

HILLTOPPERS SWIM CLUB



2024

GATOR SWIM TEAM
SWIMMER & PARENT
INFORMATION

Welcome to the Hilltoppers Swim Team
Home of the Gators

TEAM PHILOSOPHY

Hilltoppers Swim Team's philosophy is family based. Our family has grown considerably over the past few years. It is extremely important that the team acts as caring, supportive units who listen well, offer guidance, and simply love the kids involved.

Our responsibility as parents is to teach our swimmers how to become quality individuals: to be kind, respectful, generous, caring, supportive, encouraging, disciplined, and passionate. Our philosophy is not simply to produce quality swimmers, but produce quality swimmers that are quality individuals.

COMMITMENT

Success requires commitment by everyone involved: swimmers, coaches, and parents. Swimmers must commit to working hard as they master strokes and techniques, improve times, and follow our team's philosophy and rules. Coaches are committed to teaching swimmers how to improve and mastering strokes as well as guiding swimmers in a positive manner. Parents must commit to volunteering with fundraising activities, running swim meets, and organizing social events to build team spirit. Together we can achieve team success.

The coaches expect the swimmers to show up to the practices offered, set goals, and work hard. Swimmers who do this will reap the rewards of self-esteem, pride, sense of accomplishment, sportsmanship, discipline, and time management skills.

We will encourage teamwork, take time to talk, get to know one another, and mix into the workout some poolside antics to ensure our swimmers are not only working hard, but having fun, too!

We expect our swimmers to encourage each other. Negative attitudes will be discouraged to avoid bad sportsmanship. Swimmers, parents, and coaches should support all swimmers just as they would their own.

We will have periodic pizza parties after home meets. This is voluntary, but helps build a good solid swim team. Donations are always accepted to help absorb the costs.

Swimmers will be expected to attend all swim meets. If a swimmer is not available for certain meet(s) then they are expected to inform the coaches at least 48 hours in advance to ensure they are not entered into the meet via the team website. This causes problems with both the computer system as well as certain events being cancelled due to lack of participants.

Swimmers will be encouraged to set goals for themselves. Once these goals are achieved, they will be expected to establish new goals. Goals set must be realistic. Talk with your swimmers about the goals they have set. Keep track of their goals. Parents acknowledging when a goal is achieved is the most wonderful reinforcement for the swimmer.

Parents are encouraged to be loving and supportive and contribute to making the swimmer's experience a positive one. Be proud of your swimmer! By helping them learn to handle frustration and disappointment, the swimmers will gain more and more confidence. Be supportive of the coaches (who are volunteers). If you have an issue with a swimmer, please do not talk to other parents without approaching the coaches with the issues. Address the issue with the person who can help resolve the situation. Gossip is not a positive attribute.

Coaches will preach hard work, clean living and proper training, diet, sleep, and regular attendance at all workouts. These characteristics will help foster winning swimmers and a winning team; not necessarily winning the race or the meet, but winning a great swim team experience. Our coaches are human and may make mistakes. Our coaches are committed to our team and to ensuring an enjoyable team experience.

COMMUNICATION

Verbal: Talking to each other is our primary source of communication when it comes to our swimmers.

Team Unify: You must supply an email address. You will receive a link to Team Unify which is the website (and app) used for communication and meet entries and attendance. You must participate via this application. Communication regarding meets, practices, schedule changes, etc. go through this application. You can also use this app to track swimmer's times, events to swim, etc.

Team Mail Box: We will also communicate via a file folder mailbox. The mailbox is located in the office. It will be pulled out during practices so parents can check for updates and awards.

Website: <https://www.hilltoppersswimclub.com>. Pictures of our swimmers are often posted on the website. If you do not want your swimmer's picture on the website, please inform the coach immediately and we will make every effort to comply with your request.

Social Media: Please "Like" and "Follow" our Facebook page and post pictures to it to share with family and friends. We will post pictures during practices and meet of our kids having fun throughout the season.

SWIM SEASON

Application and payment in full must be received to participate. The swim season begins the day after Memorial Day and will continue through the Conference swim meet, TO BE DETERMINED, 2024. This meet is a mandatory meet if your swimmer qualifies to swim. Please be sure your swimmer is available should they qualify for this very important meet.

Swimmers must wear appropriate swimwear

TEAM PARTICIPATION

Beginning swimmers must be able to swim the length of the pool (25 yards) without stopping and/or putting his/her feet on the bottom. They must be able to be in the pool without constant supervision. This must be demonstrated to the coach. Due to the safety of the swimmer, it is up to the coach to determine whether the skills of the swimmer qualify them to participate on the team. This will be a conversation between the coach and the parent only.

Attendance to practice is critical. Being on time to practice and staying for the entire practice as often as possible will maximize learning and bring rewards to our swimmers.

