

# MIAMI COUNTRY DAY AQUATICS Parent & Swimmers Handbook



2020

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## **WELCOME MESSAGE**

**Dear Swimming Athletes and Parents,**

Welcome to Miami Country Day Aquatics (MCDA). We are excited you have chosen MCDA as your new swim team and look forward to getting to know you and your family! Our swim team is designed to provide the athletes with a very unique experience. We have a wonderful group of coaches, swimmers, and parents who enthusiastically support each other in and out of the pool. New friendships, rewarding experiences, and fun activities are just a few of the exciting possibilities that await your family as you enter the world of competitive swimming.

As with any new venture, the more you are familiar you are with the “standard operating procedures,” the easier it will be to relax and enjoy the ride. This handbook will familiarize you with all facets of our swim team operations as well swimming in general. The handbook is our way of putting all the important information you need as a MCDA family into one place, but if you don’t find the answers to your questions here or on the website, please feel free to contact one of the coaches.

Thank you for joining MCDA! We are happy you are here!

Sincerely,

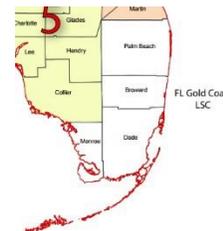
*The Miami Country Day Aquatics Coaching Staff*

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

Welcome to the MCDA Swim Team. By joining United States swimming and MCDA you are becoming a member of the country's largest organized youth sport. Your child is getting involved in what can truly be a "lifetime sport," and hopefully, will make lifetime friends.

MCDA is a member of the Florida Gold Coast (FGC), our LSC (local swimming committee) in USA Swimming, and the national governing body for swimming in the United States. The Florida Gold Coast includes teams from the Palm Beach County, Broward County, Monroe County and Miami-Dade County. The rest of the state of Florida belongs to the Florida Swimming LSC.



The purpose of this handbook is two-fold: to explain to new members about Miami County Day Aquatics and to outline various policies that affect all swimmers. All families should read it so that they become familiar with important facts and rules of the team.

## **MCDA's MISSION:**

The MCDA Swim Team is a competitive swim team emphasizing both individual and club excellence in a positive, family oriented atmosphere with the goal of producing lifelong swimmers. Our mission is to encourage every MCDA athlete to practice and sustain the level of excellence necessary to bring out the champion within – both in the competitive swimming arena and beyond. To foster an environment where excellence is valued, and the development of the whole child is inevitable.

*"Our aim is not to produce champions but to create an environment in which they are inevitable" ~Forbes Carlile*

## **PRIVACY STATEMENT:**

MCDA respects the privacy of its members. No information is shared with the general public. Email addresses are used only for weekly newsletters and team communication. Our email list is never sold or given to any other organization. Any family may also opt out of an online team directory, which may contain address and phone information.

## **TEAM STRUCTURE:**

The MCDA program is separated into practice groups, providing individual training for competitive swimmers five years of age and older. Placement into groups is by recommendation of the coach during a try-out and subsequent trial week. Each group is designed to benefit swimmers who are grouped together by ability. The frequency, duration, and training intensity of practices define each group.

## **MCDA's COMPETITIVE TRAINING GROUPS**

The team offers a multi-level swim program with our children progressing through the varied levels of swimming. The levels are as follows:

### **PRE-TEAM / SWIM LESSONS**

The MCDA pre-team program is a four-week class or month to month, meeting two afternoons per week, which is designed to teach all 4 competitive strokes and get your young swimmer ready to participate in the sport of swimming.

### **COMPETITIVE SWIM TEAM**

Our competitive swim team program is designed to help swimmers advance at a pace that is equal to their desire, and ability. The team is divided into two large age group brackets, 5-year old's-sixth grade (age group), followed by middle school and high school age (senior). Within each of these groups there are groups designed to match desire and ability level. These groups are briefly outlined below. For more specific detail including entrance requirements for each group, please see our website:

### **AGE GROUP:**

### **PATHWAYS**

Overview: The program focus of the Pathways group is stroke development and teaching all four competitive strokes and starts and turns through positive reinforcement and immediate feedback. An important objective for this group is to develop a love for swimming through fun games and activities in the water. Swimmers are expected to continue developing self-discipline, respect for coaches and teammates, as well as age-appropriate social skills in a team environment.

Attendance: We encourage attending at least two times a week.

Swim Meets: We encourage participation in intra-squad swim meets.

### **BRONZE I & II**

Overview: The program focus of the Bronze group builds on skill development, stroke construction, and refinement. Swimmers are introduced to interval sets, and practice management. General education on learning how to train, manage hydration and nutrition levels before, during, and after practice begins at this level. Coaching staff directs swimmers in developing strong work ethics. Basic racing concepts are introduced with stroke rate/stroke count, effective air exchange techniques during starts and turns, as well as event-specific breathing patterns.

Attendance: We encourage attending at least three to four times a week.

Swim Meets: We encourage participation at intra-squad swim meets. We expect all MCDA

swimmers at this level to also participate in any team-hosted meets per year. Additional meets are encouraged, but not required.

## **SILVER I & II**

Overview: The program focus of the Silver group devotes great attention to all 4 strokes and Individual Medley (IM) refinement. Starts, turns, transitions and finishes receive significant attention in the pre-race and race seasons, including reaction time, flight, entry and underwater work. Short-course racing demands an emphasis on underwater work. The increased proficiency will benefit the swimmer during the long course season as well. Swimmers are introduced to higher interval sets, varying effort, and pace management.

