

02/01/2021 Team Updates

Hey Everybody,

It has been awhile since my last update and there is a lot to cover in this email. Here is the news for the upcoming season.

Team Announcements:

To start off with I wanted to announce that the team name has been changed from Oakdale Swim Team (OST) to Oakdale Aquatics (OA). The reason for this is to have our team more inclusive of all aquatic programs (this will become clearer further in the email).

Gators will now be called Pre-Gold.

We are raising the registration rates for all groups. Details are further down in each program's update.

Pool/Practice Update:

To start, we will not be resuming practices March 1st, like originally planned. The new start date is tentatively Monday, April 5th for all programs. At this time we are planning on starting at the Plunge (the city of Oakdale pool). By June the high school pool should be back open again and we will be using both pools. If the high school pool is not open by June, then all practice groups will remain at the Plunge.

However, there is the possibility the Plunge is not ready by April (due to how "COVIDy" things still are among other things). So registration for the practice groups will not open until April 1st at the earliest. That way if the pool is not available until May or June, we do not have to worry about the mess that would be refunding.

Regardless, things are going to get busy in April and May, and practice times may change to try and accommodate everyone.

Please note that there most likely still will be COVID restrictions when we do start back up again (ie wearing mask, social distancing, limited capacity on the pool deck, ect). We'll keep you posted on what those restrictions are when we get closer to starting.

Details for practice locations and times are further down in each program's update.

Water Polo:

I am pleased to announce that we will be adding water polo to our list of programs starting this May. Savannah Martin (the high school varsity boys head coach) will be the new Head Water Polo Coach for the team.

We will have three levels that will be running parallel to the other swim programs, Splashball, Pre-High, and High School.

- Splashball - For ages 10 - under. Practices will be Tuesday/Thursday for 45 mins at the Plunge in June and July. The cost will be \$60 per month (for only polo). *There will be two sessions that will go from 6:30 - 7:15 pm and 7:15 - 8:00 pm*
- Pre-High - For ages 11 - 14. Practices will be Monday - Thursday for *1 hour* at the Plunge May - October. The cost will be \$75 per month (for only polo) and an annual USA Water Polo membership of \$45 (minimum Bronze level). *The practice times will be for May 5:15 - 6:15 pm, June - July 7:15 - 8:15 pm, and August - October 6:00 - 7:00 pm*
- High School - For high school aged kids (including incoming freshmen). Practices will be *Monday - Thursday for 2 hours* at OHS June - July, November - January. The cost will be \$100 per month (for only polo) and an annual USA Water Polo membership of \$140 (minimum Gold level including birthday verification). *The practice times are TBA*

All tournament entry fees will be covered by OA *as well as some senior travel expenses.*

Pre-Gold:

As I mentioned earlier we are changing the name Gators to Pre-Gold and the program is going to change into a beginner to novice level, month to month lesson program. Each month will emphasize and focus on a specific competitive stroke as well as core stability, balancing, and kicking. For example each month the first two weeks will focus on sculling, balancing, floating, kicking, and being comfortable in the water. The last two weeks will focus on stroke specific mechanics, drills, and form.

Swimmers who have done Gators for the last few years need to sign up for Gold, even if it is just for the summer. Pre-Gold is for beginner and novice level swimmers.

The months will be structured as such

- April: 8 - unders = free, 9 - olders = free
- May: 8 - unders = back, 9 - olders = back
- June: 8 - unders = free, 9 - olders = butterfly

- July: 8 - unders = back, 9 - olders = breaststroke

Practices will be at the Plunge and times and cost will be...

- 8 - unders: \$60 per month (for swim only) practicing Monday/Wednesday/ Friday. There will be three 30 min sessions to choose from. Practice times in April and May will be 4:30 - 5:00 pm, 5:00 - 5:30 pm, 5:30 - 6:00 pm and in June and July will be 6:30 - 7:00 pm, 7:00 - 7:30 pm, 7:30 - 8:00 pm.
- 9 - olders: \$75 per month (for swim only) practicing Monday - Friday for 45 mins. 9 - 10 and 11 - olders will practice at the same time but will be in separate lanes and different coaches. Practice times in April and May will be 4:30 - 5:15 pm and in June and July will be 6:30 - 7:15 pm.

