

## **Ripples**

### *Description:*

Ripples is the beginning group for joining the Waves. The average age of swimmers in this group is between 5 – 7 years. When trying out for this level, we look for kids who have a grasp on backstroke, and an understanding of freestyle and side breathing. It does not have to be effective side breathing as long as the child has the strength to successfully do drills, such as kicking with a kickboard, which will help facilitate the learning of side breathing. In this group, swimmers will learn skills such as streamlines, backstroke and freestyle while gaining the endurance to do all successfully to prepare for a competitive environment. Swimmers will also be introduced to Breaststroke and Dolphin kick.

### *Expectations:*

The Ripples group has practices three days a week, and swimmers are expected to attend all three in order to continue progress with the skills learned in that group. They are not expected to buy any equipment such as kickboards or fins. Swimmers are expected to attend one home meet as soon as they feel comfortable and confident to do so (after a discussion with the coach). They are not expected to travel to away meets. In order to move up to the next group, Bronze, swimmers have to demonstrate effective backstroke and freestyle, and the endurance to maintain excellent technique for multiple lengths of each.

## **Bronze**

### *Description:*

The Bronze level is the second group, and is the next level up from Ripples. The average age of swimmers in this group is between 5 – 10 years. However, skill level is the main determinant. When trying out for this level, we look for swimmers who have a solid grasp of freestyle and backstroke with a strong kick. Swimmers may or may not have a basic understanding of butterfly or breaststroke. In this level, swimmers will become legal in all four of the competitive strokes, and will learn other important skills such as dives and turns.

The Bronze group is divided into halves based on skill level. The first group demonstrates competency in freestyle and backstroke but little to no experience with butterfly or breaststroke. Swimmers will learn butterfly and breaststroke while gaining endurance in freestyle and backstroke, and learning the correct turns for each. Once swimmers have become legal in all four strokes, they will progress to the second group where swimmers will learn the more technical aspects of the strokes while focusing primarily on gaining endurance for competition and continuing in the next group.

### *Expectations:*

The Bronze group offers practice five days a week. It is highly recommended to attend at least three to four practices a week to continue progress and gain the endurance necessary to potentially continue in the Silver group. Swimmers are expected to purchase a set of fins, a mesh bag, and bring a water bottle to every practice. Swimmers are also expected and

encouraged to attend all home meets and well as the occasional away meet. In order to move up to the Silver group, swimmers must demonstrate legal strokes at swim meets and be able to swim a 100 IM legally. They must also demonstrate consistent attendance, and the endurance and strength to successfully transition to the Silver group.

## **Silver**

### *Descriptions:*

The Silver group is the next level after the Bronze group. The average age of the swimmers in this group is typically 8 – 12 years. When trying out for this level, we look for a firm grasp of all four strokes, as well as a level of endurance and strength or the potential to gain said endurance of strength effectively. In this group, swimmers will begin practices geared towards training in order to gain endurance in each stroke while working on the more technical aspects of each stroke. Swimmers are also expected to learn about intervals and how to swim effectively in a lane. The main goal of this group is to achieve excellent technique while developing a sense of competitiveness. In this group, swimmers will solidify all four strokes and work towards bettering their times at every meet.

### *Expectations:*

The Silver group is offered five practices per week. Swimmers are expected to attend at least three to four practices a week in order to maintain progress. Swimmers are also expected to purchase a set of fins, a mesh bag, a kickboard (optional), and bring a water bottle to each practice. Swimmers are expected and encouraged to attend all of the home meets, and highly encouraged to attend a couple of away meets per season. Swimmers are encouraged to know their personal times for reference during practices. In order to progress to the next level, the Gold level, swimmers must demonstrate consistent attendance, excellent work ethic, a positive attitude during practice, and the desire to continue their swimming career at the next competitive level.

## **Gold**

### *Descriptions:*

The Gold group is the next level up from the Silver group. The average age of swimmer in this group is 10-13. In order to move into the Gold group swimmers must show that they wish to be competitive in swimming and a desire to set goals to continue swimming in the future. The focus of the Gold group is gaining endurance and learning to be competitive in the sport. Athletes should know their times for practice and learn what pace is and how to find pace for a race. The Gold group also focuses on goal setting which means attending practices and meets regularly. Practices are typically 3,500-4,000 yards and will have warm up sets, kick sets and main sets every practice.

### *Expectations:*

The Gold group is offered five practices per week. Swimmers are expected to attend four to five practices a week in order to become comfortable with the training they are doing. Swimmers are expected to come to practice every day with a mesh bag, fins, a kickboard (optional), pull equipment (optional), and water bottle. The Gold group should be setting goals and attending meets on a regular basis throughout the year. Missed meets and practice should be discussed with the coach beforehand. In order to progress to the Senior level, swimmers must demonstrate consistent attendance, excellent work ethic, a positive attitude and a desire to step up their swimming.

### **Senior**

#### *Description:*

The Senior group is the highest group level the Waves offer. The athletes in this group have committed to the sport of swimming and train to compete at an elite level. Many of our swimmers train to compete at a college level. Senior Athletes practice 2 hours a day, 6 days a week with dryland practices three days a week (dryland only in North Spokane).

#### *Expectations:*

Senior Athletes are expected to attend all meets and practices throughout the year. Missed meets and practices MUST be discussed with the coach before the missed date. Their season and goals are planned around the winter and summer championship seasons with travel meets to Junior Nationals, Senior Sectionals and Western Zones. Moreover the seniors are expected to be leaders on the team. Their behavior is closely monitored by their peers and coaches to encourage positive team relationships. Expectations for seniors are spelled out at group meetings throughout the year.