

Greenwyche Gators Swim Team Guide

Welcome to summer league swimming! Greenwyche Pool is a member of the Rocket City Swim League (RCSL). RCSL is referred to as a “summer swim league” because the season runs from the end of May through mid-July when the “City Championship Meet” is held. There are three (3) divisions within RCSL; “A”, “B”, and “C”. Each division consists of six (6) teams. The “A” division comprises the highest scoring teams, followed by “B”, then “C”. The overall points earned per team at the City Championship Meet places each team in the appropriate division for the following year.

We practice Monday – Friday in the mornings, typically 9-12, with “Stroke Practice” one to two afternoons a week. This practice focuses specifically on technique, starts and turns. Morning practices are divided into age groups to allow the coaches more time to work with different levels of swimmers. Typically the schedule is 9–10 a.m. for 6 and under, 8 and under; 10–11 a.m. for 9-10 year olds and 11-12 year olds; and 11 a.m.–12 p.m. for 13-14 year olds and 15-17 year olds. Stroke clinic is usually divided into younger children from 3 to 4 p.m. and older children from 4 to 5 p.m. Stroke clinic days will be announced at the beginning of the season.

We communicate via e-mail, group text, and have a bulletin board in the breezeway at the pool for posting information.

Sportsmanship – We strongly promote and encourage good sportsmanship throughout the season. This involves coming to practice, spirit activities, cheering on team mates at dual meets and city meets, and helping younger swimmers acclimate to the swim team environment. *Failure to practice good sportsmanship by the swimmer or a family member at any time during the season will result in appropriate consequences, such as forfeiture (by the swimmer) of the ability to swim at a swim meet or expulsion from the swim team for repeated or particularly egregious offenses.*

SWIM MEETS:

- Team suit, cap, goggles (bring extra pair)
- Water bottle, sports drink, healthy snacks
- Black Sharpie, highlighter, and a pen/pencil
- 2-3 towels per swimmer
- Sweats, t-shirts or a deck coat for cold, wet swimmer
- Toiletries and clothing your child may need for changing after the meet
- Medication (e.g. inhaler) your child may need during the meet
- Cards, games, books - entertainment for lag time between events
- Folding lawn chair
- Money to purchase a Heat Sheet / visit the Concession Stand

WHAT TO DO:

- **Don't skip the warm-up**, it is important! Not only is it important to warm up your swimmer's body, but this is also the time for the coach to see who is present/absent.
- **Buy a Heat Sheet**. Locate your swimmer's event numbers, etc. Some people write their swimmer's event(s), heat, and lane assignments on their arm or leg with a sharpie. It helps not only the swimmer know what they are swimming, but also the coaches and parent volunteers organizing swimmers prior to their event.
- **Encourage your swimmer**; leave the critiquing to the coaches!
- **Volunteer to help!** We need lots of help each meet. We will pair you with a "veteran" parent to help

You learn the ropes!

Typically we meet as a group after a dual meet for dinner at a local restaurant. This is not required, but a fun way for the team to celebrate their accomplishments at the meet and enjoy each other's company.

In the event of inclement weather, a decision will be made to reschedule the meet at an agreed upon time by the 2 teams, or the meet may be cancelled. This will be communicated as quickly as possible, usually through group text.

Swim Meet Order of Events - Dual Meet events are swum in the following order, youngest to oldest, girls before boys:

Medley Relays (Comprised of all 4 strokes in one relay team)

Freestyle (including Freestyle exhibition) ("Free")

Breaststroke ("Breast")

Mixed Relays (2 girls and 2 boys on each relay; they swim Freestyle)

Backstroke ("Back")

Butterfly ("Fly")

Freestyle Relays (all 4 swimmers swim freestyle)

SWIM MEET SURVIVAL TIPS:

Prepare your swimmer for their upcoming swim meet. Swim meets are very busy and exciting, but they can overwhelm younger swimmers and those new to competition. Here are some pointers to help get them (and you) through the meet:

- **Practice pays off**. Encourage your swimmer to get to practice as often as they can and work hard during those practice sessions.