Attendance: We encourage attending four times a week.

Swim Meets: Silver group swimmers are expected to participate in any team-hosted meets. Participation in other USA-sanctioned swim meets is recommended.

## **GOLD**

Overview: The program focus of the Gold group is on swimming biomechanics with attention to every detail in stroke refinement and racing techniques. Swimmers at this level commit to being year-round swimmers. The backbone of the structure is Individual Medley (IM) training. MCDA believes the age group swimming focus should be to develop all-around swimmers. IM training addresses that effectively. Swimmers are assessed individually, and attention goes into building around the strengths while, at the same time, diligently working on improving swimmers' weaknesses.

Attendance: We encourage attending four to five times a week.

Swim Meets: Gold group swimmers are expected to participate in the any team-hosted meets as well as other USA-sanctioned swim meets. Participation at meets will be individually determined between coaches and parents, respecting each child's own readiness and motivation.

## **SENIOR DIVISION:**

### **SENIOR DEVELOPMENT**

Overview: The Senior Development group year-round swimmers, typically of middle school age, who are very motivated and goal-driven. The program focus is on all four strokes and Individual Medley (IM) refinement. Instruction will be given in starts, turns, transitions and finishes with attention to detail on all elements, including reaction time, flight, entry, and underwater work. The importance of underwater work is emphasized to match the demands of short course racing.

Attendance: We encourage attending four to five times a week.

Swim Meets: While they are swimming with MCDS, Senior Development group swimmers are expected to participate in USA-sanctioned. Participation at meets will be individually determined between coaches and parents, respecting each swimmer's own readiness and motivation.

## **SENIOR ELITE GROUP**

Overview: The Senior Elite group is an advanced group consisting of year-round swimmers, typically of high school age, who are very motivated and goal-driven. The program focus of the Senior Elite group is to further build fitness and skill range. Our coaches work collaboratively to identify, nurture, and help develop swimmers to reach their full potential. At the core of the program is a cyclical annual training plan crafted to peak the swimmers two to three times per year in accordance with the meet schedule. Each swimmer must exhibit complete ownership of the sport and an unwavering commitment and motivation evidenced by their significant swim career achievements. A desire for continued self-improvement is a must and is at the foundation of success. All energy systems are emphasized, including lactate tolerance training. There is a daily focus stroke refinement, starts, turns and transitions.

Attendance: We highly recommend six times per week, increasing to eight times per week during long-course season (two days a week of twice per day plus three days of once per day).

Swim Meets: Senior Elite group swimmers are expected to participate in a multiple of USA-sanctioned swim meets. Participation in meets will be individually determined between coaches and parents, respecting each swimmer's own readiness and motivation.

## **OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

### **MASTERS SWIMMING**

The master program is a member of the United States Masters Swimming (USMS) – Florida Gold Coast LMSC. This training group is comprised of all levels of swimmers, from those just beginning to fitness swimmers as well as the casual to nationally ranked triathletes. Each team member will take what they need from the program. We strike a healthy balance between fitness, fun and competition. This program is designed for individuals who are out of high school or older.

Attendance: We offer 6 practices per week and suggest a consistent training routine of 2-3 practices per week

### **ADULT LEARN TO SWIM**

Adult Learn to Swim is just that. This program is for those individuals who are 14 and up and cannot swim. If you have basic swimming skills, then you will go to the Master's program

### **WATER POLO**

The MCDA Water Polo Club is for both male & female athletes 12 and up, who is a proficient swimmer. Practice will consist of teaching our players the core fundamentals of egg beating, passing, dribbling, shooting, driving and defending. They will also learn to understand the game

from and “X” and “O” perspective. The goal of the club is to further develop the player’s individual skill and knowledge for the game. Through our club, players will gain the experience and increased practice times to improve on their game. Within the club there are 3 levels; Development, Elite and Masters.

The team competes in tournaments and leagues.

## **MOVING BETWEEN ABILITY LEVELS:**

*When can an athlete move up?* When current MCDA swimmers are looking to advance to a higher practice level, several factors are involved. For example: a child's technical competence, physical stamina, mental preparedness, swim meet attendance and performance all play a role.

During a trial period with the desired group, the coaching staff will ask the swimmer to complete a series of “test sets” as a means of determining if the swimmer is prepared and will be successful in the new training group. Test sets are based on the required ability levels outlined in the previous section. Testing periods are spread throughout the year to allow swimmers time to advance and improve through the year (December, March, June, and September).

At the most advanced level in MCDA's age group program the Senior Elite level, advancement only occurs two times each year: after the Florida Gold Coast Senior Championships in March, and at the beginning of the year in September.

## **PRACTICES**

The MCDA Swim Team offers year-round swim program. All practices are held at the Miami Country Day School Aquatic Center.

Posted practice times may be adjusted based on the number of swimmers in each group. In addition, since the pool is shared with the interscholastic (high school & middle school) swim teams and water polo teams, practice times are subject to change based on pool availability. Also, the school has the ability and right to cancel our practices for a school function at any time. Alternate practice locations may be required at times and will be announced on the team website. No adjustments in monthly fees are made for the loss of pool time.

## **PRACTICE ATTENDANCE**

1. The group in which the swimmer is placed determines the number of times that a swimmer must attend workout. Each group will be told what is offered at the various times of the season.
2. Please arrive for practice ten minutes prior to the start of practice, but not before.
3. Plan to stay for the entire practice session. The end of practice is very often the most important. Often, announcements are made after practice that will be missed should a swimmer leave early. If you need to be dismissed early from workout, a note from a parent is requested.