If you will be missing practice, please inform the coach. Attendance is taken at each practice. Attendance is also factored into situations that may occur when selecting relay participants or other situations.

Swim practice may be cancelled due to weather. A notice will be posted on the Hilltoppers Facebook page and an email will be sent (whenever possible) to notify swimmers of any changes. If questionable weather exists, please be sure to call 286-9790 before coming to the pool. We will try to cancel practice at least 30 minutes before the set practice time. As you know, the weather here does change very quickly. We will do the best we can to make sure everyone is informed as soon as possible.

Team Suits

Swimmers are required to wear appropriate swimwear. Female swimmers are required to wear a one-piece suit and males can wear either jammers or Speedo type suit. A team suit is not required, however, does make for a cohesive team that is easily identifiable. The team suit will change every two years. The team suit for 2024 swim season is the Dolfin “Implode”. Cost for a female suit is \$42.75 (plus tax) and male suit is \$34.50 (plus tax). Swimmers are not required to purchase this suit.



Custom swim caps are available (limited number) for \$15

SWIM PRACTICE

The team offers both morning and evening practices whenever possible. We ask that swimmers attend a minimum of four (4) practices per week. Swimmers are encouraged to primarily attend the morning practices. Evening practice is offered to only those who cannot attend the morning. We have limited space during the evening practices.

First practice will be held on: May 28, 2024. There will be no practice on Thursday, July 4th or Friday, July 5th.

Monday-Thursday

13 & up – 8:30 am – 9:30 am

12 & under – 9:45 am – 10:30 am

Evening Practice: 5:30 – 6:30 pm

(No evening practices on swim meet days)

Friday

All Team Practice/Mentor Day – 9:00 am – 10:15 am

No evening practice on Fridays.

SWIM MEETS

Swimmers are expected to attend all swim meets. Pre-registration is required via Team Unify. If unable to attend a certain meet, you must opt out of that meet via Team Unify as soon as possible.

Meet Schedule

11 June - at O'Fallon
13 June - vs. TRENTON (HOME)
18 June - vs. DORCHESTER (HOME)
20 June - at StingRays (formerly KingsPoint) (AWAY)
25 June - vs. ST. CLAIR (HOME)
27 June - vs. HIGHLAND (HOME)
02 July - BYE
04 July - HOLIDAY
09 July - at Freeburg
11 July - RAIN DATE (if necessary)
20 July - CONFERENCE @ McKendree RecPlex

Conference Teams Addresses:

Dorchester, 801 S. 7th St, Belleville, IL 62223, 618-398-3667
Freeburg, 310 E High Street, Freeburg, IL 62243, 618-539-9178
Highland, 2123 Park Street, Highland, IL 62249, 618-654-4510
Hilltoppers, 1002 Imbs Station Rd, Dupo, IL 62239, 618-286-9790
KingsPoint, 7645 Magna Drive, Belleville, IL 62223:
O'Fallon, 411 E. 5th St, O'Fallon, IL 62269
St. Clair Country, 100 S. 78th St, Belleville, IL 62223, 618-398-3400
Trenton, 300 Pine Oak Street, Trenton, IL 62293, 618-224-7442
Conference: McKendree Metro Rec Plex, 205 Rec Plex Drive, O'Fallon, IL 62269

MEET ENTRIES

The coaches must turn in meet entries 48 hours prior to a swim meet to the opposing team. Therefore, it is critical that you register on Team Unify at least 48 hours before the meet if your swimmer will not be in attendance. We count on our swimmers to be at each meet, especially for relays.

Coaches select the events in which each swimmer is placed. Swimmers will have the opportunity to swim all the strokes throughout the season. Please feel free to talk with the coaches about the entries their swimmers are placed in. The entries are made to challenge our swimmers. Some swimmers may not want to swim certain events, however, will be placed in these events by coaches. There is always a reason why swimmers are put into events. If you have an issue with certain events, please talk with the coaches as soon as possible.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES DURING MEETS

It takes a small army of volunteers to run a swim meet. Most parents discover that a meet is a lot more fun if they have something to do. If you have more than one swimmer, you may be asked to work an additional shift.

Every meet a swim team parent will be assigned to certain job. You must arrive early to your scheduled time and place to ensure the meet runs smoothly. Parent responsibilities will be emailed prior to the swim meet whenever possible, otherwise, will be posted on the pool office doors. We do our very best to ensure that parent workers only work ½ of the meet, whenever possible. If you have more than one swimmer, you may be asked to work additional shifts.

SWIM MEET JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR PARENTS

Starter: Responsible for starting the swimmers from the block. Ensures that the meet runs fairly and smoothly. Training required. *See note below.

