

7/9/21 - Potomac Marlins Swim Team

Hello Fort Belvoir Swimmers and Parents:

On behalf of my brother, Coach Bill Marlin, and myself, I'm writing to warmly welcome the FBST community of families and athletes to the Potomac Marlins swim club! Coach Bill and I are honored to have this chance to merge both clubs into a cohesive team of motivated student-athletes, dedicated coaches, and supportive families.

Over three decades ago, after swimming in college for Penn State University, my first job as an assistant USA Swimming coach was with Ft. Belvoir Swim Team. To think that thirty years later, my brother (who also swam for PSU) and I would have the opportunity and privilege to oversee the merger of two highly successful and nationally respected swim clubs would have been a dream. After years of hard work, dedication, and commitment in the pursuit of coaching excellence, that dream has come true!

After a two-year span with FBST at Benyard pool, I was hired away by Arlington Aquatic Club. Shortly after getting established at AAC, my brother joined me to co-coach for a couple of years before we were enthusiastically encouraged to start our own club by team parents. The Potomac Marlins was formed the next season under the ideals and principles developed by our own experiences as young swimmers, and we've been proudly serving Potomac Marlins swimmers (and families) with a wide range of abilities and ambitions ever since!

The merger of FBST with the Potomac Marlins has been in the works for several months, and great care has been taken by myself, Coach Bill, and Coach Mark to ensure a seamless and smooth transition. Significant attention has been made to ensure the integration of the best parts of both programs, both in the water and on deck, and within day-to-day management. From my time with FBST, and as the son of a military father (Navy), the Potomac Marlins' long-term commitment, recognition, and respect for the military community will absolutely continue in step with this merger.

Our commitment to serving families from both teams is strong, and we look forward to working with you! We have worked diligently to make this merger a very positive and exciting experience for all and look forward to getting this highly anticipated season underway.

Coach Barry Marlin

Potomac Marlins Swim Team

Team Manager

For FBST to MARLINS Program Conversion chart. See reverse.

Potomac Marlins procedural information for FBST parents.

Web Site: www.PotomacMarlins.com

The Potomac Marlins web site is a source for most of the team's important information including; Registration, Swim Meet info and Results, Practice Schedules, Team Fees, Coach Bios and Contact info, Team News, Team Record and Performance Reports, Outfitting Info, Events Calendar and Image Gallery. We encourage you to take a look to get familiarized. Coach Bill reviews the entire web site with new team members each year at the New Member meeting in September.

Registration: All Team Registration is done entirely through the team web site. No paperwork. No checks. No mailing. Before registering, each swimmer must have coach approval for the group. FBST current swimmers should get this approval prior to completing the registration form. Our Registrar will need verification from a coach (FBST or Marlins) to process and complete the registration. Pre-approval ensures, to the best of our ability, proper placement prior to the first practice. Once approved, we will send a notice to the e-mail address on file, access to your account will be granted, and you will become part of the team-wide communications system. This approval process takes only a few days UNLESS coach approval is delayed. In programs that offer a choice of days per week, the swimmer must also send their coach an e-mail note indicating the days of their choice. The system does not allow for collecting this data, so make sure you provide it separately.

Registration for the Potomac Marlins current season opens each Spring, typically by May 1st. We allow a 1-month period for all returning members to register and be guaranteed a spot on the team for the coming season prior to opening registration to all interested swimmers on an equal first-come, first-served basis on June 1st. After this date, returning members are no longer guaranteed a space in the coming season program. **For current FBST returning members this is not an issue or cause for concern this year.** Registration will open by July 20th and will remain open from that point on for all programs until they become full. Once FULL, the specific program and day of the week that is full will be indicated on the web site PRACTICE SCHEDULE page. At that time, that particular practice day/time/location will be closed.

We use the following tried and tested maximum swimmer per lane numbers based upon a 5-second SAFETY interval between swimmers.

- 6 Senior Gold
- 7 Sen-Prep Gold / Sen Silver
- 8 Age Group Aerobic Development
- 9 Age Group Stroke Development
- 10 Mighty Marlins

Along with the number of lanes contracted with the pools determines how many swimmers we can accept into each program. In some cases, outside of the prime usage zone (4:00-7:00 p.m.), the number of lanes in our contract can increase if needed.

