

# **Introduction to Competitive Swimming**

So your child has decided they want to join the Gators Swim Team. That's great! What all does joining a swim team involve and what information do I need to know to be prepared for competitive swimming?

## ***How is Greenwood Gators Structured?***

Greenwood Gators is a LLC governed by a Board of Directors. We operate both a competitive swim team and a robust swim lessons program. Our board of directors are volunteers who are elected by vote of our member families. The board, along with the Gator coaches and swim lessons coordinator, carry out day to day operations of the organization.

Gators are members of USA Swimming, which is the national governing body for competitive swimming in the US. In this capacity, USA Swimming 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. USA Swimming governs many Local Swimming Committees, or LSCs, that facilitate swimming at the local level around the country. These LSCs are split into 4 zones. Gators are a member of Indiana Swimming LSC and part of USA Swimming's Central Zone.

Indiana Swimming LSC is responsible for operating competitive swimming programs within the state of Indiana under the umbrella of USA Swimming. Among the primary responsibilities of IN Swimming is coordination of the State and Divisional Championship swim meets.

## ***What Will My Swimmer Be Working On?***

Our swim team will progressively develop each of the following:

- Legal stroke technique for each of:
  - Butterfly
  - Backstroke
  - Breaststroke
  - Freestyle/Forward Crawl
- Kicks
- Breathing
- Turns
- Starts
- Body position
- Endurance
- Age appropriate dryland calisthenics/weight training
- Race strategy
- Motivation
- Goal setting

### ***What Seasons Do The Gators Compete In?***

Gators compete in two different seasons. The short course yards season, or SCY, runs from September through March while the long course meters season, or LCM, runs from April to August. There is usually 2-4 weeks break in between seasons. SCY meets are held in a 25 yard pool while LCM meets are held in a 50 meter pool.

### ***What Are Swim Meets Like?***

Swim Meets are a big part of the Gator mission as it gives our swimmers a chance to demonstrate all they have learned and improved upon, compete with other swimmers of similar age, all while having fun with their friends. We encourage all Gator swimmers, regardless of skill level, to compete in swim meets.

A swim meet brings together multiple swim clubs to compete against each other, many times over the course of an entire weekend.. Some meets will be smaller dual/tri meets where only 2/3 clubs compete. These meets will likely be completed in 1 day. Others will be larger meets where 10-20 different clubs will compete. These meets usually begin Friday afternoon and run until Sunday evening in a multiple session format. For the most part swim meets are comprised of similar events. Events are divided by gender as well as age group so your swimmer will be competing against appropriate competition. There are all levels of skill at these meets ranging from beginner to elite. While the order of events may change meet to meet, a representative list of events for each age is shown below.

Event	8 and Under	9-10	11-12	13-14	Open Age
25 Free	X				
50 Free	X	X	X	X	X
100 Free	X	X	X	X	X
200 Free		X	X	X	X
400/500 Free			X	X	X
1650/Mile					X
25 Back	X				
50 Back	X	X	X		
100 Back		X	X	X	X
200 Back				X	X

25 Breast	X				
50 Breast	X	X	X		
100 Breast		X	X	X	X
200 Breast				X	X
25 Fly	X				
50 Fly	X	X	X		
100 Fly		X	X	X	X
200 Fly				X	X
100 IM	X				
200 IM		X	X	X	X
400 IM				X	X

At the end of each season there are a series of championship meets that vary depending on the age of the swimmer. These meets will have qualifying time standards for each event that a swimmer must achieve in order to enter. These meets include:

- IN Divisional Championships - Similar to Sectional/Regional for entire state - All ages
- IN Age Group/Senior State Championships - Fastest swimmers in the state - 14 and under
- USA Zone Championships - Age group regional US meet, faster than state - 14 and under
- USA Sectionals - Senior regional US meet - Open age
- USA Junior Nationals - Fastest swimmers in the US - 14 and under
- USA Nationals - Fastest swimmers in the country - Open age

Depending on the meet, a defined time standard will be set to determine qualification. Both [USA Swimming](#) and [Indiana Swimming](#) publish time standards that are used for these meets. There may also be occasional meets throughout the season that require specific time standards as well. These will be noted in the meet letter for the specific event. Please consult with your swimmer's coach about time standards.