



Beginner Swimmer Policy

On registration day, all new 6 and under swimmers will sign up for the swim team. These new swimmers will be swim tested prior to the first team practice. If the new swimmer is ready to join the team they will begin practicing with the returning 6 and under practice group. If the new swimmer needs reinforcement of skills prior to joining the returning 6 and under practice group they can join the Otter Pups program. This program is designed to improve the swimmers existing skills so the swimmer can successfully and safely participate on the team. During the first few weeks of practice,

these children will be broken up into small groups to work on survival skills in the water as well as entry level stroke development. This will enable them to feel more confident about swimming independently and will ensure they have basic survival skills to be used in water over their head.

Upon completion of the Otter Pups program the swimmer will again be swim tested (last session before the Red/Black meet). The children who are able to swim 25 yards, without any aid from an instructor, will then join the 6 and under practice group and swim in meets. The children who are still unsure about swimming this distance independently are encouraged to continue working on their swimming skills through outside swim lessons with the goal of trying again next swim season.

These requirements were agreed upon based on requirement set by the YMCA for all their pools. We appreciate everyone's cooperation and understanding in implementing this new policy as we believe that this is in the best interest not only of the team but of each individual swimmer.

FAQ

Q: Why 25 yards if the children only have to swim 15 yards in a meet?

A: It is true that TSA only requires 6 and under swimmers to swim 15 yards but in practice they need to be able to swim a full lap of the pool. Although a Jr. Coach will be in a lane with the children, they cannot have hands on all children at all times, therefore the children need to be able to get to the side with no assistance or float on their back. This is a basic survival skill that all swimmers need to master.

Q: Define "swim independently".

A: The child can use any stroke or "movement" necessary to get them down the pool without being held or supported. They can hold onto the rope to rest but cannot use the rope to propel themselves. They will need to complete 1 full lap of the pool and float on their back to qualify.

Q: Where can I register for swim lessons?

A: Links to area swim lesson programs can be found at <http://www.ocotters.org/lessonlinks.asp>. Also, the swim team coaches offer lessons. Please contact them for rates and availability. All lessons will have to be individually arranged with an instructor of your choice.

Q: Who decides when my child is ready if they are not registered at the beginning of the season?

A: The Parents can ask, at any time, to have their child retested, but the final decision will be at the Head Coaches discretion. The retest will have to be arranged outside of practice time.