



**2008-2009
GEGAUGA OTTERS
SWIM TEAM
HANDBOOK**



YMCA of Greater Cleveland
Geauga Branch
12460 Bass Lake Road
Chardon, OH 44024
Phone 440-285-7543

1.0 Team Purpose / Philosophy

The purpose of the Geauga YMCA Otters Swim Team is to serve the youth of our area through a competitive swim program dedicated to Christian ideals and excellence.

The Swim Team is a family oriented organization committed to a well-planned and well-executed program in which athletes can excel both in and out of the water. We work to provide a positive, supportive, environment where each swimmer is responsible for setting aggressive goals for themselves and the team in general.

The success of the Swim Team depends largely on contributions of time, effort, and money by Swim Team parents. To insure that we can support the team throughout the season, a number of requirements have been established. ALL Swim Team parents and/or swimmers must satisfy the requirements outlined on the following pages.

2.0 Team Structure / Training Groups

2.1 *The Sea Urchins*

- This is the most novice swim team group.
- Swimmers are generally age 6-10 and must be able to swim at least 100 yards freestyle (4 lengths without stopping).
- 2 practices per week suggested.

2.2 *The Crayfish*

- This group of swimmers is generally age 9-14.
- They must be able to swim a set of 3 x 100 freestyle in 2:00.
- They should be able to legally swim at least 50 yards of 2 of the 3 other competitive strokes (butterfly, backstroke, and breaststroke).
- 3-4 practices per week suggested.

2.3 *The Mussels*

- This group of swimmers is generally age 12-18.
- They must be able to swim a set of 4 x 100 freestyle in 1:40 or better.
- They should be able to legally swim at least 100 yards of each of the other competitive strokes.
- 3-4 practices per week suggested.

2.4 *High School*

- Optional for those in High School.

- They must be able to swim a set of 4 x 100 freestyle in 1:40 or better.
- They should be able to legally swim at least 100 yards for each of the other competitive strokes.
- Will participate in YMCA and then high school invitational meets during the season.
- 4-5 practices per week suggested.

3.0 Swim Team Practice Procedures and Policies

3.1 Use of Facilities

- No smoking by anyone, anywhere, on YMCA or other training facility property.
- Parents are asked to stay off the pool deck during practice.
- Swimmers must check in at the YMCA entrance deck by presenting their membership card and then proceed directly to the pool deck to check in with the coach.
- Parents may leave the facility; however, if a lightening storm is in the forecast the parent should be prepared to return quickly.
- Swimmers may use the shower and locker room facilities after practice as long as they respect other guests of the facility. Complaints of swimmer behavior may result in the parents being asked to accompany the swimmers to the locker room.

3.2 Attendance

There are no mandatory attendance requirements expected by the coaches except in the The Mussels and High School training groups. However, it should be recognized that those who progress the most during the season are those who have practiced the most. **YOU GET OUT OF IT WHAT YOU PUT INTO IT!!!**

Regular practice attendance is the basic "building block" for optimum systematic development in a conditioning sport. Our practices are planned in a sequence whereby we build upon the previous practice's instruction and work. The practices are sequenced into this TRAINING RHYTHM in which continual advanced adaptations are made by the swimmer's cardiovascular, respiratory and neuromuscular systems to increased training stress. To miss practices is to fail to build the strength and endurance needed to perform well in swimming.

Daily attendance records are taken to record presence, promptness, and performance.

3.3 YMCA Membership Cards

All swimmers **MUST** present their YMCA membership cards at the Front Desk before using the YMCA facility. If you are not already a Y member, you will need to join before participating in practice sessions.

3.4 Promptness

All swimmers are expected to arrive at the pool early enough (at least ten minutes) to be suited and ready to meet the coach at the designated time. If you arrive late, you will lose valuable practice time.

3.5 Practice and Meet Equipment

Swimmers should be equipped with:

- a nylon or lycra Speedo® competitive swimsuit
- a swim cap
- a pair of goggles
- a pair of fins



All training groups **MUST** have their own swimming fins. Swimming fins must be brought to and from practice by the swimmer, the swimmer will be held accountable for cleaning up their own equipment.

3.6 Practice Cancellations and Inclement Weather

Practices may be canceled occasionally for various reasons. Examples include inclement weather, problems at individual facilities, etc. Often times, we do not know about these cancellations until the last minute, but we make every effort to communicate cancellations as soon as possible. The coaches wait as long as possible before canceling a practice.

DO NOT call the YMCA to find out if practice has been cancelled! The YMCA is not notified of cancelled practices.

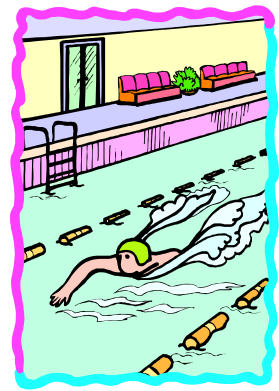
If practice is going to be cancelled a notice will be placed on the web page and email will be sent out. If practice is cancelled for a reason other than weather all attempts will be made to initiate the Phone Chain Log which will be posted on the web page.

In the event that something occurs at an individual facility that forces practice to be cancelled at the last minute, and swimmers have already been dropped off for practice, they will be instructed to call their parents to have them picked up early. In such cases, a coach will always remain at the practice site until all swimmers have been picked up.

4.0 Family Participation

4.1 Swim Meet Workers

Each family must provide volunteers to work at swim meets. Depending on the number of swimmer families, each family will be asked to provide the following:



- At least 1 worker for every dual meet your swimmer(s) attend.
- The specified number of workers for any invitational meet that we are hosting, regardless of whether your child is swimming.
- 1 person to work at Divisionals, Leagues and Zones that your swimmer is attending.
- 1 person to work Summer Championships, if your swimmer attends.
- Families who fail to fulfill the requirements as stated above may be assessed a fee determined by the cost of hired people.

