



Otterball

Bringing Fun, Confidence, and Swim Skills Together
A Game-Based Aquatic Program for
all ages and skill levels.

Mekayla Hinckley - Mekayla.hinckley@uss.salvationarmy.org





What Is Otterball?

Otterball is a game-based aquatic program designed to teach swimming skills through play.

A fun, fast-paced aquatic team sport!

- ☐ Played in shallow or deep water
- ☐ Combines teamwork, strategy, and fitness
- ☐ Great for youth, teens, and adults
- ☐ Easy to learn in minutes
- ☐ Encourages participation from all skill levels

The goal is to create confident swimmers who enjoy being in the water and retaining them past beginner swim lessons.





How we found it...

We were searching for a program that was different and exciting. After hearing about Otterball from Ron, we realized it fit exactly what we were looking for!

- Wanted a fresh aquatic recreation program
- Looking for something beyond lap swimming and water aerobics
- Discovered Otterball through “All Things Aquatics”





Why we chose it.

Struggles of our Kroc...

- Kids were losing interest in traditional swim lessons
- They were scared or nervous in deep water
- Stop participating once they learn basic skills
- Parents were not involved

We needed something to...

- Keep kids engaged
- Improve water confidence
- Encourage repeat enrollment
- Create family engagement
- Set us apart from competition

The Solution...

Otterball combines:

- Swim instruction
- Team sports
- Skill progression
- Fun-based learning

Kids develop:

- Swimming ability
- Water safety awareness
- Communication skills
- Confidence





Equipment and Costs

Basic supplies: (most pools already have these)

- Soft water balls
- Floatation devices (if needed)
- Swim Caps
- Stopwatch/Clock
- Whistle
- Goals



[Float Belts](#)

\$14.99

[Swim Helmets](#)

6 packs of
2 different colors
13.82 for 2 (82.92)



[Goals and Balls](#)

2 Nets with 4 balls and
ball pump
\$75.99X2 151.98

[Otterball Guide](#)
Quick Start Guide and
training from Ron on
how to bring Otterball
to your pool.

[Shop - Play Otterball](#) -
Rons Shop for
equipment





Pool Setup

Easy Setup

- Takes approximately 15–20 minutes
- Place floating goals
- Mark playing boundaries
- Inflate Otterball
- Divide into teams





Instructor Responsibilities

Safety First

- Active supervision
- Proper spacing
- Understanding swimmer abilities

Create Energy

- Encourage participation
- Keep games moving
- Celebrate effort

Teach Through Play

- Correct skills naturally
- Avoid long explanations
- Keep kids involved





How the Game Works



Basic Rules

- ☐ Two teams compete
- ☐ Players move the Otterball toward the opposing goal
- ☐ Passing is encouraged
- ☐ (must pass at least 3 times)
- ☐ No rough play
- ☐ Team with the most goals wins

Length

- ☐ 10–20 minute games
- ☐ Tournament or recreation format



How an Otterball Class Runs

Example 60-minute session:

10 minutes — Warm-Up

- Water comfort activities
- Swimming skills
- Floating/treading practice

15 minutes — Skill Development

- Passing
- Kicking
- Movement in water
- Team concepts

25 minutes — Otterball Game Play

- Teams compete
- Coaches encourage teamwork
- Skills are reinforced naturally

10 minutes — Cooldown & Review

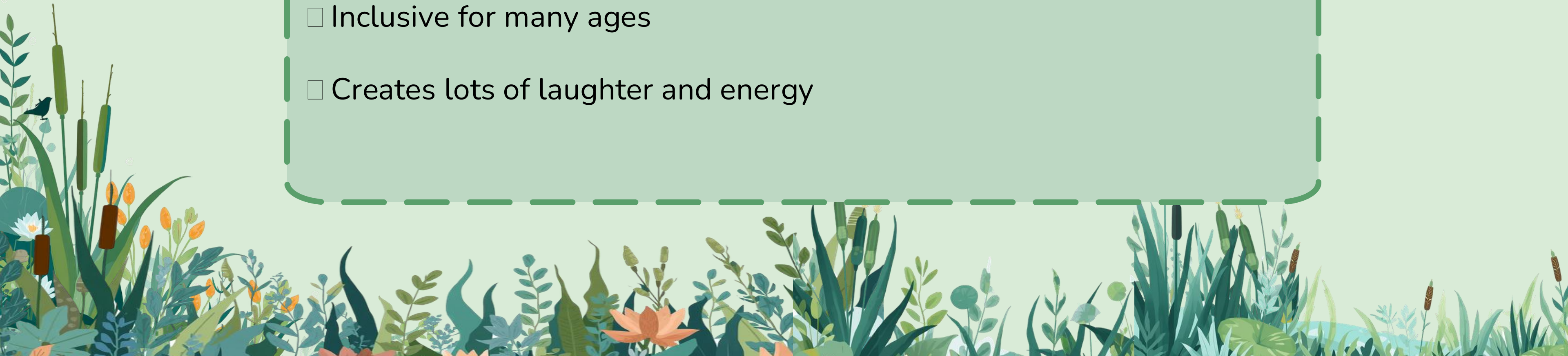
- Celebrate progress
- Discuss skills learned



