



October 2020

Mentoring Journey – Ashleigh Brennan

This year I have been mentoring Summer Zhu who is a diver. She is in grade 6 at school and I have really enjoyed building our mentor/mentee relationship this year.

It's been fantastic getting to know Summer and discuss the similarities between our sport. I feel this has been so beneficial in my role as mentor as the challenges that Summer experiences are very similar to mine as a young athlete navigating school, sport and a social life.

Summer and I have had regular discussions over Basecamp, zoom, virtual Pilates and even walked my dog together. I'm looking forward to restrictions in Melbourne being lifted so we can catch up in person and hopefully see Summer train and compete throughout 2021.

2020 has been a difficult year for not just Summer, but all athletes and students due sporting events being cancelled and remote school learning has taken up most of the year. Its very obvious what a hard working and dedicated young girl Summer is as I've witnessed how efficient she is completing all of her school work, freeing up time doing hobbies she enjoys.

It is tough being a young athlete and I feel I've been able to be a good listener and provide strategies to overcome common hurdles. Although this year has been challenging for Summer as she hasn't been able to train or compete in the pool, it has given her time to slow down, have a better balance with school and sport and be prepared for Year 7 next year while perusing her personal goals.

I am passionate about supporting young girls to become their absolute best version of themselves, so having the opportunity to mentor Summer has been very rewarding. The relationship both Summer and I have built will mean that she will always have myself to turn to for guidance and support.