



OST: State of the TEAM

STATE OF THE TEAM

Taking the opportunity to reflect on the season, the successes we've had, and recognizing the areas where we will continue to improve as athletes, a staff, and family!

☐ **General:**

First and Foremost, THANK YOU! To all the families, athletes, and team support. You all have made this first 10 weeks very special! Everyone has embraced me and my family, and I cannot thank you enough for making us feel at home. Over this stretch we've started to change the perception of what swimming in Opelika, Auburn, Lee County, and beyond can be and will become. I've received countless comments from members in the community who have heard about the great things we are doing here. Those comments can be attributed to the work all of you have put into this team!

☐ **Results:**

So far, we've achieved over 160 best times! To me, it doesn't matter if you're new to the sport, or if you've been in it for 15 years, working towards best times is what we strive for. Last year OHS placed 15th at the High School Sectional Championships, with only two girls scoring individual points. This year we placed 9th with 5 girls scoring individual points. ALL 5 girls will be coming back to swim again next year!

Meet attendance: We've entered in three meets as a team, our attendance at each meet has been 33, 33, and 43 athletes. THAT IS A BIG DEAL! It shows a commitment to the sport, it shows investment into the work all the athletes have done, and it shows the everyone that Opelika cares about swimming beyond the summer season. I am excited to see us continue to be well represented at these meets.

☐ **Opelika Swim School:**

In February of this year we will be reopening/rebranding our swim lesson program. Registration is opening December 3rd. The Opelika Swim School will work towards giving every child and adult in the community the opportunity to be water safe, learn the strokes, and join the competitive side of the sport.

☐ **Team Website:**

In an ongoing process, I've been working towards making more information available to the parents and athletes through our website (opelikaswim.com). We've also been taking steps to implement an on-line, cloud based, registration system. While this has not moved as quickly as I was hoping, it will eventually be a huge part of our team's organization and growth.

☐ **Staff and Administration Rolls:**

We've hired 4 new coaches to help assist me with teaching our swimmers how to improve! Will, Kelsey, Grant, and Faith all have a great background in the sport and are very excited to be learning from me and working with the athletes. Becoming a swim coach is not a simple task. A great deal of time and energy goes into becoming a USA Swimming certified coach. We have several goals as a staff, one of which is making sure the joy we received from the sport, is the same joy your children receive. But our most important goal is to make sure this is a safe, educational, and fun environment for everyone.

On top of hiring coaches, I've also worked with Bobby and Mandy to help them have more defined rolls on the team. Both have been essential to this transition, and without them I'm sure the state of our team would look much different. Mandy will be helping mainly with event planning. Most notable the ARPA State Swim meet this summer. Bobby will be helping me more with team administration items and the Swim School. Please, next time you see either of them, make sure you thank them for being so helpful to this team and family.

☐ **Focus on the Future:**

I want everyone to have a strong understanding of what is coming up on our horizon, and what our focus will be this spring.

Our goals will be to take as many athletes to the Southeastern Championships as possible.

This is going to require consistent hard work over the next 10 weeks until the Central Reginal Championships in Birmingham. The first two meets of the year will be the 12 and under meet in Birmingham, and then the 13 and over meet in Auburn. Both of those meets will be great ice breakers after the tough holiday season. I would like to take the entire team to Columbus the week following the Auburn meet and then anyone who does not make the southeastern championships will have one more chance at Central Districts.

To finish off the short course season, athletes will go to either the Southeastern Championships or to a meet held at Auburn the week after. This will give everyone a meet to test themselves, and to test all the hard work they've don't over the winter season.

☐ **Team Apparel and Social:**

New T- Shirts, Caps, and Water Bottles are available in Mandy's office for purchase. We also have team suits available on swimandtri.com. The information on how to order team suit is on the team website

One of the thoughts that we had earlier in the fall was to do more things as a team to help new families feel welcomed. Out of that meeting we started the team GroupMe (message coach Tyler if you are not on it), had our first SwimsGiving, and created welcome packages for new members. Being involved in team activities is a great way to get to know many of the other families. Our next team gathering opportunities will be the Opelika Christmas Parade and then a trip to the Marry-Go-Round (Carousel) in Valley on December 22nd. We will meet in Valley at 4:00 CST/5:00 EST to hang/ride the carousel and the go to dinner at San Marcos at 6:30.