4. If a swimmer will be out of the water over a long period of time due to illness, please notify the MCDA office so that the coaching staff is aware of the problem.

## **PRACTICE EQUIPMENT FOR TEAM**

MCDA is a Speedo sponsored team. All our swimmers are expected to wear Speedo suits and use Speedo equipment. Please check your swimmer's gear frequently as many times equipment is broken or lost during the season and needs to be replaced. As a suggestion, we would like to recommend the use of a "sharpie" as a tool to identify the swimmer's equipment. Please refer to the Equipment List to see what each training group is expected to have at every practice.

1. Swimsuits - are the most important purchase for a competitive swimmer. It is advisable to have at least one suit for practices (practice suit) and another suit for meets (racing suits).
  - a. When you purchase a practice suit make sure it is an "endurance" suit made of mostly polyester. Polyester/endurance suits are slightly more expensive but last at least 10 times longer than suits with Lycra/Spandex.
  - b. Two-piece suits are NOT ALLOWED for practice or competition
  - c. Girls should not wear suits with tie strings or buckles
  - d. Boys should not wear trunks or board shorts
2. Goggles - are needed for swimmers' health. They save the eyes from water irritation that can arise from long exposure.
3. Fins, paddles, and a mesh bag are also required for workouts.
4. Swim caps or swim suits may only have a MCDA Team sponsored logo. No equipment may represent any other team.
5. Water bottles are STRONGLY recommended. Swimmers should hydrate through-out practice.
6. Kick boards and pull buoys are provided by MCDA. Please understand the importance of handling all this expensive equipment with care.

## **PRACTICE BEHAVIOR**

1. At all times, all swimmers are expected to follow the directions of any coach at any time. At no time will disrespectful attitudes be tolerated. The coaching staff's relationship with the swimmers is that of direct control. When a coach is working with many swimmers at the same time, swimmers should pay undivided attention always. When a coach signals for quiet, be quiet immediately. Any child failing to demonstrate self-control will be removed from the workout.
2. In the pool, swimmers always remain against the wall, never playing in the lane. The only time a swimmer is allowed away from the wall is when swimming a given distance or when instructed by a coach.
3. Swimmers are not allowed to walk on the bottom of the pool unless something is physically wrong, example, a leg cramp or dizziness.
4. The use of profanity or verbal abuse towards another swimmer or coaching staff member will never be tolerated.
5. Swimmers are never to enter the swimming pool without a coach present on the deck.

## **PRACTICE CHANGES /CANCELLATIONS**

In the event of a practice time change or cancellations, those changes will be communicated as soon as possible. Any change to a scheduled practice will be posted on our website, in the News section, emailed to all families as well as posted on our Facebook Fan Page.

## **WEATHER POLICY**

We will always strive to hold practices. Just a light rain, we will swim. Hard rain with no lightning, we will swim. If there is thunder and lightning in the area, the Miami Country Day Aquatic Center has a Thorguard lightning detection system. When the alarm goes off (one long horn), all swimmers and spectators must exit the pool and get off the pool deck as soon as possible. We will only return when the all clear is heard (three shorter horn sounds). MCDA reserves the right to evacuate the pool if the weather warrants, even if the alarm does not sound.

During weather emergency:

- The staff will wait up to 1/2 hour into practice before we decide to cancel a practice.
- If the alarm goes off during practice and there are 30 minutes or less of practice, all swimmers will be dismissed. A MCDA coach will remain at the pool until all children are picked up.
- If the alarm goes off while there is more than 30 minutes of practice, we will take the team to the second-floor balcony of the library (just in front of the pool gate), stay inside the office or move into the gymnasium. We will do everything we can to keep the athletes engaged in a practice setting; ie: dryland training or watching swimming videos. We will remain in a safe place until we can safely re-enter the pool, or practice is called off.

## **COMMUNICATIONS:**

Communication between parents, coaches, and swimmers is a top priority of MCDA. There are several important ways to stay current:

1. Team website – [aquatics.miamicountryday.org](http://aquatics.miamicountryday.org) will have the most up to date information. The website is updated weekly and contains a lot of information about the team as well as information about swimming in general. This is where you can find information and sign up for upcoming events. You can verify if your swimmers are in a meet or not and see what events they will be swimming. You can find records of all of your swimmer's times and results from all the meets they have ever been in. You can also find our Team Records, and hopefully your swimmers name.
2. Team email – The coaches can be reached by E-Mail. This is a good way to communicate or make appointments to speak with them. It is important that families keep their E-Mail information up to date on our website, so you can be reached about happenings on the team. If you need help on using our team website or how to sign-on, please contact your coach so we can get you help. Team Emails or News is occasionally sent out during the week for various reasons.

3. Social Media – follow us on Facebook and Twitter.
4. Parent Meetings – Parent Meetings are held at least once every season.
5. In addition, parents are always welcome to contact a coach with questions or concerns. Emails and phone numbers are provided in several spots on the website. MCDA strives to provide its members with the most up-to-date information in a timely manner. Parents and swimmers are encouraged to do their part by checking email and the team website frequently, and by attending all available meetings.

