



PRACTICING FOR THEIR NEXT MEET, Oberlin Swim Club members kept things busy at the pool last week. Kiah Blau (above) worked on the difficult butterfly stroke while Jamie Soderlund (below left) waited her turn on the side of the pool.



Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Splash

Oberlin Swim Club ready for competition

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The 35 members took turns climbing onto the blocks and diving into the water, racing for the other side of the pool Thursday afternoon as the Oberlin Swim Club got ready for its first meet in Holyoke on Saturday.

The team started practices over Memorial Day weekend, said Coach Stephanie Blau, since their first meet was scheduled so early in the summer.

The swimmers, 4 to 18 years old, practice twice a day at the Oberlin City Pool, she said, from noon to 1 p.m. and again in the evening from 5 to 6 p.m. They swim laps, do sprint races, practice their starts and more.

Mrs. Blau said all of the members learn the breast stroke, freestyle, back stroke and butterfly. Competitive swimming is good for kids, she said, giving them exercise and a sport they can stick with for many years. Swimming, she said uses every muscle and joint in a person's body.

She said she would love to see more kids join the summer team. There aren't a lot of options for exercise for kids in the summer, she said, and she's noticed that swimming in the summer helps the older kids who play fall sports.

Swimming, said Mrs. Blau, is a team sport, but also an individual sport. The swimmers get to meet kids from other towns and get to know friends here better. Being a



GLIDING THROUGH THE WATER on her stomach, Darbi Rouse practiced the breast stroke.

- Schedule -

Saturday in Burlington.
 Saturday, June 16, in Oberlin.
 Saturday, June 23, in Colby.
 Saturday, June 30, in Wray.
 Saturday and Sunday, July 7 and 8, in Goodland, the league meet.

member of the club helps kids boost social skills and self confidence, she said.

The swimmers are part of the Northwest Kansas Swim League, which includes some teams from

eastern Colorado. They have six meets this year, including the one Saturday.

Mrs. Blau said this is the first time in five years that Oberlin will be host for a swim meet.

The team needs to get new lane ropes and backstroke flags, she said, as well as other supplies for the upcoming meet.

Members went to businesses in Oberlin asking for donations, she said.

Anyone who wants to make a contribution to help the swim club should mail a check to Penny Soderlund, a board member, at 210 E. North Street, Oberlin, Kan. 67749.



KICKING FOR ALL SHE'S WORTH practicing on her back, Jenna Long prepared for her next swim meet.