



ermantoun Gators Swim Team Manual



TABLE OF CONTENTS

○ Swimmer's Code of Conduct	3
○ Competitive Sports Philosophy	3
○ League Participation	4
○ General Rules	4
○ Types of Meets	5
○ Practices	5
○ Competitive Season	6
○ Registration	6
○ Work Deposit Fee	6
○ Partial Season Participation	7
○ Pool Passes	7
○ Support	7
○ Equipment	8
○ Team Information	8
○ Team Pictures	8
○ Team Picnic & Fun Night	8
○ Awards	8
○ Parental Support At Meets	9
○ Organizational Structure of Team	9
○ Protest & Criticism	9
○ Team Commitment / Swimmers	10
○ Team Commitment / Parents	10
○ Meet Volunteer Descriptions	11
○ Appendix / Board Info.	12
○ Coach Obligations	13
○ Maps to Away Meets	14

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WELCOME

This handbook was created to provide information regarding policies of the Germantown Gators Swim Team.

Our team is unique from other organizations your child may have been involved with previously. We are a non-profit, family-oriented, recreational swim team. We exist because of the joy of recreational and competitive swimming. Swimmers' parents are involved in the team's success.

The Germantown Gators Swim Team is a member of the Southern Ohio Swim League (SOSL), along with some other Miami Valley teams. Although some of the swimmers in this league compete year-round, the league's main philosophy is one of providing a place for ALL swimmers, regardless of their ability.

We are happy you have chosen to have your child swim with the Gators. We ask for your cooperation and patience with the board and coaches as they try to produce the best program for your child.

SWIMMER'S CODE OF CONDUCT

I am always striving to improve my physical condition and mental abilities.

I will treat all team members, coaches, parents and competitors with respect.

I will always offer support and encouragement to my teammates.

Instead of saying, "No, I can't", I will say, "I'll try".

I will refrain from the use of inappropriate language.

I will control myself in moments of frustration.

I will always bring problems or concerns to the coaches' attention.

COMPETITIVE SPORTS PHILOSOPHY

All sport programs incorporate certain values, demonstrated in the way the programs are conducted and the participants' interaction. This swim team program tries to include the values of equal participation, family involvement, fair play and emphasizing individual goals and instruction while keeping winning in perspective. There is a place for all swimmers who desire to participate in the Germantown Gators Swim Team.

LEAGUE PARTICIPATION

The Germantown Gators Swim Team is a member of the Southern Ohio Swim League (SOSL), along with the following other swim organizations:

Cardinal Hills (Beavercreek)
Miamisburg
Eaton
West Carrollton
Idle Hour (Beavercreek)
Springboro / Franklin

Each team competes against the other teams once in a dual meet. There is a championship meet at the end of the regular season in mid-July.

The team also tries to build relationships among non-league teams in the area by scheduling a meet or inviting their teams to our invitational meet in June.

GENERAL RULES

The Southern Ohio Swim League (SOSL) follows the current *U.S. Swimming Rules*, with the exception of allowing one false start and not disqualifying age 6 and under swimmers for stroke violations in their age group events.

All swimmers must be able to swim 25 meters unassisted in a safe manner. This is once across the length of the pool in Germantown. No flotation devices are allowed.

Eligibility for participation in SOSL meets shall be restricted to swimmers age 18 and younger. The age group the swimmer competes in is determined by their birthday as of June 1. The age groups are divided as follows: 6 and under, 8 and under, 9 & 10, 11 & 12, 13 & 14 and 15 & over, which includes graduating seniors.

At each meet, four swimmers from each team may compete for points per event.

Swimmers must compete in three league meets to be eligible for championships.

A swimmer may not compete in more than three individual events at any meet.

Swimmers may move up an age group to compete in a relay.

All 6 and under swimmers compete in backstroke and freestyle races only. They may compete as 8 & under for butterfly and breaststroke.

TYPES OF MEETS

Dual Meets:

All league meets are dual meets involving our team and another league team. Our meets are scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday evenings during the season, except for July 4.

Coaches are responsible for assigning events swimmers are entered in during dual meets. The coaches may establish guidelines on practice participation and event assignments at meets.