4.2 Committee Volunteers

The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) will assist the coaches with the business side of running the team. The PAC will NOT offer coaching advice to the coaches. Once a family has been a member of the team for a year, it is recommended that one person from each family serve as a committee head or a member of the PAC. It is your responsibility to volunteer for a committee, if you do not sign-up, you may be asked to participate on a committee.

The following list may change slightly, dependent on the needs of the team at any time:

- PAC Core Committee
 - Assists other committees, runs the Corporate Sponsorship Fundraiser, coordinates the purchase of uniforms and equipment, maintains the Web Page, promotes Fundraising, and supports the Treasurer.
- Marketing Committee and Communications
 - Supports New Parent Partners, Swimming Buddies, New Swimmer Recruitment, Bulletin Board, and the Newsletter.
- Meet Committee
 - Supports all operations of meets including concessions, official's Schedule, timer's Schedule, invitational meet planning, swim-a-thon, and scoring.
- Social Committee:
 - Plans the following events: Season Kick Off Party, Divisional Poster Party, Awards Ceremony / Banquet, and Misc Social Events

4.3 Code of Conduct

As representatives of the Geauga Otters Swim Team and the YMCA, swimmers are expected to speak and behave in a manner that is respectful, responsible, honest, and caring. If each swimmer is mindful of these traits, appropriate conduct should never be an issue. These guidelines are to be followed by Geauga Otters swimmers at all practices, meets, and other team functions.

4.3.1 Practice Behavior and Discipline

During practice, swimmers are expected to follow the guidelines and rules of behavior for the specific facility they are practicing in. In addition, there are three simple rules that must be followed during practice:

- No talking when the coach is talking
- Eyes and ears must be above water and focused on the coach
- Swimmers must ask permission before going to the bathroom

If these rules are not followed during practice, the following disciplinary actions will be taken by the coach:

- 1st violation – the swimmer will receive a warning from the coach
- 2nd violation – the swimmer will be removed from practice and sit on the deck for the remainder of practice

These rules are designed to help teach the swimmers the core values of respect and responsibility and to ensure that the staff is providing the best teaching environment possible.

4.3.2 Unacceptable Behaviors

In addition, swimmers are expected to adhere to the following behavioral guidelines when at practices, meets, and team activities.

- Unsportsmanlike conduct – taunting, teasing, or speaking negatively about teammates, competitors, officials, or coaches.
- Use of inappropriate, strong, or vulgar language or gestures.
- Lying, deceit, dishonesty.
- Littering, abuse, or misuse of equipment, furniture, or other items of property.

The Head Coach and Aquatics Director shall together determine the appropriate action to be taken for each infraction on a case-by-case basis.

4.3.3 Intolerable Behaviors

The following actions will not be tolerated:

- Verbal or physical abuse toward others
- Theft of any kind
- Vandalism or any destruction of property, public or private

- Use of tobacco products or other illegal substances
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages or other illegal substances

4.3.4 High School Swim Club Requirements

In addition to the above mentioned behaviors, the High School swimmers must comply with all the eligibility, attendance and training rule guidelines set in the Chardon Athletic Department Handbook. Please see your High School Athletic Department for a copy of the hand book. The coaches will be working with a Club advisor or Guidance counselor to insure that grade requirements are met.

If a member of the team is found to have participated in ANY of the above mentioned violations at ANY time, the head coach and aquatic director shall together determine whether to suspend the swimmer or discontinue their team membership with NO financial refunds.

5.0 Competition Swimming

5.1 *Swimming Seasons*

5.1.1 Winter – Short Course

The season runs from mid-September to the last championship your child is eligible to swim. All swimmers may swim in the YMCA Divisional Championships. Your swimmer's season will end at this championship unless he/she qualifies for the YMCA League Championships, Great Lakes YMCA Zones, or YMCA Nationals.

5.1.2 Summer – Long Course

A summer season will be offered if the required number of swimmers are interested. The summer season runs from June through the end of July or beginning of August. Summer swimming ends with a Championship meet, and, for those who qualify, Summer YMCA Nationals.

5.2 *Participation*

Meets are highly recommended since they are the measure of the swimmer's progress in training. Regular scheduled competition is essential for maximum progression in performance.

Not all meets are designed for all the swimmers on the team. Some meets require swimmers to have qualifying (cut-off) times.

5.3 Requirements to Participate in Championship Meets

5.3.1 NEO Divisional Championships

- A. All swimmers are expected to compete at this meet.
- B. Swimmers must swim three dual meets prior to divisionals.

5.3.2 League Championships

- A. Swimmers qualify for League championships by competing in Divisionals. The swimmers will be notified after the Divisional results are posted if they qualified for Leagues.

5.3.3 Great Lakes YMCA Zone Championships

- A. Swimmers must swim in at least three YMCA meets (dual and/or YMCA invitationals).
- B. Swimmers must attain cut-off (qualifying) time(s).

5.3.4 YMCA National Championships

- A. Swimmers must swim in at least three YMCA meets (dual and/or YMCA invitationals).
- B. Swimmers must attain cut-off (qualifying) time(s).

5.3.5 YMCA Long Course National Championships

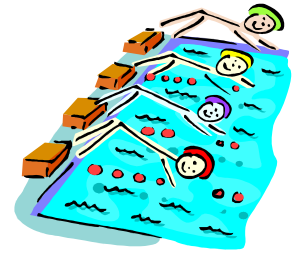
- A. Swimmers must swim in at least two YMCA meets (dual and/or YMCA invitationals).
- B. Swimmers must meet time standards.

