many area recreational swim teams, where the fastest heat of each individual event (per above, Heat 1 at Gator home meets) is considered the scoring heat. For relays, if a team enters multiple relay squads in an event only the "A" relay squad is eligible to score. Points are earned as follows:

1. Individual Events:
 - a. First Place 5 points
 - b. Second Place 3 points
 - c. Third Place 1 point
2. Relays:
 - a. First Place 6 points
 - b. Second Place 3 points

Although this continues to be the most common dual meet scoring method in our area, scoring may vary from the above at away meets according to the host team's particular scoring standard (e.g., some teams may score events based on overall place regardless of swimmers' heat assignment, and/or may score beyond 3rd place and/or may allow "B" and "C" relay teams to score).

F. Meet Awards:

Ribbons/awards are placed in your family file folder and are usually available within a day or two following a meet. They are earned as follows:

Home meets:

1. For *all* age groups:
 - a. Gators swimmers have the potential to earn an award for each individual swim in each meet! Gator swimmers will earn a "Personal Best" award (ribbon or other token, exact award used can vary by season) for each seasonal best time achieved in a meet (we do not award Personal Best awards to visiting team swimmers).
 - b. Our team awards place ribbons to all scoring swimmers of either team, i.e., up to age 10. Older swimmers can ask for a ribbon if desired.
 - i. 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place ribbons to Heat 1 individual finishers
 - ii. 1st & 2nd place ribbons to all members of "A" relay teams.

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Away meets:

1. Gators will also give the "Personal Best" award described above to Gator swimmers for each seasonal best time achieved at away dual and Invitational meets. (There can be a delay in getting these in the family file folders as we are reliant on the host team forwarding us the full meet results in a timely manner.)
2. Ribbons/Awards given by the host team at away dual meets can vary widely depending upon the host team's award policy. At a minimum, other teams typically award ribbons for scoring swimmers, but some will award for other places and heats as well. Awards for Invitational Meets also vary widely.

G. Parent Workers:

1. The success of each meet depends on the commitment and participation of the parents. Refer to page 10 for information on work requirements.
2. Our team provides one-half the workers at every dual meet; the home team typically provides snack shack and a few other additional workers. Invitational meets require a proportionate share of workers from each participating team.
3. Officials/Workers:
 - a. Starter: He or she is responsible for sending swimmers off the block and making sure each swimmer leaves on time. If a swimmer jumps early, the starter may penalize him or her for a false start. The starter controls the swimmers from the time the referee turns them over to when the race begins.
 - b. Referee: He or she is responsible for enforcing the rules, settling disputes between coaches and other officials and calling swimmers to their respective blocks. When the referee is preparing to start the swim, he or she will blow a short whistle blast to tell swimmers to stand next to their blocks.
 - c. Stroke & Turn Judge: One from each team observes the swimmers for stroke correctness, proper turns and relay starts. For example, in butterfly and breaststroke, two-handed touches at the wall for each turn and finish are required. Stroke & turn judges ensure fair competition.
 - d. Timers: Three timers are provided with stop watches, two remote stopwatches and one manual stop watch, and assigned to each lane. The timer starts his/her watch when the Starter's light flashes, and stops the watch when the swimmer touches the wall at the finish. Then the timer reports the time to the Recorder in his/her lane. In case there is a watch (or timer) malfunction, don't worry! There is a Head Timer who starts extra watches for each race, just in case. Just let the Head Timer know you need help!
 - e. Head Timer: Sits near the computer table and runs two manual timers for each race as back up manual times in case there is a malfunction.
 - f. Recorders: One recorder is assigned to each lane. He/she verifies the name of the swimmer, matches the recording sheet, corrects as needed, and records the time from the manual stop watch. This is typically in conjunction with a remote stop watch.

