

# GATOR BITS

Week of September 13-19th

## ALL GROUP NEWS

### Swim Meets

#### East Coast Open Water Championship Sept 19-20th

Mariner's Landing at Smith Mountain Lake

Deadline to register is Thursday, September 17th.

This meet is open to all Gators. We have a ½ mile race available to those swimmers 9 & under on the 20th. There is also a mile race for 10 & over that day. On Sat, we have the 5K option. There is food available on Sunday and lots of fun to be had.

- Check-in time on Sat is 1:00pm and race starts at 2 pm.
- Check-in on Sun is 9:45am and racing begins around 10:30.

See [www.lakeswim.net](http://www.lakeswim.net) for additional information.

### Important Announcements



8 & Under families will no longer be required to participate in Bingo.

Every family who recruits a new family will receive 3 Bingo credits.

8 & Under families who recruit a new family will receive \$50 off their swim fees for 3 months. Limited Time Offer.

#### **OFFICIALS CLINIC – Salem YMCA on October 11 at 2Pm**

This clinic is for all parents who are interested in becoming an official as well as officials in training or wish to be cross-trained. Officials include: Stroke & Turn, Meet Referee, Starters, Timing Equipment Operators, Timing Recorders, Timing Judges, and many more. As we all know, officials are required in order to have a meet. As a team, we need to have as many of these positions filled as we can.

This clinic will offer training for both the Wet Deck and the Dry Deck positions. It will explain all the steps involved and you may sign up to be a trainee at our first Gator Meet in October. Anyone who is in the process of being trained may find this clinic useful as well.

# NATIONAL TEAM AND SENIOR GROUP NEWS

## 2015 Sectional Cut Time as well as being named

### National Team Members:

Paige Assaid	Whitney Hamilton	Sydney Smith
Caroline Kulp	Cabell Whitlow	Emma Muzzy
Tessa Muzzy	Taylor Summerlin	Jake Lawson
Olivia Bray	Nathaneal Pilar	Angelo Russo
Dominic Russo	Adler Cargill	Keith Myburgh
Khalil Fonder	Greg Reed	

The following swimmers are working diligently and have been named as

### Senior Team Members:

Madison Horacek	Jake Bowery	Noah Bowers
Lilly Caldwell	Michael Pilar	Lillian Isbell
Emma Claire Wilson	Grayson Saunders	Nick Lawson
Mills Harris	Collin Myburgh	Kayla Jones
	Brooke Knisely	

**\*\*Morning Practices for these 2 groups will begin on Monday 9/14.\*\***

Senior Group will train until 6:00 pm on Mon – Thur while the National Group will have an extra 30 mins of training on those evenings.

National Group is expected to make up missed practices after talking to the coach; they must meet a 90% or higher attendance record.



# AGE GROUP NEWS

## Current schedule until further notice:

Monday thru Thursday 6:15 to 8:00 pm

Friday- 5:30 to 7:00 am

Saturday - 9:00 to 11:00 am

**Lake Swim** - All Gold Group Swimmers are encouraged to swim the mile on Sunday at Smith Mountain Lake. Please return your forms to Coach Brett ASAP and if you still need a form, see Coach Brett.

**Summer Age Group Champs** - Congrats again to our girls and their historic performance at Age Group Champs!! Make sure to take a look at the awesome purple banner when entering the pool.

**Gator Meet in October** - Make sure to mark your calendar for Oct 16 thru 18th as we expect all of our swimmers to compete and show why we are the best program in the state!!!

First 2015-2016 Friday Morning Practice



# 8 & UNDER NEWS

by Coach Marcia Barry

The Gators were very proud to hear of all the Age Group and Senior Accomplishments, which were enormous, this past summer. It is very exciting for our "younger swimmers" and families to watch and follow these accomplishments. We all must remember, that 90% of these swimmers came up through the 8 & Under programs that the Gators offer. The younger swimmers often get overshadowed, as there are not as many "big meets". We are proud to watch the young ones develop into great swimmers; some holding many State and Gator records.

This year, however, the 8 & unders will be a strong force of their own. Unfortunately, we lost one of our premier coaches, Shannon Summerlin, who resigned her position as Blue Group Coach. She will truly be missed. We welcome Kyndal Terrel as our new "Blue Group Coach" (daughter Collyns and Hadyn ), and Trisha Houghton, Shrimps and Green Group Coach. I coach the Mighty Gator Group and Blue Group, and run the Masters Program.'

