

SEMINOLE HIGH SWIMMING 2025

Ryan Ackerson, Head Swimming Coach
Tony Ackerson, Assistant Swimming Coach
Griffin Ciancimino, Assistant Swimming Coach

Website: www.seminoleaquatics.org

Team Policies and Information for Prospective Athletes and Parents

NOTE: *Competitive swimming and diving can be a dangerous sport that can result in a variety of injuries. The SHS program is an elite level, varsity athletic team that requires a vigorous commitment. Athletes will comply with coaches' instructions at all times. Athletes that do not adhere to this are subject to immediate termination from the team.*

Eligibility: NO STUDENT CAN COME TO THE POOL TO PARTICIPATE IN A PRACTICE UNTIL THE STUDENT HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY CLEARED BY THE SHS ATHLETIC OFFICE.

For all the information you need to have regarding athletic clearance, click [HERE](#).

Call the Athletic Office at 407-320-5057 with any questions.

Important Contacts: Please keep this contact information in a safe place. Enter the phone numbers in your phone, and put the email addresses below in your list of contacts. If you lose any of them, it is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to contact a teammate for the information.

Coach Ryan Ackerson's email: ryan_ack@yahoo.com

Pool office phone: 407-302-1034

Coach Ackerson's cell/voicemail: 407-430-9013

Seminole High School Main Number: 407-320-5050

Seminole High School Athletic Department: 407-320-5057

Woody Cox, SHS Athletic Director: 407-320-5058

Schedule and Updates: Refer to the SHS SWIM tab on the seminoleaquatics.org website.

The SPORTSYOU app—Your Primary Source for Team News / Practice Changes / Etc.: We use the SportsYou app to provide one-way communication to all team members and parents. It's primary use is to allow team members to know of last minute practice changes/ weather emergencies/ meet reminders /etc. **ALL TEAM MEMBERS MUST SIGN UP FOR THIS IMMEDIATELY (PARENTS MAY SIGN UP AS WELL), AND SIGN UP IS FREE AND EASY:**

Download SportsYou App and join our team with code RBMW-AE5Q

How To Make the Team: This is purely a coach's decision based on, but not limited to, swimming speed, skill, attitude, practice attendance, work ethic, and citizenship. Essentially, if you can swim freestyle and complete at least a JV-level workout, you are on the team until one of the coaches tells you that you either won't make it, or you are removed for some other reason. We will attempt to notify student-athletes of their not making the team as early as possible. If you can swim safely and go to all required practices, you will likely at least be in our Junior Varsity group (the faster swimmers will be in the Varsity group).

Head Coach Ryan Ackerson will work primarily with the Varsity Group--- made up primarily of the faster returning SHS swimmers and club swimmers. Our Assistant Coach, Griffin Ciancimino, will focus more on the Junior Varsity Group-- the developmental/ newer/ slower swimmers. These divisions and lane assignments will be based on the swimmers' ability to handle various levels of work. In short, newer or slower swimmers that work hard and comply with all team policies will have a spot on the Seminole High team. If they miss practices, are difficult to work with, or don't work hard, they will be dismissed.

Determining JV or Varsity: The first week of practice will be used to determine what group each swimmer will be placed in. The entire coaching staff will evaluate swimmers and make decisions after Friday's practice the first week.

Punctuality: Being **ON TIME** is a big deal. It doesn't take any special talent or ability to be on time every day. Swimmers are expected to be on deck, ready to get in the water, at **LEAST** five minutes before practice officially begins each day.

Swimmers in the Junior Varsity group can be moved into the Varsity group if they progress adequately throughout the season. Conversely, swimmers in the Varsity group may be moved over to JV if their practice performance lags.

NOTE: WE WILL NOT KEEP PEOPLE ON THE TEAM THAT HAVE TO CONSTANTLY STOP TO FIX CAPS, GOGGLES, OR TIE/ ADJUST THEIR SWIMSUITS. If you have trouble with any of these items, please spend a few days before the season begins figuring out how to remedy them.

HOW TO BECOME A GOOD SWIMMER: If you really want to be great, you need to look at the system that we have in place for you:

- You have a USA Swimming-certified coaching staff with more than a half-century of combined experience.
- You have a 50-meter, full-Olympic pool on your campus.
- You're part of a system that year-in and year-out produces State championship caliber swimmers, championship teams, and collegiate swimmers. At the end of 2020, we had the boys and girls National #1 ranked 16-year-old sprinters.

"THE SYSTEM": You're part of a proven system that generates results. Every year, we've taken kids that had no swimming experience and transformed them into State-level swimmers within a few short years.