Invitationals:

The team sponsors an annual Germantown Invitational, inviting league and non-league teams. This event is a fundraiser for our team, generates local interest in swimming and promotes community pride.

Our swimmers aren't charged for their entries. However, swimmers from other teams pay per event they swim. The main objective is to give out ribbons and lots of them. Rewarding swimmers for their efforts is most important, regardless of what place they finish.

We also may be invited to other invitationals. These aren't mandatory for our swimmers to attend and usually take place on Saturdays. Our swimmers sign up for invitational events they want to swim in. Each event costs an entry fee, so please read information carefully prior to entering.

Championships:

The season culminates in the championship meet which brings together all the SOSL teams. All participants must have competed in at least three league meets to be eligible.

Ribbons are given to twenty-six (26) places for each event; the top twelve (12) are scored for team points. Swimmers choose their own individual events, but are encouraged to consult with the coaches. The coaches determine swimmer placement on relay teams.

PRACTICES

Our Gators Team begins practice as soon as approved by the Village Manager and Pool Manager. Practice is in the morning daily, Monday – Friday, and evening occasionally. Age groups are divided and assigned practice times, which are posted at the beginning of the season.

Every effort will be made to let you know if practice is cancelled. We will use the One-Call system to inform swimmers of cancelled practices. Light rain, however, doesn't cancel practice since the swimmers get wet anyway.

COMPETITIVE SEASON

Competition begins approximately the first week in June and continues until the middle of July.

It is best that your swimmer begin with the team at the beginning of the season to establish the fundamentals of strokes, starts and turns. Conflicts, such as camp, vacation, baseball and work schedules, may not make that possible. So, membership in the team is open until the first meet. However, swimmers must have competed in three league meets to compete in championships.

REGISTRATION

Registration fees are \$30 per swimmer for the first two in a family and \$25 for each additional swimmer. A work deposit is also required.

Registration fees **MUST** be paid before any swimmer can participate in practices and meets.

A pool pass to the Germantown Family Aquatic Center is required for all swim team members regardless of residency.

No one will be turned away from belonging to the Germantown Gators Swim Team for inability to pay registration fees. Parents of swimmers desiring to participate, but lacking sufficient funds, should contact the president of swim team.

WORK DEPOSIT FEE

Each family is required to submit a \$100 work deposit fee at registration. This fee ensures there is adequate volunteer participation at each meet. Families will receive a full refund of the fee if the family volunteered the necessary shifts during the season. Families that do not volunteer for the required shifts will not get the refund.

The number of shifts required is based on the number of families enrolled, along with the number of home and away meets scheduled. The number of shifts necessary to receive the refund will be clearly communicated at registration.

Sign-up sheets are available during registration and practices so families can volunteer on the dates/times best for them.

A shift lasts 40 events (out of 80 total events) at a home or away meet and two to three hours at the invitational and championship meets.

WORK DEPOSIT FEE, Cont'd

To ensure families receive a participation fee refund, they must check in with the vice president at each meet they're scheduled to work. The vice president keeps a record of all volunteers and will refund the fee at the end of the season to those families who worked the required shifts.

PARTIAL SEASON PARTICIPATION

Although summer is time for family vacations and some swimmers may miss parts of the season for various reasons, no partial season memberships are offered. An equitable means of pro-rating fees would be difficult. One fee has therefore been established and participation on the team is based on payment of that fee.

POOL PASSES

Passes to the Germantown Family Aquatics Center (Village of Germantown Pool) are required for all Gator swimmers. This was a decision by the Pool Board. The Pool Board has given team swimmers reduced pass prices.

SUPPORT

The swim team is permitted use of the pool for practice, meets and social events by the Village of Germantown. It doesn't receive any funding from the Village of Germantown.

The Gators Swim Team has received help purchasing equipment from the Parks and Recreation Oversight Committee, Lions Club, Rotary Club and The Dupps Company. Without their help, it would be difficult to afford the equipment needed and to provide for the other expenses involved in running and managing this team.

