



Mini Ray Program

Season Start-Up Info



To Mini Ray Program members,

I would like to enthusiastically welcome you to the 2021/2022 swim season with the Strathcona County Swim Club ("SRAYS") and our Mini Ray program.

The Mini Ray program is an exciting opportunity within our swim club. It's where our swimmers begin to embark on their competitive swimming journey. A lot of firsts are experienced during a swimmer's stint as a member of the Mini Ray program, from learning how to swim all four swim strokes to attending the first swim meet. These experiences make the season all the more memorable.

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 may have regarding the content in the document or questions left unanswered at headcoach@silverrays.ca

See you at the pool!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Chantaj".

Mark Chantaj
SRAYS Head Coach



Mini Ray Program



Practice Structure

Activation (15min)

These 15 minutes are an opportune time for Mini Rays to get acquainted with their teammates & coaches and where we really attempt to develop a positive team environment. It's hard chatting with your teammates while you're swimming laps up and down the pool with your face in the water.

During this time, we'll have music playing while we participate in a variety of activities as a means to develop general athleticism and developing basic athletic abilities such as core strength.

Pool (60-75min)

A **BIG** emphasis will be placed on swimming with proper technique & swim skills. As the saying goes "*whilst it's true that all swimmers who swim with great technique are not fast, ALL the fastest swimmers have great technique*". In order for all swimmers to reach their potential when they are much older, they need to slow down right now and develop proper stroke technique & swim skills.

The SRAYS coaching staff will ensure swimmers get the attention they require to develop their stroke technique & swim skills by having multiple coaches on-deck for every Mini Ray practice. Each practice will have at least three (3) Mini Ray coaches working with our swimmers. Swimmers get to practice in a dynamic environment packed with teammates & coaches and when it's time to focus on developing their strokes & skills they can break off into smaller groups of approximately 10 swimmers. It truly is the best of both worlds!





Mini Ray Program (Con't)



Acting like a SilverRay

The SRAYS Competitive Program coaching staff takes a holistic approach when developing its swimmers. Along with what happens in the pool, we will constantly attempt to teach the kids the importance of being a great teammate, developing a positive attitude, having a willingness to try new things, showing others respect, listening when the coach is providing instruction and always putting forth their best effort.

Being mindful of how SilverRays choose to act on-deck, the words they choose to use and how they choose to treat others is placed at a great emphasis within our swim club.



Swim Meet Focus

The Mini Ray program will be focusing on the 50m events in all four strokes (Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly), 100m IM, and the 200m Freestyle. Swimmers will participate in a mix of mock meets/events to gain valuable racing experience as well as participate in some of their first sanctioned Swim Alberta competitions.

Mini Ray swimmers will also focus on being a supportive teammate at swim meets by cheering each other on, being confident in swimming new events, and being prepared by always having their SRAYS team gear, water bottle and healthy snacks with them on-deck.





Mini Ray Weekly Schedule



The Mini Ray swim curriculum will follow a “weekly template”. This will ensure all swim strokes & skills are being developed every week. This is very similar to the structure of a school day which all swimmers & parents are familiar with. Each subject is taught in the appropriate quantity throughout the week while core subjects such as Math & English are prioritized.

Example of a Mini Ray Weekly Template

Practice #1	Practice #2	Practice #3
Swim Skills (Streamline & Turns)	Stroke Technique Set	Stroke Technique Set
Stroke Technique Set	Kick Set w/ pace clock learning	Turns
Kick Set	Starts	Relays

Proper stroke technique, swim skills, and kicking are pillars of the Mini Ray program. This will help lay a solid foundation for the development of each swimmer and allow them to experience success as they progress through the swim club.

While practice attendance is not mandatory, it is **STRONGLY** encouraged. Missing a practice will have swimmers miss out of acquiring new swim skills or potentially swimming their favorite stroke during the week. With 3 weekly practices, weekly attendance is either 100%, 66%, 33% or 0% ...

Please note that practice days & times are TBA. Once our schedule has been confirmed by the Strathcona County & Millennium Place staff it will be promptly sent out to members and posted on our website.

Equipment & SRAYS Team Gear

SRAYS Swim Suit & Swim Cap

A club-wide expectation for our competitive program members is that all swimmers **wear both these items at every swim practice.**

We are a team and we want to look like a team!

Please ensure your swimmer has both of these items packed in their swim bag prior to each practice. Having an extra swim cap is always a good idea in case one breaks.

Goggles

Goggles are a very important piece of equipment as the kids need to be able to see where they are swimming so lanes are as organized as possible.

Mini Ray swimmers are required to **wear goggles at every swim practice.**



Swimmers will be expected to wear their SRAYS team gear on the pool deck at all events & swim meets.

Please feel free to contact the SRAYS Equipment Manager at equipment@silverrays.ca with any equipment or SRAYS Team Gear questions.



Hard Hat Award Initiative



The Mini Rays will participate in the Strathcona County Swim Club's "HARD HAT AWARD" initiative. This award is inspired by the lesson taught in the book *"The Hard Hat for Kids: A story about 10 ways to be a great teammate"*. The book uses a very suitable acronym "WE BEFORE ME" to outline the 10 ways to be a great teammate.

The SRAYS coaching staff is committed to encouraging all swimmers to be a respectful, positive & uplifting influence on their teammate. We will all work together, swimmers & coaches, to ensure the environment we create at the pool allows swimmers to enjoy themselves, feel a part of the team and reach their full potential.

"Hard Hat Award" recipients will get their picture taken wearing the hard hat and it will be posted on our social media pages to let everyone know how awesome of a teammate they've been!

If all swimmers are striving to be the best teammate possible, I'm more than optimistic about how amazing the 2021/2022 swim season will be for Mini Rays & the Strathcona County Swim Club.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY: PLEASE CHECK YOUR EMAIL

Throughout the season the SRAYS coaching staff will send out emails with information, reminders and any changes to the practice schedule or upcoming events. It's important that you frequently check your email inbox and read through these emails so you are informed with what is happening.

Please ensure the email you provide Lara Nonay, SRAYS Registrar, is an account you check frequently when you register for the 2021/2022 swim season.