

GATOR BYTES

New Parent Issue



Parent & Athlete

Competitive swimming programs provide many benefits to young athletes including self-discipline, good sportsmanship, and time management skills. Competition allows the swimmer to experience success and to learn how to treat success and failure as two sides of the same coin, while becoming healthy and physically fit. As a parent, your major responsibility is to provide a stable, loving and supportive environment. This positive environment will encourage your child to continue. Show your interest by ensuring your child's attendance at practices, by coming to swimming meets and volunteering for your club at swim meets, or by participating in fundraising, etc.

Parents contribute to the success experienced by the child and the team. Parents serve as role models and their children emulate their attitudes. Be aware of this and strive to be positive role models. Most importantly, show good sportsmanship at all times toward coaches, officials, opponents and teammates. Remember that you are teaching your child at all times.

Be Enthusiastic and Supportive!

Remember that your child is the swimmer. Children need to establish their own goals, and make their own progress towards them. Be careful not to impose your own standards and goals. Do not over burden your child with winning or achieving



best times. Let them know that first they are the child you love, and second, a swimmer. Tell them you will love them whether they swim well or not, and ask only that they give their best effort. Learning about oneself while enjoying the sport is the most important part of the swimming experience. The swimming environment encourages learning and fun, which will help your child develop a positive self-image.

Positive Parenting Tips

- > Your child needs your emotional, physical, and financial support. Be liberal in providing this support.
- > Support but do not push your child.
- > Understand development – long-term development as an athlete, and growth and development as it impacts performance.
- > Be realistic in terms of expectations; factor in age and skill level; be aware of your child's perception of your expectations.
- > Emphasize performance and effort, not just outcome. The athlete only has control over his/her performance. Define and measure success as giving maximal effort and as personal improvement.
- > Keep winning in perspective.
- > Do not bribe.
- > Give plenty of encouraging and rewarding statements. Criticize sparingly.
- > View swimming as an arena in which to teach your child about commitment, hard work, and coping with adversity.
- > Work to form an effective Coach-Athlete-Parent Triangle.

Gator Fact: Do Alligators Sweat?

No they do not! Alligators are also unable to regulate their body temperatures internally as humans and other warm-blooded animals do. If an alligator wants to warm up, it has to find a sunny spot. Because the gator also lacks sweat glands, it cools off by opening its mouth, finding a shady spot or going for a swim.

BGSC History

The roots of the BGSC can be traced to the 1950's when Al Sawdy, BGSU Athletic Trainer, began the first organized swimming program for Bowling Green children at the University Natatorium. After the 1963 remodeling of the City Pool, the program moved to that location which is the current summer home of the BGSC Gators.

The program took a leap forward in 1968 when Tom Stubbs, coach of the BGSU Swim Team, offered year round workouts for interested athletes. The next summer saw Bowling Green's first truly organized competitive program, and its first entries in age group AAU (pre-USA Swimming) meets. Then in 1970, the BGSC was formed. The first GNOAC Championship was held in 1971 at Napoleon; we were third. Since then, the Gators have won 41 out of 47 GNOAC Championships. Likewise, BGSC swimmers have represented the Gators from State Championships to Senior Nationals and the Olympic Trials. Needless to say, we are very proud of our heritage!

The head coaches responsible for the growth and excellence of the BGSC have been:

Tom Stubbs 1968
Dave Stubbs 1969-71
Jeff Strata 1972-75
Kurt Lee 1976-79
Ken McMaster 1980
Don Luikart 1981-82
Don Luikart and Gary Layne 1983-4
Gary Layne 1985-1997
Carolyn Strunk 1997-present



What is this G-N-O-A-C thing????