Why Participants Love it

Benefits

- ☐ Builds teamwork
- ☐ Great cardiovascular workout
- ☐ Improves confidence in the water
- ☐ Inclusive for many ages
- ☐ Creates lots of laughter and energy





Our Results...

What We Experienced

- ☐ High participant engagement
- ☐ Positive member feedback
- ☐ Families returning for future sessions
- ☐ Great spectator interest
- ☐ Easy for staff to facilitate

Biggest Surprise

- People wanted to keep playing after the scheduled game ended!
- Returning student went from not being able to swim, to treading and swimming laps
- Students begged to stay and play more



Lessons We Learned

Tips for Success

- Demonstrate the rules first
- Keep teams balanced
- Use enthusiastic Staff
- Play short games
- Rotate players often
- Encourage good sportsmanship

Challenges

- ☐ Have designated Lifeguard
- ☐ Inflating the ball ahead of time saves time
- ☐ Have extra staff during larger events
- ☐ Plan team sizes before participants arrive
- ☐ Use buzzer instead of whistle





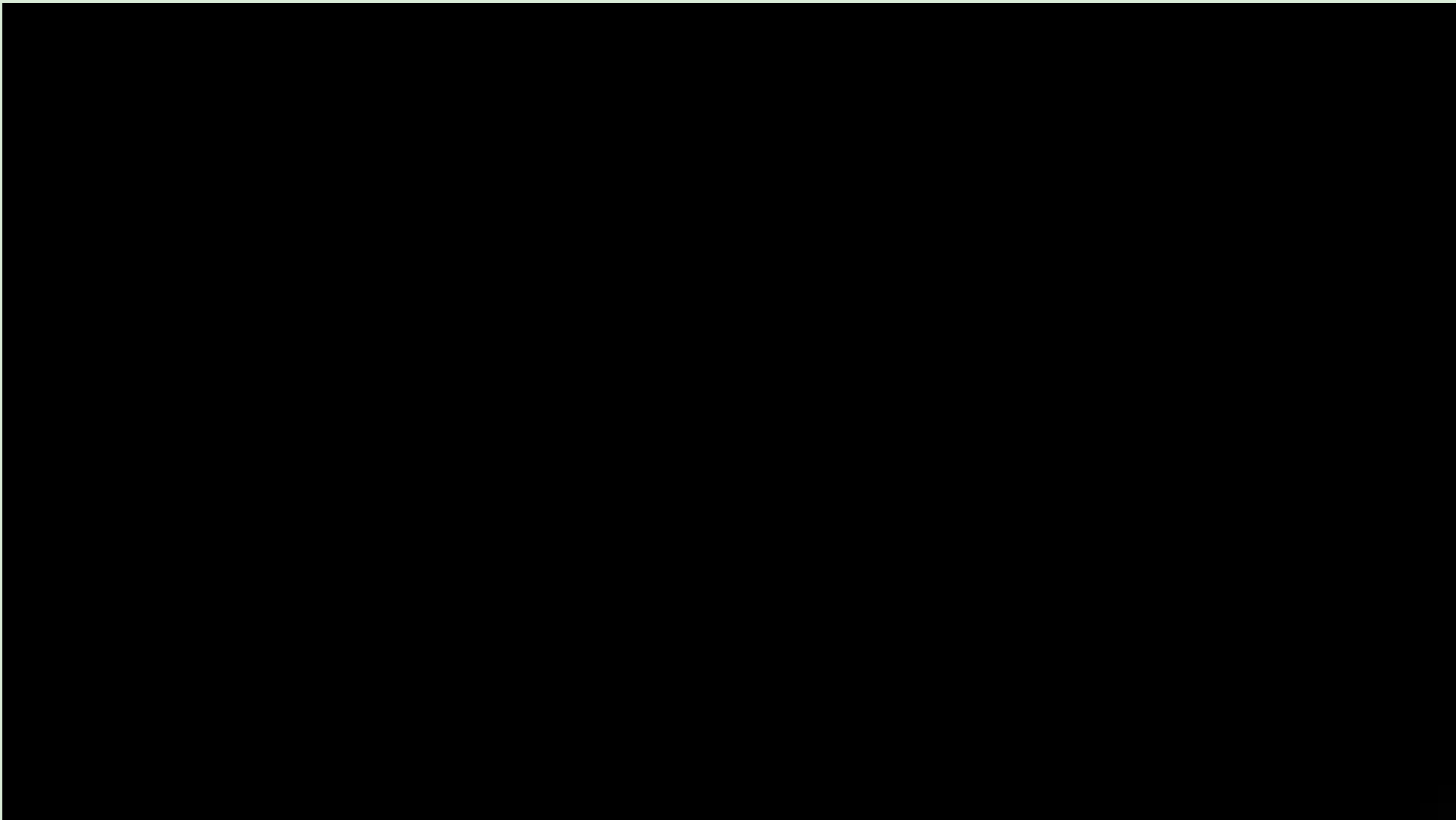
Week 1



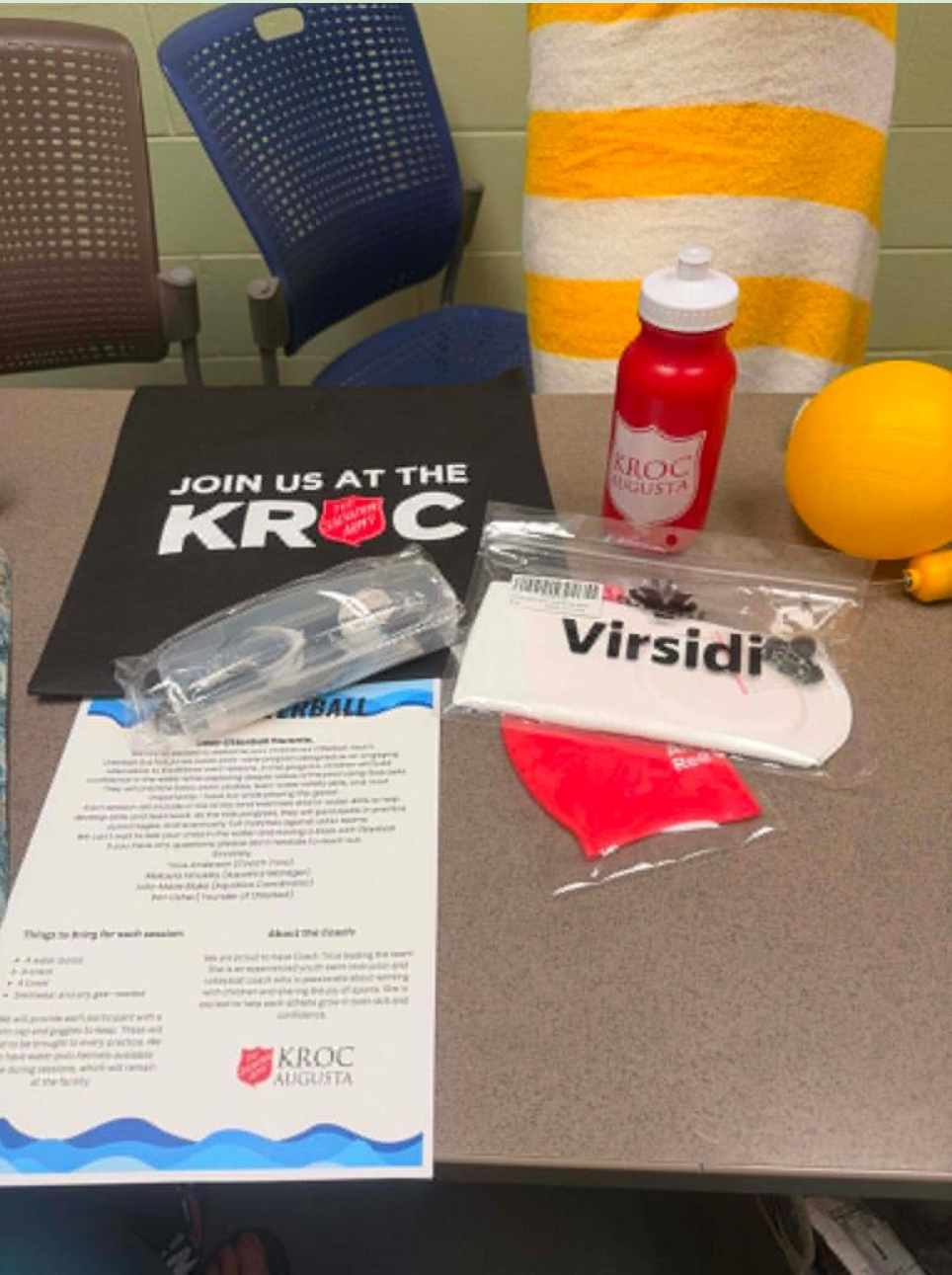
Week 3







Guard Demo before Implementing program



First Day Welcome Packet: Kroc bag, flier, goggles, swim cap, water bottle, and their swim helmet

Otterball program flier



OTTERBALL

BEGINNER SWIM SKILLS THROUGH FUN, WATER-POLO-STYLE PLAY!

APRIL 1 - MAY 20

