

POTOMAC MARLINS

2009-2010

Parent Handbook

www.potomacmarlins.com

P.O. Box 4190
Arlington, VA 22204

Barry: potomacmarlins@comcast.net

Bill: coach_bill@verizon.net

Terri: marlinswimming@verizon.net

Potomac Marlins 2009-2010 Competition Calendar

		<u>Event/Meet</u>	<u>Entry Due Date</u>
September	13	Parents Meeting/Outfitting Day	
	14	All Practice Groups Start	
October	3	PVS Swimposium	
	10-11	Halloween Mini Meet	Sept 22
	16-18	October Open*	Sept 29
	30-1	Penn State (travel meet)	Sept 29
	31-1	Fall Gator Mini Meet	Oct 13
November	6-8	November Open	Oct 20
	15	Friendship Mini Meet	Oct 27
	20-22	Swim & Rock	Nov 3
December	5-6	Reindeer Mini Meet	Nov 17
	10-13	Sport Fair Winter Classic*	Coach's Selection
	11-13	Turkey-Claus Showdown	Nov 24
	21-1	General Team Winter Break/Training	TBA
January	3-4	January Distance	Dec 22
	23-24	January Open	Jan 5
	23-24	Snowdude Mini*	Jan 5
February	13-14	PM JO Qualifier*	Jan 26
	15	PM Presidents Day Invite*	Jan 26
	19-21	18 & Under AG Champs	Feb 2
	21	Friendship Mini Meet	Feb 2
March	4-7	PVS Junior Champs	Feb 16
	11-14	PVS Senior Champs	Feb 23
	18-21	PVS 14 & U JO's	March 2
	25-28	Speedo Sectionals	March 9
	TBD	NCSA Junior Nationals	TBA
	29-2	General Team Spring Break	TBA
April	1-3	AG Eastern Zones	TBA
	16-18	Cherry Blossom	March 30

PLEASE NOTE: meet entry due dates may change, please be sure to verify due dates with you coach, the Marlin website and/or PVS website.

Additional meets and event may be added to the schedule as the coaching staff evaluates the opportunities and the needs of our swimmers. Please be sure to check the PM website regularly.

The 09 Summer LC schedule (May-Aug) has not yet been finalized. It will be added to the COMP schedule as soon as it becomes available.

The Potomac Marlins Swim Team

The Potomac Marlins Swim Team is owned and operated by Barry and Bill Marlin. Together they started the team in the fall of 1993 with 85 swimmers in 3 facilities. Today there are over 400 swimmers in 7 facilities with more than 17 assistant coaches.

Running a team of this size and caliber requires one common goal and a clear division of duties. Over the years the duties of both Bill and Barry have evolved and changed; Barry has taken on the role of TEAM MANGER, while Bill serves as the HEAD COACH. Due to the continued growth and success of the team Terri Marlin has taken on a more active role in the team administration, as the Team Registrar and Volunteer Coordinator.

Barry's responsibilities include:

- Team Manager
- Team Billing
- All Business Operations
- Team Outfitter Liaison
- Facility Aquatic Director Liaison
- Marketing/Advertising
- Graphics
- Web Master

Bill's responsibilities include:

- Head Coach; Provides training plans and oversees all coaches and all practice groups
- Lead Coach for Senior level at the JCC, AG Select and above at Audrey Moore
- Meet Entries Coordinator
- Meet Director
- Maintain MEF accounts
- PVS/USA Swimming Team Registrar

In addition Bill serves on the Potomac Valley Board of Directors as the Age Group Swimming Chairman

Terri's responsibilities include:

Team Registration

Meet Manager

Volunteer Coordinator

Hospitality Coordinator

Assistant Coach for Cub Run morning group

In addition Terri is also the Potomac Valley Swimming Admin Assistant

Coaches Contact Information

Communication is the key to a successful season. Please contact your child's coach with any questions, problems or concern. The deck coach should be your first line of communication to solve any problems or ask any questions regarding your child, practice or meet entries. If there are any additional questions, comments or concerns please contact Barry or Bill.

It is the Potomac Marlins ongoing policy NOT to give out any assistant coach's phone number. A coach may give out their phone number if they wish, however do not ask the Team Manager or another coach for anyone's phone number. If you need to directly talk to your child's coach, send them an email and ask them to call you.

