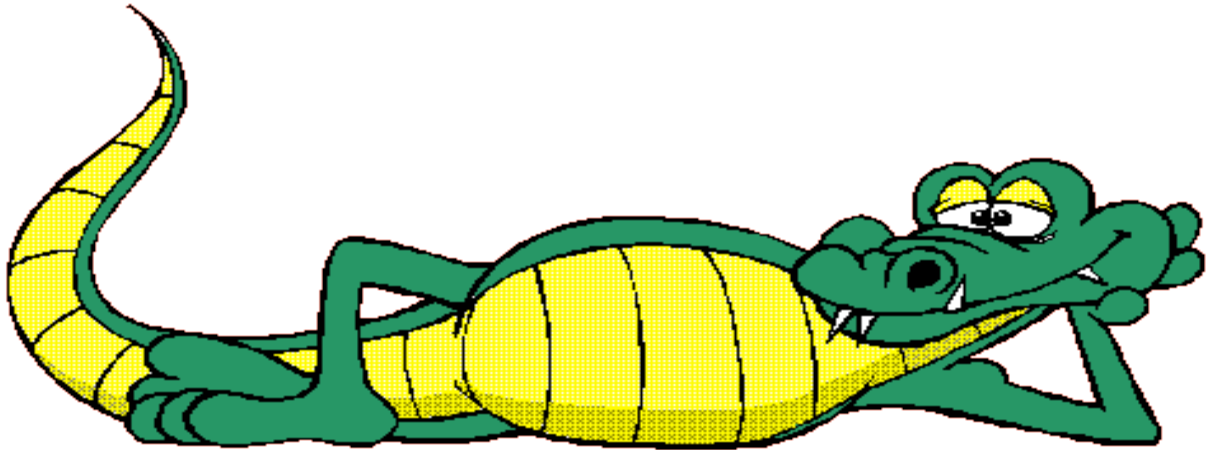


Greentree/Riverchase Gators 2010



Greentree/Riverchase Gators

2010

Team Handbook

www.gtrgators.org

Greentree/Riverchase Gators 2010

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Greentree/Riverchase Gators 2010

Dear Gator Swimmers and Parents,

Welcome to the 2010 edition of the Greentree/Riverchase Gators. Your Board of Directors has been working hard preparing for another great year. In 2010 we will, once again be competing in Division E1 of the Northwest Aquatic League (NWAL). Last year the Gators were one of the largest team in NWAL with close to 300 registered swimmers. We're excited about getting in the water and look forward to another successful season.

Please take the time to visit our website at www.gtrgators.org and spend some time getting familiar with the site. You can find email links to all of the Board of Directors as well as the coaches. New Gators should take some time to familiarize themselves with this handbook to get to know a little about the team.

There will be a parent's meeting on Tuesday March 30, at 6:45 pm in the cafetorium at Shadow Forest Elementary School to learn more about the swim team. This will also be the first opportunity to sign up for your volunteer hours.

We will be using both Riverchase and Greentree pools for practice this year. Practices are one hour and will occur be from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm until school is out, then start at 7:00 am. The individual age group schedules are posted on the website at gtrgators.org.

All new "8 and under" Gators need to come to the Skills Evaluation which will be held on Saturday April 10 from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm at Kingwood Athletic Club. Come by anytime during that two hour window and have your child plan on spending about 5 minutes in the water with a coach to evaluate their ability level. This is not a try out. We just want to make sure your child is safe in the water.

Your Board is very excited about the 2010 season but remember, without the help of our Gator Parents, we would not be able to run a swim season. We need your help. You can read detailed information about the volunteer program in the Volunteer Guide.