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- g. Runners: Collects recording sheets from each recorder after each event and delivers them to the computer table.
- h. Computer Assistant: Organizes the recording slips, verifies that the official time is correctly circled, and assists the Computer Operator with data entry.
- i. Computer Operator: Enters swimmers' times in the computer, processes scoring, placing and prints ribbon labels.
- j. Ribbon Labelers: Puts labels on place ribbons, and files in appropriate family file folders. This can be done at home or the next morning.
- k. Clerk of the Course Monitor: All parents and swimmers are responsible for getting to their race on time. This requires you to be at the Clerk of the course at least for the little 10 & under swimmers to their lanes for their races. events prior to your race. The Monitor will check off your swimmer. A coach will gather the next heat and bring them to their respective block. This is for swimmers and under.
- l. Snack Shack helpers: Parents who cook and sell food!
- m. Set Up Crew & Clean Up Crew: Parents who set up for the meet as described on page 11. And parents who tear down and clean up after the meet is over.

H. Meet Manners:

1. Spectators should be quiet for the start of each race when the swimmers are on the blocks. The swimmers need to hear the Starter's instructions.
2. Smoking is prohibited on the pool deck during a meet and practices.
3. No alcoholic beverages are allowed during a meet.
4. Of course, profanity is prohibited.
5. Root enthusiastically for the whole team, as well as your own Gator!
6. Team areas should be cleared of all litter before leaving.

Invitational Meets

These meets are usually multi-day extravaganzas with many teams from the area participating. Typically, you may select the individual events in which to enter your swimmers, but you are encouraged to consult with the coaches on what entries would be best for both your swimmer and the team. The coaches determine the relay teams at invitational meets. Additional fees are charged by the host team for these meets. Gator families should expect to spend most of the two days at these meets, depending on the events selected. Bring plenty of shade and sunscreen!

These meets usually require swimmer sign-in at the beginning of each day. In addition, they typically require all swimmers to be escorted to the starting blocks by a clerk-of-the-course for each race. Parents are not permitted to remain in the clerk-of-the-course staging area once their swimmer is checked in. These meets will require parent workers and all parents will be assigned one or more work shifts, so plan accordingly.

THE MEETS

(continued)

Missing a Meet

It is recommended that swimmers participate in every meet, but when meet attendance isn't possible it is imperative that you please let the coach know by signing out on the team unify/onDeck app at least one week prior to each meet. Coaches assign swimmers to races in all dual meets if not signed out. "No shows" hurt the team and the relay events. Don't be a "no show!"

What to Bring

Refer to the list of Gator Garb and Gear in this handbook.

What's My Time?

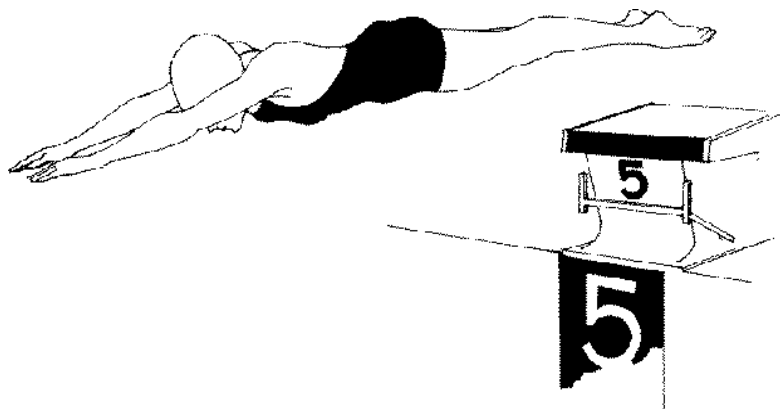
Swimmers should learn to ask a timer or recorder for their (unofficial) time as soon as they get out of the pool at the end of a race. Once the times for a heat are collected, the swimmer must wait for the official results to be posted.

Parking

At home meets please park in the parking lot or along Lynwood Drive. Please do not block driveways. At away meets, please obey all posted parking signs, and again, do not block driveways.

Time Trials

This is a Gator-only practice meet that is held during pre-season. This simulated meet gives swimmers a chance to get the feel of a meet, and establish their baseline seed times for each event. It also gives parents the opportunity to train in various meet jobs.



AWARDS

Swim Meet Awards

The awards given at Gehringer home meets are described above in the Meets Section, sub-section D & E. At away meets and Invitational meets, the guidelines for awarding ribbons or medals are determined by another team and can vary.