This team is dependent on the support from the parents of swimmers, past and present, and on the organization's fundraising efforts. Please thank these organizations every chance you get.

EQUIPMENT

A one-piece swimsuit is required. (A team suit is available for purchase, but not required.) The following equipment is also recommended for each swimmer: towels, goggles, swim cap, t-shirts and/or sweats or warm-up clothes. A one-piece swimsuit is required. (A team suit is available for purchase, but not required.)

TEAM INFORMATION

All Gators Swim Team information will be posted at the Germantown Pool in an area designated for swim team use. Please check this area every time you're at the pool to ensure you have the latest information. Efforts will be made to distribute weekly newsletters to families during the regular season as well.

TEAM PICTURES

Individual and team pictures will be offered for optional purchase. Check the Gators calendar for the scheduled date. However, we would like to have all swimmers in the team photo even if they choose not to purchase pictures.

TEAM PICNIC AND FUN NIGHT

At the season's end, the team holds a picnic for the families to honor the swimmers, parents and coaches for their accomplishments. The picnic is held at Veterans Park or the Depot. A "Fun Night Swim" follows the picnic at the pool.

AWARDS

Concentrating on personal improvement in all areas is the way to happiness for the swimmer, parent and coach. Remembering each race not only has one first place finisher, but each swimmer can be a winner if they improve in some measurable way.

The team philosophy revolves around each swimmer being taught to strive and try. The concept of trying is not automatic so the team encourages EFFORT—and rewards it. Swimmers' accomplishments are acknowledged at the mid-season and final awards banquet.

Ribbons are awarded to first through sixth place at each dual meet as well as exhibition ribbons. Personal best ribbons are also awarded to swimmers who improve their individual times. Swimmers receiving first through 26th place at championships are awarded ribbons by the SOSL. These are distributed at the family picnic.

PARENTAL SUPPORT AT MEETS

Swim meets are an important part of the age-group swimming experience. They're great for young swimmers and an opportunity for their families to see their progress. It can be a celebration of the progress made or a time of disappointment if the emphasis isn't properly focused.

Swimmers compete directly with others and places are easily seen by everyone. This is a major disadvantage if it's approached incorrectly, by judging the winner as only the person who finished first. The swimmer who has done a terrific job of improving strokes, swims a faster personal time or doesn't get disqualified are the TRUE WINNERS.

Another important aspect of swim meets is the training ground it offers for parents to get involved with their child and the team. It makes swimming on the team a family activity.

The swim meet environment needs people to conduct a good, well-run meet, and it takes a great number of people. There are many roles that need to be filled to make a meet successful.

Above all, show your swimmers enthusiasm. Clap like crazy for all the swimmers. Recognition from adults other than their parents is very important for our young people.

THE TEAM'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Officers are elected at the end of the swim season for the following season. This group of parents forms the board and assists the coaches with the functioning part of meets and team direction. All parents are welcome at any meeting.

Meetings are held as needed prior to the summer in preparation for the upcoming swim season. The board meets weekly during the swim season.

Parents can volunteer for the following positions: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer and meet director/league representative. There are a multitude of roles that also need volunteers during swim meets. See the Appendix for further details regarding officers and committee activities. The success of the people depends on you, the parents, to volunteer when requested.

PROTEST AND CRITICISM

Please remember this organization is made up of parents striving for a quality program for ALL swimmers. If there's a problem or something you don't agree with, feel free to discuss it with a board member or privately with the coaches. Problems regarding ANY aspect of the function of the team are best resolved by bringing them to the board's attention in a timely, professional manner.

SWIM TEAM COMMITMENT – SWIMMERS

Being a member of the Germantown Gators Swim Team brings with it responsibilities and obligations. The swimmer has a commitment to the team.

SWIMMERS MUST BE ON TIME. Arriving late or leaving early means missing out on important aspects of the program and can seriously disrupt the continuity of practices. Be ready to practice when practice begins.

THE PRACTICE BEFORE A MEET IS MANDATORY. Attendance at practice determines the basis for scheduling swimmers for individual and relay events. **It is imperative that the swimmers and parents inform the coaches if they will not be attending a meet and/or practice.** Efficient meets require a great deal of planning for who will swim what events. Summer school commitments, camps, vacations, etc. should be discussed with the coaches so they can plan accordingly.