## **REGISTRATIONS**

All swimmers, regardless of their original start date, must re-register each August as Short Course swim season begins in September. A fall information night is available for families to talk with coaches. You are financially responsible for the entire quarter your swimmer is registered whether your swimmer attends practices or not. Swimmers new to the MCDA program may enroll at any time during the year. While each new swimmer is entitled to a free trial week with the team, online registration must be complete, and fees paid before a swimmer can practice with the team. Should a swimmer decide to not continue with the team after the trial week, MCDA must be notified in writing and a full refund will be given.

## **SWIM MEETS**

All MCDA Swim Team members are expected to participate in meets for which they have qualified. Participating in meets gives swimmers the opportunity to better times and meet time standards needed for the Championship level meets, as well as Sectionals and Nationals.

Many USA swim meets are offered throughout the year for all levels of ability. We like to see as many of our swimmers as possible at these meets. Once the swimmer is confirmed to participate in the meet you are welcome to request what events your swimmer participates in by filling in the text box on the registration page. Unless noted on the registration form, the coaches will be choosing events for the swimmers. They know what each child likes to swim and their abilities. They will not be likely to pick events the athlete is not ready for. However, they will enter them in events that may challenge them. If you do have specific requests for a certain meet, please communicate that via the meet registration page on the team website. Please realize that it may not be possible to place a swimmer in specific events only to make sure they swim in requested sessions.

The duration of swim meets vary. Some meets are 1 day, and other meets are 3 days (Friday thru Sunday). During 3-day swim meets, the athletes do not have to participate all three days, just indicate which days you will be attending. Once the swimmer has been entered in a meet, the family is responsible for the meet fees even if the swimmer does not participate in meet. The team must pay for the fees when the entries are mailed.

There are different nationally recognized levels of achievements based on times for each age group. Swimmers begin as “C” swimmers and as they improve, they advance from “C” to “B” to “A” then to “AA”, “AAA”, “AAAA”. This permits fair yet challenging competition on all levels. In some cases, a swimmer may be a different class in each stroke. An example: “C” breaststroke time, “B” freestyle time and “A” backstroke time. Some swim meets set certain qualifications standards. To swim in these meets, a swimmer must have achieved one or more of the qualifying times. These meets will be noted on the sign-up information. Please feel free to ask a coach or board member if you have questions about signing up for these meets.

## **ENTERING SWIM MEETS**

The meet schedule is determined by the coaching staff and posted on the team website at the beginning of each season (Short Course Season is posted in late summer; Long Course is posted in spring). Families who are not sure which meets are appropriate for their swimmers are encouraged to contact the head coach. Meet information and entry deadlines are posted as early as possible on the team website. MCDA swimmers enter meets through the team website. After logging in, a swimmer will be able to declare if he is going to attend a certain meet and what days he/she plans to be there. Coaches will then enter the swimmers in their events and send the team’s entries to the host team. Meet entries fees will be posted to accounts on the next billing cycle.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT AT A MEET**

Most swim meets are two and a half (2 ½) days long – Friday night, Saturday and Sunday. The Friday schedule usually begins between 4:00-6:00PM and has events for age groups 10 and under through Senior. Each meet schedule is different and is determined by the host team. The schedule for Saturday and Sunday has each age group either swimming in the morning or the afternoon. Expect a full morning or afternoon spent at the pool. For example, if your child’s age group swims the morning session, plan on getting to the pool for warm-ups at approximately 7:00-8:00AM and leaving when the session is over at Noon-1:00PM, depending on the size of the meet. Swimmers usually spend down time in our team area. This is usually under our team tent area near the pool. Remember to dress accordingly – swimmers should bring clothing suitable for the weather. In cold weather, more than one towel is a good idea. Consider a knit cap to cover a wet head, a team warm-up suit (or heavy clothing), something to wear on your feet, and even a blanket. In hot weather, see that you have something to protect your head from the sun and a team “T” shirt.

Bring a blanket to throw down or chairs to sit on. Most meets have concessions, but it is a good idea to bring extra snacks, water or sports drinks. The most important item is LIQUID – swimmers need to replace liquids. Do not drink dairy products before swimming – these can cause stomach cramps. Remember to pack games, books or music.

Most meets have “heat sheets” available to purchase. Heat sheets will specify heat and lane assignments your child will be swimming. This information is also available from the coaches. It is a good idea to write the event number and stroke on your child’s arm or leg as a reminder. Psyche sheets are another form of a heat sheet that only shows the swimmers in each event, listed by entry time from fastest to slowest. You can estimate the heat assignment and the swimmer

will get their lane assignments when checking in. If heat and lane assignments are available, they should be included on your child's arm or leg.

Swimmers should be ready to enter the pool at the time designated for warm-up, therefore they should arrive at the pool NO LATER THAN 15 minutes before that time – this will give them enough time to find the team in the “team area”. Swimmers need to make sure that they have their suits, goggles, swim cap and towel before they leave home!! It is a good idea to have back-up goggles and swim cap.

It is a swimmer's responsibility to make sure they report to their event in time to swim. Most meets simply have the swimmers report to their assigned lane/block. Make sure your swimmer is aware of their event. Experienced swimmers and parents will assist new swim families/swimmers – please do not be afraid to ask for assistance!! Each swimmer is to report to the coach as soon as they have completed their event, so the coach can give them feedback. If your child comes to you, remind them to see their coach first – THANKS!

Do not leave the meet until you or your swimmer has checked with the coach about whether they are on relay. If a member of the relay leaves before the event, the other three team members will not be able to swim. Most relays are not announced or posted until the final phase of the session. If a child causes a relay to be scratched by not showing, his entry fee account will be charged the complete entry fee for the relay.