5.3.6 High School Sectionals

- A. A swimming and diving athlete who has not participated for the school in a swimming and diving contest during the current season must cease non-interscholastic competition four weeks (28 days) prior to the Monday of the week of the State Swimming and Diving Tournament to be eligible for OHSAA tournament competition in swimming and diving.
- B. A member of an interscholastic swimming and diving squad (any student who has participated in a regular season/tournament contest) sponsored by the Board of Education **shall not participate in a non-interscholastic contest** as an individual or a member of a team in the sport of swimming and diving **during the school's season.**

5.4 Swim Meet Sign-ups

Please pay close attention to this information because it affects whether your child swims in a meet and how your escrow is billed!



5.4.1 Sign-up Deadlines

All meets, invitationals, and championships have signup deadlines, so it is imperative to watch the online calendar in order to get signed up for the competitions you desire.

5.4.2 Dual Meets and Invitationals

It is expected that all swimmers attend the scheduled dual meets. If you cannot attend a dual meet, you must notify the coach in advance.

Invitationals are optional (you can pick and choose according to coach suggestion and your calendar). For a swimmer to attend an invitational, the swimmer or swimmer's parent must notify the coach via email (amy@goswimming.org) prior to the meet entry deadline.

Once the swimmer is entered in a meet, the entry fees and coaching expenses (which come out of your escrow accounts) are **non-refundable**, even if they do not swim. It is very important that each family be sure to check the website www.goswimming.org each week.

5.5 Swim Meet Coaching

All coaches will attend Dual Meets.

Optional invitationals will be offered to the team. All invitational coaching expenses must be shared evenly among all swimmers attending each meet. Each event will be priced with a minimum number of swimmers attending the meet. If the minimum number of swimmers is not reached the swimmers will have the option of paying a higher price for coaching or attending the meet without a coach. In general it is recommended that at least 10 swimmers be in attendance for each 4 hour session. The coaches reserve the right to NOT attend an event if less than 10 swimmers are attending a session.

If more than 19 swimmers are attending a session the coaches reserve the right to send an additional coach and the expenses will be adjusted accordingly.

5.6 Swim Meet Line-ups

Invitational, Divisional and League meet line-ups will be posted on the website 2-5 days after meet entries are due. Dual meet events are posted at the dual meet. The final decision of what a child swims in a meet is left up to the coach for overall team effort and best development of the swimmer. If you have any questions or suggestions, talk with the coaches, but the final decision is up to them.

5.7 Accommodations for Travel Meets

For most out of town invitational meets hotel information will be made available on the team's web site. It is up to each family to make their own travel and hotel arrangements. If a large group of participants are attending the PAC may arrange a block of hotel rooms and would let the team know if that was the case. *Coaches cannot chaperone swimmers.* An adult family member must accompany each swimmer, unless prior arrangement is made with another family.

5.8 Team Area

Dual Meets – Swimmers are encouraged to sit with the team at all times during a meet. Sit with the team and cheer on your team members. All Otter families generally sit in the same location. Each individual swimmer and their family is responsible to get the swimmer to the coach at least four events prior to their event to get their event card.

Swimmers must keep the area clean and must abide by facility rules.

Invitational Meets – Many invitationals assign a location for each team to store their items and sit between events. Swimmers should stick with their family or friends during these events. All Otter families generally sit in the same location. Each individual swimmer and their family is responsible to get the swimmer to the Clerk of Course when their event is starting to line up(usually 2-3 events prior).

5.9 Reporting to Coach

All swimmers are to report to the Coach of their training group immediately before and after each race.

5.10 Swim Meet Apparel

All female swimmers must wear the Otter's cap to swim meets and all swimmers must wear the team swim suit and team t-shirt to swim meets. Team suits, swim caps, GO t-shirts, and GO warm-ups can be purchased through the team. Ordering times will be announced prior to the start of the season.

The Geauga Otters are a Speedo® sponsored team. Swimmers are required to wear Speedo® suits at all meets while representing Geauga Y.

High School Swimmers will be required to wear their school colors at all events where they are representing their school,

5.11 Swim Meet Preparation

Swimmers should PREPARE best for meet performance by:

- A. Getting a full 8-9 hours of sleep.
- B. Eating a nutritious breakfast an hour or so before warm-up.
- C. Reporting ON TIME for warm-ups.
- D. NOT eating "JUNK" and sweets or drinking carbonated drinks during competition.
- E. Resting between races.

5.12 Personal Time Books

All Geauga Otters are expected to keep a running Log Book of their best times in meets and relevant comments about the event / meet. SMART SWIMMERS SHOULD ALWAYS KNOW THEIR BEST TIMES!!!

5.13 Nutrition

Good nutrition is the key to a healthy swimmer. Well balanced meals throughout the week are vital as is staying well hydrated.

The night before competitions, swimmers should be fed high carbohydrate and protein meals. Good sources of carbohydrates are: pastas, rice, breads, and fruits. Good protein sources are: meats, dairy, beans, eggs, and grains.

On the competition day, swimmers should avoid sweets, heavy foods, and carbonated drinks. Good snacks are: bagel and cream cheese, cereal bars, granola bars, muffins, Gatorade, Propel. Fast food should be avoided at all costs on competition days!

6.0 Swim Team Functions

A few team activities will be scheduled periodically throughout the season. Please pay close attention to the updates for related information. We have some non-swimming activities such as parties, and age group appropriate activities.

