

Dear Farmstead Flying Fish Parents and Swimmers,

Welcome back for another memorable and fun swim season! The swim team board, the coaches, and I have been busy planning positive improvements for our swim team! I am excited to introduce brand new spirit days, a change in social events, new coaches, new ways to positively recognize swimmers, 18 new families, and 29 new swimmers!

I have been a part of the Farmstead family for 20 years. I started coaching at Farmstead when I was 15 years old as a junior coach. I continued coaching for five years, and then took two years off while in college. In the summer of 2007, I came back to my “home away from home”, and I started as head coach right before my first year of teaching. I have been head coach of this amazing team ever since!

When I first started as head coach, the junior coaches, who are now employed by the swim team, were six years old. I remember coaching them then, and I remember them being so excited about swimming! They loved their coaches, they loved being a Flying Fish, and they loved the spirit days! They radiated FST spirit at each swim meet, swim practice, and swim team event. They still do...even eight years later as high schoolers. They still love our team as much as they did when they were six. If you ask any Flying Fish alum, you will hear how much Farmstead has meant to them over the years.

I truly think our team is different than any other team around. Our team is more than a swim team, we are a family consisting of families and swimmers who always try their best, work hard for time drops, show good sportsmanship, show AMAZING spirit, and genuinely care for one another. We offer more than just swimming to our swimmers, we offer friendship, motivation, sportsmanship, reflection, challenges, and fun. We instill respect, citizenship, responsibility, a good work ethic, and the FST spirit. This is the Flying Fish spirit of the Farmstead Swim Team.

Swimming as a Flying Fish was the best part of my family's summer. I am genuinely happy that each swimmer and family will be able to have the same amazing and memorable summer on our team that I did 20 years ago, that the junior coaches had 8 years ago, and that many swimmers before my time had! Welcome back to all returning Flying Fish! And I would like welcome all new swimmers and families to the Farmstead Flying Fish family!

As you and your family prepare for the swim season, the swim team board, the coaching staff, and myself want to share our excitement for the upcoming season. There are many new things that will occur this year, but there will always be the same values and traditions that have made Farmstead stand out from any other swim team in the conference.

There are several points I would like to make with the upcoming swim season to make this season successful:

- Parents are not able to sit on deck during swim practices. This is for the safety of our swimmers and coaches so that everyone can focus on swim practice. Parents are more than welcome to sit in the concession area.
- Please encourage your child to see Coach Noor after his/her race for swimming feedback.
- Participate in each spirit day to show off your FST spirit! Attend social events to bond with your teammates! Also, I encourage you to participate in this year's new Instagram contest! I can't wait to see all of your fun (and appropriate) pictures showing off your Farmstead pride!
- This year, we will recognize one swimmer in each age group each week (on Fridays) for showing good sportsmanship and working hard throughout the week! Coaches will be on the look out for swimmers each week who are bleeding blue at swim practices and meets!
- Swimmers should be at practice ready to go (caps and goggles on) on time, if not 5 minute early! We need to take advantage of every minute we can in the water.
- Swimmers should bring water bottles everyday to practice! Even though it may not seem like they are sweating, they are! Drinking enough water is an important component to being a successful swimmer.
- Please be on the look out for my weekly update. It will be posted on the website under the tab "Noor's Notes". This is how you will be updated about what is going on at swim practice, skills, etc. Also, don't forget to follow me on Twitter and Instagram @coachnoorfst for live updates from the deck!
- This year we will continue to utilize a behavior plan for all swimmers. We will introduce and review the plan each day this week at practice, but we would appreciate parents going over the behavior plan below with your swimmers as well!
- **Swimmer Expectations:**
  - Stay safe and follow the pool rules and keep hands to yourself
  - Respect coaches and other swimmers
  - Show good sportsmanship
  - When a coach, adult, or another swimmer is talking, swimmers are showing that they are listening by keeping one hand on the wall, head above the water, eyes on the speaker, and lips closed
  - Please do not intentionally splash others
  - Order of swimmers at swim practice will be up to the coach's discretion. Please do not ask if you can go first because it slows down practice.
  - If you need to pass another swimmer at swim practice, please tap (do not grab or pull) the person's foot twice so that they know you need to pass them. Please only pass at the wall and nicely ask if you can pass them.

