



Parent Handbook



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Extraordinary Athletes
Extraordinary Swim Club

Overview

Purpose

River Valley Swim Club (RVSC) is a competitive swim team seeking to create a respectful, cohesive, & vibrant competitive swimming opportunity for our athletes & families which enable all of its members to reach their highest potential.

Competitive swim club

The River Valley Dragons is a non profit USA sanctioned swim club, run by its elected Board of Directors. Board members are parents of swimmers willing to donate their time & their efforts to develop & to maintain a well-rounded competitive swim team. Team member tuition includes insurance coverage for all swimmers & staff members required for us to participate in sanctioned USA swimming practices & meets. We are dependent upon tuition fees, fund-raisers & corporate sponsors to satisfy all of our expenses. The River Valley Swim Club coaching staff works directly under the guidelines of the River Valley Swim Club Board of Directors.

Swim Program

AG 1

This is an introduction to competitive swimming for young people generally ages 8 years & under. Participants will learn the skills necessary to compete in the sport of swimming such as working with teammates, following directions & listening to the coaches, learning & smiling a lot! Proper technique of the four competitive strokes is stressed. Practices are held 3 days per week, Tuesdays 6:30 - 7:30pm at Chisago Lakes high school swim pool, Thursday 6:30 - 7:30pm at Osceola middle school swim pool & Saturdays 9:15-10:15am at Chisago Lakes high school swim pool.

An AG1 participant should

- swim a form of the front crawl or back crawl for the length of the pool (25 yards) without stopping & without the use of aids (pool wall, lane lines).
- have a comfort level in the deep end.
- should be comfortable in a group setting away from parents &/or caretakers.

AG 2

Generally swimmers ages 7 to 10 years who will receive training in four competitive strokes with emphasis on refining technique & increasing stamina. AC 2 swimmers will learn the skills necessary to compete in the sport of swimming such as working with teammates, following directions & listening to the coaches, learning & smiling a lot! Practices are offered 7-8pm Mondays & Wednesdays 6:30-7:45pm & Saturday 10:15-11:30am at Chisago Lakes high school swim pool. AG2 will develop & improve all four strokes by learning & performing stroke-specific drills during practices. Racing strategies & techniques will be introduced. Interval training, stroke turns, starts, & competitive readiness will be emphasized.

AG2 should be able to

- legally swim & kick 50 yards in 2 different strokes without any stopping/assistance
- C times in 2 events; one must be a 100 yard/meter event & a B time in one event
- familiarity of the other competitive strokes

AG 3

Generally 9 year olds & older swimmers. AG3 will develop & improve all four strokes by learning & performing stroke-specific drills during practices. They will also excel at the skills necessary to compete in the sport of swimming such as working with teammates, listening to coaches, learning, disciplined work ethic & smiling a lot! Racing strategies & techniques will be routinely practiced & more advanced strategies, stroke drills, & tactics will be introduced. Practices are offered Mondays 6:15-7:30pm, Tuesdays 6:30-7:30pm, Wednesday 6:15-7:30pm at Chisago Lakes high school swim pool & Thursdays 6:30-7:30pm at Osceola middle school swim pool.

AG3 should meet the following criteria:

- swim & kick 100 yards in 3 different strokes without any stopping/assistance
- understand the mechanics of butterfly
- B or C times in 2 different stroke events; one must be a 100 yard/meter event
- ability to swim a 2,500 - 3,500 yard practice

AG 4

Generally 12 year olds & older swimmers who will train advanced skills & techniques in the 4 competitive strokes in shorter & longer distances. They will also excel at the skills necessary to compete in the sport of swimming such as working with teammates, listening to coaches, learning, disciplined work ethic & smiling a lot! Advanced stroke techniques & racing strategies will be practiced. Advanced drills & training methods will be introduced & practiced. This level is designed to give the swimmer a positive & technically sound experience. Continuation of the enjoyment of the sport coupled with a physical conditioning designed to prepare & improve competitive skill & competitive times. Practices are offered Mondays 6:15-8pm, Tuesdays 6:30-8pm, Wednesday 6:15-8pm at Chisago Lakes high school swim pool & Thursdays 6:30-8pm at Osceola middle school swim pool.

AG4 should meet the following criteria:

- legally swim & kick 100 yards in all 4 competitive strokes without any stopping/assistance
- B times in 2 different stroke events; one must be a 100 yard/meter event
- ability to swim a 3,000 - 4,000 yard practice

AG 5

Generally 14 year olds & older swimmers committed to the sport of competitive swimming as one of his/her main sports & social structures. AG5 will excel at the skills necessary to compete in the sport of swimming such as working with teammates, listening to coaches, learning, disciplined & dedicated work ethic & smiling a lot! Advanced stroke techniques, drills, & racing strategies will be routinely practiced. This level is designed to give the committed swimmer a positive & technically sound competitive experience. Continuation of the enjoyment of the sport with a more dedicated & determined conditioning program to compete at the advanced level. Practices are offered Mondays 6:15-8pm, Tuesdays 6:30-8pm, Wednesday 6:15-8pm at Chisago Lakes high school swim pool & Thursdays 6:30-8pm at Osceola middle school swim pool.