Talk to the coach if you have questions. Remember at meets, swimmers are working not only to win races but also to get new “best times”. A child can take 25<sup>th</sup> place and be thrilled because he/she got a faster time than before. A word of praise and support from family, other teammates and team families is a great way to reward and acknowledge their hard work. Finally, expect to have FUN at a meet! It's exciting to be on a relay or to cheer on teammates. Sharing snacks, playing games, and building friendships are all part of the meet experience. Setting and achieving goals, as well as perfecting skills, is rewarding. More information about what to expect at a meet and other helpful resources can be found on the team's website.

## **MCDA SWIM MEET PROCEDURES**

1. 1. Pre-meet Warm-up
  - a. A member of the coaching staff always conducts warm-ups; parents should never interfere or participate in the warm-up procedure. This is the coaches' role.
  - b. Warm-up areas are open approximately one hour prior to the start of most meets. To take full advantage of the allotted time, all swimmers are expected to be present and ready to begin at that time. The younger swimmers will begin 15 to 45 minutes prior to the start of the meet.
  - c. Team members are required to warm-up with the team. The only exceptions will be when the youngster makes advance arrangements with the coaching staff, for reasons that will be considered on an individual basis.
  - d. Swimmers and parents alike must understand that a good warm-up is essential to successful performance. Each youngster in the program deserves every opportunity available to be successful. A warm-up is one of those opportunities!

- e. Swimmers should have a "team area" at meets and sit together as a group. This promotes team unity and spirit. When a swimmer arrives at a meet, he/she should find the team area.
  - f. Obtain a heat sheet and check to see that you are properly entered in your events. If there is a mistake, discuss it with your coach so that he can take corrective action.
2. After each race, the swimmer should ask for his/her time from lane timers. Upon receiving this time, swimmers are asked to come immediately to the coaching staff. This gives the coaches an opportunity to discuss the race with the swimmer and add positive comments concerning splits, stroke techniques, and race strategy, etc. If a warm-down area is available, swimmers are to warm-down first, then report to the coaches. Parents should be consulted AFTER the coach, in either case.
3. The coaching staff shall have the final word on selecting events. Team members are never to scratch or late enter an event without first consulting one of the coaches. In a meet with preliminaries and finals, it is expected that any swimmer qualifying to swim in the finals will do so.
4. As a matter of courtesy to the officials and meet host, MCDA Swim Team prefers that swimmers and parents alike, stay off the competition areas unless competing or serving in an official capacity
5. Similarly, as a matter of courtesy, all questions swimmers or parents may have concerning meet results, an officiating call, or conduct of a meet should be referred to the coaching staff. They, in turn, will pursue any matter through proper channels.
6. Each swimmer is responsible for knowing which events he/she is swimming and being present on time to swim. If for some reason a youngster cannot compete, coaches should be notified ahead of time.
7. Relays: Parents must check with coaching staff prior to leaving the meet, making certain that their child has not been placed on a relay. If for some reason a swimmer must leave early, please notify the coaches as soon as possible so that other youngsters may be informed if they are needed for the relay. Building a relay team is the sole responsibility of the coaching staff. Good or bad, many variables are considered. One is the attitude of the swimmer. Second is his/her best time. Third is his/her ability to perform under pressure. Finally, the type of meet the swimmer has had for that day and occasion is considered. Even with these variables considered, selecting the top four people for a relay is difficult.
8. As a matter of pride, leave the team area and pool in a neat and clean condition after each day's meet.

## **OUT-OF-TOWN-MEETS**

Trips to meets in other cities become an important aspect of a swimmer's career as he/she advances through the age group ranks. We established the following policies for the safety of the swimmers and peace-of-mind of his/her parents:

1. Parents are responsible for arranging transportation to away meets except for Nationals and Sectionals. **DO NOT ASK YOUR CHILDREN TO HANDLE THIS JOB BY THEMSELVES.**
2. Parents are encouraged to attend out-of-town meets with their children and to chaperone other youngsters. These trips can be great fun for parents and swimmers alike and are rare opportunities to participate in a special way in a young swimmer's career.
3. A coach has too many responsibilities to the team to accept the responsibility for an individual. Therefore, do not ask a coach to provide transportation except as a last resort.
4. Any swimmer riding in a car is responsible to that parent/driver for his/her behavior and is expected to adhere to a proper code of behavior always.
5. A medical release and emergency telephone number should be given to the parent/driver with whom your child is riding in case emergency medical treatment is required.

## **FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

### **EXPLANATION OF FEES**

The MCDA Swim Team is a not-for-profit organization run solely by the coaches and is self-supporting through membership dues and fundraising. Fees and fundraising efforts go directly towards the team's operating expenses including coaches' salaries, travel expenses, championship meet or special event t-shirts, equipment, and supplies.

### **PAYMENT OF FEES**

Quarterly fees are invoiced the 1st of each month; September, December, March, during the academic year and June, July and August during the summer, on Team Unify. Parents will be emailed a link that will take them to their account information. Billing will include any monthly fees and any other fees incurred since the last billing statement such as meet fees, swim shop, late fees, etc.

Payments must be made electronically and are automatically drawn out of your checking or savings account or charged to a credit card on the first business day of the quarter. You can set up electronic payment in your account on our website (instructions are posted on the 'parent help' page of the MCDA website).