BE AWARE AND RESPECTFUL OF OTHER SWIMMERS' ACCOMPLISHMENTS. Mastery of a few or all strokes is a step-wise process facilitated by the support and encouragement of fellow swimmers, coaches and parents, alike.

SWIM TEAM COMMITMENT – PARENTS

All parents should:

- ❖ Encourage swimmer(s) to attend all practices and meets and ensure transportation to and from these events.
- ❖ Encourage unconditional love and support in regards to athletic performance. Encourage them to work diligently and establish realistic goals.
- ❖ Take an active part and help with the running of meets, committee work, fund-raising, etc.
- ❖ Take part in an officials clinic to better enable and qualify themselves as meet workers.
- ❖ Help in the set-up and break-down of home meets and our invitational.
- ❖ Supply a baked good or other needed item for the concession stand at all home meets and the invitational.

It requires approximately 50 parents from our team to work a dual meet at home and about 25 parents at away meets. A commitment from each of our parents is needed to run the meets and your assistance is expected.

SWIM MEET VOLUNTEER DESCRIPTIONS

Many jobs require little or no experience. If this is your first experience with the Germantown Gators, you'll find the meets more enjoyable when you're involved. You get to meet other parents, help the team in a valuable way and you always get to see your swimmer when it's time.

Volunteer Positions that require little or no experience:

- ❖ **Timing** (This is the greatest area of need. You'll be right where the action begins and ends. You'll stand at the end of the lane with a timer, recording the start and finish of each swimmer in that lane.)
- ❖ **Lane Slip Runners** (You'll pick up the lane slips from the timers and deliver them to the scoring table. This extremely important job requires comfortable shoes.)
- ❖ **Ribbon Workers** (You get to sit down and write the swimmers' info on the ribbons.)

Volunteer Positions requiring extra training or certification:

- ❖ **Referee** (USS Rules insist on a referee to oversee the running of the meets in an orderly fashion and see that rules governing the meets are followed. This person is in charge of disputes and interpretations. It's in the team's best interest to have this person separate from the starter. The referee must be certified with appropriate credentials (ie. NCAA, USS or YMCA National).
- ❖ **Starter** (Needs a voice that can last for at least half of the meet and the ability to command kids to listen. This person should have been around meets for at least a year.)
- ❖ **Stroke and Turn Judges** (These individuals also get the best view of the pool. You must be certified.)
- ❖ **Announcer** (This person calls swimmers to their events. They're connected to the hub of the action (Clerk of Course).
- ❖ **Clerk of Course** (At least one charge person and three assistants are needed in this area at home meets. You must be able to keep the swimmers efficiently moving to the starting blocks.)
- ❖ **Scoring** (You get to see the times before anyone else.)

Anyone is free to sign up for these jobs. Working some portion of each meet is part of the responsibility of registering your swimmer.

Concessions Coordinator(s): Setup and tear down of concession area at each home meet; maintain supply inventory.

Invitational Program Volunteer: Responsible for advertising in program and production assistance as needed.

APPENDIX

SWIM TEAM BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

President/Co-President

- ❖ Presides at all Germantown Gators Swim Team board meetings and swim meets.
- ❖ Upholds and enforces this handbook's rules and policies.
- ❖ Coordinates all swim team and board activities and ensures all duties are completed.
- ❖ Communicates information concerning the swim team to the succeeding board officers.
- ❖ Oversees meet set-up.

Vice President

- ❖ Assists the president and performs the duties of the president in his or her absence or inability to serve.
- ❖ Responsible for coordinating volunteers during swim meets.
- ❖ Responsible for developing and selling a team T-shirt each year.

Secretary

- ❖ Records board meeting minutes and maintains records for Germantown Gators Swim Team.
- ❖ Directs all communication, correspondence, maintains historical records and other duties as they may be assigned.
- ❖ Prepares pre-season, season meet and post-season press releases.
- ❖ Purchases advertisement, prepares flyers and television messages as directed by officers.

