

SWIM PRACTICE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The Swimmer & Practice

Practice Expectations

- Follow all practice rules outlined in the Practice rules section of this handbook.
- Enter water within two minutes of practice beginning time. This means if you need to stretch (which everyone does) you should get to the pool 15 minutes before practice.
- Swim caps should be on approximately 5 minutes before entering water for warm-up.
- Avoid other activities that demand a lot of physical exertion, especially during the hottest part of the day.
- Pay attention in practice to all coaches. Do not talk, splash, go underwater, etc. when coaches are giving instructions during practice.
- Work hard at each practice and set individual practice goals.
- Work as a group within your lane and not disrupting any other swimmer.
- Bring all equipment to practice and take it home after every practice session.
- Responsible for own behavior in pool, on deck, and in locker rooms.
- Responsible for reporting other swimmers misbehaving or bothering you in any way.
- Eat properly and get enough sleep every night.
- Follow all pool rules within each facility
- Let coaches know immediately of any physical problem.
- Ask questions when explanation or demonstrations are unclear.
- Support all teammates during practice.
- Remain positive at all times and do not question coaching decisions.
- Responsible for maintaining good grades and study habits to insure sufficient time to attend practice.
- Responsible for analyzing personal performance after each practice.

Required Practice Equipment

The following is a list of equipment which we recommend our swimmers obtain in order to fully participate each season. Although these items can be purchased at most sport stores, our team suppliers, SPORT FAIR, and Aardvark will have everything recommended. Team suits and caps are mandatory for swimmers wishing to participate in U.S.S. swim meets with the Potomac Marlins.

Water Bottle: Mandatory - bring every night filled with your favorite sports drink.

Flippers: Mandatory, All Rubber, Personalized, full length and tight fitting.

Goggles: Mandatory, please personalize. Recommend having several pairs available.

Pull Buoy: Optional, and personalized.

Record Book: For recording personal meet times. Not required for practice, however, record books are a good way to make quick notes about your race performance or strategies.

Zura Kick Board: Optional - we will use the Zura kick board which is available at Sport Fair.

Hand Paddles: For ages 11 and up (optional). See coaches for sizing information.

NOTE: Personalizing your equipment is a necessity! It will save you countless headaches and a lot of money. Examples of personalizing your equipment: marking them with waterproof markers, spray painting them, cut a pattern into the bottom edge of flippers, brand a sign or symbol into them with a hot object, color or draw on pull buoys, hand paddles and goggle straps (be creative). If you lose equipment and do not have your name or mark on it, we can not guarantee that it will be returned to you. Remember, just about everybody has equipment that looks just like yours. If all you do is put your name on your equipment, try to do it in water-proof marker or a substance that will not wash off with repeated exposure to chlorinated water. Nail polish seems to work best (ink pen never stays on). Periodically swimmers should redo their names on equipment so it remains **highly visible**. Potomac Marlin coaches are not responsible for lost or stolen equipment.

General Practice Rules

(Parents please review with swimmers)

The following practice rules shall be observed by Potomac Marlin swimmers and their families in an attempt to provide the highest quality learning environment possible for both swimmers and coaches. Safety for Potomac Marlin swimmers is a primary concern at all times from the moment each swimmer enters the building until they leave the parking lot. Following an established set of basic rules is essential for developing the discipline necessary to be successful in an extremely demanding sport such as swimming. It is also understood that the Potomac Marlin Coaches have the authority to reprimand their swimmers in an appropriate manner for not following the established team practice rules. Thanks to all swimmers, coaches, and parents for their attention and support of this important aspect of your Swim Team.

THE MAJOR RULES

- ⊗ All swimmers must enter the water within 2 minutes of receiving warm-up instructions from the coach.
- ⊗ Diving boards may not be used before, during or after practice. **This is a USS rule!**
- ⊗ Never push or throw anyone into the pool for any reason. **THINK SAFETY.**
- ⊗ Do not back-talk any coach or question their authority. (Parents should call with questions or concerns).
- ⊗ No talking when Coaches are speaking to the group or giving instructions / sets.
- ⊗ No splashing or noise making when Coaches are speaking to the group.
- ⊗ Do not physically or verbally attack other swimmers at anytime.
- ⊗ Do not throw swim equipment for any reason.
- ⊗ Profanity in the pool, on deck, in the locker rooms, in the aquatics facility or its grounds is prohibited.
- ⊗ Do not go under water when coaches are speaking. Pay attention at all times.
- ⊗ No running on deck or horse play in locker rooms.
- ⊗ No spitting in the pool or on other swimmers.