Go Gators,

Your 2010 Board of Directors

Greentree/Riverchase Gators 2010

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>EVENT</u> | <u>LOCATION</u> |
|-----------------|--|--------------------------|
| Sat 3/27/10 | Registration 10-2pm | Greentree Pool |
| Tue 3/30/10 | Parent Meeting/Volunteer Sign-up 6:45 pm | Shadow Forest Elementary |
| Sat 4/10/10 | Skills Evaluation 1-3pm | Kingwood Athletic Club |
| Mon 4/19-23/010 | Rookie Camp | Riverchase Pool |
| Mon 4/26/010 | Regular Practice Begins | Riverchase Pool |
| Thu 5/6/10 | Swim 'n Dogs Time TBA Team Pictures | Greentree Pool |
| Sat 5/8/10 | Gator Bowl | Greentree Pool |
| Sat 5/15/10 | Swim Meet (FMKP) | Greentree Pool |
| Sat 5/22/10 | Swim Meet (Sand Creek) | Sand Creek Pool |
| Sat 5/29/10 | Swim Meet (Kings River) | Greentree Pool |
| Thu 6/03/10 | Splashtown | Splashtown |
| Sat 6/5/10 | Swim Meet (Eagle Springs) | Eagle Springs Pool |
| Sun-Mon 6/6-6/7 | Summer Champs | TBA |
| Sat 6/11/10 | Swim Meet (Woodland Hills) | Greentree Pool |
| Sat 6/19/10 | Division E1 Championship Meet | TBA |
| Sun 6/20/10 | Awards Party | Greentree Pool |
| Tue 6/22/10 | Astros Game | Minute Maid Park |
| Fri 6/25/10 | Breakfast of Champions | Greentree |
| 6/26-6/27 | All-Star/Ponderosa Invitational | TBD |

This is only a partial calendar of events. As more events are planned, they will be posted on the web site. Other events include pep rallies (which are typically on Friday nights before every meet), parents party, spirit nights to name a few.

Greentree/Riverchase Gators 2010

Board of Directors

| Title | Name | Phone # | Email Address |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| President | Wally Mulhearn | 281-360-6114 | <u>Wallymulhearn@me.com</u> |
| 1st Vice President | Chip Wittenbrink | 281-913-1817 | <u>chipwitt@kingwoodcable.com</u> |
| 2nd Vice President | Joe Dunleavy | 281-360-5376 | <u>Joseph.p.dunleavy@us.pwc.com</u> |
| Treasurer | Ruben Capaletti | 281-360-7136 | <u>rcapaletti@aol.com</u> |
| Secretary/ Registrar | Karen Monteleone | 281-361-9777 | <u>karenmont@embarqmail.com</u> |
| Concessions | Jim Power | 281-361-5538 | <u>jepower@mdanderson.org</u> |
| Merchandise | Dena Boudrea Kim Rozum | 281-361-8861 281-360-2879 | <u>tdah@kingwoodcable.net</u> <u>kimrozum@embarqmail.com</u> |
| Clerk of Course | Janel O'Shea | 281-361-0606 | <u>oshea@cebridge.net</u> |
| Equipment Manager | Marc Galkin | 281-361-9986 | <u>galkinfam@kingwoodcable.net</u> |
| Volunteer Coordinator | Cynthia Cantrell | 281-360-7246 | <u>cynthiacantrell@yahoo.com</u> |
| Volunteer Coordinator | Kris Mosel | 281-360-6350 | <u>tkmosel@yahoo.com</u> |
| Social Chairperson | Pon Olonilua | 281-359-3701 | <u>oluponmile@hotmail.com</u> |
| Awards & Recognition Chairperson | Sandy Sheneman | 281-360-8868 | <u>sankay@kingwoodcable.com</u> |
| Webmaster | Wally & Terri Mulhearn | 281-360-6114 | <u>wallymulhearn@me.com</u> <u>terrimulhearn@mac.com</u> |

Greentree/Riverchase Gators 2010

PURPOSE

The Greentree/Riverchase Gators Swim Team is a non-profit organization formed to foster competitive swimming for young people ages 5-18. We want this experience for your swimmer to not only be fun and good exercise, but provide competition, which develops sportsmanship, self discipline, motivation and teamwork. It also provides the swimmer with a chance to improve his or her swimming skills and provides the opportunity for swimmers and parents alike to make new friends.

OBJECTIVE

The most important goals of the Greentree/Riverchase Gators Swim Team are to improve the swimming ability of each individual swimmer and to have fun. This is accomplished through daily practices that stress starting technique, stroke form, turns and endurance and are held in an enjoyable and motivating environment. Swimming is both an individual sport and a team sport, thereby encouraging individual improvement and developing good sportsmanship.

