



PLAT 2015-2016 PRACTICE GROUP STRUCTURE

Platinum Aquatics (PLAT) is structured with an Athlete Track System to meet the needs of the individual athlete. As PLAT athletes grow and improve, new challenges are presented and higher level skills are taught. The track system takes into consideration not only the athletes age, maturity and skills but also their goals and commitment levels. Each athlete will develop at their own rate. Our objective is to allow our athletes to arrive at their physical maturity with all the skills and the physical conditioning background needed to excel and be successful if they strive to perform at a higher level. The athletes will find appropriate fun in the sport, whether it be with skill-building games for newer athletes, meeting new friends with shared interests, or having the satisfaction of setting and achieving goals as older athletes.

Our practice groups are designed to follow progression "tracks." Athletes new to the sport, start on a Developmental track. Once athletes have developed a solid foundational skill base they will progress to either the Navy or Platinum track. The athletes will be moved through the tracks as they progress, grow, change their goals and commitment levels, and change in their ability relative to their peer group. Prospective PLAT athletes will be evaluated by a team coach who will ensure the most beneficial placement for the athlete to begin or continue their swimming endeavors. While teaching aquatics is what we offer, helping parents/families develop individuals who will make an impact in and out of the water is our primary goal.

PLAT First Stroke Track

- *Learn to Swim
- *Water Buddies
- *Pre-Competitive

Developmental Track

- Foundations Group
- *Age Group FIT
- Age Group

The Navy Track

- Texas Age Group
- *Junior/Pre-Senior FIT Group
- Junior Group

Platinum Track

- Pre-Senior
- Senior
- Senior National

Masters Track

TBA

*These Groups are all non-competitive groups and typically groups that swim for ten weeks twice per swim year.

The PLAT FIRST STROKE TRACK can be found by clicking on the drop down menu under the Group Descriptions tab on the front page of the web site.

The Developmental Track is designed for children ages 5 and up who have taken swim lessons, can complete at least one length of the pool (without stopping and without in water coach assistance) in freestyle and backstroke and are in the beginning stages of understanding swimming as a sport. The emphasis is placed on teaching children the basic skills of swimming, gaining confidence in the water and to view swimming as a fun life-long healthy activity.



Developmental Track Groups:

Foundations Group: 2 x 45 minute practices will be offered each week. These swimmers will work primarily on Backstroke and Freestyle. Breaststroke and Butterfly will be introduced. Teaching foundational swimming mechanics will be the primary emphasis. These swimmers will be encouraged to compete in team meets and a maximum of 3 LSC meets per quarter. The primary emphasis for this group is to introduce safe practice habits, ensure a solid foundation of swimming skills, to understand that swimming is not only fun but also great for a healthy lifestyle.

***Age Group FIT:** 2 x 1 1/4 hour practices will be offered each week. The primary emphasis of this group is to maintain exercise habits, prepare for summer league recreational swimming and have fun. These swimmers will work with the Age Group swimmers on a reduced attendance schedule. This is a 10 week session group that is offered in Fall and Spring sessions only. The swimmers in this group **do not compete** in meets.

Age Group: 4 x 1 1/4 hour practices will be offered each week, with 3 attended practices per week strongly preferred. These swimmers will move into the process of refinement of the four competitive strokes. Drill and skill work will continue to be developed, the beginning stages of age appropriate training sets and dry land activity will be introduced. Swimmers will be encouraged to compete in all team meets as well as a maximum of 3 LSC meets per quarter. **Age appropriate swimmers within this group may be invited to attend a Junior Group practice. (These decisions will be made at the coach's discretion based on readiness of the swimmer, lane space demands of the other groups and staffing availability.)*

The Navy Track is designed for swimmers ages 10 and up. Groups within this track are designed for athletes who swim for social reasons, may mature later, or excel in the water and are committed to swimming as their primary sport. These groups will continue to focus on the enjoyment of the sport, while continuing stroke development and understanding why a solid foundation of proper swimming habits is important. Implementing IM and endurance based training sets with proper stroke technique/refinement becomes an integral part for progress towards the Platinum Track. These groups will begin the process of understanding dry land activity and how it applies to swimming.

Navy Track Groups:

Texas Age Group: 5 x 1 1/4 + hour practices will be offered each week, with a minimum of 4 attended practices per week preferred with Saturday practice "strongly" preferred as one of the weekly practices, excluding meet weekends. Athletes within this group range in ages beginning at age 9 who are close to Texas Age Group Swimming (TAGS) time standards. The primary goal with these athletes is to continue working on stroke mechanics. Drill and skill work will continue to be refined and built upon. Introduction of endurance base work load and IM base sets will be emphasized. Age appropriate dry land activity will continue to be developed and built into practices 2 to 3 times per week at different times of the year. Athletes will be encouraged to compete in any inter-squad meets as well as a maximum of 2 LSC or travel meet per month. In addition these athletes will be encouraged to attend their highest eligible level championship meets. **Athletes at Elite level (ex. AA or higher time standards) 10 years and older who are in the process of aging up to 11 years during a season, may be invited to attend a Junior group Saturday practice, (at the coach's discretion) based on the athlete's readiness, lane space demands of other groups and staffing availability.*



Junior/Pre-Senior FIT Group: 3 x 1 ½ + hour practices will be offered each week. These athletes will continue to work on stroke development with each one of the four competitive strokes. Dry land activity may sometimes be a component of this group whenever working with the Junior or higher groups. The primary emphasis of this group is to maintain healthy exercise habits and prepare for summer league. These swimmers will work with the Junior Group swimmers on a reduced attendance schedule. This is a 10 week session group that is offered in Fall and Spring sessions only. The swimmers in this group **do not compete** in meets.

