



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

GLOW Riptide

2026-2027

Handbook



Swim Team Mission Statement

The Genesee YMCA swim team's goal is to provide the opportunity for each member to fulfill his or her full potential in the sport of competitive swimming. Full potential is achieved through proper training and instruction coupled with a healthy, positive, and safe environment in accordance with the mission of the YMCA.

The Team

The GLOW Riptide Swim Team is composed of athletes that range in age from 5-18; and abilities from novice to experienced high school competitive swimmers. Team members are split into various practice groups. These practice groups are designed to keep swimmers among a peer group of a similar ability level/or age. This arrangement allows for coaches to concentrate on the skill of his/her group so each swimmer can reach his/her potential; conversely, it allows swimmers to develop with their peers and not impede others practicing in the same lanes. This decision is made by all coaches.

Practice Guidelines

1. Swimmers are expected to be on time for practice (all gear on and equipment at their lane).
2. Horseplay will NOT be permitted in the water, pool deck, locker rooms, or elsewhere.
3. Swimmers should leave the pool deck once practice is over and equipment is put away.
4. A large part of the success of our practice is to practice "perfection", therefore swimmers will be asked to swim legal strokes, turns, starts and finishes at every opportunity.
5. Parents are asked not to talk to coaches or swimmers during practice sessions and remain outside of the pool area. Waiting until practice is over will ensure all swimmers receive the coaching time they deserve.
6. Injuries or other health problems should be addressed at the beginning of practice.

Competition

The GLOW Riptide regularly attends competitions called "meets". There are several different types of meets and meet formats. All team members are encouraged to attend as many meets as possible. While meet attendance is not mandatory, it is strongly encouraged. Although swimmers compete in individual events, this is a team. The more swimmers that attend the meets, the more successful the team will be. Participation in meets will allow for more team relays. Swimmers must either attend the entire meet or have the deck coach's permission to leave early. Further, older swimmers who have a varsity season that conflicts with the Y schedule may want to complete their required meets as early in the season as possible to avoid a late season scramble. Competition in meets is arranged by age groups. The age groups recognized by the YMCA are: 8 and under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14 and 15-18. Swimmers compete according to age and gender. The swimmer swims in the age group they are in on December 1st. Swim ups are possible.

*Heat sheets for meets are shared on the Band App as soon as the meet organizer completes the files to be shared. This is usually completed by Friday night before a Saturday meet. Coaches are receptive to input on swimmers' events, but it is a team effort to be competitive, and the coaches are responsible to stretch swimmers beyond their comfort zones/events when necessary. The decision is ultimately that of the coaches.

Types of Meets

Dual Meets: Meets are arranged to have teams within BRAYSL (Buffalo-Rochester Area Y Swim League) compete against each other. The teams are from Buffalo to Geneva. The meets last approximately 2-3 hours. Swimmers must swim a minimum of 4 dual meets to attend YMCA Districts and States. There is no charge to swim in these meets, and every swimmer is encouraged to swim in dual meets. Warmups and meet start times are set by the host team. These times will be shared as soon as possible.

Invitationals/USA Meets: Many teams can attend an invitational. Some score for team points, but most score for individual points by age group. The particular format for any invitational is determined by the host team. Fees for invitationals are not covered by program fees. Fees are an individual family responsibility. Entry deadlines are not flexible. These meets are OPTIONAL.

Championship Meets: These meets are the culmination of the entire season. We focus a great deal of attention on performance at these meets. There are again several different formats for these meets. Our league holds the following meets:

1. Districts – This Championship meet is open to most team members (those that meet the requirements of attending 4 dual meets). All of the teams in the Buffalo-Rochester District will be in attendance.
2. New York State Championships/Nationals – Swimmers that meet standards or “cut times” are allowed to swim in these meets. These meets include YMCA States and Nationals.

*In order to swim at Districts, States and Nationals, a swimmer MUST have competed in a minimum of 4 Buffalo-Rochester Area District sanctioned meets. Nationals requires 4 dual meets and 1 championship meet.

The meet schedule is distributed at the beginning of the season but may be updated as the season progresses. Meet information will be posted on the Band App at the beginning of the week of the meet. Swimmers are assumed to be participating UNLESS the coach is made aware otherwise. Swimmers must tell the coach if they are NOT participating ONE WEEK before a meet, unless sickness arises. Please be considerate regarding your child’s meet attendance. Late notification or failure to show up may result in disappointed relay swimmers.

Conduct Policy

The GLOW Riptide embraces the values of commitment, good sportsmanship, fair play and integrity in all its actions. All team members are expected to uphold these values. Occasionally, these values are violated. If violations are serious enough, the YMCA staff and coaches will review each case to make a determination if continued membership and participation on the swim team will be allowed. IF continued membership is allowed, additional requests may be made of the swimmer. IF it is concluded that a swimmer needs to be removed from the team, no refund for Y membership dues or swim team fees will be granted. It is the objective of the GLOW Riptide to assist swimmers in embodying and internalizing the core values of the YMCA and the team. It is believed that continued participation on the team assists in achieving this objective.

