

GREATER PENSACOLA AQUATIC CLUB

Competitive Swim Suit and Team Attire Policy

Greater Pensacola Aquatic Club strives to consider all aspects of competitive swimming when preparing our athletes to be the best they can be. Aside from the physical and mental preparation that happens daily at practice, we realize that the choice of swimwear that an athlete has can make a difference in their performance and our team culture. We want to present a unified team image when attending meets, with swimmers wearing the designated team suit/team apparel which identifies us all as GPAC swimmers. With this in mind, we present the following team swim suit and team apparel policy to help guide parents and swimmers through the wide variety of available swim suits.

Team Suits

GPAC strongly believes that the appearance of a team has a direct impact on the feeling of being part of a team. Therefore, GPAC has gone to great lengths to ensure that all of our team members are equipped with a team suit that has been carefully selected for fit and function.

GPAC's team policy is that all team members **are required** to wear the selected team suit when representing GPAC at all USA Swimming meets, except when wearing a tech suit in compliance with the other portion of this policy.

Technical/ "Tech Suits"

New technology and materials have allowed a proliferation of modern swimsuits and are they are engineered to reduce drag and add compression and buoyancy to a swimmer, artificially enhancing performance.

We want all of our developing swimmers to value **hard work, technique and skill** as the means to improvement, and GPAC feels that these types of suits (including but not limited to LZR, Powerskin, Carbon Air/Pro, Mizuno, etc.) undermine these values, as they can be seen as a "quick fix" to performance.

Our team policy, in line with the policies handed down from USA Swimming in 2020, is that all GPAC swimmers 12 years old and younger are not permitted to wear "tech suits"—any specialized suit designed with bonded/meshed seams or kinetic tape, woven fabrics or anti-absorption treatments—at any practice or in any USA Swimming meet. This includes any swimmer training with GPAC but competing "unattached." This includes preliminary/finals meets, timed finals or relays, in-season or championship meets.

Swimmers, who are 13 years old or older as of the first day of the meet and with the approval of the head coach or head age group coach, may elect to wear a "tech" suit at a championship meet—defined as a mid-season or season-ending meet where the swimmer is prepared and focused on peak performance. GPAC coaches may also grant approval to wear tech suits at meets other than a championship meet at their discretion.

There are new suits being developed for 12 and younger swimmers in the spirit of the bonded/meshed seam suits, and these types of suits fall in line with the NGB's restrictions. Parents who pursue these suits for their swimmers should do their research and make sure they are approved for competition. Swimmers who choose to purchase these approved suits for younger swimmers may be allowed to wear them at meets that fall in line with the limitations placed on our 13 and over swimmers. Please ask a GPAC coach if you have questions.

Use of a tech suit is not required for any swimmer.

Swimwear Sponsor

GPAC has a swimwear sponsor. All team members should support the current sponsor by purchasing new equipment and apparel branded by the sponsor when the need arises. Most sponsorships have some requirements as to the suits the swimmers must wear at higher level meets (i.e. you must wear their "tech suit" and not one from another manufacturer). If this applies to your swimmers your coach will make sure they are aware.

Attire or Apparel

Swimmers are expected to use a GPAC team swim cap (if they wear one). During GPAC meet or functions, all team members should wear the team shirts. At multi-day meets we will typically specify what shirt to wear. Again, this is an important part of being a team so make every effort to know what the swimmers should have in terms of uniform. Three team shirts and one swim cap are provided as a part of a swimmer's registration fee.

Violations

We enacted this policy for the above reasons but also because we feel it fits in with our mission statement (below) and helps to teach values and life skills. We do not like to include these type of paragraphs as we all hope everyone will follow our rules and guidance but any policy without "teeth" is difficult to enforce.

If your swimmer is at a competition without the appropriate suit a coach **will** approach them about it. We will strive to give everyone one warning but we do expect that they will be in uniform. Swimmers will be asked to change their suit, if possible. If it is an issue where they do not have a team suit they may be able to go and purchase one as is typical a swimwear vendor at most meets we attend. To avoid any issues at meets we suggest that you order a team suit from our team vendor. You can access that information on our website under the "GPAC Gear" tab. While we do not see this happening, if a swimmer repeatedly does not have the proper uniform they may be held out of competition.

Questions

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy please contact the head age group coach or the head coach