- Team Manager Barry Marlin potomacmarlins@comcast.net
Information Line 703-820-7949
*NOTE: email is the best way to reach Barry
- Head Coach Bill Marlin coach_bill@verizon.net

CUB RUN

- Steve Ercolano coachsteve@cox.net
- Kevin Ahearn KevinJAhearn@verizon.net
- Rick Stakel rstakel@yahoo.com
- Jen Larmer srswim4funn@yahoo.com
- Meredith Bachman MLB713@gmail.com
- Terri Marlin marlinswimming@verizon.net
- Mark Loper mark_a_loper@yahoo.com
- Bruce Peters Bpeters@caci.com
- Bill Marlin coach_bill@verizon.net

GMU

- Steve Ercolano coachsteve@cox.net
- Bob Brofft rebprof@gmail.com
- Bill Marlin (Sat only) coach_bill@verizon.net

JCC

- Scott Bryant swimcoachscott@hotmail.com
- Bill Marlin coach_bill@verizon.net

CHINQUPIN

- Megan Fotheringham meganfoth@gmail.com
- Kimberly Clauer berlz13@gmail.com
- Marc Dash mrc_dash@yahoo.com
- Georgena Kafes georgena.kafes@gmail.com
- Barry Marlin potomacmarlins@comcast.net

AUDREY MOORE

- Joel "Cy" Cyganowicz coachcy01@aol.com
- Bill Marlin coach_bill@verizon.net
- David Horak dhorak@alumni.nd.edu
- Clare Flache flachce@gmail.com

LEE DISTRICT

- Bob Brofft bob.brofft@gmail.com
- Nadine Pottinga potnad@gmail.com

Mt. Vernon

- Kevin Mallon kmal5@comcast.net

On-line Registration/Check your Account

Beginning in the 2008-2009 season, the Potomac Marlins went with an online registration system. Although this change has brought had made the registration process and data entry significantly easier for us, it has not been without growing pains. While we are much more comfortable with this system this year, we do still experience small glitches from time to time. Feel free to contact the Team Registrar with any questions.

Registration

If you are new to the team or this is the first time you have registered using the On-line registration: Click the "New User" button to enter the system and follow prompts.

If you are a returning Marlin swimmers and have previously registered with the On-line registration and created an account: Click the "Returning User" button to enter system and follow the prompts.

Check your Account:

Once you have set up an account you can check it at anytime. Simply click on the "Check Account" button on the Nav Bar, enter your email address and password. From here you will be able to see you account balance due, programs signed up for, edit you information, pay balance by credit card.

This account is for your program fees only. Your MEF (meet entry fund) is tracked by a different system. For your MEF balance or questions contact Coach Bill.

Practice Philosophy

“Inspiring Excellence through hard work and attention to detail”

Every swimming team and its coaching staff prescribes to a philosophy which governs the manner in which they choose to run practice sessions and the expectations that are placed on the swimmers within each practice group. The Potomac Marlins practice philosophy is based on developing the individual discipline necessary to be successful in the sport of competitive swimming. Discipline is developed in our swimmers by requiring all swimmers in each practice group to adhere to specific set of practice rules. Discipline is further developed by promoting higher self standards including respect, commitment, pride and tenacity.

The Potomac Marlins practice philosophy also includes the notion that our swimmers should never practice bad habits. Stroke technique and attention to details are a primary concern during practice and every attempt is made by the coaching staff to correct stroke mechanics during workouts. In addition to these primary areas of concern the goal for all practice groups is to keep them positive and a motivational learning environment where each swimmer is treated in accordance with their desire to improve. Swimmers who are not putting forth an effort to learn or who are wasting time and goofing off will be removed from the group so as not to affect the serious swimmers who are trying to work hard. Swimmers who are able to challenge themselves and have the physical and mental discipline required to function within the practice will experience great success within the Potomac Marlins program.

Practice Policies and Safety

It is important for all swimmers to follow the prescribed practice policies to gain the most out of their swim practices.

1. Arrive to the facility at least 10 minutes prior to the start of practice in order to get suit on and all equipment ready.
2. Be on the deck and ready to swim on time; having gone to the bathroom, practice suit on, water bottle filled, all equipment ready.
3. Be respectful to the facility, lifeguards, coaches and other swimmers.
4. Enter the water only when the coach says it is okay to enter.
5. Listen to all instructions and follow all directions putting forth 100% effort through out practice.
6. At the conclusion of practice pick up all equipment, change in the locker room quickly and quietly then exit the facility in a timely manner.

SAFETY

Safety is a primary concern at all practice sessions and swim meets. All accidents around the pool or pool facilities are usually preventable as long as all involved members think SAFETY FIRST.