### **DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS**

Account balances are expected to be paid by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. Fees past due will be charged a late fee of \$15.00 per each month they are unpaid. Any families with accounts more than 45 days past due will be placed on Inactive Status (which includes not participating in any MCDA activities, meets or practices). The family shall be liable for all court costs and attorney's fees incurred in collection of delinquent accounts

All outstanding accounts must be paid in full before a swimmer can be re-registered with the team. Outstanding balances are subject to legal action if not paid in full.

## **QUARTERLY DUES / RECURRING CHARGE**

Quarterly fees are collected on the 1st day of September, December, March & June. Accepted credit cards: Visa, MasterCard, Discover. We can accept American Express as well, but you must swipe the card in the office. Coaching fees are assessed quarterly and auto-billed to your team account.

Pathways: \$360 (\$120/month)

Bronze: \$390 (\$130/month)

Silver: \$420 (\$140/month)

Gold: \$450 (\$150/month)

Senior Development: \$480 (\$160/month)

Senior Elite: \$510 (\$170/month)

- **Group Advancement** - If a swimmer is moved to a different practice group in the middle of a quarter, the family will be billed the amount of the new group dues on their next billing cycle.
- **Pro-Rating** - If a swimmer participates during any part of the 3-month span, the full quarter's dues must be paid. MCDA does not prorate dues **UNLESS** the child joins part-way through the session.
- **Refunds** - New swimmers are eligible for a refund of coaching fees, within a one-week trial period, if they choose not to continue with the program. For a refund to be processed a notice of cancelation in writing is required within the one-week trial period.
- **Suspension or Cancellation of Team Membership** - If you would like to suspend or cancel your team membership, please do so in writing or via email to [aquatics@miamicountryday.org](mailto:aquatics@miamicountryday.org) . **If a swimmer opts not to participate in the next quarter, we must receive notification in writing/email 10 days prior to the beginning of the upcoming quarter to terminate reoccurring charges.** There will not be any credits or refunds given.

## **ADDITIONAL NON-RECURRING CHARGES**

### **Annual USA Swimming Registration Fee**

A non-refundable annual registration fee of **\$70** is required for each team member upon registration. This annual registration covers the athletes from January 1st through December 31st. The registration fee covers a swimmer's Florida Gold Coast and USA Swimming registration, membership and insurance. New swimmers may register at any time during the season. The amount is not pro-rated and is mandatory.

## **USA Swimming Transfer Fee**

The USA mandatory transfer fee of \$5 covers the cost of transferring a membership to MCDA from another team. When a swimmer transfers to MCDA in the middle of the year, this fee takes the place of the annual \$70 USA registration fee. This only applies to swimmers with a current USA swimming membership transferring from another USA swim team.

## **Swim Shop**

MCDA operates a swim shop, with team suits, practice suits, caps, t-shirts, goggles and other equipment. Please contact us ahead of time and we will have items ready for the swimmer before practice and can bill to your team account. This will help us, and your swimmer get the most out of practice! You may email [aquatics@miamicountryday.org](mailto:aquatics@miamicountryday.org) for the items needed or any special orders for purchase.

- Required Equipment and Apparel – If the swimmer does not have the required items to participate in practice, he/she will be provided the items and the account will be billed accordingly.
- Special Equipment - From time to time, some training groups require special equipment, educational material or other items, as determined by the group coach. The need for such items will be communicated to the swimmer's family, distributed by the coach, and billed to the family account.

## **DISCOUNTS**

If a new swimmer joins the team after the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month, the first month's fees will be prorated by 50%. Swimmers participating in the high school-sponsored swim season should request seasonal status during their high school season. Please provide thirty days' notice prior to the start of the high school season. Quarterly fees will not be charged while a swimmer is inactive. However, invoices will still be sent if account does not have a \$0 balance. No refunds or waived fees will be given, even if a swimmer has not attended practice within a particular month.

## **REFERRALS**

A family will earn a \$25 credit towards their account for every family they refer to the team. When a new family joins the team, they must notify the Head Coach in order for you to receive the credit. This does not apply to Swim School referrals.

## **TRIAL WEEK**

A swimmer may practice with MCDA for one week, coordinated with the coach, before deciding whether he/she would like to join. Online registration must be completed, and fees paid, before a swimmer may enter the pool for their trial week.

## **MEET FEES**

Each family will be billed meet fees for each meet in which your swimmer participates. For typical regular season meets, you can expect to be charged \$3.50-\$5.00 per swim depending on the meet entered. In most meets, swimmers can swim three to five events per day. Many meets also have an athlete facility use fee of \$5.00-\$9.00 per meet. MCDA assesses a team surcharge for meet participation to pay for expenses incurred by the team for coach staffing, travel and related administrative costs. The MCDA surcharge is \$5 per swimmer for Sizzler meets, \$10.00 per swimmer for local meets and \$15.00 per swimmer for championships and travel meets.

For example, the information below details the costs for participation in a typical meet, such as a Florida Gold Coast regular season invitational:

Athlete facility use fee \$5.00

MCDA Team surcharge \$10.00

Saturday – 4 events x \$3.00 per event \$12.00

Sunday – 4 events x \$3.00 per event \$12.00

Total Meet Fees \$39.00

MCDA pays the meet entry fees to the hosting team when meet entries are sent prior to the meet. Therefore, accounts will be billed whether a swimmer attends the meet or not. Meet entry fees cannot be refunded due to illness or change of plans.