Responsibilities

Swimmers:

1. Be respectful of your coaches and teammates. No name calling, trash talking, etc. Politeness and sportsmanship are life qualities and Y standards.
2. Hands to yourself.
3. Set up/tear down pool at practice and meets (water bottles, wrappers, etc.)
4. Help out your teammates.

Coach:

1. Be respectful, encouraging, and give helpful feedback.
2. Create appropriate workouts and meet lineups.

Parents:

1. Due to Safe Sport rules, no parent is allowed in a locker room for practices and meets.
2. Stay involved with your child and their efforts.
3. Check the swim team BAND app. Be aware of upcoming events, deadlines, and commitments.
4. Volunteer to help at meets: We will share a Sign-Up Genius Link before meets.

Officials (at least 3): Online certification required – Level 1, Level 2, and AO

Timers (13): Head timer and 2 per lane (6 lanes)

Set Up/Clean Up: Chairs, timing boards, signs, general help

50/50 Sales: Sell tickets

ALL parents MUST assist in some volunteer capacity during the season (meets, dinners, etc.). Swim team is a team event and parental support is needed to make our season successful.

At the Meet

For all meets, swimmers should be at the pool for warm-up ready to get in at the prescribed time. Swimmers should take

time to get accustomed to the backstroke flags, walls and starting blocks. The coach will prescribe a warm-up for you before you get in. At a meet, we will establish a position at the pool, gym or hallway for the team and make this “home base”. All swimmers are expected to sit as a team at this base. The coaches should be made aware of where every child is if leaving home base so no one misses their event. Swimmers are expected to report to the coach AFTER each race to ensure immediate feedback on their swim is received. Parents are NOT allowed on the deck. The coaches will make all necessary scratches from events and determine all relays. Meet lineups will NOT be changed unless there are extreme circumstances.

Supplies

1. The GLOW Riptides team suit and cap are REQUIRED for all meets. (Tech suits optional at Champs)
2. Goggles (Primary pair and backup).
3. Towels, deck shoes, warm-ups, something to keep busy
4. Limited healthy snacks (fruit, water, crackers, etc.). Swimmers are reminded that if they spill something, it is their responsibility to clean it up. NO GLASS on deck. If it breaks, an entire pool may need to be drained!
5. Sharpie markers (to write events on hand)

Communication

Communication is key! Please try to check the BAND app. (Turn on Notifications!) Coaches will try to be concise with the number of posts, but all information is important. If you would like to set up individual conferences to discuss other issues, the coaches will be happy to assist you. The main means of communication between the team and a swimmer/parent is through the Band app, and email. All efforts will be made to ensure that all information and schedules are up to date. In cases of emergency or foul weather, it will be shared on the Band App promptly as well as updated information on the YMCA's social media.

Funding

As with any program associated with the YMCA, we do incur expenses throughout the year. Program fees serve to manage and offset the majority of these fees.

Y Membership: All members of the GLOW Riptides are required to be full youth members of the GLOW YMCA prior to signing up for the team. This can be accomplished in two ways:

1. Swimmers can be a member of a family plan
2. Swimmers can be an individual youth or Junior member (annual membership option only)

***These payments are due prior to your child beginning practice after the trial week. NO exceptions.**

***All families are required to take part in fundraising as it keeps our team costs low for everyone.**

Scholarships

It is the goal of the program to keep as many kids swimming as possible. The team understands that some families may need financial assistance with either the program fee or Y membership fee. The Y is committed to offer as much scholarship assistance as possible. If a family feels they may need or qualify for assistance, they are asked to see the Member Service staff as they can assist you.

Other Expenses

Not all of our meets are at home. There will be some traveling involved when attending away meets. The location and directions will be provided via the BAND app. the week of the meet.

Special Events

The GLOW Riptides promotes several non-competitive events each year to get to know each other, relax or just have fun. We hold several spaghetti dinners, holiday parties, etc. The largest and most significant event we hold each year is our team banquet. This banquet is the capstone for our competitive season. The team hands out several awards, but our main goal is to acknowledge the efforts and accomplishments of all our swimmers and coaches. ***To be eligible for the banquet and championship meets, swimmers need to complete 4 dual meets***

Team Store

Swimmers will be awarded a "Riptide Buck" for certain accomplishments. I.E. Attendance, competing in races, outstanding performance, or sportsmanship. Bucks can be used to purchase items at our store on Fridays.

Please sign and return the acknowledgment form on the next page. Thank you!

GLOW Riptide Parent Handbook Acknowledgment Form

I _____ (parent/guardian), of _____ (swimmer) have read the parent handbook in its entirety and understand the contents.

Parent/Guardian, Print Name

Parent/Guardian, Signature and Date