



Age Group Program *Season Start-Up Info*



To Age Group Program members,

I would like to enthusiastically welcome you to the Strathcona County Swim Club ("SRAYS") and Age Group program for the upcoming 2021/2022 swim season.

This program is comprised of our teenaged members who have ambitions to compete at Provincial & National level competitions. There are multiple schedule options providing comprehensive swim programs aimed to provide all members the most appropriate swim experience relative to their swim goals & current ability level.

While ability level, swim goals & training experience will vary amongst our Age Group swimmers, everyone will be held to the same standards. Putting forth your very best effort & training in a manner which reflects your ability level, having a positive attitude, showing respect to others, & communicating appropriately will be the expectation for all Age Group swimmers.

There is a lot of information within this document but it is important for all members to be as informed as possible. We hope this document gets members organized and excited for the upcoming swim season. Please take the time to read through the information package and please feel free to contact me with any questions you have regarding the content in the document or questions left unanswered at headcoach@silverrays.ca

See you at the pool!

Mark Chantaj
SRAYS Head Coach



Age Group Program

“Train to Train”/ “Train to Compete”



Purposeful Training

The training will follow a Yearly Training Plan (“YTP”) created by the SRAYS Head Coach. The YTP will divide the swim season into 3 training cycles. Each training cycle will have multiple training blocks which are a few weeks in length. Each training block will follow a weekly template. This is no different than what the kids do at school; they have semesters, which are divided into units, which have different learning opportunities each week, with specific lessons taught every day.

Certain practices within each weekly template will have our “key sets” scheduled; 2-3x every week. These key sets reflect the phase of training we’re in and which type of swimming is our top priority to make the biggest improvements in. More so than other sessions, swimmers are required to come prepared with their ‘A game’ for key sets. Swimmers will always know well in advance when these work-outs are scheduled each week.

EVERYTHING we do in training is meant to benefit the many elements of our performances at swim meets. The culmination of all the hard work will be consolidated at two “Peak Performance” competitions held in March/April and July. These two swim meets are when all Age Group swimmers will be prepared to swim their fastest!

Supplementary Training

In combination with the time spent in the pool, swimmers will have a variety of dryland work-outs throughout the week. These work-outs are just as much a part of their training as what’s done in the pool. There will be 15min on-deck before and after most sessions which will focus on developing various athletic abilities, aid in injury prevention and develop general fitness.

Why yoga twice a week to start the season?

With the natural growth & development through the teen years combined with work done in the pool and on-deck during pre/post pool routines, the likelihood that Age Group swimmers will get naturally stronger is high. During the teen years with all this work being done combined with being slouched in a desk all day at school, the likelihood they become more flexible is very low. We need to be proactive in the flexibility/mobility department so all Age Group swimmers have appropriate range of motion, can swim comfortably with proper technique and have tools to recover after work-outs. Strength training will be added into a swimmers programming when it’s appropriate.



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Commitment & Attendance

Swimmers have been given the option of an AG1 (x7) & AG2 (x5) schedule and are meant to select a schedule they can commit to. All swimmers are requested to select a program where they are the highest likelihood of 100% weekly practice attendance.

The only swimmer who doesn't have an opportunity to improve is the swimmer who isn't at the pool when they are scheduled to be at the pool.

Communication

Swimmers will be required to inform SRAYS Head Coach when they are not able to attend practices or will need to arrive late/leave early for a swim practice. This via email, text or WhatsApp message where parents will always be CC'd or involved in communication process.

Swimmers will be asked to fill out weekly “Post work-out questionnaires” as a means to communicate with their coach and reflect on the work they've done in the pool. This format of communication may be far more accessible to swimmers who may not feel comfortable with in-person face to face communication all the time.

Swimmers will always be encouraged to communicate honestly and respectfully in an assertive manner. These are the communication skills worked on last season with the Strathcona County mental health team which will look to be further developed this season.

Choices & Behaviors

Swimmers must acknowledge that they always have a positive or negative influence of the training environment, teammates and coaches. Making deliberate choices with their words, actions, attitude and effort levels is something swimmers will be held accountable to.

