

Arena to sponsor Russian Swimming Federation's Talent Program

08 JULY 2014

Tolentino, 8 July 2014 – Global waterwear brand **arena** is pleased to announce a new cooperative initiative with the **Russian Swimming Federation's Talent Program**. The sponsorship agreement extends the continuing arena-ARSF partnership that was first started over 30 years ago.

The goal of the Talent Program is to intensify scouting activity for new and emerging talent in Russian swimming, and to improve the international visibility of promising young Russian swimmers.

“Arena and the Federation – who for many years have enjoyed a highly successful partnership – have decided together to support the growth of swimming in Russia through the launch of an ambitious Talent Program,” said **Giuseppe Musciacchio**, arena's General Manager of Brand development. *“We are proud to welcome to team arena, alongside well-known names such as Korotyshkin and Morozov, talented young athletes such as Ustinova and Sedov, with the aim of offering support to all of them in their careers.”*

“The idea to launch this project was very well-timed as it is very important for young swimmers to feel support and appreciation for their achievements. It's a great benefit for them to join the Arena family together with our elite swimmers, and provides excellent motivation for their team-mates to hone their skills and work hard to get the same recognition from Arena and the Russian Swimming Federation. We are confident that there is a great pool of talent among our young swimmers”, added **Vladimir Salnikov**, President of the Russian Swimming Federation.

15-year-old backstroker Daria Ustinova made a big splash at three international meets in 2013, starting in July with the European Junior Championships in Poznan, Poland, where she won two individual golds (50 & 100 backstroke) and five overall. Less than a month later she was part of the Russian women relay team's 4x100 medley bronze-medal effort in Barcelona's World Championships, where she also made the 200m backstroke final. Weeks later at the World Junior Championships in Dubai, she won four gold medals, including the individual 100m backstroke along with three relays. She ended off the year by winning a gold medal at the European SC Championships in Herning, Denmark, with the Russian 4x50m medley relay team. 2014 has seen a continuation of Ustinova's development, with the 100 and 200m backstroke titles in May's Russian nationals in Moscow, including new junior world marks for

both (59.87 & 2:08.02) and at the time world fifth and second rankings respectively.

Like Ustinova, 18-year-old Evgeny Sedov also won 5 gold medals at the 2013 Euro Juniors, including the individual 50 & 100 free, and 50 fly. Later in the year at the World Juniors he picked up a silver and bronze in the two freestyle sprints, along with a 4x100 medley relay gold. In May's Russian Nationals this year he broke the 50 fly junior world record twice on his way to the national title (23.30 & 23.28), and did the same in 50 free despite finishing outside the podium places (22.07). His 50 fly swim placed him ninth in the year's world rankings so far.

Another of the program's prodigies is 18-year-old butterfly exponent Svetlana Chimrova, who with Daria Ustinova won bronze and gold medals respectively with the Russian medley relay team at last year's World Championships in Barcelona and Euro SC Championships in Herning. In 2013 Chimrova also won four gold medals at the World Juniors, including 50 and 100 fly. She currently holds the Russian national records for 50 and 100 fly for both long and short course.

Butterfly and freestyle dash specialist Rozaliya Nasretdinova and middle-long distance freestyle swimmer Mariya Baklakova also fall into the program's Rising Stars category, while among the Rookies designation are Alexander Palatov (breaststroke), Alexander Kudashev (fly), Semen Makovich (IM) and Arina Openysheva (freestyle).

Ustinova, Sedov, and Openysheva are scheduled to compete at the upcoming Arena European Junior Championships from July 9th-13th in Dordrecht, Holland.



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