



## **SSC Practice Groups**

### **Pre Team and Mini Team should review the Mini Seahawk Document**

#### **Developmental**

The skills for entry into this group include all the skills mentioned for the Mini Team and the ability to legally swim 50 yards of freestyle, back, breast and butterfly. This group continues to place emphasis on legal stroke mechanics, starts, turns, stroke drills and an introduction to swimming “sets”. Swimmers will learn to read the clock, swimming etiquette, more advanced turns, stroke drills. Swimmers must be able to behave in a large group setting and have age appropriate listening skills

All Developmental swimmers have to register for USA Swimming and are eligible to swim in age and ability appropriate meets. Average age for this group is 8-10 years old. Swimmers are usually in this group 1-2 years.

#### **Developmental Plus**

The skills for entry into this group include all the skills mentioned for the Developmental group and additionally the ability to legally swim 50 yards of freestyle, back, breast, butterfly, 100 IM and 100 free with legal strokes, turns, transitions and finishes. SSC likes to see these swimmers with 50 free, 50 back, 50 breast, 50 fly and 100 IM times in the USA Swimming times database. Swimmers should have a working knowledge and ability to execute stroke drills, kick with and without a board, starts, swimming “sets”, reading the clock, and circle swimming. This group continues to place emphasis on technical stroke drills, legal stroke mechanics, starts, turns, and introduces a basic physical training component.

All Developmental Plus swimmers have to register for USA Swimming and should have an eagerness to swim in meets. Swimmers who are above the average age and do not meet the group specific skills would benefit from private lessons for continued growth. Swimmers are usually in this group 1-2 years but can exceed this time if age appropriate.

#### **Bronze**

Skills necessary for entry begin with all the requirements for the previous group levels (Pre-Team, Mini Team, Developmental and Developmental Plus). The swimmer should also display the ability to legally swim 100 freestyle, 100 backstroke, 100 breaststroke, 50 butterfly and 100 IM. Previous competitive swimming experiences either with SSC or another USA Swimming Club recommended with times in 50 free, 100 free, 50 back, 100 back, 50 breast, 50 fly and 100 IM times in the USA Swimming times database. Swimmers in this group are expected to be mature enough to practice in a large group environment, take ownership and accountability for practice behavior, practice dedicated attendance, attend meets and own their swimming journey. Swimmers should display respect for teammates and coaches and be able to communicate effectively.

All Bronze swimmers have to register for USA Swimming and should have an eagerness to swim in meets. Average age for this group is 10-13 years old. Swimmers who are above the average age and do not meet the group specific skills would benefit from private lessons for continued growth. Swimmers who are within the age range and do not meet the group specific skill parameters would benefit from continued development through remaining in the Developmental Plus group and additional instruction through private lessons. Swimmers are usually in this group 1-3 years.

## **Silver**

Skills necessary for entry begin with all the requirements for the previous group levels (Pre-Team, Mini Team, Developmental, Developmental Plus and Bronze). The swimmer should also display the ability to legally swim 200 freestyle, 200 backstroke, 200 breaststroke, 100 butterfly and 200 IM. Previous competitive swimming experiences either with SSC or another USA Swimming Club recommended with times in 50 free, 100 free, 200 free, 50 back, 100 back, 50 breast, 100 breast, 50 fly, 100 IM and 200 IM times in the USA Swimming times database. Swimmers in this group are expected to be mature enough to practice in a large group environment, take ownership and accountability for practice behavior, practice attendance, meets and their swimming journey. Swimmers should have a foundation of aerobic conditioning, be able to execute swimming sets 12-30 minutes in length, be able to complete a 1.5-hour training session without injury accommodations or repeatedly stopping or getting out of the pool during sets. Swimmers should display respect for teammates and coaches, display strong character and be able to communicate effectively. A year round commitment, consistent practice attendance and participation in meets is expected.

All Silver swimmers have to register for USA Swimming and should have an eagerness to swim in meets. Average age for this group is 11-13 years old. Swimmers who are above the average age and do not meet the group specific skills would benefit from private lessons for continued growth.