If you **COMPLETELY AND TOTALLY** "buy-in" to The System, you'll become very, very good. All you need to do is to fully commit to the sport, be a team-first athlete (be prepared to sacrifice personal ambitions for team

goals), become a student of the sport, and totally trust your coaching. Doing all of these things will yield results that other high school swimmers can only dream of.

The System works ... if you do.

Divers: Diving is a single event in a 12-event swim meet. We don't have diving boards at our training facility, so you will have to find a facility and a coach to train you for this single event. If you plan on becoming a diver, you must let Coach Ackerson know your intentions to be added to the roster. Divers must still have completed physical packets on file with the Athletic Office, although none of the practice attendance standards apply to the divers. Most competitive divers in Central Florida travel to the Rosen Aquatic Center in Orlando to train with professional diving coaches.

Materials Needed for Swim Team: One-piece swimsuit, towel, and goggles. Additionally, over-the-counter ear drops (the alcohol-based ones, called "Auro-Dri" or "Swim Ear") are good for preventing ear infections, and we highly recommend using these after every practice.

Where Do Athletes Keep Their Equipment? There is a rack system on the pool deck, complete with enough hooks for over 100 swimmers to leave mesh equipment bags overnight. **During practice, athletes should keep backpacks and clothing on the poolside bleachers, in plain sight. Keeping a plastic trash bag inside the backpack allows the swimmer to keep belongings dry in case of a rainstorm. If you leave items in the bathroom, there is a good chance that your valuables may be stolen; we cannot monitor who uses the bathrooms during swim practice.**

Neither the pool nor SHS is responsible for any loss or theft that takes place at the pool. DO NOT EVER LEAVE ANYTHING OF VALUE IN THE BATHROOMS OR POOL BREEZEWAY!

Additionally, the breezeway area needs to be left clear of personal items. Again, place your belongings on a bleacher bench poolside, or one of the lockers.

Team Equipment Order: Info TBA via SportsYou

SHS Swimming Attendance Policies

PARENTS AND SWIMMERS, PLEASE READ CLOSELY AND CONTACT COACH ACKERSON (ryan_ack@yahoo.com) WITH ANY QUESTIONS.

2025 SHS SWIMMING MASTER SCHEDULE WITH ALL PRACTICES AND MEETS: 2025 SHS SWIMMING MASTER SCHEDULE

1. **ALL afternoon SHS practices are mandatory**, barring illness (you must physically miss school with an excused absence) or tutoring (must have written proof from the teacher).

2. **IF YOU MISS any afternoon practice, Coach Ryan Ackerson must be notified on that same day by leaving either an email, or a voicemail / text message on either his cell phone in order for the absence to be excused.**

MESSAGES NOT LEFT ON THE DAY OF ABSENCE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

3. **Morning Swim Practice (CLUB-ONLY, NOT REQUIRED):** The Seminole Aquatics USA-club swim team will hold morning swim practices at the pool on Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays from 5:30 to 6:45 AM and on Saturdays from 9:00 to 10:30 AM. These practices are for Seminole Aquatics USA-registered swimmers only. Most of the high school swimmers swim for Seminole Aquatics and will be attending the mornings. It's club swimming, so there's no attendance or late policy. These morning practices are only intended to supplement the training that the high school team gets. Our strong opinion is that ANY morning practice is better than none, but swimmers need to balance what they feel they're able to do in order to keep up their grades. If you are not a Seminole Aquatics swimmer and you wish to attend these practices, go to www.seminoleaquatics.org Membership Information on how to join our Club Swim Team. If you are a swimmer on another USA team, you are welcome to do morning practices with your club team, or, with your club coach's permission, you can pay the Seminole Aquatics fees for August thru October and do the SA morning swim workouts with Coach Ackerson. Doing so will not involve your changing club affiliation.

4. **Penalties for Unexcused Afternoon Practice Absences:**

First Time? = Swimmer must sit out next dual/tri/quad/championship meets (you will have to still attend the meet and serve as a lane timer instead).

Second Time? = Swimmer must sit out next two dual/tri/quad/championship meets.

Third Time? = Swimmer is dismissed from the team.

5. **THE SHS SWIMMING POINT SYSTEM:** Every required afternoon practice is worth 1 point. Half of a practice is worth ½ point. Optional morning club swim practices are worth ½ point. Beginning August 11th, we will begin taking attendance, and all afternoon practices are mandatory. At the end of every two week cycle, athletes need to have at least 10 points accrued per cycle in order to remain on the team. If not, they will receive one warning and miss the next dual/tri/quad/championship meet. If this happens more than once, they will be dismissed from the team.
6. **MAKING UP POINTS FOR MISSED PRACTICES:** Swimmers that miss practices can make them up two ways: By coming to the pool on M-W-F from 5:30-7:00 am for ½ point, or swimming on Saturday mornings at our pool from 9-10:30 am for 1/2 point. In both cases, the swimmer needs to simply swim constantly---no stops or breaks---in order to receive make up points. To be clear, these are not club practices for non-club swimmers. It is simply an opportunity to recover lost points, primarily due to excused absences, presumably for tutoring or illness. Coach Ackerson reserves the right to make some exceptions to the policy. Ask him if you have any questions.