## **MCDA SPECIAL EVENTS**

Intrasquad Swim Meets, mini meets, theme meets or special MCDA parties, hosted by MCDA for MCDA athletes and families only, involve a flat fee of \$10.00 for participation.

## **LEAVING THE TEAM**

Should your swimmer decide to quit the team for any reason the team should be notified, in writing, by the person responsible for the account. An email must be sent to [aquatics@miamicountryday.org](mailto:aquatics@miamicountryday.org) by the 20th of the month prior to leaving. A \$10 service fee may be charged if notification is given after the 20th of the month prior to leaving. Fees will not be refunded when a swimmer leaves the team. The exceptions to this policy are based on either of the following conditions:

1. **Medical problem** - Families requesting a refund because of a medical condition must demonstrate that a swimmer is unable to participate in swimming activities because of a diagnosed medical condition. The request must include medical documents that clearly identify that a swimmer is unable to swim or that a certified medical professional recommends the child not swim.
2. **Family relocation** - Families requesting a refund because of relocation must identify when they expect to leave the area, with area being defined as beyond 30 miles from MCDA's practice

location.

**3. Suspension or Cancellation of Team Membership** - If you would like to suspend or cancel your team membership, please do so in writing or via email to [aquatics@miamicountryday.org](mailto:aquatics@miamicountryday.org). **If a swimmer opts not to participate in the next quarter, we must receive notification in writing/email 10 days prior to the beginning of the upcoming quarter to terminate reoccurring charges.** There will not be any credits or refunds given.

## **SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT**

If you have questions about your account, billing and specific charges assessed to your account email is always the best way to start the communication. Sometimes in person is easiest and best and in that case, it is best to schedule an appointment to do so. We are typically in the office during school hours and have some availability for meetings in the afternoon/evenings but request an appointment or a heads up before coming by to be able to give you great service without taking away from our swimmers. The hours of 2pm-7pm are our busiest coaching times and we devote our time to the swimmers. In order for us to give our attention to the swimmers and to be able to give you our full attention and service we request to please refrain from lengthy discussions during those times.

## **PARENT'S ROLE**

The greatest contribution you can make to your swimmer's progress is to be a loving, supportive parent. First, a parent's role is to supply encouragement, mental and moral support. Parents are welcome at practice. The coaches' attention needs to be focused on the swimmers during practice. The coaches will be available before and after practice each evening to discuss concerns or suggestions. You may also leave a written question in the coaches' mailbox. The coach's job is to motivate and constructively criticize the swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to supply the love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to make the child work harder in practice, which in turn gives him/her the confidence to perform well in competition. Each of our coaches has a different style of coaching. Some coaches are loud, and some are quiet. No matter their style, they are seeking to motivate your swimmer to reach for their full potential. Please make every effort to have your swimmers at practice on time. Realize that your child is working hard and give all the support you can. Encourage good diet and sleeping habits. They will serve your children well.

## **YOUR ATHLETE**

To have a successful program there must be understanding and cooperation among parents, swimmers, and coaches. The progress your child makes depends to a great extent on this triangular relationship. The following guidelines will help you keep your child's development as an athlete in the proper perspective and help your child reach his/her full potential under the coach's direction.

Ten and unders are the most inconsistent swimmers and this can be frustrating for parents, coaches and the swimmer alike! Parents and coaches must be patient and permit these youngsters to learn to love the sport. When a young swimmer first joins, there may be a brief period in which he/she appears to slow down. This is a result of the added concentration on stroke technique, but this will soon lead to much faster swims for the individual. Even the very best swimmer will have meets where they do not do their best times. These "plateaus" are a normal part of swimming. Over the course of a season, times should improve. Please be supportive of these "poor" meets. The older swimmers may have only two or three meets a year for which they will be rested and tapered. Sportsmanlike behavior and improved performance are of equal importance. All the coaches teach swimmers how to behave like champions whether the swimmers have a "good" or a "bad" swim. Respect for officials, congratulations to other competitors, encouragement to teammates, determined effort, and mature attitudes are examples of great behavior. A swimmer should be praised for improving his/her stroke or time. It is the coach's job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent's responsibility to provide love and encouragement that bolster the swimmer's confidence along the way. Swimmers are taught to set realistic, yet challenging goals for meets and to relate those goals to practice to direct their training efforts. Swimmers are prepared and encouraged to compete in all swimming events, distances, and strokes. This policy promotes versatility and encourages the swimmer to explore his potential in the wide range of events offered in competitive swimming. Often times, a swimmer's "best" stroke changes as they mature, and his/her body goes through physical changes.

## **MCDA CODE OF CONDUCT**

As a swimmer, I understand that I must follow these rules to stay in good standing:

**R - RESPECT** – Respect the coaches, the sport, teammates and yourself. I will respect the coaches' direction and authority. I will respect the rules and regulations of the sport. I will respect my teammates. I will show self-respect and not use abusive language.

**A – ATTITUDE**- I will try to keep a positive attitude. I will think positively and approach even the most difficult tasks with a good and forward-thinking attitude.

**C – CONDUCT** – I will demonstrate good sportsmanship before, during and after practice and swim meets. I will be courteous to any official, coach or swimmer from another team. I will be modest when successful and be gracious in defeat. I will refrain from the use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol and abusive language.

**E – ENCOURAGING** – I will encourage my teammates and promote good sportsmanship. By displaying encouraging actions, I will be helping myself and my teammates achieve our goal of excellence.

