



DIVING INTO THE POOL for practice (from left) were Keagen Blau, Daniel Jordan and Jamie Soderlund, all members of the Oberlin Swim Club. The three swam two lengths of the pool to help prepare them for their upcoming meet.



Swimmers practice for upcoming meets

Back and forth, back and forth the kids swim, practicing the butterfly, breast and back strokes and something called "freestyle," which means roughly, whatever works.

The Oberlin Swim Club members practice twice a day Monday through Friday at the Oberlin City Pool.

The kids, from 3-years-old to 18 train, under the guidance of coach Stephanie Blau. The 15 to 18 year olds help out too, she said.

This year, the team has 38 swimmers, said Mrs. Blau, which is up from last year. That's good, she said; the word is getting out about the team and more kids are joining. Fourteen of the members are 8 and younger, she added. One reason for more of the younger kids, said Mrs. Blau, is because they got rid of a rule that swimmers had to be able to swim the length of the pool.

The club, she said, has five meets this summer and then a two-day league event at the end. They have already competed in four of the meets and plan to be in Oakley Saturday. There's no home meet this year, she said, because regulation pools are 25 yards and this one is 33 and one-third.

The season thus far, she said, is going well. The club has taken an average of 16 competitive swimmers to the meets, with nine normally scoring in the high-points awards.

This summer, said Mrs. Blau, she's been working with the team



HANGING onto the ladder, Alana Raile (in back) and Emma Anderson were ready to come out of the water for a break.

on building up their long-distance swimming. They are also working on techniques so there aren't any disqualifications.

A lot of it is about repetition so that the swimmers can learn the skills, she said.

Mrs. Blau, whose four kids are on the team, said she's been coaching the swimmers for six years. She said she swam in competition from the time she was 3 or 4 until she was 18.

She said she would like to see the club continue to grow. It's important to get kids started in swimming and interested when they are younger, she said, noting that the club has only three members who are 15 to 18.

Each swimmer pays a \$15 membership fee or \$40 for a family. The swimmers are responsible for their event entry fees, which cost \$1.25 each, she said.



KILEANA BLAU (above) came up for a breath during practice last week while Gage VanMeter (top) waited for Alana Raile to jump into the pool from the starting block. Coach Stephanie Blau (right) talked to Kelsey May about what events she could enter in the next meet.

