



Greenwood Aquatic Club
Parent Handbook

www.greenwoodgators.net

Greenwood Aquatic Club is a member of:



Welcome!

The Greenwood Aquatic Club (also referred to as "Greenwood Gators" or just "Gators") is a non-profit organization dedicated to teaching young people the sport of competitive swimming. Gators is run by a board of directors consisting of parent volunteers, team coaches and the Greenwood High School Athletic Director. Although Gators utilizes the Greenwood Community High School natatorium, our organization is independent of Greenwood Community Schools Corporation.

Gators conducts two swim seasons each year. The short course season takes place in a 25-yard indoor pool and runs from September through March. The long course season adds a 50-meter outdoor pool to the ongoing indoor work outs. The long course season runs from April through July.

We welcome you and your swimmer(s) to Gators! We look forward to a great season as we work to improve stroke technique, build endurance, gain confidence and – most of all – have fun!

USA Swimming

Greenwood Gators is a member of USA Swimming. USA Swimming is the national governing body for competitive swimming in the United States. It was formed in 1978 with the passage of the Amateur Sports Act specifying that all Olympic sports be administered independently. USA Swimming headquarters is located in Colorado Springs, Colorado, at the Olympic Training Center. As the national governing body for the sport, USA Swimming is responsible for the conduct and administration of all competitive swimming in the United States. In this capacity, it formulates rules, implements policies and procedures, conducts the national championships, provides our charter and insurance, and selects the athletes that will represent our country in international competition.

Each Gators swimmer must be a member of USA Swimming. This requires an annual or seasonal registration with USA Swimming. Swimmers who do not have current USA Swimming memberships complete USA Swimming registrations at the time they sign-up to swim with Gators. USA Swimming provides accident insurance for each member while he or she participates in Gators practices and swim meets. Each member also receives a membership card that lists his or her athlete tracking number which can be used at www.usaswimming.org to track the swimmer's race times and see his or her national rankings. Membership in USA Swimming automatically provides the swimmer with membership in Indiana Swimming, Inc., which is Indiana's chapter of USA Swimming.

Practice Groups

Gators divides swimmers into three graduated, integrated training/practice groups. Groups range from novice to elite swimmers. Each swimmer is placed in a group by a Gators coach based on his or her current swimming ability and age. Within each group, coaches focus on helping swimmers achieve skill-appropriate goals thus allowing each swimmer to grow and progress at an individual pace.

Bronze Group: The Bronze group is the first step. This group consists of swimmers age 9 and under (with exceptions for beginners at age 10). Swimmers in this group focus on learning turns, starts and technique for all four strokes. The Bronze group practices for one hour, three times each week.

Silver Group: The Silver group is the next step. This group consists of swimmers age 12 and under. Swimmers in this group continue to practice and improve turns, starts and strokes. In addition, they learn to use the pace clock, and they begin to build endurance. Racing skills are also introduced and practiced in this group. The Silver group practices for 1½ hours, 4 or 5 days each week (practice durations and frequencies depend on swimmer ability).

Gold Group: The Gold group is an advanced group. Swimmers in this group are age 12 and older. Often this group is comprised of middle-school and high-school students. Swimmers in this group continue to

work on technique and all skills learned in previous groups. Strength-building and conditioning exercises are added to practices in this group to help as swimmers continue to increase endurance and swim speed. The Gold group practices for 2 hours, 5 times each week (with optional additional practices during summer long course seasons).

Practices

On practice days, swimmers should arrive at the pool with goggles and a towel. Swimmers should also bring drinking water to rehydrate as necessary during practice. Plan to arrive a few minutes prior to swim time, and wait away from the pool deck until coaches call each group. All swimmers will stretch and warm-up before entering the pool.

Greenwood Gators does not require swimmers to attend every practice, nor does Gators require swimmers who will miss a practice to call and report the absence. However, committing to a consistent practice schedule is important for every swimmer. Swimmers who attend practice regularly and frequently reap the most benefit and achieve the most improvement. Gators coaches encourage and support involvement in other activities, but they also encourage all swimmers to develop and commit to good swim habits.

Monthly practice calendars are available on the Gators web site. Each calendar identifies changes to normal practice schedules, highlights upcoming meets and lists special activities. Please take a moment at the end of each month to print the current practice calendar.

Gold swimmers might be asked to purchase additional equipment (fins, kick boards, etc.) for use during practices.

Practice Rules. Swimming is a fun, exciting sport to be enjoyed by the whole family, but, as with any organized youth activity, rules are necessary to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all participants.