The **GNOAC (Greater Northwest Ohio Aquatic Conference)** was formed in 1971 to provide a formal organization for competition among swimming teams from small communities in Northwest Ohio. The current members of the conference are Bowling Green, Bryan, DAYS, Napoleon, Ottawa, and Wauseon. GNOAC competition consists of dual meets held between teams during June and July, ending with a conference championship (Champs) in which all the teams compete, held in mid-July. □

Why is Swimming a Year Around Sport? By Guy Edson

First, at the competitive level a swimming athlete must train year around just to stay competitive with all the other athletes. Swimming is both conditioning intensive and skill intensive. Strength and endurance conditioning for swimming are not readily transferable from other sports or activities so they must be developed in the pool and in swimming specific dryland exercises. Swimming skills are constantly being developed and refined throughout the swimmer's career.

Not all swimmers are at competitive levels so what is the point in training year around for them? The simple answer is that a good swimming program provides far more than swimming skill development and improvements in strength and endurance — it provides active development of life skills. By "active development" we mean planned — not by accident and not by coincidence. We regularly stop practice to take advantage of a teaching moments to demonstrate or discuss a life skill and we plan short 10 minute discussions on a variety of topics. Life skills that are actively promoted by this team include responsibility, self-discipline, work ethic, coping with peer pressure to use drugs, time management, team commitment and loyalty, lifetime fitness, nutrition, setting and meeting goals, learning to extend themselves, challenges, cooperation, and goal setting.

We know through research that sport in and of itself does not build character or life skills. These skills are developed by the influence of role models, the environment, and through a systematic, planned process. We do this on our team all year around and it is the most compelling reason to keep your child in the water all year around. Now, having said that, is there room for other sports and other activities? As long as children aren't being over scheduled we think YES! We encourage the children to be in other sports and other activities. The bottom line is that this swimming program is a healthy and wholesome activity available all year around for your children and we encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity.

The Basics:

The five competitive swimming

strokes are freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and individual medley. Each swim meet offers a variety of events and distances, depending on the age group and classification. Each swimmer will have a limit to the number of events he or she may swim each day, depending on the meet rules.

In freestyle events, the competitor may swim any stroke. The stroke most commonly used is sometimes called the crawl, which is characterized by the alternate stroking of the arms over the water surface and an alternating (up-and-down) flutter kick. On turns and finishes, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. Most swimmers do a flip turn.

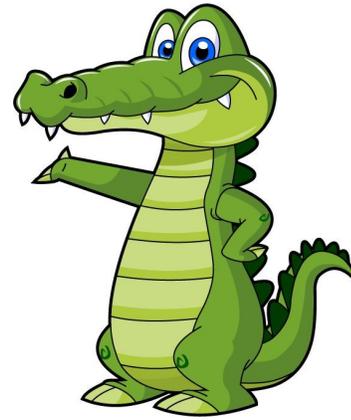
Backstroke consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flutter kick while on the back. On turns, swimmers may rotate to the stomach and perform a flip turn and some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. The swimmer must finish on the back.

The breaststroke, which is the oldest stroke dating back hundreds of years, requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pressed out from in front of the breast in a heart shaped pattern and recovered under or on the surface of the water. The kick is a simultaneous somewhat circular motion similar to the action of a frog. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously at, above or below the water surface.

Some consider the butterfly to be the most beautiful of the strokes. It features a simultaneous recovery of the arms over the water combined with an undulating dolphin kick. In the kick, the swimmer must keep both legs together and may not flutter, scissors or use the breaststroke kick. Both hands must touch the wall simultaneously on the turns and the finish. (The butterfly is the newest stroke and was developed in the early 1950s as a variation of the breaststroke. It became an Olympic stroke in 1956 in Melbourne.)

The individual medley, commonly referred to as the I.M., features all four strokes. In the IM, the swimmer begins with the butterfly, then changes after one-fourth of the race to backstroke, then breaststroke and finally freestyle.

In the medley relay, all four strokes are swum. The first swimmer swims backstroke, the second breaststroke, the third butterfly, and the final swimmer anchors the relay with freestyle. The freestyle relay events consist of four freestylers, each swimming one quarter of the total distance of the event.