AG5 should meet the following criteria:

- A times in 2 different stroke events; one must be a 100 yard/meter event
- ability to swim a 4,000 - 5,000 yard practice

Group placement is at a coach's discretion.

General information

Equipment needed

- all groups one piece practice suit, goggles, cap for long hair, water bottle
- groups 4, & 5 optional: TYR cross blade fins, paddles & competitive swim snorkels

Parental/Guardian responsibility

Your help is greatly needed & appreciated. PLEASE GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR CLUB!!!

- Please ensure that practice is being held before you leave your child at the pool. If weather forces the respective school district to close or after school activities are cancelled, there will be no swim practice that evening.
- Please pick swimmers up promptly at the end of practice.
- Practices are open for your observation. Please remember that the pool area is warm & that the coaches are focusing on the kids. Dress for the heat & ask your questions or make your comments after practice or via email.
- Consider volunteering for one of the club committees.
- Actively participate in team fund-raising events.

Communication

We rely on the website and emails as a primary method of communication. Team related news, events, & other information is routinely posted on the website & emailed to members. Please check the Dragon Website & your email regularly.

Monetary payments:

Use of our on-line system is highly encouraged. If you wish to use cash or a check for payments, please give those payments to a coach or a board member at practices.

Competitive Swimming

Team swimsuits

Team swimsuits are generally ordered at the beginning of the season. This cost is not included in tuition fees, but we make every attempt to keep it reasonable. Team suits should be worn at swim meets & should not be worn for practice. Team suits are of a lycra material that does not hold up well under heavy wear. Suits of 'endurance' or a higher percentage mix of nylon or polyester material are best for practices. Any one-piece swimsuit can be worn for practice. Team meet suits are not mandatory, but we highly encourage that you purchase one.

Meets

Meet fees are extra & vary. Many meets are two day offerings, & participation is voluntary. It is not necessary to participate both days of a meet & generally younger swimmers events are 1/2 day & older swimmers events are the other 1/2 day. Transportation to & from meets is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. If you cannot provide transportation but would like your child to participate, try to find a ride for your child with another family attending the event. Coaches cannot transport any swimmers to a meet.

Operations

Parent Meetings

Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend occasional informational meetings held at registration & periodically throughout the season. Important issues are brought up for discussion, information is given & input is sought from you to help improve your team. Your ideas, suggestions & support are needed at these meetings to keep the team working together & running smoothly.

Board of Directors

The following parents are your Board of Directors

Steve Nichols – President
Chris Wondra – Vice President
Paul Cruz – Treasurer
Chris Lundberg – Secretary
Frank Johnson – At Large
Jessica Patrick – At Large

Team Coaches

The following are your coaching team

Ellen Heath - Head Coach
Danielle Berg
Hallie Duethman
Lily Meierhoff
Ed Wakefield
Meghan Phelps
Amanda Brett

Banquet

At the end of each season, a swim banquet is scheduled. Swimmers are recognized for their accomplishments at this time. It is one of the few times swimmers can be seen dressed up & not soaking wet! We've held pot-lucks, picnics & had banquets at other venues. There may be a charge. More information to follow as the time draws near.

General FAQ's

Does my child have to be an Olympic swimmer to join the RVSC?

No, but we do expect a minimum skill level equal to that of an intermediate swimmer through recreational lessons. An AG 1 must be able to swim a form of the front crawl for the length of the pool (25 yards) without stopping & without the use of aids. Depending on the age group of the child, they may be expected to swim 50 yards for some events. An AG 1 should be able to go underwater for short periods of time & have a comfort level in the deep end.

Does my child have to be at every practice & meet?

The RVSC does not have an attendance policy for practices or meets, but if a child wants to swim in a meet they must attend at least one practice the week prior. Consistent participation is necessary to better develop skills & proficiency. We ask that the staff be advised if a swimmer will be absent from a scheduled practice. Our fee payment policy does not allow for partial attendance or discounted membership fees. We strongly suggest each swimmer attend as many practices as possible.

What should my child expect from practice?

Depending upon what age group the child is placed in, he/she will be exposed to a wide variety of water drills which allow the swimmer to learn & practice the fundamentals of a stroke, turn or start. More experienced swimmers will be training for endurance as well as practicing instructional drills, thus swimming many more laps. Younger group swimmers will be doing fewer laps & more individual drills, having hands on instruction & demonstrations. Similar abilities within a group will be placed in the same lanes to accommodate uninterrupted workouts.

How can parents get involved?

We have a list of volunteer positions that are vital to the operation of the team. Any parent wishing to find out more about how they can help, should let a coach or Board of Director member know of your interest. Even though some coordinator positions may be filled, any additional help is welcome. Parent volunteers help us offer a better team program!

How many members in the RVSC?

This is a team environment in which 30-50 swimmers may be in the pool area at one time. Qualified staff will be on deck at all times. Practices are customized to the age and ability of swimmers.

Welcome to the River Valley Swim Club!