
LaneLineNews

Spring Championship Edition



[CLICK HERE for a pre-order of our made to order GSC shirts. Short sleeve and long sleeve available. More info on the last page of the newsletter!](#)

We have arrived to our Spring Championship Season!

Stage 1 - Area Championships
February 24-25, 2024

This meet is a timed final meet on Saturday and Sunday in Ocala. This is our first level championship meet, you don't need qualifying times to attend.

Florida Age Group Championships (FLAGs)
February 29-March 2, 2024

This meet is our top meet for our 14&Under swimmers. Qualifying times are required.

Florida Senior Championships
March 7-10, 2024

This is our top Spring Meet for our 15&Older swimmers, although we do have younger swimmers that qualify and go as well in addition to FLAGs. Qualifying times are required.

Why our Championship Meet Counts More

Swimming is a bit different than other sports in that it is a full year round calendar. We have the seasons split up into basically three mini seasons:

- August - December (1st week) (Short Course)
- December - March (Short Course)
- April - August (1st week)

The championship meets are where memories are formed and milestones are passed. These are MUST SWIM events for our team. This spring Area 4 we only had about 50% of our eligible swimmers sign up for the event. These dates should be sharpies onto the family calendar at the beginning of the season. From a physiology standpoint, we need to be rested and tuned to perform our best, but we can't do that for every meet through the season so we select these meets to get the group ready to swim FAST!

At the end of each mini season, we have a Championship Meet that we prepare to swim our best.

In December, we have three versions depending on your times:

- Stage 1 - Harry Meisel B Championships
- Stage 2 - Gator Holiday Classic
- Stage 3 - USA Swimming Winter Juniors

In March we have three versions depending on your age and times:

- Stage 1 - Area 4 Championships
- Stage 2 - FLAGS (14&Under)
- Stage 3 - Senior Champs (Open)

In late July and early August we have a few additional top end meets:

- Stage 1 - Area 4 Championships
- Stage 2 - FLAGS (14&Under)
- Stage 3 - Senior Champs (Open)
- Stage 4 - Florida Zone Team (14&Under Top8)
- Stage 5 - USA Swimming Futures / Junior Nats



Senior National swimmer Lillie Nesty and Pro Group swimmer Katie Ledecky get ready to square off in the 400m Freestyle at the TYR Pro Series Knoxville. The duo were joined by Senior National swimmer Liam Aleman, Pro Group swimmers Bobby Finke and Kieran Smith.

[CLICK HERE for our full Summer 2024 event calendar, including Champs Meets](#)

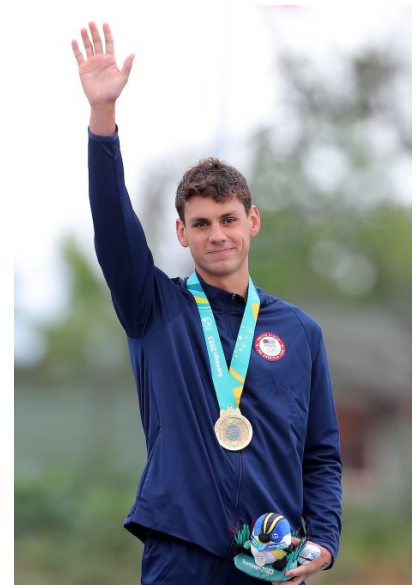
Pre-Meet/Meet Preparation for Elite Swimming

by Coach Brennan Gravley

In order to be successful as an elite swimmer, we often put most of our focus into what we are doing in the water on a daily basis. We show up to practice and make sure we have maximized our effort, technique, and intention. While our training habits and effort are incredibly important, how we take care of ourselves *outside* of the water is equally important. These “at-home” habits are more than necessary when preparing for an upcoming competition, and when in the midst of a championship meet, they are practically vital. This article covers several important ways that athletes can ensure that their meet preparation and execution matches the level of their daily effort that they put in throughout the season.

When approaching a championship meet, most coaches will begin to rest their athletes. This process can occur in several ways: for one, the volume of practices may begin to reduce. Coaches may also choose to reduce the intensity of these workouts as well. This is often referred to as *resting* or *tapering*. Along with the changes that happen in the pool, athletes may also see a reduction in out-of-water training, whether that be through strength training or dryland work. With all of this in mind, it is important to recognize that athletes will now begin to burn less calories with each workout. This means that as we approach our championship meet, our diets should begin to change. Our intake of carbohydrates should begin to reduce slightly, and our intake of healthy greens, vegetables and proteins should make up for that reduction on our plates. Throughout the day, we should also be maintaining a constant level of hydration, as proper hydration helps us buffer lactic acid in our bodies (which makes you sore and inflamed!). A good rule of thumb for hydration should be to try and drink your body weight in ounces of water each day! This constant hydration can drastically help your recovery from the season’s hard work, and it’s of the same level of importance as a quality diet. Finally, there should be a defined limit on sugars and sweets! These items will not aid in the recovery process, and an over intake of these junk foods could create inconsistency with energy levels...which is not preferred for high athlete performance.