7. **WEIGHT TRAINING WITH THE SWIM TEAM:** Over the Summer (June + July) and must be cleared for 2025-2026 through SHS Athletics. Mondays and Wednesdays 1:30pm-2:30pm and Fridays 7:30am-8:30am. STARTING JUNE 2ND, 2025.
8. **CONFLICTS WITH OTHER CLUBS, BAND, OTHER SPORTS, ETC:** You can do any other activities so long as you can make the point total necessary, and that all mandatory practices and swim meets are attended. *If you really love competitive swimming but can't make a full commitment to the SHS team, join a club swim team! Coach Ackerson can direct you to several in the area, including Seminole Aquatics.*

A Special Point about Injuries:

If a swimmer has any injury, the swimmer must communicate this to the coaching staff immediately.

The swimmer then needs to either see the SHS athletic training staff or consult a physician. If the injury prevents the athlete from practicing fully, he/she should not participate while hurt. **A serious /chronic injury will, in all likelihood, prematurely end the season of the athlete**—we only have an 11-week training period until we begin our taper for the District Meet. A two or three week period of lost training due to an injury makes it nearly impossible to be ready for a peak performance at the end of our season.

Example: Swimmer gets out during practice complaining of shoulder pain. Swimmer can do vertical kicking with a weight belt for the remainder of practice (allows swimmer to kick without involving the shoulder by extending a kickboard). If the swimmer can do this, there's no need to make up practice time. If the swimmer can't continue, then the time has to be made up.

Soreness or Injury? Swimmers need to be able to distinguish between simple muscle soreness from muscle exertion, and that of a serious injury. The majority of time that we train, people on our team will be in various stages of discomfort. Swim practice is a draining, often grueling ritual. Swimmers that train hard place their muscles in a state of acidosis, or oxygen deprivation, which causes intense, burning pain during a difficult workout. Swimmers need to be prepared for muscular fatigue and soreness, as this is simply part of the sport. Pain from injury typically is progressive---that is, it doesn't get better with a few minutes' rest.

School Holidays and Vacations: Athletes, if you have dentist or orthodontist appointments, driving tests, etc, etc., schedule them on the school holidays, NOT on a regular practice day. Please begin now to schedule appointments and vacations around the swim schedule in order to avoid conflicts later.

BEING A PART OF THIS TEAM INVOLVES A FULL COMMITMENT. THIS IS A VARSITY-LEVEL, TEAM SPORT. YOUR TEAMMATES DEPEND ON YOU. YOU ARE REPRESENTING YOUR SCHOOL. THIS IS NOT SOME CLUB, OR ACTIVITY. WE TAKE THIS SPORT VERY SERIOUSLY, AND WE WANT STUDENT-ATHLETES TO BE EQUALLY SERIOUS.

Miscellaneous Issues

Fundraising and Team Support: Like most sports, high school swimming has a number of costs associated with it (invitational meet entry fees, travel expenses, miscellaneous equipment, etc). As our sport is 100% responsible for covering our own expenses, we have instituted a Team Support donation request of \$50 per family. We would kindly ask that all families participate in this and support our team. There MAY be an additional need for some of our swimmers to contribute toward entry and travel fees for some of the invitational meets with limited entries (ex., LBHS and FSPA, if we attend these).

Varsity Letter Requirements: To earn a varsity letter, a swimmer or diver must either A) score at least one point in any championship meet (District, Regional, or State), B) finish the season training in the Varsity Group, or , C) merit special consideration by the JV coach for going above and beyond the norm in practice habits. A varsity letter will also be awarded to any JV swimmer that has perfect attendance and works hard the entire season. This decision will be made at the discretion of the coaching staff.

Students Wanting to Be on The Team Mainly to Add to Their College Transcript as an Activity/ Sport? Please find another “activity”. We’re serious about this sport, and we want serious student-athletes who are here to help our team, not themselves.

When Does The Season End? High school swimming is a fall sport, running from August through November. If an athlete is not entered in the Conference or District Meet, his/her season will end at that point. For athletes not making Regionals, high school practice will end at that point. Likewise, only the top Regional swimmers will qualify for the State Meet. As soon as a swimmer’s season ends, he or she can go right into club swimming (see below).