- Swimmers should arrive at practice no more than 15 minutes before practice, and they should be picked up no more than 15 minutes after practice ends.
- Only swimmers and Gators staff members are permitted on the pool deck and in locker rooms. Parents are encouraged to watch from the stands during practice.
- No one is allowed in any other area of the school building.
- Swimmers should treat the facilities and all equipment with care. We are permitted to use the high school pool without charge, and we need to be responsible stewards.
- The consumption or purchase of alcohol, smoking or chewing tobacco or any other illegal drug or substance is never permitted. Any team member found or suspected of participating in such activity will be subject to a review and may be expelled from the team.

Swimmers attend practice to have fun but also learn and train. Swimmers who interfere with these goals will be removed from practice. Continued violations can result in suspension or dismissal from the team.

Locker Rooms and Restrooms

Locker room entrances are located on the pool deck and are available to all swimmers. Restrooms are located just outside the high school natatorium doors. (Turn left upon exiting the natatorium.) Parents who wish to accompany young swimmers are encouraged to use the restrooms just outside the natatorium.

Fees and Escrow

The Gators board of directors sets the team fees at the beginning of each season. These fees support our club and its operating budget. Fees are based on the practice group with which each swimmer swims and are paid at the time of Gator registration. If a swimmer advances to a new group during the season, pro-rated fees for the new group will apply. Fees for those joining the team during an interim period are pro-rated, and discounts are offered to families that have multiple Gators swimmers.

In addition to team fees, swimmers are assessed meet fees when they elect to compete in swim meets. Meet fees pay the hosting swim club for participation in the meet. The fees for each swimmer vary based on the quantity and type of events in which the swimmer competes. Generally, events cost \$2.00-\$4.00 each for short course competitions (fall/winter season) and \$3.50-\$5.00 each for long course competitions (spring/summer competitions).

Each swimmer's family has a Gators escrow account that is used to pay meet fees. Families are asked to contribute to their escrow account at the beginning of each swim season and then adequately maintain their account so funds are available when the Gators treasurer makes payment to the hosting club. Monies not used for meet entry during the season can be rolled over for use during the next swim season or returned to the family.

Swim Meets

All Gators swimmers have opportunities to compete in swim meets during the swim season. A swim meet is comprised of multiple swim events that are scheduled over the course of a single day or weekend. Events are often scheduled in groups based on the ages of the participating swimmers so one swimmer's events may take place during a single morning or afternoon. Swimmers select and register for events based on their interests, ability, age and gender. In some cases, a Gators coach may select alternate or additional events. Although Gators does not require swimmers to participate in swim meets, it is strongly encouraged so swimmers can experience competitive environments and establish personal swim times.

Competing swimmers are asked to wear a Gators team suit or jammer. Gators offers swim suits and jammers for sale periodically during each swim season.

Home Swim Meets. Gators hosts swim meets, too. Hosting home meets is an important opportunity for the club and its swimmers. For Gators swimmers, a home meet is an opportunity to compete in the home pool. For the club, a home meet is a tool to meet budget needs. Approximately one half of the Gators budget funding comes from the collection of team fees. The remaining budget must be met through fundraisers and home swim meets.

Hosting a home meet is not difficult, but it does require a lot of help. As a result, Gators asks members of each swimmer's family serve as volunteers when home meets take place. There are plenty of fun jobs to choose from, and none of them are difficult. We'll provide training to so everyone knows what to do. Some of the positions will include:

- Announcers
- Timers
- Scoreboard and clock operators
- Computer operators/Scorers
- Officials (*certification is required*)
- Hospitality room hosts
- Concession stand operators
- Attendees for sales and awards tables

In addition, Gators will ask families to make concession stand and hospitality room donations.

Gators also needs swim meet officials. Officials know the rules of the meet and make sure they are adhered to. USA Swimming has a program that prospective officials complete before being certified. Swimming is a life-long sport, and officiating is a great way to contribute and be involved. For those interested in becoming an entry level official, please contact a board member.

Pool Facilities

The Greenwood High School natatorium is located in the southeast corner of Greenwood High School. The facility houses a 25-yard pool that can be converted to a 25-meter pool for the long course season. The Gators swim team and the Greenwood High School and Greenwood Middle School swimming & diving teams all practice and host meets at the facility during their swim seasons.

During the long course season, Gators Gold and Silver groups also utilize the Greenwood Community City Pool, a 50-meter outdoor facility located at 415 Lincoln Street.

Gators Website and Other Sources of Information

The best place for Gators information is the Gators website: www.greenwoodgators.net.

Here, you'll find the latest news, forms, practice schedules and meet information. You'll also find a listing of Gators coaches and board members plus easy access to email communication with them.