7.0 Swimmer Expectations

A Geauga Otter swimmer should:

- A. Be present at the appropriate number of practices per week.
- B. Get your school work done, on time. Don't let things pile up!
- C. Eat healthy and get enough sleep. Stay hydrated throughout the day.
- D. Arrive early to practice and meets.
- E. Be honest.
- F. Be responsible for yourself and your actions.
- G. Not talk when the coaches are talking.
- H. Try your best at everything that is asked of you.
- I. Encourage your teammates every day.
- J. Be respectful of everyone around you (peers, coaches, officials, parents).

8.0 Just For Parents

A parent should:

- A. Volunteer, volunteer, volunteer! Parent volunteers perform a variety of tasks. All jobs are important for the swim team to operate smoothly and effectively. For this reason, it is essential that every parent participate in some way by volunteering his or her time and talent during the course of the season.
- B. Conduct himself/herself in a manner to earn the respect and confidence of the athletes, coaches, officials, and YMCA professional staff.

- C. Model good sportsmanship in the following ways:
- Encourage all swimmers
 - Control your emotions in frustrating situations
 - Abide by referees' or officials' decisions.
 - Congratulate the opponents when they win.
- D. Be a goodwill ambassador between the Geauga Otters swim team and the public.
- E. Encourage the moral, spiritual, physical, and intellectual life of the athletes.
- F. Support such virtues as hard work, honesty, values, and sportsmanship with the athletes.
- G. Treat every athlete fairly, justly, intelligently, impartially, and with sensitivity.
- H. Leave the coaching to the coaches! Do not pressure or volunteer swimming advice to your swimmers. Parental coaching can cause much confusion and harm to the swimmer. He needs only one source of coaching input - from the coach.
- I. Understand that coaching decisions are for the best interest of the team and athlete and should therefore be supported.
- J. Keep winning in perspective, and help your child do the same. Every decision parents make in guiding their children should be based first on what's best for the child, and second on what may help the child win. Stated another way, this perspective places: *Athletes First, Winning Second!*
- K. Understand what your child wants from swimming, and provide a supportive atmosphere for achieving these goals.
- L. Help swimmers practice good health habits (pre-practice and pre-meet meals, appropriate diet, sleep patterns, appropriate dress, positive outlook).
- M. Get your swimmer(s) to practice on time. Every effort should be made to have swimmers to the pool on time so that practices will run smoothly for everyone.
- N. Nip your coaching concerns in the bud. If you have an issue that needs to be discussed with a coach, arrange a private meeting with the coach (or phone discussion), work it out, and drop it. Don't carry grudges.
- O. Keep informed! CHECK THE WEB SITE (www.goswimming.org). All relevant documents will be posted on the web page and emailed to the contact email.

If you have concerns or suggestions about any part of our program, talk to the Parent Advisory Committee member responsible for that area.

9.0 Swim Team Communication System

A traditionally inherent challenge in swim organizations the size of ours is communication of information and concerns among parents, swimmers and coaches. We need regular communication to and from all parties of our organization and have set up avenues to accomplish this.

- A. **Parent Advisory Committee (PAC):** Each month, the PAC team members, Coach, and Aquatic Director have a business meeting to plan and manage all swim team activities and needs. Meetings are open to all parents. Meeting dates will be posted on the web page. See the web page for a list of PAC members and contact information.
- B. **Team Newsletter:** An electronic newsletter will be posted on the website.
- C. **Geauga Otters Web Site:** www.goswimming.org Meet results and team news will be posted on our web page. This is our most effective form of communication.
- D. **The Coaches:** Direct communication with the coaches is encouraged, but we ask that you please not engage the coaches in conversation during practice sessions or meets. **PARENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO ON DECK DURING PRACTICE SESSION!!** If you have a question for the coaches you may email them or leave a message on the Otter message hotline -- **call 440-287-6892.**
- E. **Electronic Mail:** Check your email inbox frequently. The most up-to-date information will be communicated via email as well as being posted on the team web site.
- F. Communication of a personal nature, made by phone or by letter to coaches, the YMCA, or board members will be handled discreetly.

10.0 Finances

10.1 Swim Team Fee

Before a swimmer can be considered eligible for signing up for the 2008-2009 swimming year, all financial obligations from the 2007-2008 must be paid in full.

Each swimmer is required to pay an annual swim team fee. The amount depends on which training group the swimmer practices with. The fee covers the winter season through Divisionals or 19 weeks of training. Fees will be reassessed for all the swimmers that make League Championships based on the necessary pool time and participating swimmers.

Sixty percent of the swim team fee is due before the first team practice. **If funds are not received the swimmer will not be allowed to attend practice.** The treasure will send

you a monthly invoice and you will need to maintain a positive balance in your account. The remainder of the 40% will be billed to you in November. **All swimmers must be an active member of The Geauga YMCA.** This fee is paid to the YMCA.

All fees are to be made payable and mailed to:

John Marra
115 Tinkers Trail
Chardon, Ohio 44024

OR Drop off to Kim Marra at practice

Coaches will not collect funds!

There are no refunds if you decide to leave the program during the season.

10.2 Fundraising

Each swimmer is requested to participate in additional fundraisers. These fundraisers will be used to reduce the swimmer's out of pocket expenses as well as fund our general fund. Participation may be met through organized team fundraisers, OR, by a combination of fundraising participation and direct donation to the Geauga Otters Swim Team. Direct donations would be made to the treasurer.

If a family decides not to participate in fundraising a donation of \$70 per swimmer is required to the general fund and the family must pay any expenses related to hiring volunteers to work in their place. Please let the Treasurer know if you would like this option so the funds can be deducted from your escrow.