COMMUNICATION

There are several forms of communication between the team leaders and the parents and swimmers. This includes E-mails, the GTR website. We encourage parents to provide feedback so that the team can continue to improve its communications.

Website: www.gtrgators.org: The most comprehensive and up to date place to find all the Gator information you need!

Emails: If you would like to be added to the email distribution list, please email Wally at wallymulhearn@me.com. Please feel free to request as many email addresses as you would like to the distribution list. During the season, we will send out several emails weekly with all the latest and greatest Gators news.

NWAL

Our team is associated with Northwest Aquatics League which is the governing body of our league. You will hear many references to NWAL. Think of NWAL as our version of the NCAA. All the rules that govern our swim meets are dictated by NWAL. For more information, visit the NWAL website at www.nwal.org. NWAL is one of the largest recreational sports leagues in the United States with close to 100 hundred teams competing with over 13,000 swimmers. In 2009 the Gators were one of the largest team in NWAL with close to 300 swimmers. In 2010 the Gators will be competing in Divison E1.

Greentree/Riverchase Gators 2010

ELIGIBILITY

The Gator swim team provides competitive swimming for all children who are residents of Greentree, Riverchase and other sub-divisions that do not have teams of their own. Our youngest Gators must be about to enter Kindergarten in the fall following the end of the current year season. and our oldest Gators cannot be any older than 18 as of May 31, 2010. Swimmers who do not meet the minimum age requirement will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Any individual who swims for a NWAL team cannot compete in any other sanctioned league (e.g., USS long course meets) during the official NWAL season. They can practice with other leagues, but can not compete in meets. This is a strict rule of NWAL and anyone violation of this rule could force us to forfeit any meets won by our team.

REGISTRATION

Registration is on Saturday March 27 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Greentree Pool. The schedule of fees is on the registration form and can be accessed on the website. All fees must be paid at registration. Swimmers electing to leave the team, swimmers who become injured, or swimmers not ready for the swim team will receive their membership refund, less \$20, prior to May 7. If your child does not continue to swim for whatever reason, it will be the parent's responsibility to contact the Registrar of the team for a refund.

SWIM MEETS

You will hear several different terms regarding swim meets. We participate in three types of NWAL swim meets: dual meets, divisionals, and invitational meets. In addition, prior to the official start of the NWAL season, we swim an intra-team meet called Gator Bowl.

Prior to competing in an NWAL meet, each swimmer must establish a seed time for any event they wish to swim during the season. We hold an intra-team meet as our first meet of the season . This meet serves as our time trial and is designated as "Gator Bowl". We use this meet to establish seed times for all of our swimmers and also to give us a dress rehearsal before our first dual meet. Note that the times established at Gator Bowl are not official times and can not be used for target times or team records. A week after Gator Bowl, we will begin our dual meets. We will swim a dual meet against each team in our division. Following the last dual meet, we will compete in the Divisional meet that consists of all 6 teams in our division. We usually have a limited number of entries at Divisionals. If that's the case this year, not all swimmers will be able to participate in Divisionals.

The Gators also participate in several invitational meets. These meets require a qualifying time. The organization that sponsors the meet will determine the qualifying time. If a swimmer swims the particular stroke in the required time, he or she is eligible for that meet. The Gators typically participate in three invitational meets, but a swimmer can compete in any of the NWAL invitationals that they wish. The first invitational is "Summer Champs" which is sponsored by Blue Tide Aquatics. The two other invitationals that we compete in as a team are Ponderosa and All-Stars. There are several other invitational meets that you can swim in as well. Please see the NWAL website for more information (www.nwal.org). Again, these meets have specific time requirements.

To be considered "meet eligible" a swimmer must be able to swim the applicable stroke in 2 minutes or less.