Here are some other places you can look for Gators information:

- The bulletin board at the pool. Information regarding practices, meets and other upcoming events will be posted there.
- Your family's folder in the second drawer of the file cabinet located near the natatorium entrance.
- Your e-mail. Information will often be sent to you directly via the email address you provided at registration.
- Your coach, a board member or another parent at the pool.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Do I need to be at the pool with my swimmer during practices?** It is preferable that someone stay at the practice, but if you must leave and return, please bring your swimmer into the pool personally. Then, come back in to pick them up. Do not drop and run at the outside doors.
- **Do I have to work during home meets?** Yes! We rely heavily on the participation of our parents. Each family is required to volunteer at home swim meets. Helping out during a swim meet is also a great opportunity to meet and become better acquainted with parents and families of other swimmers. Swim meets are a lot of fun, too.
- **Are there any required meets?** No, but please treat our home meets as such! We traditionally host one in the summer and two in the fall/winter.
- **Can I get a refund if my swimmer decides not to swim anymore?** No. Team fees are not refunded and the family is responsible for any unpaid fees.
- **Do we go to travel meets?** Within reason, we do go to meets that are away from Indianapolis and Greenwood. Usually only 2 or 3 that are 2 hours away, most of our meets are within 1 hour or less drive time. If we go to a far away meet we will look for affordable lodging options for those that choose to go. Lodging is the family's responsibility, as we do not take a group of swimmers without their parents. Participation is optional on all away-meets.
- **How long are the meets?** A session in a meet usually takes four hours or less. Many meets offer multiple daily sessions.
- **Must we swim in all meets?** No. Gators does not expect all swimmers to go to every meet. It is however, encouraged that a swimmer compete as much as possible during the course of the season.

Competition is a great way to improve within the sport of swimming. Gators does not place emphasis on finish placements. Instead, the focus is on each swimmer's improvement.

- **Can I pick what session to swim?** To some extent, yes. You may pick the day or days that you want to swim, but the session is determined by which age group is swimming in the AM or PM, and those sessions are set by the hosting club.
- **How does my swimmer qualify for post season or special meet?** A swimmer qualifies for Divisional, State, Zone, National, or a special meet by swimming faster than pre-determined times.
- **Is there food at a meet?** Most host teams will provide a concession stand. However, the type of food provided may not be the best type of consumption for your swimmer. You may still want to consider packing a cooler so you can monitor or determine what your swimmer is eating and drinking.
- **Is there seating at a meet?** During the fall/winter season, meets are at high school pools or college natatoriums with built-in seating. Sometimes it is hot, and sometimes seating is limited at these facilities, so you may want to consider packing seating for use in our team's "camping" area. During the summer when we attend outdoor meets, you should plan to bring lawn chairs since these meets usually take place at outdoor city pools.
- **What if it rains during an outdoor meet?** The swimmers are already wet so it won't matter to them. You, however, will want to be prepared. If there is a possibility for wet weather, bring umbrellas or raingear. If the weather turns severe, officials will postpone or cancel the remainder of the session or meet. They may alternatively elect to move the meet indoors (if such a facility exists) and try to wait out the weather before cancelling the remaining events.
- **Must my swimmer attend all practices?** It is up to the parent to decide if a swimmer attends practice or not. Kids are involved in many other activities so attendance is not mandatory (but it is strongly encouraged). If a swimmer is ill, do not bring them to practice.
- **If we cannot attend a meet that we have signed up for what do I do?** If for any reason you cannot make it to the meet, call your coach. If you are running late we will see if we can get your swimmer signed in, but there is no guarantee! Swimmers must be signed in to the meet approximately 45 minutes before the meet begins.
- **If we miss a meet can we get our entry fee back?** No. The entry fees are sent to the host club 2-4 weeks in advance of the meet. Since a host team will not refund fees to us, we cannot refund the fees to you.
- **Are there team suits?** Yes. It is requested that Gators swimmers wear the team suit and/or cap. If you choose not to purchase the team suit, a basic black or black/green suit is suggested.

Do you know other swimmers?

Gators welcomes swimmers of all ages and multiple skill levels. Any swimmer who is able to complete a length (25 yards) of the pool and swim freestyle (or near freestyle) comfortably in water over his or her head is a Gators candidate. Past participation in swim lessons is sometimes helpful, but it is not a requirement.

Before being accepted to the team or being placed in a practice group, swimmers may be asked to swim for evaluation purposes. Gators accepts almost every swimmer who seeks to participate on the team provided he or she can meet the swim requirement.

Registrations and evaluations are held at the beginning of each swim season. However, new swimmers are accepted at any time during the season. Many swimmers begin with Gators after completing other extra-curricular activities or at the end of a series of swim lessons. Gators allows a two-week trial period during which unsure swimmers can practice with appropriate swim groups during normal practice times.