**D – DISCIPLINE** – I will be responsible for my behavior. In ensuring a positive learning environment at practice and at swim meets, I understand the levels of discipline.

Warning #1: Verbal statement from the coach about discipline.

Warning #2: A time out period from practice (5-10 minutes) where I can reflect upon my behavior and adjust it as required.

Warning #3: Removal from swim practice. If I am asked to leave swim practice I will not leave the premises unless directed by a coach or approved by a parent. If discipline continues to be an issue, a coach/parent/swimmer conference may occur.

## **COMPETITIVE STROKES**

The four competitive strokes are (1) freestyle, (2) backstroke, (3) breaststroke, and (4) butterfly. Events are held in all the competitive strokes at varying distance depending on the age group of the swimmer. In addition, there is a combination of the strokes swum by one swimmers call the individual medley (IM). The order of the individual medley is butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle. Other swimming events include relays, which are a group of four swimmers who either all swim freestyle (freestyle relay) or each swim one of the competitive strokes in the order of backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle (medley relay).

## **LEVELS OF ACHIEVMENT**

There are several different age group classifications recognized by United States Swimming (the governing body of the sport): 8 & Under, 10 & under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18. Some meets also have events for 6 & unders and combine the 15 and older swimmers into events under the classification of “Senior” or “Open”. All swimmers may participate in open events but only swimmers 15 years old or above may participate in the senior events. There are no “time standards” for 8 & under swimmers but they may swim in 10 & under qualifying events. Not all age group classifications are offered at every swim meet. The swimmer’s age on the first day of a meet will govern the swimmer’s age for the entire meet. Within each age-group, there are different nationally recognized levels of achievement based on times. All swimmers begin as “C” swimmers. As they improve, they advance from “C” to “B” and so on. The times required for each ability level are published yearly by United States Swimming. This permits fair, yet challenging competition on all levels.

Time standards may be found on our website under the Qualifying Times tab.

## **TYPES OF SWIM MEETS**

1. Florida Gold Coast Multi-team Meets – the MCDA Swim Team will compete with a variety of FGC teams. These meets are fun and help promote team unity. All levels of swimmers can usually compete.
2. Developmental Meets – These are “B” and “C” meets and do not usually have a minimum qualification time standard. Swimmers with an “A” time in a specific stroke cannot swim that event in these meets.
3. Qualification Meets – These meets have some type of qualifying time standards that a swimmer must have achieved to enter the meet. For example; Junior Olympics or Senior Championships.
4. Zone Championships – USA Swimming is divided into four zones: Eastern, Southern, Central and Western. Florida Gold Coast is a member of the Southern Zone. Zones are held two times during the year. A swimmer must have achieved a “AAA” time to qualify for this meet, and swims as a member of the LSC team rather than their local swim club.
5. Region Meet – Two examples of these meets are Sectionals & Junior Nationals: USA Swimming is divided into 14 Regions. The Florida Gold Coast is a member of the Southern Zone South Sectional. USA Swimming is then divided into two regions, East and West. Both meets are held twice a year and both have qualification standards. Qualifying times are approximately “AAAA” times.
6. Phillips 66/USA National Championships (Senior Nationals) – Other than the Olympic Trials and the World Championships Trials, each of which is held every four years, the highest level of competition for senior swimmers is the USA National Championships. Any swimmer meeting the national qualifying time standards travel to various cities throughout the US to compete against America’s best swimmers. Swimmers can qualify for national teams that represent the USA in international competition by their performance at this meet.

## **SAFE & POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT POLICY**

To make sure swimmers and their parents feel good about their involvement with MCDA Swim Team, MCDA has a reporting structure in the event there is a concern about coach behavior, including, but not limited to, sexual abuse.

1. All parents have unlimited access to coaches. Contact numbers for coach can be found on the Team website. MCDA takes all parental complaints and concerns seriously. If any parent – or swimmer – has concerns, they should bring those concerns immediately to the Head Coach. This includes concerns over inappropriate behavior of any kind.
2. MCDA will investigate all concerns.

## **Safeguards**

In addition, the following safeguards will be taken to ensure a safe and positive environment for MCDA swimmers:

Prior to hire, all coaches and swim instructors will undergo a sexual offender background check by the Miami Country Day School, as well, all USA Swimming coaches undergo a background screening by USA Swimming prior to certification.

There are no closed practices for swimmers. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to attend their child's practices.

Parental permission is required for any filming/videoing of swimmers for stroke analysis.

MCDA is only responsible for the safety and welfare of the children while they are attending practice. Parents/guardians are responsible for the safety and welfare of their swimmers prior to the start of practice and immediately following practice. Please pick up your children after practice in a timely manner.

Our main goal is to ensure that swimming with MCDA is a positive and safe experience for the swimmers and parents. If you have any questions about this policy, please contact a member of the Board of Directors.

All parents should be aware, as well, that MCDA expects appropriate behavior from its swimmers towards other swimmers and coaches. Depending on the nature of the conduct, the Board may get involved in investigating inappropriate behavior of swimmers and has the right to discipline the swimmer. Such discipline can include dismissal from the team.

## **PHOTO POLICY**

Periodically, photos and/or videos may be taken of MCDA swimmers for instructional or promotional use. The team may take photos and post them to the team website or use them in promotional material. The team may take videos, both above and under the water, in order to better instruct swimmers on stroke technique and to illustrate both positive and negative aspects of a swimmer's stroke or racing skills