Potomac Marlins SAFETY RULES INCLUDE ALL POOL RULES ESTABLISHED BY EACH FACILITY IN ADDITION TO THE FOLLOWING TEAM SAFETY RULES:

- No pushing or pulling other swimmers into the pool for any reason.
- No throwing of any items in or around the pool, pool deck, locker room or interior of the building.
- No fighting or wrestling in or around the pool, pool deck, locker room or interior of the building.
- No running at any time in or around the pool, pool deck, locker room or interior of the building.
- No diving (head first entry) at any time into any pool without the direct supervision of the coaching staff or in water less than 4 feet deep.
- No diving off any facility diving boards or using indoor slides, while at the pool for swim practice.
- Always swim in the direction of the rest of the lane (circle swimming) in order to prevent collisions.

**Rules regarding the GMU facility will be communicated to those swimmers directly.

FOR SWIMMERS WHO DRIVE:

Although it is important to get to practice on time, it is ultimately more important to arrive SAFELY. If swimmers are running late for practice have them call their coach or another swimmer and remind them to take their time and obey all traffic signals.

Practice Equipment List

The following equipment list is all of the possible equipment a swimmer may need for practice. Each coach will pick and choose what equipment your swimmer will need. If you have not received a required equipment list from your child's coach please contact them directly. Sport Fair our team's outfitter also has lists of required equipment for several of the coaches. You can ask them for assistance as well.

The minimum needed for every practice:

Practice Suit	Required for all groups (not team racing suit)
Goggles	Required for all groups
Water bottle	Required for Age Group and above
Team Cap	Required for all those with long hair

Additional possible equipment (check with your coach):

Drag Suit	Optional, 12 & over only
Fins	Required for most groups * check with coach
Kickboard	Optional *check with coach
Pull Buoy	Required AG-Select and above *check with coach
Paddles	Required for AG-Select and above, 12 & over only
Breaststroke Fins	Required for Bill and Kevin's group; IM and breaststroker only
Freestyle Snorkel	Required for Bill's group

All items can be purchased from our official supplier:

Sports Fair
5010 Lee Highway
Arlington, VA 22207

Ph: (703) 524-9500

Fax: (703) 534-9501

Swim Meet Expectations and Policies

Swim meets are an essential part being on a competitive swim team. Although it is the best way to assess a swimmers progress it is also a venue for learning many important life lessons; sportsmanship, success, failure, disappointment, excitement, competition, being responsible for oneself, goal setting, mental rebounding, etc. Not to mention the fact that swim meets are FUN!

Participation in swim meets is only required for those who signed up for the Competition Team, however PM strongly encourages Practice Team member to "upgrade" and try a swim meet sometime during the season. There are plenty of meets for every level of swimmer from the very beginner Mini Marlin to the highly competitive National level. Contact the Team Manager or talk to your coach if you are interested in signing up for a swim meet.

Signing up for a swim meet is easy and can be done on the website or directly through your deck coach. See "Entry Procedures" on the following page for instructions on entering a meet.

Specific Meet Procedures

ATTENDING A MEET

Swimmers should plan to arrive at a swim meet at least 15 minutes prior to the posted warm-up start time (be sure to check the PVS website www.pvswim.org before leaving in case of potential schedule changes), Come out to the deck in your team suit and find the Potomac Marlins coach (a coaching schedule is usually posted on the web prior to the meet), check in all events necessary (positive check-in) and get ready for warm up.

Potomac Marlins coaches will indicate which lanes are for PM swimmers. Only enter the water after a coach has indicated that the pool is open for warm up and enter the water FEET FIRST, this is a safety precaution for all swimmers set forth by Potomac Valley Swimming. Swimmers are required to stay in the water for the duration of the warm up, unless specifically instructed by the coach. After warm-up swimmers shall return to the team area, dress warmly (team sweats are best!) and wait for their events. It is important not to leave the team area without first notifying a coach. Coaches need to know where the swimmers are at all times so that an event is not missed; Missing an event because a swimmer could not be found in the team area when the coach announces the event is the

sole responsibility of the swimmer. If your swimmer does miss an event, don't panic, it happens. Coaches strive to ensure that all swimmers make it to their events, however sometimes a swimmer misses an event. It is also important to talk to a coach both before and immediately after each event is swum to get instructions and feedback on the swim.

Swimmers are permitted to leave the pool after all of his/her events are finished for the day, but be sure to check with a coach before leaving to make sure your child is not scheduled or needed for a relay or other reason.

Encourage your swimmer to relax and enjoy the swim meet experience. There will be times where your child will see great improvement and feels very successful, but there are also times when "it just wasn't their day" and they will leave the pool feeling down and dejected. It is important that, as the parent, you remind your swimmer that you love them no matter how they did and there is always another meet. Try to avoid giving your child any "post race analysis," leave that to the coaches.