Junior Group: 5 x 1 ½ + hour practices will be offered each week, with a minimum of 4 attended practices per week preferred with Saturday practice “strongly” preferred as one of the weekly practices, excluding meet weekends. These athletes will continue to work on stroke development with each one of the four competitive strokes. In addition to drill and skill work, challenging training sets will be part of all practices. Additionally, challenging dry land activity will be an integral component of this group. Athletes will be strongly encouraged to compete in all team meets as well as all LSC, team travel meets and or highest level championship meets. * *Elite level 10 years and older athletes may be invited to attend a Pre-Senior group practice (at the coach’s discretion) based on the athlete’s readiness, lane space demands of other groups and staffing availability.*

The Platinum Track: is for athletes ages 13 and up who view swimming as their primary competitive sport, have higher performance-oriented goals, may have matured earlier and demonstrate their commitment toward swimming. This track focuses on building speed and endurance, improving stroke technique, and preparing pre-high school athletes as well as high school/collegiate athletes who have achieved state level (high school/Sectional or higher) time standards, or swimmers ages 15 and over with multiple USA Swimming Motivational "A" or higher time standards. These groups focus on specific training and working towards their highest level swimming goals. **Please note: the groups in this track have more stringent recommendations for attendance and competition.**

Platinum Groups:

Pre-Senior: 6 x 2+ hours offered each week (5 practices minimum each week strongly preferred) with Saturday practice “strongly” preferred as one of the weekly practices, excluding meet weekends. These athletes from time to time will be asked to attend double practices, typically during holidays and summer. This group is primarily for elite level athletes ages 12 years or older. IM and endurance base sets will be emphasized. Additionally, challenging dry land activity will be an integral component of this group. Athletes will be strongly encouraged to compete in all team meets as well as all LSC, team travel meets and or highest level championship meets. * *13 years and older athletes may be invited to attend a Senior National group practice (at the coach’s discretion) based on the athlete’s readiness, lane space demands of other groups and staffing availability.*

Senior Group: 6 X 2¼ + hour practices offered each week (5 practices Platinum Aquatics practices plus AM high school practices each week strongly preferred) with a 2 ¾ hour Saturday practice strongly preferred as one of the weeks primary practices. These athletes from time to time will be asked to attend double practices, typically during holidays and summer. This group is primarily for elite level athlete’s ages 13+ years of age. IM and endurance base sets will be emphasized. Additionally, challenging dry land activity will be an integral component of this group. Athletes will be strongly encouraged to compete in all team meets as well as all LSC, team travel



meets and or highest level championship meets. * 13 years and older athletes may be invited to attend a Senior National group practice (at the coach's discretion) based on the athletes readiness, lane space demands of other groups and staffing availability.

Senior National: 6 x 2 1/2 + hour practices offered each week (6 practices minimum each week strongly preferred) with Saturday practice as one of the weekly practices, including meet weekends (if Saturday meet session is PM). These athletes will be asked to attend 2 double practices each week during specific training periods each season, typically holidays and summer training. (7 practices minimum are strongly encouraged each week during holidays and summer training periods.) This group is primarily for elite level athletes, ages 14+ years of age and have higher performance-oriented goals. These athletes may have matured at an early age and may demonstrate a higher commitment level toward swimming. (e.g., swimmers with sectional level or higher time standards.) Challenging dry land activity will be an integral component of this group. Athletes in this group must compete in all team meets as well as all LSC, team travel meets and or highest level championship meets.

Masters Track: *This group has not yet been formed and start dates, times and locations will be determined, hopefully in the near future.*

Masters swimming is for adults age 21 and older. This group is oriented first towards participation and lifelong fitness, with competition in Masters meets a motivating but secondary goal. The group is diverse and workouts are written to suit the ability and interests of novice adults with no prior experience, former elite competitors, tri-athletes, and includes parents of children in other PLAT groups.

Group Changes: Group changes/moves for athletes usually occur after the end of season championships meets, twice per year. However, they can also occur as appropriate throughout the year as determined by the coaching staff. For some athletes there will be a "cross-over" transition period during the move-up where the swimmer will remain with their primary group but attend a few practices each week with the new group they will join until they adjust to the new workload. Periodically, some swimmers may be invited by special request to attend a higher group practice. This must be a mutual decision between all staff members involved and the PLAT head coach.