## **Silver Plus**

Skills necessary for entry begin with all the requirements for the previous group levels (Pre-Team, Mini Team, Developmental, Developmental Plus, Bronze, Silver). Swimmers should have a foundation of aerobic conditioning, must have the physical competence to handle increased workload under increased intensity, internal motivation towards improvement, ability to communicate collaboratively with the coaching staff, be able to execute swimming sets 30-60 minutes in length, be able to complete a 2-hour training session without injury accommodations or repeatedly stopping or getting out of the pool during sets. There should be a high level of mastery of details and foundational skills and drills. Swimmers should display respect for teammates, SSC staff and coaches while displaying strong character. A year round commitment, consistent SSC practice attendance and participation in SSC team effort meets is expected.

All Silver Plus swimmers have to register for USA Swimming. Average age for this group is 12-15 years old. Swimmers who are above the average age and do not meet the group specific skills would benefit from private lessons for continued growth.

## **Fitness**

Skills necessary for entry begin with all the requirements for the previous group levels (Pre-Team, Mini Team, Developmental, Developmental Plus, Bronze, Silver). This group is primarily for swimmers who swim in high/middle school and cannot commit to SSC's full training program. Swimmers will be eligible to swim in meets with the understanding of their reduced SSC programming workload. Swimmers should have a foundation of aerobic conditioning, must have the physical competence to handle increased workload under increased intensity, internal motivation towards improvement, ability to communicate collaboratively with the coaching staff, and be able to execute swimming sets 30-60 minutes in length.

All SENIOR FITNESS swimmers have to register for USA Swimming. Average age for this group is 13 and over. The programming for this group is designed to accommodate athletes who may do multiple sports or have other obligations preventing them from fully committing to the SSC upper level training groups.

## **Gold**

Skills necessary for entry begin with all the requirements for the previous group levels (Pre-Team, Mini Team, Developmental, Developmental Plus, Bronze, Silver, Silver Plus). Swimmers should have a foundation of aerobic conditioning, must have the physical competence to handle increased workload under increased intensity, internal motivation towards improvement, ability to communicate collaboratively with the coaching

staff, be able to execute swimming sets 30-60 minutes in length, be able to complete a 2-hour training session without injury accommodations or repeatedly stopping or getting out of the pool during sets. There should be a display of high level mastery of details and foundational skills and drills with an understanding of the purpose behind skill and drills. Swimmers should display respect for teammates, facilities, SSC staff and coaches while displaying strong positive character. A year round commitment, consistent SSC practice attendance and participation in SSC team effort meets is expected.

All Gold swimmers have to register for USA Swimming. Average age for this group is 13 and over. This group requires swimmers and parents to have a belief and understanding of the SSC program and training philosophy while maintaining a collaborative coach-athlete-parent relationship, respecting boundaries and the professional knowledge of our coaching staff.

### **Gold Elite**

Skills necessary for entry begin with all the requirements for the previous group levels (Pre-Team, Mini Team, Developmental, Developmental Plus, Bronze, Silver, Silver Plus, Gold). Swimmers should have a foundation of aerobic conditioning, must have the physical competence to handle increased workload under increased intensity, internal motivation towards improvement, ability to communicate collaboratively with the coaching staff, be able to execute swimming sets 30-60 minutes in length, be able to complete a 2-3-hour training session without injury accommodations, repeatedly stopping or getting out of the pool during sets. There should be a display of high level mastery of details and foundational skills and drills with an understanding of the purpose behind skill and drills. Swimmers should display respect for teammates, competitors, facilities, SSC staff and coaches while displaying strong positive character. A year round commitment, consistent SSC practice attendance and participation in SSC team effort meets is expected.

All Elite swimmers have to register for USA Swimming. Average age for this group is 16 and over but consideration will be given to swimmers who hold a NCSA qualifying standard (making them eligible for the SSC National Team). This group requires swimmers and parents to have a belief and understanding of the SSC program and training philosophy while maintaining a collaborative coach-athlete-parent relationship, respecting boundaries and the professional knowledge of our coaching staff. Swimmers will display a commitment to the SSC program by attending practices regularly (80% practice attendance expectation unless an alternate plan is discussed with the SSC Elite Performance Coach).

### **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, under waters 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.