We have a very talented, large group of 6 & Under and 8 & Under boys and girls this season, the likes of which we haven't seen in a few years. We look forward to having a large contingent qualify for Pittsburgh and help the Gators in scoring another win there. We will also be fielding several top relay teams at the meets they attend. They are all very excited for the season, and we hope you enjoy watching them compete this year. We thank all the parents for there continued encouragement and support.



# COACH'S CORNER

## Why You Should Become an Official?

What better way to show your swimmer(s) you are as committed and dedicated to *their* chosen endeavor than by becoming an official? Not only will you help to cement this bond, but you will help the entire team. What more critical role is there that ensures a successful meet? Think of it terms of giving back to the swimming community we all love. Many hands make light work. When we all pitch in...things run more seamlessly... Show your children learning never has to end...

Then of course there are the often referred to Reasons why you should volunteer:

- Free Heat Sheet & Free food/drinks
- Usually cooler on deck than in stands & not as crowded
- You don't have to decide what you want to wear at the meet
- Meet new people who have swimmers from across the nation
- May be able to deduct travel expenses on taxes
- Your swimmer knows where you are when they need money
- Satisfaction of knowing you are contributing to your swimmer's efforts
- If you choose to complete your certification to National Levels, you may have the opportunity to be on deck at national level meets or even international meets.

Perhaps the most important is **without officials, we have no meets**. You will have opportunities to work at meets beyond Gator Meets. This is critical to the swimming future for your child. Not me, let someone else do it? Please read the following as it points out the importance of working together for our swimmers.

## ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL

BY JIM STROMSKI // OFFICIALS CHAIR, NIAGARA LSC

I often hear comments to the effect, "my team needs a referee" or "my team needs another stroke and turn judge." When asked about the reasoning behind the statement, I usually hear, "so my team can hold a meet." This motivation dismays me as I believe that it's shortsighted at best and detrimental to local age group competitive swimming at worst.

"How can this be so?" I always tell people that they should become an official so that other teams can host their meets. Why? First and foremost is that other clubs need officials for their meets, too. When your team is hosting a meet, it's "all hands on deck" and I don't necessarily mean the pool deck. There's concession, hospitality, and timers to staff, clerk of course, timing and awards tables to be run, etc. In other words, there are so many other non-officiating jobs to be done that taking people away from those jobs to staff the deck can cause problems in those other areas of the meet.

## ... Cont. COACH'S CORNER

Imagine the potential outcomes of taking your most experienced timing system operator or clerk of course away from that job so that they can be a stroke and turn judge and what effect that can have on the smooth operation of your meet. These and other unintended consequences are detrimental to the athlete experience at a meet. I believe that when a team is hosting a meet, it should focus on the hosting and rely on officials associated with other teams to come in and staff the deck.

Further, if your club thinks it's covered to host a meet because they have a referee, a starter, an admin official, and a bunch of stroke and turn judges, what are you going to do when life happens and your referee, starter or admin official suddenly can't be at the meet? How are you going to replace that person unless your club is fortunate enough to have several people in each of these critical positions? This is where human nature comes in to play.

Right or wrong, officials know who and, more importantly, who does not come to help officiate at their club's meets. Would you expect others to step up and help you out when you've never done anything in the past to help them? Could you really blame them if they said, "no, I have other plans?" My point here is that fostering a mutually cooperative environment is much more beneficial than being an island unto oneself. Sugar, as is said, works better than vinegar.

There are other ways that living on an "officiating island" can negatively affect both the athlete and the official. Living on an island, as it implies, means isolation. Officials who only work for their own club's meets run the risk of falling into the "we've always done it this way" trap where, because there is little to no interaction with the wider officiating world, non-standard officiating processes and procedures can foster and develop. The athlete suffers because she or he is suddenly confronted with something they're not used to, causing them to lose focus on their race or be overly officiated in some aspect of their stroke, and the official suffers because they are missing the opportunity to improve and become better officials.



Further, those not working meets hosted by other clubs are missing out on what I think to be one of the joys of officiating, and that is meeting and working with all sorts of different people. Over the years, I've had the pleasure of working and socializing with some of USA Swimming's most experienced and knowledgeable officials and, believe me, you just can't get that experience, knowledge, wisdom and seriously funny stories by only officiating your own team's meets.

If you're one of those officials who only works your own club's meets, I hope this article has given you some things to consider going forward and that you decide to expand your officiating world. Remember, it's all for one (all officials for the athlete) and one for all (each official for all athletes)!