Club Swimming: Seminole Aquatics is a USA-affiliated swim team that trains at the SHS pool. We offer training 12 months a year. All of the successful swimmers at SHS train on USA club teams, and nearly all of them with Seminole Aquatics. The coaches can provide you with more information about Seminole Aquatics or you can visit the web site at www.seminoleaquatics.org and click on “Membership Info.” For a list of other Central Florida teams, you can go to www.floridaswimming.org. If you are already a Seminole Aquatics USA-registered club member, you can continue an active membership with the club during the high school season. Doing so will allow you to come to all morning swim practices, as well as afternoon club swim practices (useful on days when the high school practice gets cancelled due to weather issues).

Saturday Morning Practices: Seminole Aquatics club swim team practices on Saturday mornings from 9:00 to 10:30 AM. We encourage the high school swimmers to attend as the Saturday sessions focus on starts, turns, and finishes, and often includes underwater video and review. Again, if you are not a Seminole Aquatics club team member, you can go to www.seminoleaquatics.org and click on “Membership Info” to find out exactly how to join.

Parent Meeting: TBA, During first week of practice via Zoom. We will send out date and time via SportsYou.

Personal Behavior Expectations of Our Student-Athletes

Tobacco, Alcohol, And Illegal Drugs: For several years, we have held our student athletes to the very highest standard of personal conduct. Drinking alcohol, tobacco, vaping, and using recreational drugs all negatively impact a swimmer's performance, both physically and mentally/ motivationally. There is no debate on this. Apart from just the damage that this can do to one's personal aspirations, engaging in the use of any of these substances is selfish when considering the impact it can have on our team. So, to put it simply, if tobacco, alcohol, vaping, or drugs are part of your lifestyle, stop. We value our student-athletes, and we want to work with individuals that want to maximize their abilities and help contribute to our team. If you choose not to stop, then get away from our team; we have big plans.

Most importantly, if you CAN'T stop, let's get you some help. Coach Ackerson can provide you with contacts if you have a problem. Your health should always come first. Don't be afraid to reach out to your coach.

“Deck Changing”: This practice of changing clothes on the pool deck, with only a towel around the waist, is against most pool facility rules, including ours.

Feet-First Entry into All Pools: Athletes must enter the pool feet-first at all times, with the exception of when we are doing starts off the starting blocks. This applies to our visits to other pools as well.

Profanity/Crude Behavior: The way that you conduct yourself as a member of this team makes a huge statement about not only you, but about your team and your school. Any athlete using profanity or speaking inappropriately will be reprimanded. This extends to the pool, the pool deck, the locker rooms, and even the pool parking lot. Keep in mind that **the younger swimmers at our facility look up to you, just like you looked up to many of the older swimmers when you were little.** Set the kind of example that makes the younger kids want to be just like you!

Parking Lot: Caution is to be taken at all times while driving on campus, particularly near the pool parking lot, as children arrive each afternoon for their Seminole Aquatics practice. If the coaches or lifeguards observe fast or careless driving, texting, etc., you will be prohibited from parking near the pool, and your parents will be notified.

After Practice: LEAVE. Don't stick around the pool, don't hang out in the breezeway, and **do not talk to swim coaches or lifeguards while they are working**, unless it is a pool/ facility problem or emergency.

Stay Out of the Pool Offices: NEVER enter the pool office building unless accompanied by an SHS coach or pool staff member, or unless you have permission from a coach or lifeguard. Summer Coaches for Seminole Aquatics, Summer Volunteers, etc., cannot freely come in the office area to leave equipment, etc. See Coach Ackerson if you have any questions.

Come Every Day Prepared to Swim: Do not leave your caps, goggles, suits, or water bottles at the pool. Bring your things with you each day. Take them with you when you leave. If you leave it, it will be thrown out.

Keep Our Facility Clean: Throw away disposable water bottles each day, and take pride in our facility. This is your team's HOME. Let's act like it.

AGAIN, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR PERSONAL ITEMS. Items are most likely to be stolen from either the locker rooms or the breezeway. Be smart, and don't leave a backpack with a \$1,000 phone in a locker room. Keep your personal items on the bleachers, in plain view, or in a locker poolside.

(PLEASE PRINT AND RETURN THIS PAGE TO COACH ACKERSON AS SOON AS POSSIBLE)

2025 SEMINOLE HIGH SWIMMING

PARENT/STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Please read and sign/date below.

This must be signed by the athlete and the parent, and returned to practice by the end of the first week.

STUDENT ATHLETE'S NAME: _____

BIRTHDATE: ____/____/____ **AGE:** _____ **GRADE:** _____

Parent Name(s): _____

Parent Cell Phone(s): _____

**I acknowledge that I have read and thoroughly understand
all of the policies regarding participation on the
2025 Seminole High School Swimming and Diving Team.**

Student-Athlete: (SIGN) _____ **DATE:** _____

Parent/Guardian:(SIGN) _____ **DATE:** _____