- **Get plenty of rest.** Some meets go late into the evening. Make sure your swimmer has gotten plenty of rest and takes it easy the day of the meet; stay out of the sun, make it a low activity day on meet days.
- **Feed your swimmer.** Swimmers burn LOTS of calories when they are working hard. Complex carbohydrates and protein are good foods. These include pasta, potatoes, whole wheat breads, grains, meats, dairy, fish, and chicken.
- **Know** where and when you need to be for the meet.
- **Stay hydrated!** Drink plenty of water or Gatorade ½ strength throughout the day and at the meet. It can get quite warm, and water is more important than food during the course of the meet!
- **Set the scene.** We compete in a variety of pools around the RCSL area. At each meet, the host team will set up a “visitor area” for swimmers and their families to set up their gear. This promotes team “spirit” and helps prevent your swimmer from missing their event.
- **Do your best!** Swim meets are competitive, but the purpose is to show the swimmers that all their hard work at practice is paying off for them personally. The best thing parents can do for their swimmer is support them, no matter how they perform at a meet. Some will get great times, some not so great, that’s ok.

SWIM MEET VOLUNTEERS:

Parent Volunteers:

The key to a successful swim program is the “Parent Volunteer.” Without each volunteer, the program does not exist. It takes approximately 30 volunteers to host a home swim meet. In addition to volunteering during home and away dual meets, if your child swims in a competition/scored event at the RCSL City Meet, you can volunteer to work during our team’s assigned job. All positions are essential, whether you are handing out cards to swimmers or judging strokes and turns.

We will be recruiting volunteers often and hope you will support our Gators whenever possible. We appreciate your time and assistance!

If you want to be a **stroke and turn judge or referee**, there is a test and a demonstration of correct techniques that you are required to attend. Please see your swim team reps or visit the RCSL website for details about this important volunteer opportunity!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. What is a swim meet, and how many are there?

A. A swim meet is an organized competition between swim teams in a given category of the RCSL (“A”, “B”, or “C”). These are called dual meets. At the end of the season, a RCSL City Championship Meet is held over a two day period that

includes all teams in the league. There are 5 dual meets scheduled during the season.

Q. When are swim meets?

A. Except for the Championship City Meet, our swim meets are on Wednesday nights. We will have a Time Trials before the dual meets start to give all swimmers the opportunity to swim all of the events. The coach may schedule an additional "B" meet during the season on Saturday to allow all swimmers to swim all strokes.

Q. How is a swim meet organized and how long does it last?

A. A dual meet consists of 42 events. It usually takes about 3 hours to complete a swim meet. Younger swimmers (6 & Under) may leave before the meet ends, but you MUST make sure you DO NOT LEAVE without checking to make sure your child is not entered into more events.

Q. How do I know when my child is supposed to swim?

A. You can purchase a Heat Sheet for a minimal price at dual meets. The Heat Sheet will tell you what events your child is swimming in, the heat, and what lane they are in. Seek out a "veteran" parent to help you!

Q. What is a "Medley Relay"?

A. A Medley Relay is a relay with 4 swimmers where each swimmer swims different strokes. The first swimmer swims BACKstroke. The second swimmer swims BREASTstroke. The third swimmer swims butterFLY. The "anchor"/last swimmer swims FREEstyle. Each member of an 8&U relay team swims one (1) length of pool or 25 meters/yards. All of the other age groups, each swimmer swims two (2) lengths of pool or 50 meters/yards.

Q. Will my child get to participate in the City Championship Meet?

A. Not all of our swimmers will get the opportunity to swim a stroke other than freestyle in the City Championship Meet. Unfortunately, we are only allowed a limited number of slots at this meet except in the exhibition freestyle event. At the City Championship Meet they have a freestyle exhibition and award ribbons to those that place 1-16.

Your child needs to swim in two (2) dual meets in order to compete at the City Championship Meet. The top three (3) swimmers in each stroke will swim that stroke in the City Championship Meet.

Q. Why isn't my child swimming in a relay?

A. This is better explained by an example. For example, the Freestyle Relay, which has four (4) swimmers. If there are only three (3) swimmers in your child's age/gender group, then there are not enough swimmers to make up a full relay team. If there are more than four (4) swimmers, but less than eight (8), then there are only enough swimmers to make one relay team.

Q. How can I tell what event we are on?

A. The official Starter with the bullhorn that starts each race will announce the event and heat before each race.

Q. Why do we have exhibition swimmers?

A. Each team is limited to three (3) swimmers in each individual competition event. A freestyle exhibition event allows every swimmer on the team an opportunity to swim in a dual meet. Exhibition events are important because they allow your swimmer to improve their time and it helps the coaches track their progress. All swimmers will receive ribbons for each event they swim!

Q. My child got DQ'd. What does this mean?

A. For some of the strokes there are technical things that they legally can and cannot do. For example, in butterfly and breaststroke, they must touch the wall with two (2) hands simultaneously during the turn and finish of the race. If the official notices that a child is doing something illegal for that stroke, they can get disqualified. In relays, the swimmer must touch the wall before the next member can dive in.