THE MINOR RULES

- ⊗ All swimmers must ask coaches before exiting the pool for any reason.
- ⊗ No swimmer will be allowed to get out of the pool to go to the bathroom in the middle of a set.
- ⊗ Bring practice equipment on deck every practice. Do not leave items in locker rooms unless locked.
- ⊗ All swimmers must exit the locker rooms with their suits on and ready to swim. Swimmers will not be allowed on deck in street clothes.
- ⊗ Swimmers who arrive to practice late must make every attempt to and get in the water as fast as possible or be prevented from participation.
- ⊗ Swimmers must leave 5 seconds apart on repeats unless otherwise instructed (10 seconds in long course).
- ⊗ Move to side when finished swimming sets so others may swim to wall.
- ⊗ Always pass swimmers on the left towards the middle of the lane.
- ⊗ Do not stop or touch bottom during sets before touching the wall. **SWIM TO WALL.**
- ⊗ Do not stop in the middle of the pool for any reason.
- ⊗ Do not pull on lane lines while swimming unless instructed to do so.
- ⊗ Do not pull on other swimmers feet when passing.
- ⊗ Do not run other swimmers into the lane ropes when passing.
- ⊗ Never sit or stand on lane ropes.
- ⊗ Do not pee in the pool.

Standard Disciplinary Action for major rule offenders:

First offense: Warning (one time only for entire season)

Second offense: Push-ups on deck (25 minimum) coaches discretion.

Third offense: Removal from practice - sit on deck for remainder of practice & call to parents from coach.

CONTNUED Behavioral problems will be reported to the Team Manager and the Strike Three Procedures will be implemented.

Locker Room Behavior

Because locker rooms are rarely supervised by either the coaches or parents, most swim team accidents and behavioral problems occur within them. Please be aware that the coaches are not responsible for swimmer's behavior in the locker rooms. All practice facilities allow parents to be present in the locker rooms after practices to provide supervision. It is a requirement of all our pool facility contracts to have a parent supervisor on duty in the locker rooms after practice. We encourage parents to supervise locker rooms at the end of practice sessions to help prevent young swimmers from personal injury, ejection from the facility or expulsion from the team.

Disciplinary Removal From Practice Policy

Organizing and maintaining a productive, stimulating learning environment is essential to the functioning of a teaching based program such as the Potomac Marlins. Good behavior and discipline are crucial in order to provide the highest level of instruction possible to every swimmer on an equal basis. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated for two main reasons.

1. It is not fair to the swimmers who are paying attention and trying to learn.
2. It is not fair to the coaches who must spend more time with the disruptive swimmer(s) than with the swimmers who want to learn and improve.

With this in mind, we have initiated the following policy for behavior during practice.

Three Strikes and You're Out!

Strike One- (*detention*) A swimmer is removed from the water for disruptive behavior. Any of the Potomac Marlins coaching staff reserve the right to make this decision. The swimmer will be required to leave the practice for the remainder of the session and sit in a designated area on the pool deck in plain sight of the coach. The occurrence will be followed with a **green** letter being sent to the parents with an explanation. The swimmer will be allowed to return the following practice. Questions should be directed to the coach who has handled the situation.

Strike Two- (*suspension*) A swimmer is removed from the water for a second time for a similar or related reason. The swimmer will be required to sit for the remainder of practice in the designated area. All Potomac Marlins coaches reserve the right to make this decision. The occurrence will be followed with a **yellow** letter being sent to the parents with an explanation. The swimmer **will not** return to practice for 1 week from the night of the occurrence and a meeting with at least one parent, the swimmer, a Head Coach, and the assistant coach (if applicable) is required before reinstatement.

Strike Three- (*expulsion*) A swimmer is removed from the water for a third time for a similar or related reason. The swimmer will be required to sit for the remainder of practice in the designated area. All Potomac Marlins coaches reserve the right to make this decision. A final **red** letter will be mailed to the parents notifying them of their forfeiture of any paid fees and the removal of their swimmer from the team for the remainder of the season. A Head Coach must make the final decision to remove the swimmer from the team.. The swimmer may re-join the team the following year only after he/she attends a meeting between both Head Coaches and his/her parents. The swimmer will remain on probation for the remainder of their time with the Potomac Marlins if accepted back on the team and will be at risk of being permanently removed for any problem thereafter.

Excused Dismissal from Practice

Swimmers requesting to be dismissed from practice before the official ending time must present a signed permission request note from their parent(s) prior to the beginning of practice or must have the parent notify the coach on deck before the start of the practice session.. Swimmers who do not have a note or form of parental permission will not be permitted to leave practice until the official ending time. The official ending time for practice includes all dryland sessions. A separate note must be presented with each dismissal. All notes will be kept on file. This policy is being implemented for the safety of all Potomac Marlins swimmers.