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SWIMSUITS AND GEAR

Although team swimsuits, t-shirts, and swim caps are not mandatory, they do cultivate a sense of belonging and easy recognition of our team. Any swimsuit may be worn for practices during the week, but team suits are encouraged for meets. In addition, swim caps from another team are not permitted during an NWAL meet. Swim suits, goggles, caps, etc. will be available for sale on various dates, check the website for exact dates and times. Goggles, caps and other merchandise will be available for purchase at both our home and away meets.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Our volunteer program is an essential component to the success of our team. Each family is asked to sign up to work at the home and/or away meets of their choice. You must sign up to work a total of four volunteer shifts per family. If you have a swimmer who is 7 or older, two of these must be second-shift assignments. There are a total of seven meets this season. There are also a few volunteer opportunities that are not performed during meets. See the volunteer guide for more information on the various volunteer opportunities. Volunteer sign-ups will be held at the parents meeting, some practices, and every home meet. During registration you will need to write a separate check for the \$150.00 volunteer fee. These checks will not be cashed, only held until the end of the season. All volunteer hours will be tracked through an online spreadsheet by the Volunteer Coordinators. There will be a link on the Gator website that will allow families to access this spreadsheet. Once your shifts have been completed, your name will be highlighted and you will be eligible to receive your check back. If, for whatever reason, you did not work the required hours, the swim team will keep and cash your check and the money will be placed in a fund to help the team make capital improvement purchases. Once the deadline for refunds has passed, any remaining, unclaimed checks will be deposited. In addition to the above requirements, parents of swimmers participating at Divisionals will be required to volunteer at the Divisionals meet.

SKILLS EVALUATION

All 8 and under swimmers who are new to the Gators will need to attend a Skills Evaluation on April 10. It will be held at the Kingwood Athletic Club from 1:00 to 3:00pm, please come anytime during those hours and plan to spend 5-10 minutes. During this time the children will get in the water and the coaches will assess their water safety and skills. You may sign up for skills evaluation at the parents meeting, or just go to the Athletic Club anytime between 1:00 and 3:00 on April 18th.

ROOKIE CAMP

Rookie Camp will be held at Riverchase pool from April 19th to the 23rd in two (2) one hour sessions. All 6 and under new Gators and any swimmers so advised at the skills evaluation are to attend Rookie Camp. In order to better help the least advanced swimmers, the coaches may only spend a couple of days with your swimmer and then tell them to return for the first week of practice. As the name states, rookie camp is for new Gators only.

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PRACTICE

Practices are held Monday through Friday. Practice for all swim team members begins on April 26th and will be held after school until the end of the school year, then move to mornings. Keep in mind that we must have our practices finished before the pool opens for the community. We understand how difficult that hour may seem, but it is necessary to work with the community as they support our team as well.

On the first day of practice, the swimmer should be equipped with swimsuit, goggles, towel and a swim cap. Please make sure that items are clearly labeled with your child's name. If your Gator loses these things, they will be put in the lost and found boxes at the pools. Please check them regularly, because they fill up fast. Jewelry, watches, money and other valuables should be left at home.

PRACTICE REMINDERS

1. Observe all pool rules and mind the coaches and desk parents.
2. Be on time for practice. Arrive 10 minutes prior to your scheduled practice for warm-ups.
3. If you drop your swimmer off, pick him/her up promptly after practice.
4. Swimmers are expected to practice at their designated time with their designated age group. If there is a conflict, coordinate with the coaching staff in writing (E-mail is sufficient).
5. Outer Ear Infection, usually called Swimmer's Ear, can be a common occurrence. An alcohol/vinegar (50:50) mixture or ear drops used immediately after practice may help to alleviate this problem. Ear plugs may also reduce the chance of ear infections.
6. If a swimmer misses an occasional practice they do not need to call. For an extended absence, see section on absenteeism.
7. Parents are not allowed inside the pool area during practice. Parents are to check with the desk parent if there is a need to speak with a swimmer. Parents needing to contact a coach may leave a note in the coach's box located at each pool.
8. Coaches may not be interrupted by parents during practices.

PRACTICE SCHEDULE

The practice schedule is available on the website. Practice times during school will be from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Each age group will have a one hour practice. Once school is out, we will move to our morning practice schedule.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Parents, remember that you are the most important person in your child's life. You drive them to practices and meets, you pay the expense for them to swim, you volunteer to help the team, and you are there at the end of the day whether they have achieved a personal best time or not.

