

Marlins Practice Group Guidelines

Parents often ask why their swimmer was placed in a particular practice group. The following practice group descriptions explain what the coaches consider when determining which practice group to assign to each swimmer. For returning swimmers, the previous season's performance is the key consideration in determining practice group assignment. For new swimmers, the coaching staff will hold evaluations during the two week trial period to help determine where each swimmer should be appropriately placed. The number of swimmers at each level and pool availability may also play a role in determining practice groups. **Ultimately practice group assignments are determined by the head coach. If a practice group does not end up being a good fit for a swimmer, changes can be made at any time at the head coach's discretion.** Please talk to your child's coach if you have questions about practice group assignment.

Red

Red is our novice group. Swimmers must be comfortable with putting their face in the water. Each swimmer must be able to complete a full 25 yards of both freestyle and backstroke without any assistance. This group will primarily focus on the fundamentals of swimming and preparing to swim all four strokes legally at meets. Red group will practice 4 days a week at the Macomb YMCA. There is no minimum practice requirement for this group.

Gold

Gold is our developmental group. A swimmer is expected to be able to compete all 4 strokes correctly before entering the gold group. Swimmers are expected to start from the block and use flip turns. Improving racing starts and turns will be heavily emphasized. Gold group will be introduced to a more structured workout plan. For example, the swimmers will be on interval (timed) based workouts. The Gold group will practice 4 days a week at the Macomb YMCA. While there is no minimum practice requirement, 3-4 days per week is strongly encouraged.

Black

Black group is an advanced training group, focusing heavily on technique and conditioning. Swimmers will be expected to understand and complete interval formats without assistance. Swimmers in this group are committed to the sport of swimming and continuous improvement. The goal of this group is to attain individual qualifying times to participate in USA/YMCA State Championship meets. While there are no minimum practice requirements, swimmers should be able to handle 5 days a week of practice for 2 hours each day, and should strive to attend as

many practices as possible.

Black Elite

These swimmers have previously attained at least 3 individual State Meet qualifying times (either YMCA or USA). Swimmers are required to attend a minimum of 4 practices a week and are strongly encouraged to attend more. Swimmers age 13 & up are expected to participate in dryland training two nights per week.

Blue

Blue group is an advanced training group for high school aged swimmers. Swimmers will be expected to understand and complete interval formats without assistance. Swimmers in this group are committed to the sport of swimming and continuous improvement. The goal of this group is to attain individual qualifying times to participate in High School County, MISCA & State Championships, as well as USA/YMCA State Championship meets. While there are no minimum practice requirements, swimmers should be able to handle 5 days a week of practice for 2 hours each day, and should strive to attend as many practices as possible.

Blue Elite

These high school age swimmers have attained or are close to attaining top level meet time standards (YMCA Zones, USA States, YMCA Nationals). Dryland training is mandatory. Attendance at a minimum of 4 evening practices a week is required.

Equipment needed for all groups:

Kick Board, Fins, Pull Buoy, Snorkel, Hand Paddles