



Glacier Aquatic Club

To develop and promote competitive swimming for all ages and abilities. GAC encourages a lifestyle of health and fitness by developing athletes with high self-esteem, respect, and sportsmanship. The development of these assets enables our athletes to better serve our sport and the community of Kalispell.

Swim Meet 101
Revised: 2022.10

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Contact Information

GAC Board

- katsboard@gmail.com

Our GAC Board is fully comprised of volunteer positions. These individuals are not paid and generously volunteer their time and energy year-round toward the success of the GAC program.

Executive Officers

President:

Shawn Hummer

Treasurer:

Jennifer Johnsen

Vice-President:

TBD

Secretary:

Sarah Taylor

Members

Melissa Vornbrock
Steve Qunell
Andrea & Erik Schroeder

Nolan McGaughy
Kerrin McCormick

GAC Coaches

Co-Head Coaches:

Angelique Dousis
Price Richardson

Assistant Coaches:

Karen Bouda
Bridgette Maltby
Suzanne DeVore
Danny Keeling

Michelle Botner
Mary Thompson
Nicole Randall

How Does A Swim Meet Work?

- 👤 **Morning Routine:** The team will stretch on deck before their assigned warm-up time. Typically, swimmers are asked to be on deck and ready 10 minutes prior to their assigned time. Coaching staff will email warm-up times prior to the meet.
- 👤 **Programs:** Programs are available at each meet. This will list all events and heats in order. It is advised to bring a highlighter to mark your swimmer's events. Some families use two colors, one for their kids and one for the rest of the team so they can cheer for teammates. Also pack a sharpie to write the events on your swimmer's arm.
- 👤 **Races:** Once the meet starts, listen for event & heat announcements. You can also track meet progress by looking at the timing board. Your swimmer will need to check in with coach prior to their event with enough time to get to the block and be ready to race before their heat is up. After their race, they are expected to check back out with coach to discuss how the race went and receive feedback. **DO NOT MISS YOUR EVENT.** The coaching staff won't be tracking down your swimmer before their event. It is expected that they stay on top of when they need to swim.
- 👤 **Officials:** USA Swimming requires officials to be on-deck for sanctioned meets. They are there to ensure that swimmers are swimming the event legally. Please do not block their view. If they do raise their hand to disqualify (DQ) your swimmer, please refrain from asking them questions. They will complete the slip and it will be returned to the coaching staff. Our coaches will review DQs with your swimmer. If you have specific questions, you can ask coach after the session. Officials are all volunteers and we are always looking for more. If you're interested in this position, please let us know.
- 👤 **Results:** Results are posted on a wall or at a designated location (this varies by meet). You can check your swimmer's official time and placing at the results board. Some meets update on Meet Mobile and you can check times/results from your phone. You can download that app from whichever app store you use (there may be a fee associated).
 1. **Finals:** For older swimmers, some meets may have a finals session. The results sheet will show if your swimmer qualifies for finals. Your swimmer should know if they qualified for finals before leaving the session. If they are unsure, they can check with the coaching staff before leaving the session.
- 👤 **Time Standards & State Qualifications:** USA Swimming Age Group time standards are used as qualifying times for our state meet. You can find these online ([Age Group Standards](#)) or oftentimes at the back of your meet program. In order to qualify to swim in the state swim meet, your swimmer needs to achieve a BB time in their event. Once they attain the BB time, at state they can swim any event they've achieved a B time or better in that season.
- 👤 **End of the Day:** When your swimmer is finished for the day, have them check out with coach before leaving. There may be changes to the next day or additional things coaching staff needs to pass along to your swimmer.

Home Meet Volunteering

- 👤 When we host a home meet, there are a number of volunteer positions open. You can sign up for open slots on our Team Unify site. This is one of the best opportunities to fulfil your required volunteer hours. We need to have all our spots filled in order to run an efficient meet, especially timing slots. Our goal is to fill all timer slots with GAC volunteers and never call for timers from teams that have traveled to participate in our meet. If you have questions about specific volunteer positions, please contact the GAC Board.

