

# **Tidalwaves 2011 Registration**

[\*\*www.gowaves.com\*\*](http://www.gowaves.com)

**Head Coach  
Marie McSweeney**

**Ph: 453-9563**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED  
QUESTIONS**

**Q. What is splash week?**

A. It's the first week of practice (Feb. 28- Mar. 4) when the coaches assess the ability of all swimmers and assign them to specific practice groups. It is imperative that your child attend each night that they are called – once is not enough for the coaches to assess a swimmer's ability, especially with the younger ones. New swimmers are grouped according to age. Returning swimmers are grouped based on the practice group they were in at the end of last season.

**Q. How many days does my child have to swim each week?**

A. After splash week, once your swimmer has been assigned a practice group, it's up to you how often they swim. We offer practice Mon-Fri. Some children swim every day, some only come a couple times a week. Coach Marie recommends 2-3 times a week if they want to see any improvement.

**Q. How do I find out what group my child is in?**

A. The Website – [www.gowaves.com](http://www.gowaves.com) Practice group assignments will be posted on the website as soon as possible after splash week assessments are completed. It is your source for all information about the team. Practice groups assignments, schedule changes, pool closures, meet information... Anything to do with the team can be found on the [www.gowaves.com](http://www.gowaves.com) website. It is updated almost daily during the swim season.

**Q. What if my child isn't ready for the team after splash week?**

- A. Some families find that their children really aren't quite ready for a swim team. Coach Marie offers a program called Tadpoles. These younger swimmers practice separately from the team, sometimes at the Marin Academy pool in San Rafael, rather than Redwood. They do not swim in meets. The Tadpoles program is meant to be a training ground for the swim team. For more information, please call Coach Marie McSweeney at 453-9563. Tidalwaves does offer refunds for new swimmers for one week after splash week if their child isn't ready to join the team.

**Q. How long does practice last?**

- A. That depends on the age/ability of the swimmer. At the beginning of the season, the youngest swimmers are usually in the water for 30 minutes at a time. The more experienced swimmers start out anywhere between 45 minutes and 1.25 hours at a time. Most groups increase the amount of time they're in the water later in the season.

**Q. When is my child's practice time?**

A. We start practices in the very beginning of March and the Redwood pool is booked for Tidalwaves from 5:30-8:00 pm. We try to schedule all the younger swimmers' workouts on the earlier end of this time period, but it is dependent on the number of swimmers in each group – there are usually 9-10 groups ranging from Novice 1 to Advanced.

**Q. Can I sit on the pool deck to watch my child practice?**

A. This question comes up every year, even for returning parents and the answer is “no”. Coach Marie wants parents to remain off the deck. There are numerous reasons. Often, the youngest swimmers want to hang onto their parents if they can see them. It is easier for the coaches to entice them into the water if their parents aren't sitting 10 feet away. The other reasons for the “no parents on deck” rule are: it is a distraction for all swimmers and a safety issue – conversations, cell phones, etc. You are welcome to bring a deck chair and sit outside the fence either by the entrance or (if the rain ever stops) on the grassy area on the opposite site of the pool.

**Q. Will my child get instruction from the coaches regarding their swimming strokes?**

A. Absolutely. The coaches are constantly doing drills, giving the swimmers feedback, assessing what each practice group is ready to learn. That being said, there are often 15-20 swimmers in any given group so your child must be comfortable with swimming on their own in a deep pool. If they are not at that point yet, please consider talking to Coach Marie about her Tadpoles program.

**Q. How do I communicate issues/concerns with the coaching staff?**

A Coach Marie has a phone line dedicated to swimming – 453-9563. We share this line with her adult masters' swimming program but you can always leave a message for her there and she will call you back. Please DO NOT engage the coaches in conversations on the pool deck. Their attention must be focused on the children/swimmers when they are on the deck for your children's safety!

**Q. Can I send my child in with a snack to the pool deck?**

A. No! Please feed your children in the car or outside the pool gates. Redwood High School is very strict about not allowing food on the pool deck at any time and, as we are their guests, we need to respect that rule.

**Q. Can I request that my child be placed in a practice group with their best friend or next door neighbor?**

A. No. Practice groups are chosen strictly on the **swimming ability of the children** – not on friendship and not on carpools. We're sorry, but with 200 swimmers, it's the safest way to run the program.

**Q. Is practice or splash week cancelled if it's raining?**

A. No, we swim in all kinds of weather (except of course lightning). Rain and wind don't keep us out of the water.

**Q. Do I need to purchase a Tidalwaves swim suit or can I just use any swim suit?**

A. Any suit is acceptable for practice (one piece) but team suits are highly recommended for any swimmer planning to participate in swim meets. They will be available for fitting and sale in mid March or orders can also be placed directly with T&B Sports in San Rafael.

**Q. Is there a place to change into swimsuits at Redwood?**

A. There are two small bathrooms on the pool deck but they are not meant for changing. Please bring your children to the pool dressed to swim. If it's cold, grab their warm boots and a bathrobe and bundle them up.

**Q. What other gear do I need – goggles, etc.**

A. Girls should have swim caps and goggles in addition to their swimsuits. Some boys also wear swim caps if they have longer hair, but everyone needs goggles (and we recommend that you keep a back-up pair in the car...funny how they get lost so easily.)

**Q. How do I sign up to volunteer? How do I know what to do for the different jobs?**

A. Although we hire professional coaches, our team is totally run by parent volunteers off the pool deck. All families are asked to contribute 20 “points” worth of their time to helping keep the team functioning. All volunteer sign-ups can be accessed online at [www.gowaves.com](http://www.gowaves.com) and then clicking “Online Volunteer Sign-up”. Board members and experienced parents are always available to help you understand this process so don't be shy about asking.