

Clovis Swim Club “Move-up” Policy

Promotion from one practice group to the next is a decision that rests solely with the coaching staff. “Move-ups” typically occur at the end of the Long Course season (August) or Short Course season (March), and/or the Coaching Staff’s discretion and final approval. This policy is spelled out to help parents understand the process and factors that shape how we determine the best placement for each athlete.

The coaching staff considers a variety of factors and not just the pre-requisite “sets” that give us an insight to see if the athlete can “keep up” with the next level group. Leadership ability, experience, understanding more complex instructions, among others are subjects that will be considered. This process is deemed to be most effective given that successful long term development of the person and athlete is the goal. Athletes who move up to a higher group are immediately subject to the new group’s financial commitment and training standards. The following is a rough outline of factors the coaches use when determining practice group “move-ups.”

1. Attendance. Attendance is one factor. At the early stages, it is important to attend regularly but not imperative for move-ups. Young athletes should be attending practice often enough to learn and master new skills. In higher levels of the program, it is an extremely important factor. In many cases it is the determining factor that shows an athlete’s desire to commit to a greater level of training and success.

2. Work ethic and attitude. Both of these attributes say a lot about an athlete’s goals and willingness to excel in this sport. An athlete who chooses not to push beyond a certain level is less likely to transition than an athlete who does not hesitate to work at a consistently high level. Attendance, attitude and work ethic combine to produce faster times as athlete’s progress through the program. The athlete’s ability to complete sets as instructed will also be a factor.

3. Performance and skill development. At an early stage in the age group program, a faster athlete may not move-up if basic skills cannot be mastered. “Fast swimming” at this level commonly is a result of early physical maturity or natural ability. Failure to learn how to better propel oneself through the water may result in a very short career. Perception of success will diminish as other kids physically catch-up and then surpass the early achiever in skill development.

4. Other factors. Other factors include: current size of team, athlete’s age, time management skills (the ability to juggle schoolwork and a training regimen without compromising either), leadership, current group cohesiveness, confidence level, coachability, and emotional maturity. Because so many factors are involved with a move-up, it is rare for a specific group of athletes to move up at the same rate. Each individual is “graded” on his or her own attributes. Consideration is given to what conditions will best serve the athlete’s swimming future and the group dynamic.

The long term development of the athlete is the most important aspect of coaching. The coaching staff has witnessed the development of a great number of athletes. They have seen what happens to those who move-up too early, seeking the prestige or benefits of a certain group before it is necessary. These athletes often leave the sport prematurely. The coaches have also observed that athletes who move in an appropriate manner, or in some cases move “late,” still have ample opportunity to succeed. The next time move-ups come around, be a good “Swimming Parent” and discuss your athlete’s development in an appointment with the coach. Ask questions and express your concerns, but in the end, trust in the coach’s decision to do what is best for your athlete. The Head Coach may have final say concerning move-ups.