10.3 Swim Fees and Escrow Account

10.3.1 GENERAL ESCROW

The general escrow will be used to provide a bank of dollars for any up front fundraising costs, equipment purchases that must be purchased in bulk or any other costs that will be reimbursed in some manner. Expenditures must be approved by the PAC Treasurer, PAC President, and at least one coach.

Payments will be made from this fund to supplement children who have qualified for scholarship funds through the YMCA. The decision to use this account for such purposes will be made by the at least one Coach, Aquatic Director, PAC President and PAC Treasurer only if the funds allow.

At the discretion of the Coach, PAC President, Treasurer and other PAC members coaching expense scholarships may be offered through the general fund for swimmers who have advanced beyond the League Championship level. The total value of the scholarships will be based on the general fund balance and are not to exceed 25% of the current balance during one season.

The general escrow will also pay:

- Awards
- Office Supplies
- Coaching Recertification
- Party Expenses
- Misc. Expenses

Additional transfer of funds to the general escrow may be made from individual accounts if the general escrow is depleted. All swim team members will be notified if this is necessary and the transfer of funds will be a joint decision between the Coach, PAC President, and active members of the PAC.

10.3.2

INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTS

Payments:

Every Swimmer deposits the team fees in individual escrow fund. See section 10.1.

Swimmers will need to deposit funds needed to cover optional YMCA swim meet invitationals or USA Invitationals. Costs, including coaching and event expenses will automatically be withdrawl for these events if the swimmer has signed up to attend the event. **If the swimmer is unable to attend the event they will not receive a refund.** If funds are not available in the escrow account at the time of the event the swimmer will not be able to participate.

Each swimmer is responsible to make sure they have a balance above \$30 at all times. If the escrow balance drops below \$30 the participant will not be able to participate in practice. The treasurer will notify you if your balance drops below \$50. During the months of January and February the treasure will use their best judgment to request additional funds from families based on the pending expenses during these last two months. The goal is not to have money left in the account; however, each family must have enough funds to cover their expenses.

Any monies will not be refunded at the end of the year. Positive balances in accounts will be held over until the 2008-2009 Season. Profits from fundraisers cannot be paid out at the end of the year due to IRS regulations.

Overall Expenses:

The following items will be deducted evenly across all swimmer accounts **even if you do not participate in the event:**

- Coaches meals for AWAY DUAL and DIVISIONAL meets.
- Pool Rental fees for practices and meets.
- Coaching Salaries for all DUAL and DIVISIONAL meets.

Coaching Salaries for Practice will be deducted according to pre-assigned group level percentages even if the swimmer does not attend the recommended number of practices. The percent of total will be divided evenly by the number of swimmers in that group level. These percentages are subject to change depending on the number of participants. Once all swimmers are enrolled the swimmers will be notified of their monthly coaching expenses.

The following items will be deducted evenly per swimmer that participates in the meet:

- Heat fees for each swimmer event at YMCA Invitational Meets, Leagues, Zones, or USA meets.
- Coaches meals for YMCA Invitational Meets, Leagues, Zones, or USA meets.
- Coaches hotel for YMCA Invitational Meets, Leagues, Zones, or USA meets.
- Salary expenses for YMCA Invitational Meets, Leagues, Zones, or USA meets and training for these events.

Itemized withdrawals will be noted on the invoices.

Coaching Expenses:

Meal Expenses:

- Overnight Meets: \$30 per day for meals
- Dual Meets: \$15 for one meal for a meet whose distance is greater than a 1.5 hour drive and FREE food is not provided at the meet.
- Invitationals: \$15 per session when FREE food is not provided by the event.

Hotel Expenses:

- Complete reimbursement for hotel expenses for all nights the coach is required to stay in a hotel.
- One Hotel Night- Meets whose distance is greater than a 2.5 hour drive and warm ups start before 8:00 am.
- One Night- Meets whose distance is greater than a 2.5 hour drive and the coach will be coaching two consecutive days.
- Two Nights- Meets whose distance is greater than a 2.5 hour drive, the warm-ups start before 8:00 am and the coach will be coaching two consecutive nights.
- Greater than Three Nights- With prior approval from the swimmers attending the event.

Mileage Expenses:

- Mileage will be paid at the US Standard Mileage Rate for all away meets and invitationals.

Airline Expense:

- Coaches will be reimbursed for the total cost of the flight with prior approval from the swimmers attending the event.

10.4 United States Swimming



USA swimming is an optional program offered by the Geauga Otters swim team. USA Swimming offers additional competitive opportunities for the more experienced swimmer. In order to participate the swimmer must have one year of competitive swimming experience or permission from the team coaches.

More information about USA swimming can be found at usaswimming.org.

In order to participate in USA swimming the swimmer and the team must be USA certified. The team must pay a membership fee which is divided amongst all the USA swimmers. The swimmer must complete a registration form and pay a membership fee at least three weeks in advance of the USA Swimming meet in order to get a membership card. A USA Swimming card is good for one year. The USA membership includes a copy of the USA swimming magazine on a quarterly basis.

Please see the coaches or PAC president if you are interested in participating in USA Swimming.

A USA Swimming membership is optional. You only need it if you plan to compete in USA Swimming meets. It is not required to compete in YMCA meets.

10.5 Financial Assistance

Financial Assistance is available from the YMCA through the Strong Kids program. The team also offers supplements to pay for swimming expenses beyond team membership fees. Please see the coaches or PAC president for questions.

11.0 Maps and Directions

Maps and directions to each meet will be posted on the web page one week prior to the meet.

12.0 Glossary

A glossary of those strange and wacky words we use in the sport of swimming. Parents! You may or may not find these words in the English Dictionary, and if you do, their definitions will probably be radically different than the ones listed in this Glossary. Relax and take your time reading. Soon, you'll be understanding and maybe even speaking some "SWIMSLANG."