Swim Meet Packing List

Here is a list of items you should pack in your swimmer's bag for each meet. Don't forget to label their items with their name (and contact number or team name if you can).

- Team Suit:** It's a good idea to pack an extra suit (even if it's not a team competition suit) just in case something happens with their team suit.
- Team Swim Cap:** Pack two if you have them. Caps can tear, especially if left out in the hot sun.
- Goggles:** It's a good idea to bring two pair, sometimes goggles break. Be sure they are fitted to your swimmer before they line up for an event. It's best if they have worn both pair of goggles in the water before the meet begins to be sure they are sized properly.
- Team T-Shirt/Apparel:** Show your team spirit!
- Towels:** Pack two or more beach sized towels. They will need one after warm-up and then after their events. It's great if you can rotate between two, leaving one hanging to dry at all times.
- Water Bottle:** It is vital that our swimmers stay hydrated. Be sure to pack enough water to combat dehydration.
- Clothes for Layers:** Warm up suit, sweats, bathrobe or fleece jacket. Something for swimmers to wrap up in between events. Plan for any type of weather – this is Montana after all! Even indoor location temperatures can vary greatly.
- Sunscreen (outdoor meets):** Sunscreen is essential during summer swim season. Even if the weather is cloudy or overcast, it is important to protect against the UV rays. No sunburns!!
- Deck Sandals or Flip Flops:** Help protect their feet as they head to and from events or warm-ups.
- Dry Change of Clothes & Toiletries:** After racing is finished, your swimmer will want to shower and change into dry clothes for the day. Be sure to bring their toiletries for the shower. It's important to wash the chlorine off of their skin.

Here is a list of items your family should pack for each meet.

- Cooler:**
 1. **Healthy Foods:** Bring plenty of nutritious snacks for your family. Some great ideas are yogurts, cheeses, fruits, melons, vegetables, crackers, peanut butter, jerky, etc. Avoid heavy and overly sweet items like donuts and candy. Concessions are typically available at each meet.
 2. **Water:** Be sure you have enough water for your swimmer *and* family. Chocolate milk and sports drinks are great for rehydrating after warm-ups or an event.
- Highlighter, Pen, Black Sharpie:** You will need a highlighter to mark their race info in your program. You'll want a pen in order to note your swimmer's times and a black sharpie to mark events on their arm or leg.
- Cash:** Bring some cash along for the daily program and concessions. Try to carry smaller bills, it's often hard to make change for larger bills.
- Prescription Medications:** Inhalers, allergy medication, etc. Be sure you have them on hand for your swimmer.
- Entertainment:** Bring games, playing cards, iPods/iPads, tablets, handheld electronic games, reading materials, coloring books, etc.
- Sun Protection Items:** Sunscreen, sunglasses, hat... anything to help protect your family from the sun.
- Shade Tent (outdoor meets):** Great for relaxing between events. They also provide a central location for your family's belongings. We do have two team tents for families that we will set up at each meet.
- Folding Chairs:** Folding camp chairs work great. Some people like bringing stadium seats, depending on the venue.
- Blankets:** Blankets or sleeping bags are great for relaxing between events.

What's with those numbers on your arm??

Many swimmers hear this question after an amazing weekend of competition. Sometimes the black numbers are listed on the arm or even the leg. What do those numbers mean? Why do we put them there? It's really a simple explanation. These numbers help swimmers (and parents) keep track of their events, heats and lanes.

When you arrive at a meet, you'll want to purchase a meet program. Usually these programs are available at the concession stand. Inside this program is a list of all the events and swimmers.

