

HISTORY OF SAN FERNANDO VALLEY CATHOLIC SWIM LEAGUE

The SFVCSL was started over 40 years ago, for the purpose of offering championship swim competition for Catholic School/Parish swimmers. Currently there are 15 teams in the league, over 600 swimmers, from Malibu to East Valley. Teams include St. John De La Salle, Incarnation, Our Lady of Grace, our Lady of Lourdes, St. Bernadine, St. Bridget, St. Charles, St. Cyril, St. Euphrasia, St. John Eudes, St. Joseph the Worker, St. Jude, St. Mel, St. Paschal, and St. Francis de Sales.

The league is a parent volunteer-based group which allows families to be involved and work together with their swim coaches to participate with team activities and meets. The healthy competition based on Christian values provides our youth with the opportunity for spiritual, physical and social growth.

Founded by a group of catholic swim families active in the sport of swim and a regulatory agency called Southern California Swimming/USS. Today the governing agencies are USASwimming and AAU. We follow rules and guidelines of both USASwimming and AAU, with allowances so that novice swimmers and JO/club swimmers can fairly participate within the same races/meet. Swimmers consist of beginners, novice & JO levels. AAU, USASwimming, USADiving, various city and private swim clubs.

All catholic swimmers ages 4-14 are eligible to compete in the league and if their parish/school does not have a swim team, they may swim for another team. The team itself must be open to both school and parish swimmers. The League consists of team representatives appointed by the swim team who have a child on the team. The League votes on its Board, consisting of a President, Vice President/Meet Manager, Treasurer and Secretary.

HISTORY OF ST. FRANCIS DE SALES SWIM TEAM

Jean Everman started the SFDS swim team about 30 years ago when her children were early swimmers. Her children went on to have very successful swim careers at USC and Yale (as Swim Captain). After her children aged out of eligibility, she continued volunteer coaching for some time. We currently pay her for her coaching expertise from the summer conditioning fees we collect at the beginning of the summer.

Thanks to her water accreditation and long time relationship with Notre Dame, we are able to practice at their pool twice weekly from June through November. We do not pay for this use, but do make a donation to the school at the end of our swim season, which is collected from part of the team dues. Past donations have helped pay for the shed on the pool deck, backstroke flags, and pace clock.

Larry Enos began coaching the young swimmers (6 & unders) assisting Jean. Coach Larry was a champion swimmer for Notre Dame High School many years ago. Parishioner, Jody Bradley (parent of two SFDS swimmers) has been an assistant coach since 2003. Rounding out the current coaching staff are Mike Swander (parent of two SFDS swimmers) and Jack Moran (parent of two SFDS swimmers).

The current Team Reps are Stephanie Brouse and Marcella Bell. The current Team Managers are Marci & Jack Moran. The team has approximately 100 swimmers, approximately 10-15 swimmers are from the parish.

TEAM FINANCES

Team Dues are collected at the beginning of September to cover operating costs and cost of t-shirts for each swimmer. Swimmers must also pay entry fees for each of the meets. The entry fee includes a flat fee to compete in each meet (approximately \$8), then each stroke/event costs approximately \$3. So, each meet will cost anywhere from \$11-21, depending on the number of strokes/events your swimmer participates in.

We have always been one of the top 4 teams, both in size and success. SFDS had never hosted a meet until 2008, when Marci & Jack Moran took over as Team Managers, and arranged for SFDS to host one of the five (now four) swim meets. Hosting a swim meet is a lot of work for the host team, but a great deal of revenue can be raised for the host school. Thanks to the incredible support of SFDS parents, we have been able to use funds raised to purchase needed items for both the school and parish over the years, including the beautiful palm trees near the altar at church, new flat screen TVs and DVDs in the library and arts rooms, and walkie talkies for the car line.

Additionally, the Morans created a Swim Team Scholarship Fund as an incentive to keep 7th and 8th grade swimmers on the team. It is modeled after the program used by St. John Eudes. A swimmer “earns” \$50 for each year they swim on the team. To qualify for a scholarship, a swimmer must compete in at least $\frac{3}{4}$ meets in their 7th and 8th grade years, when they have so many other sports options. If a swimmer begins when they are 4 years old and swims every year, they could earn \$500! The scholarship check is written to their high school of choice after their 8th grade graduation. If a swimmer is eligible to swim their freshmen year of high school (which means they are 14 at the start of the swim season) and participates in at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the meets, a \$50 gift card will be awarded to them at the end of the season.

MEETS/VENUE

We currently have four meets each season, which take place on alternating Sundays beginning in September through November. The first three meets are “Invitationals” – which means they are open to all swimmers. The last meet is the “Finals” – which means that you have to qualify in a stroke in order to swim it in the Finals. To qualify, you must have completed a race without being disqualified in one of the first three meets. Currently, meets are hosted: De La Salles, St. Mel, St. John Eudes and St. Francis de Sales.

Meets are held at the San Fernando Regional Pool, though there is a possibility that meets may also take place at Valley College. In the past, meets were held at the Simi Valley Community Pool and the Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Pool.

The meet entry fees are paid to the Host Team. From the fees collected, the Host Team must pay for the Pool Rental, Swim Officials/Referees & Meet Managers, and Awards (from ribbons for heat winners to medals to individual event winners to team trophies). The Host Team also sells Programs for about \$2 (which lists the lane assignments for each event); Raffle Tickets (for raffle items that the team families donate); and Concessions (from breakfast to lunch items, drinks, fruits, and snacks) at each meet.

VOLUNTEERING

This is a parent driven sport meaning we rely heavily on the support and assistance of ALL swimmer parents. SFDS Swim Team needs your help at both the swim practices and swim meets.

Swim Practice: We need at least two parents to help remove the pool cover and put the lane lines in the pool before the start of each practice at Notre Dame High School Pool. Likewise, we need at least two parents to help remove the lane lines and place the pool covers on the pool at the end of each practice. We also need parents to help distribute merchandise when it arrives (suits, caps, towels, etc.). Please let us know if you are willing to help in this way.

Meets: Of course, you will need to get your swimmer to the right lane at the right time... which is a big job when you have a younger swimmer. However, we also need your help at each meet setting up our Team Base Camp (tents and tables). We also need parent volunteers to work either morning or afternoon check-in for our team, so we know which swimmers have arrived. Additionally, each team is required to provide volunteers for various job duties, such as timers or stagers.

Host Meet: On the Sunday that SFDS hosts the meet, we need ALL HANDS ON DECK, literally. We require that every family volunteers in some way, whether the time is served before, during or after the actual day of event. If there is no way that you can volunteer at the actual meet, we ask that you consider helping secure raffle or concession donations before the event. However, we hope that each family provides one parent to volunteer at the concession stand, awards table, team check-in table, timers, stagers, or clean-up! This is the day when we can raise a lot of funds for St. Francis de Sales, so please do whatever you can!

Buddy Families: Each year, we are blessed to have new swimmers join the team. We pair them up with another "Buddy Family" to help them navigate their first meet or two, as we don't want any of our swimmers missing their heats because they don't know how to read the lane assignments or where to go. Please be aware that as a new family, we will buddy you up... and returning families, please be prepared to be a buddy to a new family, if we need you! Thanks!