SWIM SUIT AND OUTFITTING REQUIREMENTS

Every swimmer is required to wear a Potomac Marlins team suit (with the logo) and a team cap (if needed) for all meets. This year's team suit is the same as last year, so everyone should have a team suit (Call Sport Fair if you need one 703-524-9500). We also HIGHLY encouraged all swimmers to wear only Potomac Marlins T-shirts and sweats to all team events (would a Redskin player show up to a game wearing a "blue" T-shirt or worse, a shirt from a different team?). We are a team and we want to look like a team! All current Competition Team members will receive a new team T-shirt which will be required to be worn on the Saturday of each meet, your choice of shirts for all other days. All Potomac Marlin logo outfitting is available from our team supplier, Sport Fair in Arlington.

NOTE: Fastskin suits, of any color, are permitted for championship meets only; Winter Classic, JO's, Age Group Champs, Junior Champs, Senior Champs, Sectionals or Nationals. But a PM cap MUST be worn. We would prefer the Fastskin to be black or primarily black, however if you already own one, do not go out and buy another one. It is preferred that the Fastskin be worn only for finals, however, if for mental reasons, the swimmer feels they have the best chance of making finals by wearing a Fastskin in prelims, it will be allowed. No Fastskins will be allowed at any open meets or qualification meets for any reason.

POSTITIVE CHECK-IN

In the interest of swim meet time lines and to offer the best competition, it has become customary to "Positive Check-in" all events 200 yards or more. This process allows the meet manager to only enter the swimmers that are actually at the swim meet into those events; decreasing the number of empty lanes due to "no shows", thus decreasing the number of heats for the longer events and saving time.

Positive check in is the sole **responsibility of the swimmer**. Upon arriving at the meet have your swimmer check in with the PM coach, then find the positive check-in table (usually near the starting end of the pool) and put their initials on the line next to their name; indicating their intention to swim that event. Please do not ask another swimmer or your coach to check your swimmer in, this could lead to a disqualification if there was a misunderstanding and your swimmer in fact did not intend to swim.

NOTE: Be sure to carefully check all meet announcements for the meet's positive check-in policy. At times it is necessary to positive check-in ALL events.

DECK ENTRIES

If you miss the entry deadline for a swim meet and still want to swim, contact Coach Bill right away. If it is too late to send the entry in, he may instruct you to "Deck Enter" your swimmer. This means that you show up for the meet 15 minutes prior to the posted warm, tell the PM coach that you are there to "deck enter" the meet. The meet director will accept deck entries on a first come first serve basis. NOTE: Your swimmer will only be added to empty lanes in the first heat of the event, so DO NOT expect to be entered into a heat with swimmers of the same ability. Deck entries cost \$10 for each event and are the sole responsibility of the family. Important note: deck entries are not offered at every meet be sure to check the meet announcement for availability.

Meet Entry Procedures

Swimmers are entered in swim meets in one of two ways; Coach directed or swimmer directed by emailing entries to Coach Bill.

1. **Coach Directed:** Some of the primary coaches choose/collect all meet entries and send them to Bill to be combined with the rest of the team and sent to the meet director.

The coaches who collect their own entries are: Steve Ercolano and Kevin Ahearn. Other coaches may be added to this list as the season progresses; if you are unsure check with your primary deck coach. Information will be sent from the coaches on their group's meet entry procedures.

2. **Using the website for meet entries:**

Finding meet and choosing events:

A. Click the swim meet icon on the PM home page or from the PVS website meet announcement page http://www.pvswim.org/pvs_schd.htm

B. Confirm the PM entry deadline. All deadlines are posted on the Potomac Marlins calendar. NOTE: PM deadlines are always 7 days before the deadline posted on the meet announcement. This gives Coach Bill time to compile all entries and make any corrections needed before they are due to the meet director.

C. Chose events; be sure to check with your coach to see if there are any group required events for the meet, also check requirements for Team Participation Award.

Entering meet:

A. We are working on a new on-line meet entry procedure. Until that time a meet entry template will be made available to all families. Please download the form and save it on your hard drive. Then fill it out and email back to Coach Bill at coach_bill@verizon.net to submit your meet entries.

B. All returning swimmer's best times are already in the computer and times are available on the PVS website for swimmers transferring from other PVS teams. If the swimmer has never swum the event a "NT" (no time) will be entered. For new year-round swimmers; summer league time will not count. In summer league, most

team compete in a meter pool, while during the winter, we primarily participate in a yards pool (yard times will be faster than meter times because the pool is shorter).