The Gators Board of Directors is reminding you, our parents, to remember THIS IS A TEAM SPORT and we expect good sportsmanship from our swimmers and our parents. You are a role model for your child. Let's show them what good sportsmanship is all about and how to be a TEAM player. One strong swimmer is not the team; it takes ALL of us, parents and swimmers, to be the great swim team that we are.

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DISCIPLINE

Usually, discipline is not a major problem; however, because of the large number of Gators and the size of the practices, safety is the first and utmost concern of both the Coaches and the Board. Therefore, strict discipline is required for the benefit of the team. Coaches will maintain discipline at all times during practice and will stop unacceptable behavior. In the event of repeated offenses, the parents will be contacted and the team reserves the right to bar the swimmer from practices and meets.

ABSENTEEISM

It is mandatory that swimmers sign out at least 7 days in advance if they know they will miss a meet. This is very important especially when that swimmer is on a relay. If your swimmer is sick the day of a meet, please contact his/her age group coach or call the pool prior to the start of the meet so that the swimmer can be officially scratched from the meet.

MEET CHECK IN

Meets begin at 8:30am, but swimmers must be at the pool earlier (6:45 am for home meets) for roll call and warm-ups. Remember, we have two teams that need to warm up, and the visiting team always is allowed the later warm up time. Each week coaches will advise swimmers on check in times for away meets. These will also be printed in the Gator Gram and posted on the website. The swimmer must check in with the team parent upon arrival at the meet so that he/she can be counted present. If the swimmer does not check in by 7:30am, he/she will be scratched and not allowed to swim in the meet. For most swimmers, the team parent will also write the swimmers events on their hand to remind the swimmer in which events they will participate. Swimmers should stay in their team area during the meet.

MEET PARKING

Parking around the Greentree pool is very limited. We request that you park at Greentree Elementary School on meet day. You can drop your swimmer and chairs off at the pool then go to the school and walk to the pool via the Greenbelt. You can plan on about a 5 minute walk. Parking on both sides of the street is strongly discouraged because it restricts emergency vehicle accessibility. No Parking areas have been reviewed with the Houston police and No Parking signs will be posted again this year. The HPD will strictly enforce the parking policy by issuing parking tickets. Families are encouraged to ride their bikes, carpool or walk to the pool. Swimmers and equipment may be dropped off at the pool in the Swimmer's Drop Zone prior to parking at the school. Please observe the 2-minute rule in the Drop Zone. The Drop Zone will also be reserved throughout the meet, so concession equipment and supplies can be loaded and unloaded with a minimum of inconvenience.

This is a sore subject with the homeowners association, and they have the authority to disallow swim meets, which would mean the team would cease to exist. So please, show your good sportsmanship and park at the elementary school on meet days.

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SWIM MEET ORDER OF EVENTS (Most meets start @ 8:30am)

| <u>EVENT</u> | <u>RACE TYPE AND STROKE</u> |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 1-2 | 13-14 100 yd Freestyle |
| 3-4 | 15-18 100 yd Freestyle |
| 5-6 | 6 & Under Free Relay |
| 7-8 | 8 & Under Medley Relays |
| 9-16 | 9/10- 15/18 Medley Relays |
| 17-22 | 6 & U-9/10 Freestyle |
| 23-28 | 11/12-15/18 Freestyle |
| 29-32 | 7/8-9/10 Breaststroke |
| 33-38 | 11/12-15/18 Breaststroke |
| 39-40 | 6&U Backstroke |
| 41-48 | 9/10 & Up Individual Medley |
| 49-52 | 7/8-9/10 Backstroke |
| 53-58 | 11/12-15/18 Backstroke |
| 59-62 | 7/8-9/10 Butterfly |
| 63-68 | 11/12-15/18 Butterfly |
| 69-72 | 7/8-9/10 Free Relay |
| 73-78 | 11/12-15/18 Free Relay |

HEAT SHEETS AND SEEDING

Swimmers are seeded according to their best time in each event and a list of these seed times is called a Heat Sheet. Heat Sheets can be purchased at the meet from the host team. Heats are arranged from slowest to fastest. The team parent will take the swimmers to the ready bench area when their event is called. The swimmer will be assigned to their position on the ready bench. After the race, the swimmer's race time and standing will be posted in the pool area.

