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New Flag Football League begins at Palmer Park

BY GARY ALAN RUSE

Omar Diaz and Stuart McGregor, both of whom have been involved and associated with youth sports in Miami for many years, have launched the new South Miami Youth Flag Football League (SMYFFL), which will follow the South Miami Youth Baseball League season schedule at Palmer Park. McGregor served as Commissioner of the SMYBL since 2002 before "retiring" from the organization and is now happy to become active again in the new flag football program.

"South Miami Youth Flag Football League is an exciting new venture and appears to be filling a need for the youth in the South Miami, Coral Gables and Pinecrest areas," McGregor said. "With the decline in physical education opportunities in the school system, there is a need to make sure our young children get the physical activity they need to develop healthy, strong bodies. Flag Football is a fast growing, non contact sport that gives young players the opportunity to learn the basics of the game while having fun and developing inter-personal skills as well."

The South Miami Youth Flag Football League is an "NFL" sponsored youth flag football league and open to all children ages 5 to 15 years old – regardless of skill level. The "recreation" league is another program being offered for the neighborhood communities surrounding the parks in the City of South Miami and supported



Coach and Director Omar Diaz conducting evaluations for the new South Miami Youth Flag Football League at Palmer Park; Julian Conesa; Juan Carlos Herrero, Daiel Vera and Justin Diaz.

by the City of South Miami Parks & Recreation Department. Unlike some sports programs, learning and fun are the primary goals.

"Winning and losing is something every young player should experience but winning is not the end-all of what sports are all about," said McGregor. "Our league is unique in that our mission statement is aimed at learning football skills and having fun. We work to maintain a competitive balance between our teams but also attempt to keep classmates, friends and family members together. This makes each game and practice a social occasion for parents and provides opportunities for car pool-

ing and other scheduling that is helpful to parents as well."

Omar Diaz is well known in youth sports throughout Miami, having grown up here and attending area schools. He has been a Head Coach for the following organizations: Kendall Boy's & Girl's Club, SMYBL and Coral Gables Panthers. He is presently Assistant Commissioner of the South Miami Youth Baseball League and has been a team manager and Division Commissioner for over 4 years. He has been asked to assist the South Miami Gray Ghost Tackle football and Baseball Leagues soon.

Coaches are volunteer parents who have an interest in

their children's activities and are being actively sought.

Cost is \$140 per player for Spring Season. Siblings can be registered for \$110. Mouthguards are required and a SMYFFL mouth-guard can be purchased from the league. NFL shirts and flags will be supplied by the league.

Parents can register their sons and daughters online now by pressing the registration link on the website, www.smyff-football.com. Download the registration form and send the registration fee by mail to: 6368 SW 31 St. Miami, FL 33155. Contact Omar at <smyff-football@yahoo.com> or 786-514-8256.