Stroke and Turn Judge: Ensures that strokes and turn are done legally. Illegal strokes and turns are reported and the swimmer is disqualified (DQ'd). Responsible for speaking with the swimmer to identify what was done incorrectly and reporting to the lane timer. Training required. *See note below.

“We have an urgent need for parents to become a qualified stroke judge. There is a four-hour course you must attend prior to swim season hosted by our conference (free of charge). We often offer this at our pool. If you were a swimmer in the past or have prior knowledge of swimming strokes, techniques and rules please offer to help us out. The more judges we have the less they have to work! The training date will be emailed out as soon as its scheduled.

Timers- Operates a stopwatch. Records stop watch times on time sheet or event cards. Approximately 20 timers are needed for each home meet (primary, back up, and relief). Timers are needed for all away meets- the numbers of timers needed at away meets vary.

Bull Pen- Organize swimmers by event before reporting to Clerk of Course by using computer printout or handing out cards.

Clerk of Course- Organize swimmers from both teams in order by lane and heat into benches prior to event being called by the starter. Combines events if needed. Walk younger swimmers to the correct lane. Utilize sign that is visible by both bullpens to call events. 1 –2 is needed from each team.

Runners- Collect recorded times from each lane timer and gives to the Scorers.

Computer/Scorer- Responsible for computer needs at meets. Input and submit entries using Meet Manager. Provide computer support for scratches, printing heat sheets, time sheets and entering results.

INCENTIVE PROGRAM – GATOR CHIPS

An incentive program was implemented in 2007 called the “Gator Chip Program”. This program rewards swimmers for entering a race, improving their times, improving their strokes, showing good sportsmanship, as well as many other factors. The laminated “chips” are to be kept in a safe place in their swim bags and can be used when the Gator shop is open (generally after practice on Fridays).



“ONE GATOR CHIP”

Awarded to a Hilltoppers Swimmer for a job well done.

Be sure to keep your Gator chips dry and safe in a zip lock bag in their swim bag. Use your chips as “money” to get great prizes from the Gator Shop!

GATOR SHOP

The Gator shop is fully funded by the donations made by swim team parents. Donations should be made prior to the first swim meet but can continue throughout the season as the shop runs low sometimes! Items like towels, goggles, rafts, swim toys, nail polish, markers, jewelry, etc. Packs of non-meltable (no chocolate or gum products) candy are always a hot item in the shop. Parents may be asked to assist in the Gator Shop whenever it is open. Please feel free to volunteer in advance.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to talk to a coach at any time either verbally or by email. We are all here for our swimmers and want to make this a great experience for everyone involved.

Thank you for joining the Gator family!

Hilltoppers Swim Club Safety Rules

As part of the swim team, both swimmers and parents are expected to follow the rules and regulations as stated by Hilltoppers Swim Club.

In order to minimize injuries, it is important that all swimmers abide by the following rules:

- ✳ ABSOLUTELY NO TANNING OILS ARE ACCEPTABLE
- ✳ No food or drinks are allowed on the deck
- ✳ No running on the pool deck or in the shower rooms.
- ✳ Always enter the water feet first unless directed otherwise by a coach.
- ✳ Do not push anyone into the pool.
- ✳ Never sit or hang on lane ropes.
- ✳ Never play on starting blocks. Always pay attention when getting on blocks and entering pool.
- ✳ Always follow the posted rules at all pools where our Team practices or attends meets.
- ✳ 11 and under must be accompanied by an adult
- ✳ Appropriate swimwear

Code of Conduct

1. Any swimmer who is known to use alcohol, non-prescribed drugs, or tobacco is subject to suspension from the Team.
2. Swimmers and/or parents are never to interfere with the progress of any swimmer during practice or otherwise.
3. Swimmers and parents are expected to behave in such a way that reflects positively on the Gators Swim Team at practices, meets, and at Team gatherings.
4. Vandalism or theft of property may be grounds for expulsion from the Team.
5. Abusive or foul language by swimmers, coaches or parents is not acceptable.
6. Swimmers must treat teammates, parents, coaches, officials, and opponents with respect and consideration at all times.
7. When coach talks, all swimmers' eyes and ears must be above the water pointed toward the coach, and swimmers' voices must be silent.

Failure to comply with these rules and codes or engage in any other inappropriate behavior will implement the following Coach's Discipline Policy:

- ✳ First offense – verbal warning
- ✳ Second offense – removal from the water/sitting on the deck
- ✳ Third offense – removal from practice – calling parent
- ✳ Fourth offense – suspension from practice for 1 week with a formal apology to everyone involved upon return.

Any further infractions will result in a formal expulsion request to the Gators Parent Board. If a swimmer is expelled from the Team, dues/fees will not be reimbursed. Return to the Team the following season will be decided by the Parent Board.