

# **The Marlins Developmental Plan: Important Considerations to Give Your Child the Best Chance at a Happy, Healthy and Productive Athletic Career**

## **Developmental and Mini Marlin Groups**

Grades 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>

Time Commitment: 2 – 5 hrs per week

Emphasis:

Fun and interest, introduction to all 4 strokes, starts and turns, workout etiquette

Parent Tips:

- RELAX!! Your child's swimming career is a marathon, not a sprint.
- Fun, fun and more fun! Be clear with your child that swimming is not work, it is play.
- Emphasize process over performance. What time your child goes in the 25 free is about the least important thing right now.
- Encourage personal responsibility for equipment.
- Encourage participation in other sports and activities.

## **Black and Red Groups**

Grades 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>

Time Commitment: 4.5 – 7.5 hrs per week

Emphasis:

Fun and interest, refinement of all 4 strokes, starts and turns, pace clock, basic aerobic development, race plans, goal setting

Parent Tips:

- Relax (see above)
- Encourage participation in other sports and activities.
- Do things that help them form an identity as a "swimmer". Make it their thing.
- Teach them to love our team and the sport.
- Display trust in the system and coaches to boost your child's confidence.
- Be there, but not THERE!
- Avoid coaching.
- Teach them how to handle failures without fear
- Teach them to be intrinsically motivated. No external awards (i.e. money, ipods, luxury cars, etc)

## **Junior Group**

Grades 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>

Time Commitment: 6 - 10 hours per week

Emphasis:

Fun and interest, further refinement of technique and efficiency, introduction of distance free and IM training, race tactics, detailed goal setting

Parent Tips:

- Help them decide where swimming fits in their priorities.
- Teach them that the definition of "Competition" is to strive with, not against.
- Teach them that progress does not happen linearly.
- Encourage participation in other sports and activities, but they need to start choosing.
- Remove your ego from the equation.
- Model impeccable team behavior.

### **Pre-senior Group**

Grades 8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>

Time Commitment: 10 – 14 hours per week

Emphasis:

Advanced refinement of technique and efficiency, heavy aerobic development, promotion of distance free and IM training, race tactics, fun and interest, introduction of national level swimming possibilities

Parent Tips:

- MAKE IT THEIR THING!
- Start focusing on one or two sports/ activities.
- Allow play to evolve into satisfaction of achievement.
- Giving them the freedom to change course will give them the best chance of a successful career.
- Encourage team travel.
- Teach them how to be good sportsman.

### **Varsity Group**

Grades 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>

Time Commitment: 12 – 16 hours per week

Emphasis:

Preparation for high school league champs and sections, advanced refinement of technique and efficiency, aerobic development, distance free and IM training as well as specialty training

Parent Tips:

- Help them decide where swimming fits in their priorities.
- Teach them good time management.
- Make it their thing.
- Personal responsibility.
- Help them to decide if there is going to be a next step in swimming (college).

### **Senior Group**

Grades 10<sup>th</sup> – college

Time Commitment: 14 – 18 hours per week

Emphasis:

Preparation for national, international and collegiate swimming, emphasis on reaching ones ultimate potential, advanced technique training, aerobic and anaerobic development, extensive goal setting,

Parent Tips:

- Teach them good time management.
- Be on the lookout for excessive stress.
- Know when it's time to take a day off.
- Teach them the value of "hidden training".
- Help them to choose the right college.
- Don't focus on scholarships unless you absolutely have to. The "right" school is almost never the one that offers the most money.