Another non-negotiable factor when it comes to meet preparation is *sleep*. Not prioritizing sleep when approaching a championship meet is the equivalent of shooting ourselves in the foot. Athletes should be trying to get at *least* 8-9 hours a sleep a night, every night, 2-3 weeks out from their championship meet. This is done in order to (once again) maximize our recovery gains and make sure we are at 100% by the time the championship meet arrives. And a little tidbit on quality sleep...our bodies and brains recover much better in the hours that we sleep *before* midnight, so make sure those 8-9 hours of quality sleep start early!



Coach Brennan Gravley has represented the USA in Open Water Swimming as the dominant swimmer from the US over the past quad.

Once we *do* reach the day of that championship meet, it should be our goal to continue the same habits that we enacted during the preemptive weeks. With potentially several sessions of intense racing in front of us, our focus away from the pool should be razor-sharp. Fueling our bodies with healthy meals, whether that be before or after a racing session, is vital. Ample hydration should continue to be implemented over the course of our day, so that we may recover from session to session. Once those items are taken care of, our only remaining focus should be on down-time and recovery. Foam-rolling, stretching, and even massages can be incredibly useful recovery items between/after sessions. When we are not actively recovering, we should generally be lazy and off our feet! Staying relaxed, whether that be through physical or mental means, is the best way to ensure that we are fully recharged when it is time to hit the pool again. Finally, getting to bed early is the last step to having a meet that is not only successful, but consistent. With early sessions and late nights being a common theme for end-of-season competition, this step can occasionally be challenging. As swimmers, it just happens to be part of the sport we chose to compete in. The best thing we can do is to accept this factor, and make the most of the little downtime that we often have! With quality sleep, a balanced diet, and a desire to recover optimally, we can maximize our performance session after session.

Resting, taper, and end-of-season experiences can be a really exciting time for swimmers. We are finally given the opportunity to make a withdrawal on all the hard work we deposited throughout the season. If we choose to stick to the right habits in the lead-up to our competitions, it allows us to experience our best possible results, which is what all swimmers want! Do yourself a favor and focus on these little pre-meet tips, and I am sure you'll surprise yourself with how awesome you feel, and how fast you go!

TShirt Orders for Spring 2024

Orders will be closed on April 1st, 2024.

T-shirts will be \$30 each charged to your GSC account.

Sizes YS - 3XL

[CLICK HERE](#)



GSC Move-UP Philosophy and Timing

So, you're wondering when your Gator will move up and progress through GSC's team structure.

Firstly, what is a **move up**? Moving up is **the process of transitioning from one group, to the next highest group within GSC**. The coaching staff is constantly evaluating and discussing each athletes' progression and readiness to move up.

There are **three overarching levels** within Gator Swim Club - **The Developmental** (Pre-Comp through Blue groups), **Age-Group Performance** (Orange through Gold) and **Senior** (Senior Flex through Senior National) levels.

There are many factors that determine a move up. In the Developmental Groups, swimmers are gaining the fundamental skills for a strong competitive swimming foundation. In the Performance Groups, swimmers are aiming to perform at a high level and compete with the best in the State. They may also aim to achieve qualification times for higher-level swimming competition (FLAGS, [A & above times](#), and Senior Championship cuts).

In most cases, **swimmers spend about one year (or two seasons) in each group**. It is not guaranteed that a swimmer will move up at the end of a season, or after any period of time. They must meet the below standards and be approved by the Head Age Group Coach.

At the age-group level, a swimmer cannot skip over any group in the move up process.

- Age
 - Groups are age-limited. This is to ensure that swimmers of similar physical, mental, and maturity are grouped together as much as possible.
- Achievements and Skills
 - These criteria include a combination of the following factors:
 - Times achieved at meets
 - Times/sets achieved/completed at practice
 - Distances completed at meets/practice
 - Physical skills (technical ability, turns, etc.)
 - Mental skills (understanding sets and intervals at practice, utilizing race strategies at meets, understanding nuance of stroke efficiency etc.)
- Attendance and Commitment
 - Practice attendance
 - Meet attendance
 - Willingness to try new things and take on new challenges at practice and at meets

[See the full breakdown of the group requirements here.](#)

Please keep in mind that assessments are multifactorial. **There is not one single factor that will automatically move a swimmer from one group to another**. Just because a swimmer is a certain age or has achieved a specific time standard does not mean that they will automatically be moved to the next group.

So, when do move ups happen? Move ups can happen three times per year. Most swimmers will receive notification of moving up at the end of the summer, before the start of the Fall season (early August). A small, select group of swimmers may move up after the Winter Championship meets (mid-December) and/or after the Spring Championship meets (late-March).

The Head Coach and the Head Age Group Coach reserve the right to move any swimmer up at any time in the season at their sole discretion. If you have any questions regarding move ups, please contact Coach Jason (jason@gatorswimclub.com)