- C. Verify procedure with Coach Bill by email coach_bill@verizon.net; 2-3 days after the PM deadline check the Meet Entry Verification form on the website to verify that your swimmer is entered properly in the meet. If there is a problem please contact Bill immediately. PM will be responsible for any mistakes made by the team or coaching staff and PM will do their best to rectify the mistake. However Potomac Marlins is not responsible for entry errors made by the swimmer or swimmer's family. Please double check your entries before submittal. Entries that are submitted to Coach Bill after the deadline possibly will not show up on the meet entry verification page. You can email Bill with any questions.

Once you are entered in the meet and the entries have been sent to the designated meet director they are final. If your child is unable to participate in the meet for any reason after this point you will forfeit any event fees.

Meet Entry Fee (MEF)

Every swimmer is required to pay an entry fee for each individual event they swim in each meet though out the season. In general the fee ranges from \$3.50 to \$10 per event. In order to efficiently collect and pay these fees, the Potomac Marlins have implemented a MEF account for each family on the Competition Team. Any "deck entry" fees (\$10 per event) will be paid directly by the family to the host team prior to swimming in the meet.

\$25 of the COMP team fee is deposited into a family's MEF account for each swimmer on the Competition Team. At the conclusion of each swim meet the appropriate amount is deducted from the MEF account based on the swimmer's entries, not what the swimmer actually swims.

At least once a month the accounts are reconciled and an invoice is e-mailed to each family if there is a low or negative balance. Each family is responsible to replenish their account by sending a check to Coach Bill, at which point the account is updated.

Each family's MEF fund will continue to exist as long as a member of the family is on the Competition Team. Any money remaining in the account at the end of the season will roll over to the next season. However at the start of each season \$25 of the registration fee will be added into the account.

All families must maintain a positive MEF balance. Entry into a swim meet may be denied if account is overdrawn by more than \$25.

MEF money will not be reimbursed for any reason. Any money left in a MEF account if the family decides to leave the team goes into a general MEF fund which goes towards the payment of all relay team fees.

Entries Fees are paid and mail to:

Potomac Marlins MEF
3212 Allness Lane
Herndon, VA 20171

Potomac Marlins Volunteers

The Potomac Marlins are among a very small handful of Potomac Valley Swim Teams that regularly host and sponsor meets in Potomac Valley. As with most youth sport leagues, in order to provide quality competition experiences for our athletes, a significant parent volunteer participation effort is required. Through an excellent and sustained parent volunteer support system and a great deal of attention to the behind the scenes prep-work for each meet, the Potomac Marlins have gained the reputation of being among the best at running and managing meets in PVS.

A volunteer policy has been in place for several years with the intention of spreading the workload more evenly. Every parent deserves the right to sit, relax and watch their kids once in a while.

During the 2009-2010 season the Potomac Marlins will sponsor 4 meets:

- Sports Fair Winter Classic (December) - 10 sessions
- Snow Dude Mini Meet (January) 2 sessions
- 14 & Under Qualifier (February) - 2-5 sessions
- VA State Long Course Champs (May) - 9 sessions

In addition, the Potomac Marlins will host 3 meets for Potomac Valley Swimming:

- October Open - 5 sessions
- January Open - 6 sessions (pending)
- Summer LC 1 (June) - 2 sessions
- Summer LC 2 (June) - 2 sessions

With these 8 meets currently on the schedule and roughly 30-40 volunteers needed per session, there are many, many volunteer slots to be filled over the course of the season to effectively and efficiently run these meets.

Per Potomac Valley Swimming policy the host/sponsor team is required to provide at least 8 timers per session, 2-3 meet officials and at least one table worker. In addition there are many other jobs that are the responsibility of the host team: the hospitality suite for all coaches & officials, posting results, deck marshals and program sales among others.

Potomac Valley Swimming also requires all teams to help provide timers and officials in each meet the team participate in, so we strongly recommend that you consider volunteering at any meet your child participates in.

There are many jobs available for volunteering. Several positions require special training, but most jobs are easy and don't require any training. Not all positions are required at every meet.

- Stroke and Turn Official (training required)
- Hytek Computer Operator (training required)
- Colorado Operator (training required)
- Timer
- Hospitality
- Runner
- Table Worker
- Meet Marshal
- Program/T-shirt sales (not at every meet)
- Awards (not at every meet)

This year we are going to try a new way to have volunteers sign up for the meets in which we host/sponsor. We are going to use an on-line volunteer sign up program called "Volunteer Spot". The upcoming meet will be set up on line with the number of volunteers needed for each job for each session. A link will be posted to the team Website for volunteer sign up for each meet that the Marlins run. Then automatic reminders will be sent to you prior to the meet, so you know what you have signed up for at the meet. If you need to make a change to your commitment, then you can go back to the site and change your job or time slot. For meets where the Marlins are just participating you can volunteer once you arrive at the meet.