- Each swimmer should leave 5 seconds apart so that each swimmer has space in the lane.

- **Swimmer Consequences:**

- 1st: Warning with explanation of what the swimmer was doing and explain why it is not showing good character
- 2nd: Warning with explanation of what the swimmer was doing and explain why it is not showing good character
- 3rd: Sit out for 2 minutes (Coach will tell swimmer what time on the clock to get back into the water and it is the swimmer's responsibility to get back in the water)
- Parent will be notified via email
- 4th: Swimmer is sent home
- Parent will be notified via phone call

Each year, our team presents two spirit awards in honor of Flying Fish swimmers who have passed before their time. Please talk with your child about our two yearly spirit awards: The Jason Bill Spirit Award and the Connor Kandl Outstanding 6 & Under Award. We will also talk about these awards with the swimmers during upcoming swim practices.

**The Jason Bill Spirit Award:**

At the end of the swim season, during the swim team's banquet, the coaches will award the Jason Bill Memorial Spirit Award. This award goes to a swimmer who demonstrates enthusiasm/spirit, a positive attitude and teamwork – always supporting fellow Farmstead swimmers and coaches. Jason Bill exemplified these qualities- thus, the reason for this award.

For those families that are new to the Farmstead Team, we thought it would be beneficial to provide you with a brief background on how this award was established. Jason Bill was a long-time member of the Farmstead Flying Fish. He began competitive swimming as a 6-under, and swam for Farmstead for many years. He enjoyed every aspect of the swim team. In June 1995, Jason was involved in a tragic water sports accident, which claimed his life at the age of 13. The Farmstead community mourned along with Jason's family, and missed his presence at the pool. At the close of that 1995 swim team season, the Farmstead Swim Team established this award in honor of Jason, so that he would never be forgotten, and so that other swimmers would aspire to demonstrate some of the same qualities that Jason had possessed.

The recipient of this award will have their name engraved on a plaque, along with all of the preceding recipients' names. This plaque is proudly displayed at the pool all summer long.

**The Connor Kandl Outstanding 6 & Under Award:**

Another award that is given to one swimmer each year is the Connor Kandl Award. This award is given to a deserving 6 & Under Farmstead Flying Fish swimmer. The swimmer

should demonstrate enthusiasm, show outstanding spirit, have a positive attitude evidenced by an ever present smile, and be a hard worker. These characteristics were all exhibited by Connor Kandl.

Connor Kandl became very ill during the summer of 2002. The Farmstead community joined together for a car wash to raise money for the Kandl family. The Farmstead Flying Fish came together in such a remarkable way. Connor's fellow teammates helped with the car wash, trying to help in any way. Sadly, a short time after the car wash Connor passed away.

Connor had blonde hair, blue eyes that you couldn't miss, a perfect backstroke start, which made you think he had been doing backstroke starts his whole life, and who could ever forget his huge shining smile. He came into practice every morning with that huge smile on his face. When Connor passed away unexpectedly, it left all who knew him and his family in deep shock and sadness. The Farmstead Swim Team created this award as a way to remember and honor Connor.

Each year the Farmstead Swim Team coaches choose a recipient of the award. That person's name is engraved on a plaque, along with all the preceding recipient's names. This plaque is titled "Connor Kandl Outstanding 6 & Under Award", and it is proudly displayed at Farmstead Pool all summer long.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to working with each swimmer and family to make this summer the best that it can be! As always, feel free to email me with any questions or concerns. I look forward to seeing all of you during this first week of practice!

Start visualizing your races now Flying Fish! Go Flying Fish!

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