Starts: In the start, the swimmer is called to the starting position by the starter who visually checks that all swimmers are motionless. When all swimmers are set, the starting horn is sounded to start the race. If the starter feels that one of the swimmers has moved, left early or gotten an unfair advantage, the guilty swimmer may be disqualified after the race for a false start. Under USA Swimming rules, one false start disqualifies the swimmer.

Rules: The technical rules of swimming are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition and to promote uniformity in the sport. Each swimming stroke has specific rules designed to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair competitive advantage over another swimmer.

The Course: Competition pools may be short course (25 yards or 25 meters), or long course (50 meters). The international standard (as used in the Olympics) is 50 meters. World records are accomplished in 25 and 50 meter pools. USA Swimming maintains records for 25 yard, 25 meter and 50 meter pools.

Teams: USA Swimming is made up of approximately 2,800 teams from all over the country. Of these clubs, nearly half have 80 swimmers or less, and a handful of teams have over 500 swimmers. A team may be comprised of any number of swimmers, parents and coaches.

Participants compete in different age groups and meets depending on their achievement level and how old they are on the first day of the meet. Traditionally recognized age groups are 10 and under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18. Many local meets feature 8 and under, single age groups, or senior events. Team practice groups are usually determined by age and/or ability.

Officials: Officials are present at all competitions to enforce the technical rules of swimming so the competition is fair and equitable. Officials attend clinics, pass a written test and work meets before being certified. All parents are encouraged to get involved with some form of officiating.

The code of a good sport

by Handley

When Hugh Fullerton, a well-known sporting editor, featured an article on Good Sportsmanship in the American Magazine, under the title, "Ten Unwritten Commandments of Sport", it caused a minor sensation. Handley promptly reprinted the article in the WSA News saying that "these laws should model everyone's conduct; they are handed down by tradition and should be obeyed by all sportsmen if they wish to live up to their good names."

FULLERTON'S TEN UNWRITTEN COMMANDMENTS OF SPORT

1. Thou shalt not quit.
2. Thou shalt not alibi.
3. Thou shalt not gloat over winning.
4. Thou shalt not be a rotten loser.
5. Thou shalt not take unfair advantage.
6. Thou shalt not ask odds thou art unwilling to give.
7. Thou shalt always be ready to give thine opponent the shade.
8. Thou shalt not underestimate an opponent, nor overestimate thyself.
9. Remember that the game is the thing, and that he who thinketh otherwise is a mucker and not a true sportsman.
10. Honor the game thou playest, for he who playeth the game straight and hard wins when he loses.



What is USA Swimming?

USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for competitive swimming in the United States. USA Swimming was conceived in 1978 with the passage of the Amateur Sports Act which specified that all Olympic sports would be administered independently. Prior to this act, USA Swimming was the Competitive Swimming Committee of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) located in Indianapolis, Indiana. USA Swimming Headquarters office was established in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 1981 and is located at the Olympic Training Center.

USA Swimming Mission Statement

USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming. We administer competitive swimming in accordance with the Amateur Sports Act. We provide programs and services for our members, supporters, affiliates and the interested public. We value these members of the swimming community, and the staff and volunteers who serve them. We are committed to excellence and the improvement of our sport.

USA Swimming Vision Statement

To inspire and enable our members to achieve excellence in the sport of swimming and in life.

How Is USA Swimming Organized?

International - The international federation for the aquatic sports is the Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA). USA Swimming is affiliated with FINA through United States Aquatic Sports (USAS).

National - USA Swimming is a Group A member of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC).

Zone - We are divided into four separate zones – central, eastern, southern and western.

Local - Within the United States, there are fifty-nine (59) Local Swimming Committees (LSCs). Each LSC is responsible for administering USA Swimming activities in a defined geographical area and has its own set of bylaws under which it operates.

How USA Swimming Operates

USA Swimming is a non-profit organization made up of very dedicated volunteers and support staff. Interested volunteers donate their time, energy and expertise at every level from the national Board of Directors to the local swimming clubs. The House of Delegates meets annually to determine the rules and regulations for the following year. A support staff at Headquarters in Colorado Springs implements the policies and provides service to members.