Volunteer Policy

Over the years we have implemented several different volunteer policies, striving to "spread the work" as much as possible, while also rewarding those families who go above and beyond. Managing the each families volunteer sessions is an extremely time consuming job. In order to streamline this effort, we are going to attempt to simplify the policy for the 09-10 season. Each family will have a set number of sessions they are required to volunteer and be responsible for keeping track of. Once the required number of sessions has been worked the \$50 will be deposited into the family's MEF account (per child on the team).

Required number of sessions:

- Family with one child on the team: 5 sessions
- Family with two children on the team: 7 sessions
- Family with three or more on the team: 9 sessions

These sessions may be worked at any meet your child/children participate in throughout the season, regardless of whether or not it is a Potomac Marlins run meet!

When considering which meets to sign up for please keep in mind that we have two meets on our schedule where every family in the meet will be required to work; The Sport Fair Winter Classic - 3 sessions/family required (December) and Virginia State Long Course Championships - 2 session/family required (May). Both meets are very large, so it is imperative that we have as much help as we can. Due to the great volunteers in the past, both meets have gained the reputation as being the two of the best run meets in Potomac Valley.

At the conclusion of each meet, the family is responsible to sending their sessions worked to the Volunteer Coordinator at marlinswimming@verizon.net. Only sessions sent in will be credited toward each family's commitment.

Volunteer Positions

Parent volunteers are an essential part of the successful operation of the Potomac Marlins swim team. Every meet requires a significant number of parent volunteers, from all teams in Potomac Valley, in order to run an efficient meet. Because of the number of parent volunteers it requires to run a meet Potomac Marlins have implemented a Volunteer Incentive Policy in order to establish a system wherein the necessary swim meet volunteer workload is more evenly and fairly distributed among the parents of the COMPETITION TEAM swimmers.

There are many different positions available to volunteer. Key positions needed are;

1. **Official:** (meet referee, starter, stroke and turn judge, timing system operator, timing judge); these positions require training and certification. See the PVS website (www.pvswim.org) for additional information and class times or contact Brian Johnson, PM Official Coordinator for more information at brian.johnson154@verizon.net
2. **Timer:** no training or prior experience is needed. We are required to have a minimum of 8 timers per sessions for every meet we run.
3. **Computer Operators/Results Computer (Hy-Tek):** requires some training, observation and hands on experience and certification.
4. **Hospitality:** help stock food and drinks for coaches, officials, timers and other workers throughout the meet. No experience necessary.
5. **Runner:** assist table workers with the posting of meet results and other "running around" during the meet.
6. **"General Worker:"** scratch table, awards and program/t-shirt sales, meet marshal

When Potomac Marlins HOST a meet for Potomac Valley (i.e. Oct. Open,) we are required to supply a minimum of 1 timer/lane, 2 stroke and turn officials, 1 referee, 1-2 hospitality workers, 2 runners, 1-2 general workers, per session.

When Potomac Marlins SPONSOR a meet (Winter Classic, JO Qualifier, VA States LC Champs) we are responsible for supplying a minimum of 1 timer/lane per session including finals, 2-3 officials, 2-3 hospitality workers, 2-3 runners and 3-4 general workers, per session.

Dates and locations of Potomac Marlins Team hosted and sponsored Meets:

October Open	Oct. 16-18	Mt. Vernon	host
Winter Classic	Dec. 10-13	GMU	sponsored
Snowdude Mini Meet	Jan 23-24	Mt. Vernon	sponsored
14 & U JO Qualifier Feb.	13-14	Cub Run	sponsored
PM President's Day Invite	Feb 15	Cub Run	sponsored
VA States LC Champs	May	Oak Marr	sponsored
SR/AG I	June	TBD	host
SR/AG II	June	TBD	host

Non-Marlin Meets: The Marlins also participate in meets that we do not host/sponsor. Per Potomac Valley Swimming Policy we are still required to supply several volunteers, such as timers and officials. Please consider helping out at these meets as well.

Goal Setting

Have a dream, set a goal, make a commitment, make it happen

WHAT IS A GOAL?

Goal setting is an important motivational tool used to enhance performance. Goal setting helps swimmers in a number of ways.

1. improve themselves in a technically or attitudinally way
2. find a new and challenging direction
3. build confidence and mental toughness

What exactly is a goal? A goal is an end result that one pursues and expects to achieve after following a specifically designed and set course of action.