Season Awards

Season awards are presented at the end of the season at a special ceremony held at the Gehringer Park Pool or a local restaurant. You won't want to miss this special evening honoring the efforts, achievements and participation of all our hard working Gators. All swimmers will receive at minimum a participation trophy, and there are also special awards by age groups as determined by coaches for special swimmer achievements based on aspects such as swimmer improvement, team spirit, and team points scored.

TEAM RECORDS AND POOL RECORDS

Team and pool records are displayed in a special case on the wall near the gate shack. Team records are the best times made by a Gator swimmer or relay in any meet at any pool. Pool records are the best times made by a swimmer or relay from any team at the Gehringer Pool.

SPECIAL GATOR ACTIVITIES

Mandatory Team Meeting

Will be held at the beginning of the season. This is an important meeting for new families as well as returning families to learn of new changes. This is a great opportunity to get all your swim team questions answered.

Picture Day

The entire Gator Swim Team will be photographed on Picture Day. On Picture Day, please be on time and wear your team swim suit if you have one. Please do not get wet before the team photo. Individual and small group photos will be taken on the same day. Watch for price and package information later.

Team Banquets

Team Pasta Feed/ Potlucks occur during the season primarily around Invitational Meets. Watch for details in the Family Folders, Pool Bulletin Boards and Team email for dates and times.

Gator Grunt Week

One week each season is filled with extra conditioning, intense practices and special fun activities, such as crafts and face painting. Watch for details in the Family Folders Pool Bulletin Boards and Team email for dates and times.

Team Apparel/Merchandise

Shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants and other Gator logo items will be available for purchase from the team at various times during the swim season. Watch for special fundraisers and sales.

SPECIAL GATOR ACTIVITIES (continue)

GATOR FUNDRAISERS

The registration fees do not cover all the expenses of operating the team. Usually several fundraisers are conducted each season, including but not limited to:

Swim-A-Thon

A mandatory fund-raiser that doubles as a heavy duty work-out for our swimmers during a special week of challenging practices known as “Grunt Week.” Swimmers obtain sponsors per lap or flat amount, and then swim as many laps as they can in a specified amount of time.

Sponsorship

Businesses can receive advertising at the Gehringer pool, and announcements during our home meets in recognition of their sponsorship donation to the team. For more information, please contact the committee member in charge of fundraising.

Additional Fund Raising Activities may include: Raffles, Product Sales, Food Sales etc.

GEHRINGER GATOR SWIM TEAM CODE OF CONDUCT

Purpose

To promote the best possible conduct of all Gehringer Team members and families at home and away meets and at all team functions. To create the best possible individual and team impression at all times.

General Conduct:

1. Team members, parents and guests will abide by this Code of Conduct at all times.
2. Team members, parents and guests will abide by all facility rules and regulations.
3. Team members, parents and guests will show respect to all those with whom they interact including but not limited to Gehringer and opposing team: swimmers, parents, coaches, meet organizers.
4. Team members, parents and guests are to refrain from the following behaviors, they will not be tolerated:
 - a. Unsportsmanlike conduct
 - b. Gossiping
 - c. Destructive criticism
 - d. Berating a swimmer or coach
 - e. Obscene language or behavior
 - f. Indiscreet behavior
 - g. Disorderly behavior
5. During practice all swimmers are expected to work to their fullest capacity at every session. They are expected to pay full attention to all instructions.
6. At a meet, each member, parent and guest is to conduct himself in an orderly manner so as to not cause embarrassment to his/her team, him/herself or his/her teammates.
7. **Tobacco/Alcohol/Drug Policy**

For swimmers - It is our belief that abstinence from the use of tobacco products, alcohol and/or illegal drugs are beneficial to the health and athletic performance of our swimmers. We encourage our swimmers to pledge abstinence from these substances at all times. Any swimmer who is determined to have used tobacco, alcohol and/or illegal drugs while at practice, at a meet, or any other Gator Team function (or who is found to be in possession of such substances at any Gator Team function) shall be subject to suspension or dismissal from the team.