Fees & Payments: The Potomac Marlins do not take personal checks. There are only two methods of payment offered. Credit Card and ACH (Auto Check Handling = direct withdrawal from banking acct.). Both methods are processed online through the registration system. Credit Card processing carries a 2.95% fee charged by the bank. ACH carries a \$1.25 per transaction fee.

There are three payment plan options available.

- **Early Bird:** 5% discount off of advertised fee. Requires payment in full by the deadline. See below for details for transfer FBST swimmers for 2021-22 season.
- **Standard:** \$500 reg. deposit at time of registration - Full balance due October 1st.
- **Extended:** \$500 reg. deposit at time of registration. 5 equal 20% partial payments due on the following dates: October 1, November 1, December 1, February 1, March 1. Extended plan carries a 5% convenience fee.

Placement Evaluations: First time/new member in-person Placement Evaluations are typically required for all new team members. These locations, times, and dates are posted on the team web site under the TEAM INFO tab. They are drop-in, but it is always advantageous to drop us an email letting us know you are coming. They only take 5-10 minutes and are conducted based upon the BASE ELIGIBILITY standards listed under each program on our PRACTICE SCHEDULES section of the TEAM INFO section of our web site. All 12 & unders should be placed by a coach who has direct observation capabilities. Higher level swimmers with experience can often place themselves or be placed over the phone with a Marlins coach.

With the current situation, all FBST transfer swimmers should/might be able to be placed properly by their current FBST coach with knowledge of the PM requirements. We have done our best to sync up the program names and levels for each club and have provided that information on the attached **FB to PM program conversion chart**. If you aren't able to match up programs with success, don't worry. Contact Coach Mark, Coach Bill, or myself and we will help. Likewise, if the program selection ends up being incorrect once we get started, it is not a big problem to switch registration status at that time. Thank you for your patience during the first couple weeks.

Discounts, Credits & Refunds: The Potomac Marlins offer several cost-saving discounts and credits, all of which can be combined in any manner provided they are accomplished before specified deadlines.

- **Early bird:** The standard annual early bird payment deadline is June 15th. Early Bird payment must be made in full by this deadline. For the first year of the merger, a special extended EB payment deadline has been established for August 15, 2021 at 9:00 p.m. Don't miss it! It will be a hard deadline with no exceptions. This extension will be a one-time arrangement with subsequent seasons reverting to the standard EB team date of June 15.
- **Active Military Discount:** The Potomac Marlins have provided Active Military Discounts to our Military members since the first year of our program in 1993. We are proud to be able to do this. The Military Discount is \$250 per family if registered prior to January 1st, and \$100 per family if registered after January 1st. To receive the military discount a copy of the service members ORDERS must be sent to the registrar or verified by a deck coach. The system does NOT calculate this discount automatically. The Registrar must manually do it.
- **Referral Credits:** A \$50 per swimmer referral credit is offered to all CURRENT team members credited with a new swimmer registering for the current season. The new referred swimmer must indicate your name on their registration form where asked. There is no limit to the number of referral credits a swimmer can accumulate per season other than programs being closed at capacity. The Registrar applies referral credits in the fall of each season. Referral credits are not a refund. **All 2020-21 FBST swimmers will be considered "Returning" members and therefore eligible for this year's Referral Credit.**

- **Sibling Discounts:** A \$150 per swimmer sibling discount is offer for all family members after the 1st child if registering prior to January 1st of each season. The sibling discounts are automatically applied at registration as long as all family members are registered at the same time. If registering at separate times, the registering agent/parent must contact the Registrar to have the discount applied manually.
- **Late Start pro-rate:** Weekly prorated discounts are provided for late starts AFTER October 1st. Pro-rate discounts are NOT provided for early withdraw from the program.
- **REFUNDS:** The Potomac Marlins do not offer refunds for any reason once fees have been made unless the team or facility terminates the program. Swimmers are responsible for their full team fees regardless of when or why they choose to stop. See payment policy details on the web site FEES page.