Another, simpler definition (given by an 8th grade swimmer) is: a goal is something you want to do and are willing to work hard to achieve.

WHO SHOULD SET GOALS?

All swimmers from Mini's to National level should set goals for themselves. Goals help everyone to find a purpose in their swimming and give meaning to their hard work. Everyone set mini goals for themselves in their everyday life, so why not set swimming goals as well. One thing that is important to remember; **the goal should be you CHILD'S goal, not yours!** As parents we all want our children to excel and be happy. We want them to achieve success and often try to shelter them from failure. But failing or not being the best is normal, and expected. Failing should be a learning experience and motivation to work harder next time. By setting goals our children will have a better understanding of what they can achieve, what it takes to get there and will lead to self pride and confidence when they do accomplish their goal.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF GOALS

Goals might range from "swimming a whole 25 without stopping" to "qualifying for Olympic Trials". Some goals are very specific such as: "I want to go a 59.99 in the 100 yard freestyle" to something more general like: "compete in all the 200 yard races this year."

The most common type of goal is a performance goal. This type of goal is probably the one that you and/or your child are the most focused on. Performance goals are probably the easiest to monitor and initially give the most pleasure. Examples include: "I want to go a 17.19 in the 25 butterfly at the Fall Mini Meet" or "At the Winter Classic meet in December I want to qualify for Olympic Trials in the 200 backstroke by going a 2:17.99 (LCM)."

Then there are technical goals, or goals that are related to a specific skill, "My goal is to have a legal breaststroke kick before the end of the season" or "I will streamline off every wall, out past the flags in the 1000 freestyle at my championship meet."

Another important type of goal is a conditioning goal; this type pertains to the overall fitness or condition of the athlete in practice. One such goal may be: "I want to swim a 500 without stopping by the end of September" or "I will make 10 X 100 free on a 1:15 interval by mid-October."

Other goals that are sometimes called "stepping stone goals" are: mental preparation goals: to assist athletes with routines and help them reach peak performance, tactical or pacing goals to work on swimming strategies, lifestyle goals focusing on proper rest, nutrition, etc. and the all important academic goals.

IMPORTANCE OF STEPPING STONE GOALS

Setting lofty or seemingly difficult goals are a good thing, but just as important as setting the overall performance goal is figuring out how to get there, or what the "stepping stones" are to achieve that goal. The stepping stone goals are really where the technical, conditioning, mental preparation, tactical and lifestyle goals come into play, it is the path or plan the swimmer is going to take to successfully achieve their goal.

EXAMPLE: If the overall performance goal is to qualify for PVS 14 & Under Junior Olympics (in March 09) in the boys 11-12 100 breaststroke at the Winter Classic Meet in December, a time of 1:25.19 or better is needed. Currently the swimmer's best time is a 1:27.37, so the goal is set high, but attainable. Although this swimmer has a clear and specific goal, he needs to decide on the path to get him there, by also setting stepping stone goals. He might focus on these goals: Technical goal; stay underwater on my pullout, past the flags on my start and all turns, Conditioning goal; make all 10 x 100 on 1:15, Mental preparation goal; visualize my perfect race every night before I go to bed, Tactical

goal; swim all my broken 100 breaststrokes 1:24 or faster, and finally Lifestyle goal; go to bed every night by 9:00, eat more pasta, fruits and vegetables everyday, drink 8 or more glasses of water every day and go to 5 practices a week.

Often times, stepping stone goal will pertain to multiple event or multiple performance goals. Many goals can be made in general terms and support many different specific or performance goals. For example a lifestyle goal of eating better and drinking more water, will help all other goals by supplying the swimmer with more energy and keeping them hydrated.

Stepping Stone goal may be a little advance for many of our swimmers, but is good information to keep in mind when setting goals and reflecting on the overall season.

SETTING GOALS

It is important, as a parent, to discuss goals with your child. Often times it is necessary for the family to "be on board" with the goals. For instance, if one of the swimmers goals includes going to 4 practices a week, then most likely he or she is going to have to rely on the parents for a ride to all these practices.

Although knowing your child's goal is indeed important, leave the actual goal setting up to your child and their coach. The coach is ultimately the best judge as to what goals are attainable or within reach and what goals are unreasonable, the coach is also able to determine if the goal is not set high enough. Every coach should be having a goal meeting with each swimmer in his or her group. There are some practice groups, specifically the younger ones, where these goal meeting may be done in a group setting. But the Age Group Select group and above should be having one on one goal meeting sometime in the first 6 weeks of practice. If your coach does not offer goal meetings, do not hesitate to talk to them. Goal setting will only make your child's swimming experience more productive and FUN!