Treasurer

- ❖ Receives all monies for the swim team and keeps accurate records of receipts and expenses.
- ❖ Pays out funds in accordance with the approved budget or as authorized by the officers.
- ❖ Maintains a checking account and makes all expenditures via check.
 - All checks will bear the signature of the treasurer or president. Only the treasurer may routinely write checks and make expenditures previously approved by the officers.
 - The president has check signature authority, but only in the event the treasurer cannot perform this duty and not to exceed \$30 of discretionary money without board approval for minor needs of the team. (ie. minor meet emergencies like batteries.)
- ❖ Gives receipts for all monies collected. Only the treasurer may routinely collect money. Others may assist the treasurer, for example during registration, with officer approval.
- ❖ No other officer or swim team member may expend team funds without prior Board approval.
- ❖ Responsible for invoicing of Invitational program ads.

SWIM TEAM BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES, Cont'd

Meet Director/League Representative

- ❖ Assembles information, contacts, directs and performs all duties necessary with running the invitational in accordance with USS Rules.
- ❖ Directs all needs for jobs and workers, ribbons, scoring and other necessities to the officers for assistance.
- ❖ Provides information regarding league rule changes.
- ❖ Keeps up with certification requirements as necessary to be a member in good standing with the National Boards of Swimming (NCAA, USS, or YMCA National Board)
- ❖ Attends all league meetings as called by the league president, assisting and voting in the best interest of the team as delegated by the officers.
- ❖ Be the liaison to the local swim community as a contact person for general business, meet arrangements and inform the officers of the information.
- ❖ Offers direction and support in all areas of the swim team.

OBLIGATIONS

Coaches

- ❖ Attend every practice session. The coaches should place high importance on being at practices and meets. The coach is a chief motivational force to a young swimmer and his/her attendance on a regular basis is important. Coaches will make arrangements with other members of the staff should illness or conflict arise.
- ❖ Offer positive reinforcement and avoid negative criticism.
- ❖ Communicate respectfully with team parents and listen openly to their concerns or ideas.
- ❖ Maintain a level of professionalism in dress and behavior.
- ❖ Do not take phone calls or attend to personal business during practice hours.
- ❖ Constant attention should be given to practice group.
- ❖ Always remember, as a coach, you're a very important role model. The Germantown Gators Swim Team coaches will always conduct themselves with pride and will abstain from the use of inappropriate language.

DIRECTIONS TO AWAY MEETS

Cardinal Hill
1990 Wilene Dr.
429-3131

Directions:
Take US 35 E.
Take ramp toward Dayton-Xenia Rd./Linden Ave.
Turn left on Linden Ave.
Continue on Dayton-Xenia Rd.
Turn left on Wildonna Dr.
Turn left on Honey Locust Ln.
Turn right on Wilene Dr.

West Carrollton
350 Wilson Park Dr.
866-9212

Directions:
Take Dayton Pk.
Bear right on Upper Miamisburg Rd. (OH 725)
Continue to follow OH 725
Turn left on N. First St.
Continue on N Main St.
Turn right on E. Richard St.
Turn left on N. Heincke Rd.
Turn right on Sherwood Forest Dr.
Turn left on S. Elm St.

Idle Hour
3590 Kemp Rd.
426-9015

Directions:
Take US 35 E.
Take ramp toward Dayton-Xenia Rd./Linden Ave.
Turn left on Linden Ave.
Continue on Dayton-Xenia Rd.
Turn left on Grange Hall Rd.
Turn right on Kemp Rd.

Eaton Swim Club
541 W. Main St.
456-2548

Directions:
Take OH 725
Bear right on E. Franklin St.
Continue on OH 122
Turn left on E. Main St. (U.S. 35)
Continue on W. Main St. (OH 122)

Miamisburg
400 S. Heincke Rd.
847-6433

Directions:
Take Dayton Pk.
Bear right on Upper Miamisburg Rd. (OH 725)
Bear right on W. Linden Ave.
Turn left on Maue Rd.
Turn left on S. Heincke Rd.