Choices and behaviors will constantly be monitored and addressed to ensure the best training environment is being created and maintained throughout the swim season. The SRAYS coaching staff will always give credit where credit is due and acknowledge swimmers who are making great choices and implementing 'performance oriented' behaviors within our training environment.



Mental Training & Mental Health



Age Group swimmers will be introduced to or further explore various topics throughout the swim season via group discussions on-deck, online google forms and 1-on-1 discussions with their coach. The intention of all these activities is helping them develop the mind of a champion.

Topics covered this season will include but are not limited to:

- Creating & implementing 'action plans' to help achieve season-ending goals.
- Dealing with adversity
- Strategies to maintain a strong work ethic for the entire season
- Developing appropriate communication skills
- Making appropriate choices (Time Management, Technology use, Hydration, Nutrition & Sleep)

Collaboration with Strathcona County's Mental Health Team

During the 2020/2021 season, the SRAYS participated in a pilot program with the Strathcona County's Mental Health team. This program was aimed at supporting the mental health of youth athletes. Specific topics which were covered were developing a growth mind-set, communication skills (assertive communication), and positive self-Talk.

We will continue our relationship this upcoming season hosting more presentations specific to the needs of our Age Group swimmers. As well, the county's Mental Health team will be a liaison for the swim club if Age Group swimmer would benefit from speaking with trained professionals.





Age Group Program Schedule



Schedule	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AG 1			Act 5:30-5:45a 5:45-7:30a		Act 5:30-5:45a 5:45-7:30a	Act 10:30-10:45a 10:45a – 12:45p Yoga 1:00-1:45p
	Act 3:45-4:00p 4:00-6:00p Post 6:00-6:15p	Act 3:45-4:00p 4:00-6:00p Post 6:00-6:15p	Act 3:45-4:00p 4:00-5:45p Yoga 6:00-6:30p	Act 3:45-4:00p 4:00-6:00p Post 6:00-6:15p	Strava Run/Bike S&C	
AG 2					Act 5:30-5:45a 5:45-7:30am	Act 11:00-11:15a 11:15a-12:45p Yoga 1:00-1:45p
	Act 3:45-4:00p 4:00 – 5:30pm	Act 3:45-4:00p 4:00-5:00p	Act 4:00-4:15p 4:15-5:45p		Strava Run/Bike S&C	

Act = Pre-Pool Activation (Pulse Raiser + Mobility + Strength + Power)

Yoga = Stretching, mobility & flexibility work done with a certified yoga instructor

Making weekends as accessible as possible

Experiencing pronounced growth spurts, consistent development and hard work in the pool make sleep an extremely vital recovery & growth tool for our swimmers. Regardless of whether there is an AM practice or not, an alarm clock will be set to get up early for school. If Saturday & Sunday are the only opportunities to get the sleep one needs, we want to capitalize on that with our weekly schedule as best we can.

The successful implementation of our “home dryland program” through covid restrictions last season have shown that our most committed and self-reliant swimmers can get their work done without having to be at a certain place at a certain time. In alignment with a program prepared by the SRAYS Head Coach, swimmers can get their Strava run/bike or S&C work-out done immediately after school (or even at school). They can have Friday afternoon/evening off to finish homework or socialize with family and friends then sleep in Sat morning.



Equipment & SRAYS Team Gear



Mesh bags

Swimmers are required to maintain a mesh bag with their required pieces of equipment.

Mesh bag <https://team-aquatic.com/collections/bags>

Snorkel <https://team-aquatic.com/collections/equipment-snorkels>

Kick Board <https://team-aquatic.com/collections/equipment-kickboards>

Pull Buoy <https://team-aquatic.com/collections/pull-buoys>

Extra SRAYS swim cap equipment@silverrays.ca

Extra pair of goggles

Water bottle

Skipping rope

Yoga Mat

Deck shoes **Optional**

Foam roller **Optional**

Tennis / Lacrosse ball **Optional**

Light Thera band **Optional**