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Fundamental swimming skills taught in a class structure
- Basic ball handling skills (in and out of water)
- Good sportsmanship
- Discipline and teamwork
- Age appropriate challenges and activities

Wednesdays
5:30 - 6:30 PM

AGES 6-12

8-Week Session
\$85

LOCATION 3133 Broad Street, Augusta, GA 30901

REGISTER augustahrms.org



OTTERBALL

Dear Otterball Parents,

We are so excited to welcome your child to our Otterball Team! Otterball is a fun, junior water polo-style program designed as an engaging alternative to traditional swim lessons. In this program, children will build confidence in the water while exploring deeper areas of the pool using float belts. They will practice basic swim strokes, learn water safety skills, and most importantly—have fun while playing the game!

Each session will include a mix of dry land exercises and in-water drills to help develop skills and teamwork. As the kids progress, they will participate in practice scrimmages, and eventually, full matches against other teams. We can't wait to see your child in the water and having a blast with Otterball! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,
Trice Anderson (Coach Trice)
Mekayla Hinckley (Aquatics Manager)
Lala-Marie Blake (Aquatics Coordinator)
Ron Usher (Founder of Otterball)

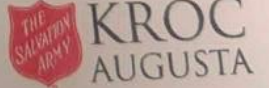
Things to bring for each session:

- A water bottle
- A snack
- A towel
- Swimwear and any gear needed

We will provide each participant with a swim cap and goggles to keep. These will need to be brought to every practice. We also have water polo helmets available for use during sessions, which will remain at the facility.

About the Coach:

We are proud to have Coach Trice leading the team! She is an experienced youth swim instructor and volleyball coach who is passionate about working with children and sharing the joy of sports. She is excited to help each athlete grow in both skill and confidence.



Our "What is otterball" Handout



Why Other Kroc Centers Should try It

Benefits for Every Kroc

- ✓ Easy implementation
- ✓ Low equipment cost
- ✓ Appeals to multiple age groups
- ✓ Builds community
- ✓ Encourages repeat participation
- ✓ Makes aquatics exciting



Ideas or Future Programs

KROC AUGUSTA

OTTER BALL

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REGISTER: augustakroc.org

Expand the Fun

- ☐ Family Otterball Nights
- ☐ Teen tournaments
- ☐ Summer camps
- ☐ Staff vs. members games
- ☐ Birthday parties
- ☐ Community competitions
- ☐ Fundraising events



Key Takeaways

Otterball Is...



Easy to learn



Easy to set up



Affordable



Fun for all ages



Highly engaging



A great addition to any aquatic program



Thank You!
We'd love to help
get your Kroc
started!!