Practice Schedules: The 2021-22 practice schedules for the traditional FBST practice locations (George Washington, Mt. Vernon, Lee District, and South Run) are currently planned to be posted by July 20. Registration will open as soon as the posting is made. You can find the practice schedules on the Marlins web site under TEAM INFO. Current Marlins practice schedules on the Potomac Marlins web site under TEAM INFO. Current practice schedules are posted at this time if you are curious.

- **Start Date:** Currently planned to most programs for September 13th. Senior morning groups will stat earlier. TBD.
- **Holidays & Training Breaks:** Standard team breaks occur over T-giving, Christmas/Winter Break, FCPA Spring Break and most of August. We will provide detailed schedules.
- **Schedule Flexibility:** Like FBST, the Marlins make all attempts to offer maximum flexibility with individual swimmer schedules. If schedule changes are necessary, the process would be to first check with the swimmer's deck coach to determine if the change is possible. In nearly all cases, we can find some workable solution. This is not possible if the day for the program requested is already FULL. In this case, we typically can find a suitable alternate at one of the other locations. Bottom line, we will do everything we can to allow for maximum schedule flexibility but cannot guarantee it based upon availability.

Outfitting: The Potomac Marlins Team fee includes a standard annual SPEEDO supported outfitting package. We have been doing this with great success and member appreciation for the past ten years with excellent support from our team outfitter, Sport Fair. Because we do this in bulk through Speedo, we can broker a 40% discount on most Speedo items. With the discounts applied, the annual outfitting packages cost approx. \$150. Details on the team's outfitting policy and philosophy are located on the web site under the TEAM INFO tab.

With input from Coach Mark and the realization that this is a new concept for our new FBST members, we will NOT be requiring or including the outfitting package with current FBST transfer swimmers. Swimmers who DO WANT the Marlins first-year outfitting package WILL be able to "OPT IN" for this year. (The plan for subsequent seasons will be to "OPT OUT" if desired).

Since Outfitting is included and automatically calculated into the team fee, the Registrar will have to credit each current FBST members' account with a \$150 credit or refund. Swimmers who DO want the package will have to contact the Registrar (or me) and "OPT IN". This means that the swimmer would not get the \$150 credit/refund. Further info TBA.

The only outfitting REQUIREMENT for FBST transfer swimmers for the 2021-22 season will be to wear a Potomac Marlins Racing Cap at swim meets. Our standard policy requires only Marlins caps in practice, but we are waiving this requirement for the first year, so old FBST caps are entirely acceptable at practices.

COMPLIMENTARY WELCOME ITEMS: In appreciation for trusting us with your swimmer this season, we will be providing each FBST transfer swimmer with a team latex cap, a Team t-shirt, and a Team car magnet. These are a few of the items found in the 1st year outfitting package and will be delivered by the deck coaches at the pools in September. 😊

Coaches: All of the 2020-21 FBST coaches have been or will be offered their same positions under the new Potomac Marlins banner. Per USAS requirements all new coaches must submit to the new hire requirements, which include extensive background and social media checks in addition to multiple certifications. Coach Mark has relayed that information to them at this point. There is no guarantee that they will all stay, but that decision is completely up to them.

We look forward to working with the current FBST staff in addition to adding NEW great coaches as needed. Questions regarding FBST's current staff member retention can be directed to Coach Mark. If anyone knows of good coaches through association with your summer teams who would be a good fit with the newly merged team, please let us know.

Swim Meets & Meet Entry: Swim meet participation is NOT mandatory or required for ANY Potomac Marlins program. Upper-end Senior swimmers are expected to attend meets if possible, and we encourage ALL of our swimmers to attend meets if and when they are physically and emotionally ready. Still, if they chose not to, they are never treated differently. The reason for this philosophy falls in line with USA Swimming statistics that indicate "***swimmers who participate in meets; improve faster, enjoy the sport more, and stay with the sport longer***". All of which are mutually advantageous outcomes. The Potomac Marlins host many local meets throughout the season, and we would encourage everyone to give it a try. Because we host several Mini Meets during the season, these are perfect opportunities for new 8 & unders to experience their first USAS meet.