Swimmer's Code of Honor

The following code is in effect for every swimmer throughout every swim season.

- **Respect for Others.** Gators members will be respectful of peers, coaches and parents. Any member not acting in such a manner will be asked to stop the offending behavior. If that team member fails to comply, he or she will be asked to leave, and may also face team disciplinary procedures.
- **Respect for Property.** All swimmers, parents and family members will respect the property of others including property of other team members and that provided by or used by Gators. This includes property in locker rooms, on pool decks, inside and near pool facilities, on site at places of lodging and all other areas used or visited by the team. Any expenses or liability for any damage or theft at any location will be the responsibility of the swimmer(s) and their families. Inappropriate actions such as these will also result in further disciplinary action.
- **Behavior.** All swimmers, parents and family members will behave in exemplary manners at all times. This rule applies to behavior in locker rooms, on pool decks, inside and near pool facilities, on site at places of lodging and all other areas used or visited by Greenwood Aquatic Club. Our club's reputation and the reputation of all swimmers on the team are dependent on your behavior.
- **Substances.** The consumption or purchase of alcohol, smoking tobacco and chewing tobacco by any team member is prohibited. The possession or use of illegal drugs or USOC banned substances of any kind are also prohibited. Club members are further prohibited from being in the **presence of others** (regardless of team affiliation) partaking in any of the aforementioned activities. Swimmers suspected of any such activity will appear before a review committee composed of the Gators head coach, assistant coaches, club president, and two other Gators board members.
- **Unsupervised Association.** At no time shall male and female athletes be in the same room together unless a coach or parent or approved chaperone is in the room with them or has approved the situation. This applies to all Gators members associating with fellow team members and team members associating with members of any other team.
- **Rules.** All team members are expected to adhere to all rules governing team practices and all rules regarding meet behavior.
- **Authority.** The Gators coaching staff provides the final word regarding all club rules, regulations, or disciplinary action.

Our Coaching Staff

Gators employs a coaching staff that is comprised of certified professionals who are dedicated to helping each child be the best swimmer he or she can be.



Chas Grimm. Chas is our head coach. He is also the head coach of the Greenwood High School swim team and the assistant coach for the Greenwood Middle School swim team. Chas swam with Warren Central High school and competed as a member of the Indy Fins swim club. He then continued swimming at the collegiate level as a 4-year member of the IUPUI varsity swim team. During two of those years, Chas was team captain and the team's Strength and Conditioning coach. After some time as the assistant coach of the Lawrence North High school swim team, Chas came to Greenwood. Now, he's proud to be both a Woodman and a Gator!



Brandon Loveless. Brandon coaches our Silver group. Brandon graduated from New Palestine High School where he was a member of the swim team for 4 years. During two of those years, he was the team's captain. Brandon now attends the University of Indianapolis where he is studying to be a Secondary Education Math Teacher. Brandon has also been a member of the University of Indianapolis swim team during which time he has qualified for conference and earned Academic All-Conference honors. Brandon is thrilled to be a Gator, and he enjoys helping our swimmers grow and mature in the sport of swimming.



Justin Heinold. Justin is our Bronze coach. He comes from La Porte, IN where he had a successful high school swimming career. He also brings teaching and coaching experience from La Porte. Before moving to the Indianapolis area, Justin taught swim lessons, coached the middle school swim team, and worked with the La Porte swim club. Justin graduates from the University of Indianapolis in May 2010 with a degree in Chemistry Education. He plans to teach high school Chemistry or middle school science in the Indianapolis area. Justin has plenty of other interests, too. Some of them include playing basketball and soccer, listening to music, leading a Bible study, playing video games, and eating. Justin has been a Gator for three years now!



Kelly Miller. Kelly is the head coach of the Greenwood Middle School swim team and also an important part of the Gator swim club. She is also the coordinator for Gator's Swim Lesson program. She was the head coach of the Aurora Shores Swim Club in Ohio and swam at the collegiate level for 4 years with IUPUI. She currently teaches for Head Start in Marion County.

Eric Hollingsworth. Eric attended Avon High school where he was a record holder in the 200 yard medley relay. Today, Eric attends IUPUI. He'll graduate soon from IUPUI's Health Information Administration program. As a member of IUPUI's swim team, Eric has added to his list of accomplishments. As a freshman, he had one of the fastest 1650 times in IUPUI history. During that same year, the IUPUI swim team completed the season as the runner-up in the conference. Eric served as the team's captain during his junior and senior years and, as a senior, ranked 5 in the conference in the 400 IM. His 400 medley relay team also broke IUPUI's school record that year. Academics have been important to Eric, too. He has earned Academic Advisors List honors, Academic All-Conference awards, and even a Dean's List Accolade.