



## **SSC Practice Groups**

### **Pre Team**

Basic skills for entry into this group: - knowledge of freestyle and backstroke and ability to swim 25 yards of each stroke without stopping. This group places a heavy emphasis on legal stroke mechanics for all four strokes. Average age for this group is 5-9 years old, each swimmer is afforded the opportunity to swim in age and ability appropriate swim meets.

### **Mini Team Blue and Gold**

Basic skills for entry into this group: - knowledge of all 4 strokes and ability to swim 25 yards of each competitive stroke without stopping. This group places a heavy emphasis on legal stroke mechanics, starts and turns and is an introduction to competitive swimming. Average age for this group is 7-10 years old, each swimmer is afforded the opportunity to swim in age and ability appropriate swim meets.

### **Developmental**

Skills for entry into this group: - the ability to legally swim 50 yards of free, back, breast, and butterfly. Practices focus on technique, starts, turns and small amount of conditioning. This group continues to place emphasis on legal stroke mechanics, start, turns, stroke drills, and an introduction to swimming “sets”, which is building a stronger basic understanding and fundamental swimming foundation. Average age for this group is 7-12 years old, each swimmer is afforded the opportunity to swim in age and ability appropriate swim meets. Participation in meets is encouraged.

### **Bronze**

Skills for entry into this group: - the ability to legally swim 50 yards of butterfly, and 100 yards of free, back and breaststroke with legal turns and finishes. Each swimmer must display an adequate level of fitness conditioning which is evaluated by practice consistency, effort level and meet participation. Swimmers must display a working knowledge (or ability to learn) stroke drills and kicks frequently used by the SSC Coaching Staff during practices. This working knowledge not only includes execution of the stroke drill but understanding of why the drill is being performed. Swimmers in this group should display the ability to understand and execute swimming sets and a rudimentary knowledge of reading the pace clock. A strong technical foundation should already be established and executed consistently during practices. A year round commitment, consistent practice attendance and participation in meets is strongly encouraged. Swimmers in this group display the desire to continue thru the SSC competitive team progression in an effort to achieve a higher level of swimming success and longevity within the sport.

### **Senior Silver**

Skills for entry into this group: - the ability to legally swim 100 yard of butterfly, and 200 yards of IM, free, back and breaststroke, with legal turns and finishes. Swimmers must have competed in USS swim meets and have established times in a variety of swimming events. Swimmers must have a foundation of aerobic conditioning; display a working knowledge of stroke and kicking drills frequently used by the SSC Coaching Staff during practices. This working knowledge not only includes execution of the stroke drill but understanding of why the drills are being performed. Swimmers in this group should display the ability to understand and execute swimming sets, the knowledge of reading the pace clock, keeping time, and keeping track of repetitions as outlined by the SSC coaching staff. An advanced technical foundation should already be established and executed consistently during a swimmers current practice group. This technical

foundation includes (but not limited to) streamline, body and head position, consistent kick, consistent breathing patterns, legal turns and transitions, shimmer kicks and underwater swimming. Swimmers should be able to execute a coaches instructions and able to complete a 1.5 hour training session which includes dry-land, stroke drills, kicking, aerobic and anaerobic conditioning. Swimmers in this group will be introduced to strategies of racing and competitive swimming and must be able to train consistently, and willing to develop leadership skills and display strong character towards younger members of the SSC program. A year round commitment, consistent practice attendance and participation in meets is expected.

### **Senior Silver Plus**

Skills for entry into this group: - all of the above listed skills. This group will begin to work with our Senior Gold coaches and execute advanced drills. Swimmers in this group are working on an advanced level of training with the intention of preparing for Senior Gold. Swimmers in this group display the desire to continue thru the SSC competitive team progression in an effort to achieve a higher level of swimming success, longevity within the sport and the desire to swim at top level regional, zone, and national competitions.

### **Senior Gold**

Swimmers in this group should be truly dedicated to the sport. It is structured to produce outstanding swimmers and leaders within the community thru intense training and competition at regional, national and international levels. Swimmers in this group should have a strong technical foundation, advanced physical/aerobic conditioning, knowledge and execution of race strategies as prescribed by the SSC Coaching staff and the ability to complete 2-3 hour training sessions. These are the most dedicated and skilled swimmers on the club. The schedule is meant to challenge a swimmers practice standard and the commitment is a privilege. The SSC coaching staff emphasizes the most up-to-date training techniques, race strategies and preparation for competition. Placement into this group is by the Head Coach with input from the entire SSC Coaching Staff only.

### **Movement between Groups**

Group movement and placements are discussed and determined by the SSC Coaching Staff. It is an evaluation process which includes a combination of factors, not one but all of these factors are weighted and taken into account. Factors may include : current ability, athletic ability, physical maturity, emotional maturity, intellectual maturity, technical skills in all 4 competitive strokes, turns, transitions, underwaters and starts, capacity for aerobic conditioning, understanding/execution of various drills, ability to understand and execute the details of the practice sets as prescribed by the coaching staff, attendance and personal goals.