Program Advancement Procedures

Although it is not typical, every year several parents ask about their child being able to "move up" to a higher program during the season (ex. From Mini Marlins to Jr. Marlins).

At the start of the season we strongly recommend completing at least 3-4 full weeks within current program before discussing a possible level change with your child's coach. During the first several weeks of the season, the coach is focused on assessing and learning about their swimmers and the overall level of their group. Remember there are often multiple "mini" levels within any one group, although the entire group should be "on the same page". We must rely on the coach's expertise and knowledge of the entire group's cohesiveness and overall goal.

During the season the entire group will be moving forward together. As with any group, some children will progress quicker than others, however assuming all swimmers remain consistent through out the season, they should all be improving together. It is customary for your child's coach to make a projected recommendation at the end of the season, as to which group will be the best for your swimmer in the next season.

The minimum requirement for each group is clearly outlined next to TRAINING CATEGORIES on the "Program Recommendations & Athletes Progressions" chart on the website on the Registration page.

If after the first few weeks of practice, or at some point during the season you feel as if your child is in the incorrect practice group then there are specific steps to be followed:

1. Contact your current deck coach. He or she has knowledge of the conditions that must be met by the higher level group prior to making any determination. The swimmer **MUST** be capable of meeting the minimum training set as described on the chart.
2. Current coach must check with Team Registrar to see if there are any spaces and on which nights.
3. Current coach, if agrees, will make a recommendation for the swimmer to change groups. ****Remember the current coach has FINAL say in this matter.**** The recommendation will only come if the swimmer **FAR** outpaces the group or is **OBVIOUSLY** not challenged by the workload of the entire practice.
4. Higher level coach will then arrange a series of "tryout" practices per his/her preference.

5. If the swimmer is approved, the higher level coach will then contact the Team Registrar with the approval and instruct the parents to contact the Team Registrar to update the database and assess if any additional fees are to be charged.
6. At the end of the season each coach will complete a "Swimmer Skill Check List" and "Program Recommendation" sheet for each swimmer. These reports will give you a good idea of where your child currently is and what group will be serve them the following season. Please use these recommendations when registering your child for the following season. It is our goal to have cohesive grouping for all levels, which will only help improve your child's experience with the Potomac Marlins.

Our goal as a team is to advance all swimmer through the system as they are ready, keeping the best interest of the swimmer in mind. The Potomac Marlin will not honor advancement recommendations during the months of November, December, February or March, as these are core training months for all programs. The best times for advancements are mid September to late October, early January or early April.

Disciplinary Policy

"Three Strikes and You're Out!"

Disruptive behavior during practice or meets will not be tolerated. Fortunately we have not had very many incidents of extreme behavior. However PM Coaches feel it is important to maintain proper behavior for two main reasons:

1. It is not fair to the rest of the swimmers who are paying attention and trying to learn if some one is being unusually disruptive.
2. It is not fair for the coaches to have to spend more time with the disruptive swimmer than the swimmers who want to learn and improve.

With this in mind we have initiated the following "Three Strikes and You're Out!" policy for behavior during practice and meets.

Strike One: A swimmer is removed from the water for disruptive behavior, at the discretion of any Potomac Marlin coach, after adequate warnings have been given. The swimmer will be asked to sit in a designated area of the pool deck, under coach supervision, for the remainder of the practice session. The occurrence will followed up with a "green" e-mail letter to the parents with an explanation of the incident. The swimmer will then be allowed to return to their next practice.

Strike Two: A swimmer is removed from the water for a second time for similar or related disruptive behavior. Again the swimmer will be asked to sit in a designated area of the pool deck, under coach supervision, for the remainder of the session. This occurrence will be followed up by a "yellow" e-mail letter to the parents with an explanation. This time the swimmer will be suspended from all practice and/or meets for a minimum of 7 days. A meeting between at least on parent, the swimmer, deck coach and, a head coach, if requested, will also be required prior to the swimmer returning to practice.

Strike Three: If the swimmer is removed from the water for a third time for a similar or related behavior, and then the swimmer will be asked to leave practice or the meet and immediately contact their parents to come and pick them up. Notification will be given to the parents in the form of a "red" e-mail letter, indicating that the swimmer is being asked to leave the team for the remainder of the season and the forfeiture of any paid fees. Only Bill or Barry can make this decision to remove a swimmer from the team; however the

deck coach's recommendations will be highly considered. The swimmer may be allowed to rejoin the Potomac Marlins the following year only after meeting with, their parent(s) both head coaches, and the deck coach; however the swimmer will remain on probation for one calendar year and will be at risk of being permanently removed for any problems thereafter.