"A" - Time classification for a swimmer. National Age Group Time Standard "A." "A" time is .01 seconds faster than the "BB" time standard and .01 slower than the "AA" time standard. See the NAGT published chart.

"AA" - Time classification for a swimmer. .01 faster than "A" time standard.

"AAA" - Time classification for a swimmer. .01 faster than the "AA" time standard.

"AAAA" - Time classification for a swimmer. .01 faster than the "AAA" time standard. This is the fastest time standard listed on the NAGT chart. Times faster than this are approaching National cuts or Top Times consideration.

A-Meet - Swim meet which requires swimmers to have previously achieved an "A" time standard in the events they wish to enter.

A-B Meet - Swim meet that offers separate competition for both "A" swimmers and "B" swimmers, usually with medals for the "A" swimmers and ribbons for the "B" swimmers. Swimmers compete in separate brackets against other swimmers of their own ability. Usually only "A" swimmers can score individual event team points.

Anchor - The final swimmer in a relay.

Backstroke - One of the 4 competitive racing strokes, basically any style of swimming on your back. Backstroke is swum as the first stroke in the Medley Relay and second stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yards/meters, 100 yards/meters, and 200 yards/meters. (LSC's with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yards/meters backstroke).

Blocks - The starting platforms located behind each lane. Some pools have blocks at the deeper end of the pool, and some pools have blocks at both ends. Blocks have a variety of designs and can be permanent or removable.

Breaststroke - One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Breaststroke is swum as the second stroke in the Medley Relay and the third stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yards/meters, 100 yards/meters, and 200 yards/meters. (LSC's with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yards/meters back)

Bullpen – Area swimmers must report to promptly when their event number is announced. This is where swimmers are lined up in the proper heats and lanes.

Butterfly (Fly) - One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Butterfly (nicknamed FLY) is swum as the third stroke in the Medley Relay and first stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yards/meters, 100 yards/meters, and 200 yards/meters. (LSC's with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yards/meters back)

Cards - A card that is either handed to the swimmer by the Clerk of Course or given to the timer behind the lane. Cards usually list the swimmer's name, USS number, seed time, event number, event description, and the lane and heat number the swimmer will swim in. Backup times are written on these cards. Each event has a separate card.

Carbohydrates - The main source of food energy used by athletes. Refer to a nutritional manual for more information.

Championship Meet – The meet held at the end of a season. Qualification times are usually necessary to enter this meet.

Championship Finals – The top 6 or 8 swimmers (depending on the number of pool lanes) in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals. The fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held.

Check-In - The procedure required before a swimmer swims an event in a deck seeded meet. Sometimes referred to as positive check in, the swimmer must mark their name on a list posted by the meet host.

Course - Designated distance (length of pool) for swimming competition, i.e., Long Course = 50 meters / Short Course = 25 yards or 25 meters.

Deck - The area around the swimming pool reserved for swimmers, officials, and coaches. No one but an "authorized" USS member may be on the deck during a swim competition.

Deck Entries - Entries accepted into swimming events on the first day or later day of a meet.

Deck Seeding - Swimmers report to a bull pen or staging area and receive their lane and heat assignments for the events.

Dehydration - The abnormal depletion of body fluids (water). The most common cause of swimmers' cramps and sick feelings.

Distance - How far a swimmer swims. Distances for short course are: 25 yards (1 length), 50 yards (2 lengths), 100 yards (4 lengths), 200 yards (8 lengths), 400 yards (16 lengths), 500 yards (20 lengths), 1000 yards (40 lengths), 1650 yards (66 lengths). Distances for long course are: 50 meters (1 length), 100 meters (2 lengths), 200 meters (4 lengths), 400 meters (8 lengths), 800 meters (16 lengths), 1500 meters (30 lengths).

Disqualification (DQ) – Every child is DQ'd at some point in their career. Keep in mind that there are specific rules governing each stroke that certified USA Swimming judges use in determining whether the stroke was "legal." You may think that the stroke looks great, but it may be in violation of USA Swimming rules. The official will tell your child or a GO coach why she/he was DQ'd. If the swimmer does not understand what the official said, the swimmer should ask the coach as soon as possible so that the coach can talk with the official immediately following the call. A DQ should be looked upon as a necessary evil from which the swimmer can learn. Ask the coach if you do not understand why your child was DQ'd. NEVER question the official. Common DQ's

- o General: false starts, late for start, not checking into event, stopping mid-race, touching bottom of pool
- o Freestyle: not touching wall on turn
- o Back stroke: not swimming completely on back; non-continuous turn
- o Butterfly: flutter kicking; non bilateral stroke; elbows not recovering out of water; one hand touch
- o Breaststroke: flutter/fly kicking; non bilateral stroke; two stroke under water; one hand touch; stroking while shoulders not parallel to surface; improper breathing; improper stroke rhythm.
- o Relays: false start / relay leg leaving early; stroke / turn fault as described above

Dive - Entering the water head first. Diving is not allowed during warm-ups except at the designated time, in specific lanes that are monitored by the swimmers' coach.

DQ – abbreviation for Disqualification

Dual Meet – Type of meet where two swim teams compete against each other.

Dropped Time – When a swimmer goes faster than the previous performance they have "dropped their time".

Dryland – The exercises and various strength programs swimmers do out of the water.

Entry Fees - The amount per event a swimmer or relay is charged. This varies depending on the LSC and type of meet.

Entry Limit - Each meet will usually have a limit of total swimmers they can accept, or a time limit they can not exceed. Once an entry limit has been reached, a meet will be closed and all other entries returned.