Example:

(E) Event

5 - 100 Yard Free

(H) Heat

1

(L) Lane

3

1:10.19 FLAG Florida Age Group Ch				
Lane	Name	Age	Team	Seed Time
Event 5 Girls 10 Year Olds 100 Yard Freestyle				
Heat 1 of 7 Finals				
1	Megge, Peyton G	10	DBS-FL	NT
2	Pearson, Sarah A	10	PA-FL	NT
3	Murray, Madison T	10	MACG-FL	NT
4	Ziemba, Zoe A	10	PA-FL	NT
5	Spayth, Ashley M	10	PA-FL	NT
6	Oxley, Payton R	10	PA-FL	NT
7	Bean, Erynn E	10	PA-FL	NT
8	Evans, Faith R	10	PA-FL	NT
Heat 2 of 7 Finals				
1	Matschner, Hope L	10	BD-FL	NT
2	Triozzi, Charlize M	10	PA-FL	2:23.76
3	Meyers, Rachel E	10	STAR-FL	1:50.96
4	Hutchison, Alexa N	10	DBS-FL	1:40.10
5	Frangoulis, Anastasia M	10	DBS-FL	1:43.13
6	Bazemore, Morgan G	10	PA-FL	1:53.37
7	Keyes, Haley R	10	STAR-FL	NT
8	Sanabria, Vanessa	10	DBS-FL	NT
Heat 3 of 7 Finals				
1	Kephart, Ashley E	10	SA-FL	1:38.65
2	Anderson, Jensen K	10	DBS-FL	1:33.58
3	Rumery, Amanda G	10	MACG-FL	1:30.92

On Madison's hand, arm or leg you would write the following:

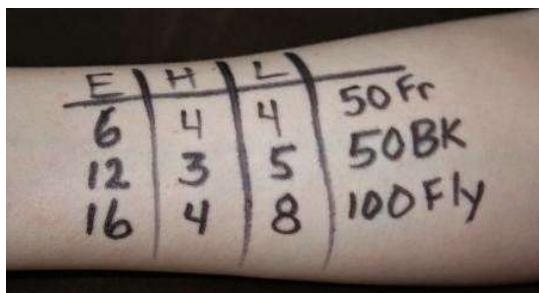
E H L

5 1 3 100 Free

15 2 4 50 Back

35 3 1 50 Fly

Here is an example:



Safe Sport Guidelines

“Safe Sport is USA Swimming's comprehensive abuse prevention program.

We believe that every child has the right to a safe swimming environment that is free from abuse. Our swimmers should be free to work hard, pursue their goals, make friends, benefit from good coaching, and celebrate achievements without worrying about being in an abusive situation.”

GAC is committed to the safety of all athletes. You can learn more about USA Swimming's Safe Sport initiative by visiting: <https://www.usaswimming.org/Home/safe-sport>.

A couple of Safe Sport polices to be aware of at meets:

1. No visual recording is permitted behind the starting blocks (photography or film). This includes recordings with a cell phone.
2. Changing in or out of swimsuits is permitted in designated areas only. Deck changing is prohibited.



Coaches' FAQ from New Swimmers



Here are a few questions our coaches receive from swimmers.

How should I prepare for my meet?

Get a good night's rest! **Have a healthy breakfast!** **Come with a positive attitude and ready to race!**

What should I bring?

Definitely review the [Swim Meet Packing List](#) as well, but here are a few 'must haves':

- Water
- Lunch & healthy snacks (Sandwich, fruit, yogurt, string cheese, etc.)
- Towels
- Extra goggles
- Extra swim cap if possible
- GAC will provide your first team cap. You can purchase additional caps as needed. Please see a board member to purchase caps.

What should I expect at the meet?

- Check in with your coach BEFORE your race. They will discuss reminders and strategies for the race.
- Check in with your coach AFTER your race. They will review how the race went, what you did well and what to improve on next time.
- Absolutely NO jewelry (including watches) can be worn for competition.
- Swimsuits must be one piece without any zippers and cannot be a tie-back style.

What is a Disqualification or DQ?

- Officials will be monitoring races for stroke infractions which may result in a disqualification. Don't worry about DQs during your first meet. We will review any DQs during practice the week following the meet. This allows coaches to help you fix your stroke and make it legal. As you continue to practice, your DQ counts will diminish.