For parents - Smoking is prohibited on the Gehringer Facility. No alcoholic beverages are allowed during swim meets.
8. **Be On Time:** Whether arriving in a car pool or individually, be sure to arrive on time. Remember to allow time to do any flexibility work and/or fix your cap and goggles before practice begins.
9. **Use of Facilities:** We are guests at the facilities we use and visit. Please respect the facilities, equipment, rules and people at those host facilities.
10. Parents please double-check that practice is occurring prior to leaving your child at the pool.
11. **Problems:** If you have any questions or problems, talk to the head coach or a swim team committee member. They are the best source for an answer or solution.

GEHRINGER GATOR SWIM TEAM CODE OF CONDUCT (continued)

Violation of the Code: At the discretion of the swim team committee, one or all of the following penalties may be applied:

1. Removal of a swimmer from practice and a parent/guardian notified. Action taken will be at the sole discretion of the Coaching Staff and/or Swim Committee.
2. Scratching of a swimmer from a meet and a parent/guardian notified. Action taken will be at the sole discretion of the Coaching Staff and/or Swim Committee.
3. Termination of Swim Team membership. Recommendations will be made by the Swim Committee with the final decision made by the Pool Board.

Refund Policy:

Fees for swimmers dropping from the team will be refunded as follows:

- a. New Swimmers Only – Full refund within the first two weeks as a trial period
- b. No refunds after the first day of practice for returning swimmers.
- c. There will be no refund if a swimmer is expelled from the Team.

Parents Signature _____

YES! YES! YES!

1. While waiting to swim or during instructions, one hand must be on the wall and the head must be above water.
2. Circle swim - swim on your right (as you face the opposite end) of the lane.
3. Swim all the way to the wall.
4. Make room for others to swim to the wall.
5. When swimming laps and you need to pass another swimmer, tap (don't pull) their foot and then swim around them (down lane center) freestyle.
6. If someone taps your foot, stay close to the lane/line and let him or her pass.
7. Listen to instructions and raise your hand to ask if you do not understand.
8. Respect your teammates and coaches.
9. Have a positive attitude.
10. Be on time to practice.
11. Demonstrate good sportsmanship.



NO! NO! NO!

1. Horseplay!
2. Hanging or playing on the lane lines
3. Running
4. Diving without instructions and direct supervision of the Coach
5. Pushing anyone into or under the water
6. Walking on the bottom of the pool during swimming sets
7. Kicking others
8. Splashing
9. Spitting water
10. Slapping kickboards

THE VALUES OF SUMMER RECREATIONAL SWIMMING

- **Swimming has no bench sitters.** Recreational swimming is a sport in which there are no bench sitters because all programs are by age group and ability level.
- **Swimming is healthy.** Injuries are few and mild. The sport has been shown time and time again to be the best sport for overall conditioning of the body. Swimming provides cardiovascular fitness, muscular fitness, and increased flexibility.
- **Swimming provides self-discipline.** No one can make a person swim. All swimmers must develop an inner sense of discipline to devote themselves to the sport.
- **Swimming is a direct reward system.** In swimming, the harder you work, the greater your reward. The time clock is an objective judge of the result. There are no judges with subjective scores, no dependence on the efforts of others; only you and the clock evaluate your effort.
- **Swimming teaches the relationship between team and individual.** Neither team nor individual can exist and prosper in swimming without the other. Swimming teaches people to work with others.
- **Swimming teaches organization.** Swimmers have to organize their day to fit in all the life activities they want. They learn to do so, and in so doing, usually become much better students. Swimmers are almost always better students when they are training and competing.
- **Swimming teaches people how to win with grace, how to lose with grace, and how to develop their personal philosophy that will make them long-term successes in life.** Swimmers learn to evaluate their efforts, set goals and achieve. They gain an athlete-mentality that says, "I can control my life, and the results of it. If it is to be, it is up to me!"



GATOR CHEERS

Hey you over there on the other side

Hey you over there on the other side
We've got something called Gator pride.
With a G _ A _ T _ O _ R _ S
Gehringers are the Best!