Electronic Timing - Timing system operated on DC current (battery). The timing system usually has touchpads in the water, junction boxes on the deck with hookup cables, buttons for backup timing, and a computer type console that prints out the results of each race. Some systems are hooked up to a scoreboard that displays swimmers' times.

Event Cards – Cards that contain the swimmer's event number and event name. These cards are used to seed the heats in each event. Cards are kept in the bullpen until the time for the current race. Swimmers are then responsible for taking the cards of the times in their respective lanes.

False Start - When a swimmer leaves the starting block before the horn or gun. One false start will disqualify a swimmer or a relay team, although the starter or referee may disallow the false start due to unusual circumstances.

False Start Rope - A recall rope across the width of the racing pool for the purpose of stopping swimmers who were not aware of a false start. The rope is about half-way on yard pools and about 50 feet from the starting end on meter pools.

Fastest to Slowest - A seeding method used on the longer events held at the end of a session. The fastest seeded swimmers participate in the first heats followed by the next fastest and so on. Many times these events will alternate one girls' heat and one boys' heat until all swimmers have competed.

Flags - Pennants that are suspended over the width of each end of the pool approximately 15 feet from the wall.

Freestyle - One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Freestyle (nicknamed Free) is swum as the fourth stroke in the Medley Relay and fourth stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yards/meters, 100 yards/meters, 200 yards/meters, 400 meters / 500 yards, 800 meters / 1000 yards, 1500 meters / 1650 yards. (LSC's with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd free)

Heat - A division of an event when there are too many swimmers to compete at the same time. The results are compiled by swimmers' time swum, after all heats of the event are completed.

Heat Award - A ribbon or coupon given to the winner of a single heat at an age group swim meet.

Heat Sheet - The pre-meet printed listings of swimmers' seed times in the various events at a swim meet. These sheets vary in accuracy, since the coaches submit swimmers' times many weeks before the meet. Heat sheets are sold at the admissions table and are used mainly to

make sure the swimmer has been properly entered in all the events they signed up for. Parents enjoy looking at the seedings prior to the race, and swimmers can tell how the order the events will be conducted and get a rough idea how long the meet sessions will last.

IM – abbreviation for Individual Medley

Individual Medley (IM) – a swimming event using all 4 of the competitive strokes on consecutive lengths of the race. The order must be: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle. Equal distances must be swum of each stroke.

Interval – A specific elapsed time for swimming or rest used during swim practice.

Invitational – Type of meet that requires a swim team to request an invitation to attend the meet.

Jump - An illegal start done by the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th member of a relay team. The swimmer on the block breaks contact with the block before the swimmer in the water touches the wall.

Juniors - A USS National Championship meet for swimmers 18 years old or less. Qualification times are necessary. National Meets are conducted both short course (in April) and long course (in August).

Lap - One length of the course. Sometimes may also mean down and back (2 lengths) of the course.

Lap Counter - The large numbered cards (or the person turning the cards) used during the freestyle events 500 yards or longer. Counting is done from the end opposite the starting end. The numbers on the cards are "odd numbers" only with the final lap being designated by a bright orange card.

Leg - The part of a relay event swum by a single team member; a single stroke in the individual medley (IM).

Length - The extent of the competitive course from end to end. See lap.

Long Course – a 50 meter pool.

LSC – abbreviation for Local Swim Committee

Local Swim Committee - The local level administrative division of USA Swimming (USS) with supervisory responsibilities within certain geographic boundaries designated by USS.

Lycra - A stretch material used to make competitive swim suits and swim hats.

Mark - The command to take your starting position.

Marshal - The adult(s) (official) who control the crowd and swimmer flow at a swim meet.

Meet Director - The official in charge of the administration of the meet. The person directing the "dry side" of the meet.

Meters - The measurement of the length of a swimming pool that was built per specs using the metric system. Long course meters is 50 meters, short course meters is 25 meters.

Mile - The slang referring to the 1500 meter or the 1650 yard freestyle, both of which are slightly short of a mile.

NAGTS - abbreviation for National Age Group Time Standards - the list of "C" through "AAAA" times published each year.

Nationals - USS senior or junior-level meets conducted in March/April and August. See Senior or Junior Nationals.

Natatorium - A building constructed for the purpose of housing a swimming pool and related equipment.

NCAA – abbreviation for National Collegiate Athletic Association

NGB – abbreviation for National Governing Body

Non-Conforming Time - A short course time submitted to qualify for a long course meet, or vice-versa.

Non-Team Meet - A meet not targeted by the coaching staff. Swimmers who wish to attend must register on his/her own and find supervision at the meet.

NRT - abbreviation for National Reportable Time

National Reportable Time - A time list published once a year, which if a swimmer equals or betters the time on the list, they may submit their time in that event for consideration for national recognition.

NT (No Time) - The abbreviation used on a heat sheet to designate that the swimmer has not swum that event before.

Officials - The certified, adult volunteers, who operate the many facets of a swim competition.

OT (Official Time) - The swimmers event time recorded to one hundredth of a second (.01).

OVC (Official Verification Card) - a 3 copy form for certifying a national qualifying time made by a swimmer and issued only by a verification official of the area in which the meet was held.

Open Competition - Competition which any qualified swim team, organization, or individual may enter.

Pace Clock - The large clocks with highly visible numbers and second hands, positioned at the ends or sides of a swimming pool so the swimmers can read their times during warm-ups or swim practice.

Prelims - Session of a Prelims/Finals meet in which the qualification heats are conducted.