RELAYS

During a dual meet, each team may enter 3 relay teams. We will make every effort to enter 3 relay teams in every age group. Normally, the "A" relay will be the most competitive swimmers in the age group. The "B" and "C" relay teams will be made up of different swimmers. Determination of the relay team(s) is solely at the specific age group coaches' discretion. Every effort will be made to allow every swimmer to participate in at least 1 relay during the year.

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DISQUALIFICATION

Swimmers can be disqualified for a number of reasons. The most typical reasons for disqualification is incorrect stroke technique, no two hand touch or improper kicking with either butterfly or breaststroke, and false starting. If you don't know why your Gator was "DQed", ask the coach to speak to the Stroke and Turn Official, please do not approach the official yourself as this delays the meet. If you want detailed information on strokes and turns you can purchase the official "NWAL Rule Book" from our team NWAL representative or download it from the NWAL website.

SCORING

Points are scored for each event swam (not heats). Only the top three fastest times in each event (not heat) will be awarded points.

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS: Points are awarded for the first three places, with 5-3-1 points awarded respectively.

RELAY EVENTS: Points for first and second place 5-2. A team may only score relay points for one place. If one team wins both 1st and 2nd place then only 1st place (5 points) shall be awarded.

POST SEASON MEETS

There are several post-season meets in which swimmers can qualify. Divisional meets have a limited number of entries and therefore the swimmers participating in this meet will be determined by the age group coach. Summer Champs, All-Stars and Ponderosa and other invitational meet entries are determined by qualifying times, which will be posted during the season. Parents can check their swimmer's times with the qualifying times to know if their child will be going to one of these end-of-the season meets. All post-season meets require an entry fee for each individual event. Money will be collected from the swimmer the week prior to the meet. If there is any question about your swimmer's eligibility for these meets, please discuss it with the coach. Once a Ponderosa time is achieved, then the swimmer is no longer qualified for All-Stars in that event, but may still swim All-Stars in other events in which they qualified.

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AWARDS

The Gators Swim Team believes their swimmers should be encouraged to work hard, and to improve, as well as to win. We aim to do this through positive reinforcement by coaches at practices, meets and through weekly awards.

Ribbons

Heat Ribbons: are awarded at home and away meets to all swimmers 10 and under for places 1-6 in all individual and relay events.

Event Place Ribbons: are given by the host team to swimmers that finish in the first six places overall (in each individual event) and First through Third for relay events. These are prepared during the meet and handed out at practice sessions the following week. Meet results will be posted during the meet and on the website approximately 2 days after the meet is over.

Personal Best Ribbons: are given to all Gators each time a swimmer improves his or her time in each event. These are handed out during practice sessions the following week.

Team and Pool Record Ribbons: are awarded to each swimmer that breaks a team and/or pool record in individual or relay events.

Stars

Team Target Times: a blue star is awarded to swimmers that meet each Team Target Time in their age group. Stars are limited to one per stroke per season. Team Target Times represent a realistic goal for all swimmers to strive for and are based on the team's average times from previous years.

All-Star Invitational Meet Qualifier: all swimmers that attain an All-Star qualifying time will receive a red star, limited to one per stroke per season.

Ponderosa Invitational Meet Qualifier: all swimmers who attain Ponderosa qualifying times will receive a gold star, limited to one per stroke per season.

These iron on stars are normally worn on the back of each swimmers team t-shirt.

Awards Ceremony

Every Gator that swims two meets (excluding Gator Bowl) will receive a trophy at the Gator Awards Night Ceremony. Special recognition will be given in each age group to the girl and boy High Point Scorer and Most Improved Swimmer. Special recognition is also given to swimmers who have completed their 5th and 10th year on the Gators.

We are looking forward to a rewarding and winning year! Let's swim!