How will I know if I DQ?

- The officials will write up a disqualification slip. These slips are reviewed by the meet referee. If the DQ stands, the slip will be given to your coach at some point during the meet. If time permits, coaches will discuss the DQ with you at the meet. If they don't have time during the meet, they will discuss after the session or during the next practice.

How early should I be behind the blocks for my race?

- Check in with your coach BEFORE your race. Listen to announcements, monitor the event board to see the current event and heat.
- For 100-yard events, it's a good idea to be behind the blocks 3-4 heats before your heat of racing.
- For 50-yard events, it's a good idea to be behind the blocks 6-7 heats before your heat of racing.

Do I get out of the water right away after my race?

- STAY in the water. Wait in quietly your lane against the wall while the official starts the next heat. When the next heat dives in you may exit the water.
- EXCEPTIONS:
 - Backstroke: Since we start from the water, clear the pool for the next heat of swimmers.
 - Relays: Don't stay in the pool. Hop out of the water when you've finished your leg of the relay.

What is a Soft Touch?

- Your time is recorded automatically by the electronic touch pads. Finish your race by pressing fingertips/hands onto the pad. Your electronic time will then show on the results board. If you don't hit the pad and place your hand or fingertips above the pad or somewhere on the gutter, this will result in a "soft touch" and you'll see a bunch of hyphenated lines on the results board for your lane. There are volunteer timers with hand-held watches as back up, but the touch pad time is most accurate, so HIT the PAD!

What are the flags for at each end of the pool?

- These are backstroke flags. They are positioned so that they are 5 yards from the wall. The flags serve as a guide for you on both the finish of a backstroke race as well as a flip turn. KNOW your backstroke COUNT. Practice so that you know how many strokes from the flags to the wall for a finish. Subtract one stroke for a flip turn.
 - Example:
 - Backstroke count for a finish: - 5 arm strokes
 - Backstroke count for a turn: - 4 arm strokes, turn over on stomach for 1 freestyle stroke then flip and push off the wall on your back.
- CHECK your backstroke counts often. The flags are supposed to be 5 yards from the wall, but pools vary, and you may need to adjust when you are not at your "home" pool.

What is a Heat?

- A heat is one group of the current event. An event like the 50 freestyle will have a lot of swimmers. With a 6-lane pool there will be multiple "heats". There may be 15 or more heats of 6 swimmers for the 50 freestyle. You are competing against everyone swimming the 50 freestyle, not just the kids in your specific race, or "heat".

I'm 7 and swimming next to a 12-year-old. That's not fair!

- You may be swimming next to someone who is not your same age. The meet is set up so that swimmers with similar times swim in the same heat. Early heats will have no times listed. You may see your name with an "NT" next to it. This means it's your first time swimming this race. Once you have completed your first meet, your times will show up in the USA swimming database and should populate in heat sheets for future meets. This may not happen for the first couple of meets. Results are separated out by age group: 8 & under, 9/10, 11/12/, 13/14, 15 & over

How do I find out the results of my race?

- Results are posted in the pool or gym area and may also be available on "Meet Mobile"- an app you can download on your phone or tablet.

What happens if my goggles, cap or both fall off during the race?

- Just keep swimming! It's best to swim your race without the goggles and/or cap. It's acceptable to stop and fix them on the freestyle races, but you will add a lot of time. Other strokes (like breaststroke) will result in a DQ because your arm stroking will no longer be simultaneous.

How do I prevent my goggles/cap from falling off during my dive?

- The short answer is PRACTICE! If you perfect your dive, you should have no trouble with cap or goggles. The biggest reason your goggles fall off at the start is poor diving skills. Some precautions you can take:
 - Invest in quality goggles.
 - Wear the goggles under your cap and pull the edge of your cap over the very top of your goggles to help hold them in place
 - Make a goggle sandwich: cap/goggles/2nd cap