Prelims-Finals - Type of meet with two sessions. The preliminary heats are usually held in the morning session. The fastest 6 or 8 (Championship Heat) swimmers, and the next fastest 6 or 8 swimmers (Consolation Heat) return in the evening to compete in the Finals. A swimmer who has qualified in the Consolation Finals may not place in the Championship Finals even if their finals time would place them so. The converse also applies.

Pre-seeded - A meet conducted without a bull pen in which a swimmer knows what lane and heat they are in by looking at the Meet heat sheet, or posted meet program.

Proof of Time - An official meet result, OVC, or other accepted form. Swimmers/Coaches must supply proof of time with some meet entries, while at other meets, it is not required unless a swimmer misses a cut of time at the meet.

Psyche Sheet - Another name for a "Heat Sheet" or meet program.

Qualifying Times - Published times necessary to enter certain meets, or the times necessary to achieve a specific category of swimmer. See "A" "AA" (etc.) times.

Recall Rope - A rope across the width of the racing pool for the purpose of stopping swimmers who were not aware of a false start. The rope is about half-way on yard pools and about 50 feet from the starting end on meter pools.

Referee - The head official at a swim meet in charge of all of the "Wet Side" administration and decisions.

Relays - A swimming event in which 4 swimmers participate as a relay team, each swimmer swimming an equal distance of the race. There are two types of relays: 1.) Medley relay - One swimmer swims Backstroke, one swimmer swims Breaststroke, one swimmer swims Butterfly, one swimmer swims Freestyle, in that order. Medley relays are conducted over 200 yd/meter and 400 yd/meter distances. 2.) Freestyle relay - Each swimmer swims freestyle. Free relays are conducted over 200 yd/meter, 400 yd/meter, and 800 yd/meter distances.

Sanction - A permit issued by an LSC to a USS group member to conduct an event or meet.

Scratch - To withdraw from an event after having declared an intention to participate. Some meets have scratch deadlines and specific scratch rules, and if not followed, swimmer can be disqualified from remaining events.

Seed - Assign the swimmer's heats and lanes according to their submitted or preliminary times.

Seeding - Deck Seeding - swimmers are called to report to the Clerk of Course. After scratches are determined, the event is seeded. Pre-Seeding - swimmers are arranged in heats according to submitted times, usually a day prior to the meet.

Senior Meet - A meet that is for senior-level swimmers and is not divided into age groups. Qualification times are usually necessary and will vary depending on the level of the meet.

Senior - A USS National Championship meet for swimmers of any age as long as the qualification times are met.

Senior Nationals - Nationals are conducted long course in the spring (usually in late March) and in the summer (usually in late July or August).

Short Course - A 25 yard or 25 meter pool.

Split - A portion of an event, shorter than the total distance, that is timed. For example, a swimmer's first 50 time is taken as the swimmer swims the 100 race. It is common to take multiple splits for the longer distances.

Starter - The official in charge of signaling the beginning of a race and insuring that all swimmers have a fair takeoff.

State - A meet held twice a year (Short Course and Long Course) sponsored by the LSC. It is common to hold a Championship Senior meet and Age Group meet separately. Qualification times are usually necessary.

State Qualifier - A swimmer who has made the necessary cut-off times to enter the State meet.

Stand-up - The command given by the Starter or Referee to release the swimmers from their starting position.

Step-Down - The command given by the Starter or Referee to have the swimmers move off the blocks. Usually this command is a good indication everything is not right for the race to start.

Stroke Judge - The official positioned at the side of the pool, walking the length of the course as the swimmers race. If the Stroke Judge sees something illegal, they report to the referee and the swimmer may be disqualified.

Submitted Time - Times used to enter swimmers in meets. These times must have been achieved by the swimmer at previous meets.

Swim-A-Thon - The "Fund Raiser" copyrighted by USS swimming for local swim teams to use to make money.

Taper - The resting phase of a senior swimmer at the end of the season, before the championship meet.

Timed Finals - Competition in which only heats are swum and final placings are determined by those times.

Time Standard - A time set by a meet or LSC or USS (etc.) that a swimmer must achieve for qualification or recognition.

Timer - The volunteers sitting behind the starting blocks/finish end of pool, who are responsible for getting watch times on events and activating the backup buttons for the timing system.

Time Trial - An event or series of events where a swimmer may achieve or better a required time standard.

Touch Pad - The removable plate (on the end of pools) that is connected to an automatic timing system. A swimmer must properly touch the touchpad to register an official time in a race.

Transfer - The act of leaving one swim team or LSC and going to another. Usually 120 days of unattached competition is required before swimmer can represent another USS team.

UNAT – abbreviation for Unattached

Unattached - An athlete member of USS who competes, but does not represent a team.

Unofficial Time - The time displayed on a read-out board or read over the intercom by the announcer immediately after the race. After the time has been checked, it will become the official time.

USA Swimming – USA Swimming was established by Congress as the National Governing Body for competitive amateur swimming in the United States. USS is a federation member of the international governing body of swimming, The Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA). USS is divided into four zones: Eastern, Southern, Central, and Western. The Geauga Otters is located in the Central Zone.

USS – abbreviation for USA Swimming

Warm-down - The loosening a swimmer does after a race when pool space is available.

Warm-up - The practice and loosening session a swimmer does before the meet or their event is swum.

Yards - The measurement of the length of a swimming pool that was built per specs using the American system. A short course yard pool is 25 yards (75 feet) in length.

Yardage - The distance a swimmer races or swims in practice. Total yardage can be calculated for each practice session.

Zones - The country is divided up into 4 major zones: Eastern - Southern - Central - Western. At the end of the long course season (in August) the Zone Administration sponsors a championship age group meet.

Geauga Otters Quick Reference



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Team Web Site

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www.goswimming.org

Team Message Hotline

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