We're so fast (sung in cadence)

We're so fast and you know it,
We're so fast we never quit.
We intend to raise the score
You'll be screaming "No More!"
Fly and Back and Breast and Free
Gators will make history.
Gators rock and Gators rule
Gators rock in every pool!

We are we are the Gators

We are we are the Gators, the Gators
We are we are the Gators, the Gators
We've been swimming all over the place,
Splashing water in your face.
We've been swimming like we've been told;
All our strokes will never grow old.
(Repeat Chorus)

Take me out to the Swim Meet

Take me out to the Swim Meet
Take me out to the pool.
Buy me some goggles and swimming caps
I think that I can always swim fast,
And it's root, root, and root for the Gators,
if they don't win it's a shame.

Let me tell you a story

Let me tell you a story 'bout the Gator Team
(Crowd) Gator team, Gator team.
They swam so fast the water steamed.
(Crowd) Water steamed, water steamed.
One day they went to swim a meet
(Crowd) Swim a meet, swim a meet
Now look at all the teams they beat
(Crowd) Teams they beat, teams they beat
Now the crowd they were so happy
(Crowd) Happy, happy
Cause the Gator team means victory
(Crowd) Victory, victory

Aye, Aye, I like us

Aye, Aye I like us, nobody likes us,
We are the kids from Gehringers.
Always a winning, always a grinning,

we like to say
Hello, goodbye,
stick your face in apple pie,
ooey, gooey, chop suey,
squish squash apple sauce,
nobody else can swim like us
Cause if they do,
we'll beat them too –
and that means you!

Oh Yeah

We are the Gators (Oh Yeah)
From Gehringers Park (Oh Yeah)
We move so fast (Oh Yeah)
Cause we got class (Oh Yeah)
When in the pool (Oh Yeah)
We are so cool (Oh Yeah)
We are so fast (Oh Yeah)
That you'll know we're hot (Oh Yeah)
Cause when we race (Oh Yeah)
We set the pace (Oh Yeah)
When in the water (Oh Yeah)
We turn it hotter (Oh Yeah)
When we swim (Oh Yeah)
We always win (Oh Yeah)
We've got the hold (Oh Yeah)
On all the gold (Oh Yeah)
We are the Gators (Oh Yeah)
We swim to win (Oh Yeah)
We're number 1 (Oh Yeah)
The only 1 (Oh Yeah)
Oh Yeah, Oh Yeah,
Oh Yeah, Oh Yeah!

Hey you over there

Hey you over there now you're gonna hear
Gehringers Gators do their Gator cheer
We're number one and we know it's true
But if you don't believe us then we'll show you
We dive in the water and swim real fast
Cuz we love to swim, so let's have a blast.
We're glad you're here so let's have some fun
Gehringers Gators are number 1

B-A-N-A -N-A-S

Go Bananas Go Go Bananas
Peel to the Left
Peel to the Right
Yum Take a Bite, Our Team's All Right!

Cookie Monster

The cookie monster says the Gators are
The great big cookies at the top of the jar.
The cookie monster says the other teams are
The itty-bitty crumbs at the bottom of the jar.

Alligator

A-L-L-I
(A-L-L-I)
G-A-T-O-R
(G-A-T-O-R-)
Alligator Alligator
Eat 'em Up Eat 'em Up
Alligator Alligator Eat 'em Up

Clap Your Hands

Clap Your Hands
Stomp Your Feet
Move Around to the Gator Beat
Jump Up Jump Back
Jump Up Jump Back
Go Clickity Clack
To the Back
To the Front
To the Side
And Turn!

Tick Tock

Tick Tock, Beat the Clock
Flick Flash, Kick My Splash!
Green Power, Wins The Hour!
Gooooooooo Gators!

Old Faithful

Get up, get up, get up
And face us in the pool and
Show us what you got!
We got, we got, we got,
Some in every heat of every meet
Who'll win? We'll win!
Who'll win? We'll win!
Gators Gators, they are cool
Swim so fast they Rule the Pool!

Mighty Gators

We are the Gators!
The mighty mighty Gators!
We're gonna hypnotize ya,
analyze ya, knock you down
and when you're down you're drown!
Against the Gator you're gonna drown!

Ba Ba Cheer!