If planning to participate in meets, the team sends meet announcements via email several weeks before meet entries are due. Meet entries are processed ONLINE through the Marlins website. Swim meet fees are "pay as you go" and require payment through our web site with Credit Card or ACH. It is a straightforward and easy-to-use system that Coach Bill will review with everyone at the New Member meeting in September (TBA). Potomac Marlins coaches are responsible for approving meet event selection for all of their swimmers prior to final entry submittal. We allow our coaches flexibility in the amount of oversight each provide for this process. Meet event selection questions should always be referred directly to the swimmer's primary deck coach.

Communications and Customer Service: Coach Mark has impressed upon us the importance of maintaining the high level of personalized communications and customer service that the Ft. Belvoir team have come to expect. You have our commitment to do our best, not to mention that Coach Mark will still be available and helping in any way needed throughout this season and beyond.

Standard Hierarchy: The standard team communications hierarchy should always be to attempt to communicate with your swimmer's primary deck coach for all practice or meet related issues. We will have all of our staff email contacts posted to the COACH section of the website by September. Issues that require other information or higher-level assistance should be directed to one of the following staff members. As always, any issues or concerns should be brought to our attention immediately to be proactively resolved in an expeditious manner.

- **Bill Marlin** is the team's Meet Director/Manager and Head Coach (wet side). All issues related to swim meets and meet entries that a swimmer's primary deck coach cannot answer should be directed to Coach Bill at Bill.Marlin@verizon.net. Leave phone number for return calls. Coach Bill distributes meet announcements to all eligible swimmers as they are produced and posts the results, when available, to the team website.

- **Barry Marlin** is the Team Manager responsible for rental contracts, employee and business management issues and requirements, outfitting questions, web site questions, etc. (dry side). Coach Barry can be contacted at PotomacMarlins@cox.net Leave phone number for return calls.
- **Team Registrar:** The current Team Registrar is **Kathy Zoranski** (PSU Swimming 85-88). Kathy works remotely from her home in Cinnaminson NJ. Kathy is available to answer registration and payment questions throughout the season via e-mail at KRZoranski@gmail.com. The registrar should not be contacted for practice, meet, outfitting, or placement advice.
- **Communications Director:** The Marlins are also instituting a new position this year under the leadership of Marlins Cub Run Coach **Reid Owen** (UNC Swimming 01-05). While the position is not yet defined, it is anticipated to include monthly educational team newsletters with post meet and swimmer highlights, facilitate and enhance coach to coach and coach to parent communications, and assist with community outreach, fundraising and marketing. Further info TBA.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- July 15-20:** (FBST) Registration opens for Mt. Vernon Rec, George Washington Rec., South Run Rec. & Lee District Rec. for current FBST members on the Potomac Marlins web site.
- August 15:** **FBST current member extended Earlybird discount deadline. 9:00 p.m.**
- August 20:** Registration Deadline for outfitting batch #1 to be ready for pick up at Team Outfitting Day on Sept 19.
- August 30:** 2021-22 Senior morning programs to begin at summer outdoor pools
- September 12:** Registration Deadline for outfitting batch #2. To be distributed first half of October TBA?
- September 13:** First Day of 2021-22 afternoon programs
- September 19:** Sport Fair Team Outfitting Day. Afternoon. Fair Oaks Marriott. (1-4 p.m.)
- September 25:** College Swimming/Recruiting Seminar (Tentative). Further info TBA.
- September 30:** Registration deadline for outfitting batch #3. To be distributed second half of October.
- October 1:** Standard payment balances due. Extended payment plan payment #1 due.
- October 15-17:** First meet? October Open. TBD.

Enclosed please find several 2021-22 Potomac Marlins recruiting brochures. Each season we ask our current members to share team brochures with their summer league team by either displaying at their pool in the appropriate space and/or hand delivering to interested individual swimmers or families. Please note, USA Swimming code of ethics prohibits UNSOLICITED dispersal of recruiting information directly to swimmers currently affiliated with other USA teams. USAS does not prohibit swimmer to swimmer recruiting. Public display of recruiting information is permissible.

Thank you!

Coach Barry (and Coach Bill Marlin)
Potomac Marlins Swim Team

P.S. We are looking for a few GOOD, enthusiastic, new coaches for our staff (primarily in the Alexandria/Mt. Vernon/Springfield area). If your summer coaches are exceptional and interested, please reach out to them and have them contact us. THANKS!



FASTER, BETTER, STRONGER, TOGETHER !