There will be no meets for Pre-Gold. The four traditional unsanctioned meets will be for Gold swimmers who have yet to achieve a USA Swimming age group time standard or it's their first year swimming for Gold.

Instead we will have a time trial on the last practice of each month. Once the high school becomes available, we will run the time trials there otherwise for April and May they will be at the Plunge.

Swimmers will need to be reregistered each month if you wish to continue the next lesson in Pre-Gold. If you are uncertain whether your swimmer is ready for Gold, ask their coaches.

We will not have lessons this summer. We are working closely with the city and are going to help them with their lessons program (which runs in June and July). Depending on available coaches, weather, and interest, we might have lessons in August and September.

Swim tests for Pre-Gold will be the same as before (submerge head and blow bubbles, float on belly and back, and kick on belly and back) and will be done on a walk-on basis.

Gold:

Not much is changing here except a registration rate increase. Here is the new price structure for Gold...

- 8 - unders: \$60 per month. Practices are Monday - Friday for 45 mins. Must also have a USA Swimming membership.

- 9 - 10s: \$75 per month. Practices are Monday - Friday for 60 mins. Must also have a USA Swimming membership.
- 11 - 14s: \$90 per month. Practices are Monday - Friday for 75 - 90 mins. Must also have a USA Swimming membership.
- Seniors (high school age): \$100 per month. Practices are Monday - Friday for 2 hours. Must also have a USA Swimming membership.

There are two USA Swimming memberships to choose from and both are an annual cost, Flex: \$21.75 and Premium: \$91.75. Below are the details of each membership.

- Flex: Limited two non championship meets. After two meets the swimmer has to upgrade to the premium membership (paying the difference) to attend additional meets or championship and higher. Membership is valid until December 31, 2021
- Premium: No limitation and is valid until December 31, 2021

For now, anybody signing up for Gold should go with the Flex membership. At least until meets become a certainty again.

Speaking of meets, the tentative meet schedule for 2021 is attached. Please note that due to COVID many of these meets may never happen including our home May meet.

Also the team will now be covering all swim meet splash fees. The only caveat to this is if you tell us your swimmer can attend the meet and then do not show, the team will bill you for the splash fee for that meet.

Practice times will be...

- 8 - unders: 4:30 - 5:00 pm
- 9 - 10s: 5:00 - 6:00 pm
- 11 - 14s: 4:30 - 6:00 pm
- Seniors: TBA. For June and July they will most likely practice in the mornings

For April and May all Gold groups will be at the Plunge. Once the OHS pool is open in June (hopefully sooner) Gold will move back to the high school. Then August - October Gold will be at the Plunge (during the high school water polo season).

Coach Quinton will be running the 10 - under group, Coach Breanna will be running the 11 - 14 group, and Russ and myself will be running the Senior group.

Masters:

Like Gold there isn't much changing except a registration rate increase. Masters will now be \$45 per month and each swimmer must be a current member of US Masters (\$60 per year).

Practice will still be Monday/Wednesday/Friday coached and Tuesday/Thursday lap swim. Although, at some point in the year we may change it to Monday - Friday coached practices, depends on coach availability.

Masters practices in April and May will be at the Plunge 6:00 - 7:00 pm, June and July 6:00 - 7:00 at the high school (if the OHS pool is available before June we will move back over there then), and August - October 6:00 - 7:00 pm at the Plunge (during the high school water polo season)

Bundling:

Because we have a lot of programs to choose from now and kids may want to do both polo and swim we have a bundling prices structure.

- Swim (Pre-Gold or Gold) and Splashball: \$100 per month
- Swim (Pre-Gold or Gold) and Pre-High: \$140 per month
- Swim (Pre-Gold or Gold) and High School: \$140 per month

Savannah and I have structured the practice times so that it is possible for kids to do both without too much conflict.

If you want me to run another Q&A town hall Zoom meeting again to address any questions, please let me know. Otherwise feel free to contact me. Email or text are probably best.

Thank you and see you all soon,

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