Ba, Ba, backstroke
Breaststroke, Fly and Free
We'll blow you out of the water
You just wait and see.
All you guys will see our feet
when we're lappin' ya in the 50 Free
Ba ba backstroke,
Breaststroke, Fly and Free
Look at all the points we got
Don't be surprised what you see.

Green and Black

We're the Gators! We're the Gators!
We're the team in Green and Black!
We'll beat ya in Free, Breaststroke, Fly and Back!
We're Gators, we're Gators!
And we're here to bring you down.
We'll stop the clock before you start,
And turn you upside down.

Alabam

Alabam! Alabam!
Alabam Diego! San Diego!
Harcus parkus! Kiss our carcass!
Go Gators Go!

Hey Ho, Hey Ho

Hey Ho, Hey Ho,
It's off to cheer we go,
For Gator team
Let's see you beam,
Hey Ho, Hey Ho.
Hey Ho, Hey Ho,
It's off to cheer we go,
For Gator Team,
Let's hear the scream,
Hey Ho! Hey Ho!

The Gators are on fire

The Gators, the Gators
The Gators are on FIRE
When you're in the pool
You're goin' down, but we'll go HIGHER!

Hydee Hay Hydee Ho

(everyone repeats after leader)
Hydee Hay Hydee Ho
Ibidy Widdy wabidy wo
Now lift your head up to the sky
Cause Gehringer Gators are passing by.
We'll beatcha in the water,
We'll beatcha at the wall,
We'll beatcha to the turns,

And that ain't all
We're Gehringer Gators,
the baddest of the best
And you will see,
so you'll not rest
(Everyone together)
Rocka rocka chee chee rocka rocka chy
Gehringer Gators, in your eye!!!

Gators Freeze

(Everyone in a circle, coaches scream a verse, and everyone replies OH YEA!!)

Are the Gators ready for the Gators freeze?

(Everyone) OH YEA!

Are the Gators ready for the Gators freeze?

(Everyone) OH YEA!

Now say it again, now say it again now
OH YEA!

Are the 8 and unders ready for the Gators freeze?

(Everyone) OH YEA!

Now say it again, now say it again now
YEA!

(same for all age groups and parents)

Is (the other team) ready for the Gators freeze?

(everyone) OH NO!!

Now say it again, now say it again now
OH NO!

Now git, git, git, git on down, whew!

I said git, git, git, git on down !!!

Loud as Thunder

Loud as thunder.

Here comes the 8 and unders.

Quick as lightning

We're pretty frightening.

(Repeat)

Dont Mess

Don't mess, don't mess!

Don't mess with the best

`cuz they don't mess!

Don't fool, don't fool!

Don't fool with the cool

`cuz the cool don't fool!

To the east, to the west

The Gators are the very best!

Don't mess, don't mess!

Don't mess with the best

`cuz they don't mess!

Don't fool, don't fool!

Don't fool with the cool

`cuz the cool don't fool!

Don't jive, don't jive!

Don't jive with a team
that's so alive.

Don't mess with the best

`cuz the best don't mess

Don't fool with the cool

`cuz the cool don't fool

We are the Gators

We are the Gators, the mighty, might Gators

Everywhere we go,

people want to know

Who we are and so we tell them...(repeat)

Shake Your Booty

Hey (other team), (ya)...

Hey (other team), (ya)

Shake your booty (no way),

Shake your booty (okay)

(jump, shake your booty,

jump, jump shake your booty)

Then other team starts cheer and Gators

respond and shake their booties

Satisfy My Soul

I was swinging on a grapevine.

OH YEAH

And I started to slip

OH YEAH!

Started thinking about the Gators.

OH YEAH!

Got ahold of my grip.

OH YEAH!

(Chorus:)

It takes a rock to rock,

Takes a roll to roll

Takes a team like the Gators

to satisfy my soul

S s s s satisfy,

s s s s satisfy,

s s s s satisfy

My soul, my soul

I was swimming in the river.

OH YEAH!

And I started to drown.

OH YEAH!

Started thinking about the Gators.

OH YEAH!

Just couldn't go down.

OH YEAH!

(Chorus)