

2025 SWIM TEAM SURVIVAL GUIDE



Twin Farms Tigers

Montgomery County Swim League (MCSL)
Division "M"

Welcome to the Twin Farms Tigers Swim Team!

The Twin Farms Swim Team provides our children with the chance to experience competitive swimming in a fun, supportive, and child-centered environment. The competition is extremely healthy, and good sportsmanship is the rule, rather than the exception. There is also the added excitement of seeing times improve during the season and cheering on teammates. Fun, friendship, team spirit, improved self-esteem, and life-long swimming skills are all part of what the Twin Farms Swim Team is all about!

Coaching Staff

Candace Austin – jervcan98@gmail.com

Alex Helberg – helbeal@ssfs.org

Team Reps

'A' Rep: Katherine Verderese, 703-439-0941, twinfarmstigers@gmail.com

'A' Rep: Mary Lombardo, 240-483-1837, twinfarmstigers@gmail.com

'B' Rep: Alison Canning and Mandy Harper, brepwinfarmstigers@gmail.com

Web Site

<http://www.teamunify.com/team/recmcsltfst/page/swim-groups/swim>

The Twin Farms Swim Team Facts

- Is part of the Montgomery County Swim League (MCSL): <http://www.mcsl.org/>
- Competes in the M Division for 'A' meets with Flower Hill, Fallsmead, Hillandale, James Creek, Diamond Farm.
- Competes in 'B' meets with West Hillandale, Rock Creek, Norbeck Grove, and Forest Knolls.
- Age groups for swim meets are 8 & under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15-18.

Swim Team Eligibility

- Must be members of the Twin Farms Swim Club
- Must be at least 5 years old and no older than 18 years old as of June 1, 2025
- Must be able to swim a length of the pool

Pre-Team

Our pre-team is designed to train our youngest swimmers to be ready to join the main team. Pre-Team swimmers must be able to pass the Twin Farms pool test. See the schedule on page 5 for Pre-Team practice information. When the coaches think a pre-teamer is ready, that swimmer will participate in 'B' meets!

Swim Team Costs

Participation fee (which helps defray the cost of MCSL fees, supplies, awards, and coaches' salaries):

\$185 for one swimmer in a family

\$295 for two swimmers in a family

\$370 for three or more swimmers in a family

The participation fee includes participation in both sports teams offered at Twin Farms (swimming and diving) and we encourage all swimmers to try their skills on the boards!

2025 Swim Team Schedule

| DAY | DATE | TIME | EVENT |
|------|--------|----------|--|
| Tues | 27-May | 7:30 PM | Sports Teams Parent Meeting @ Twin Farms |
| Wed | 28-May | | Afternoon Practice Begins |
| Sat | 07-Jun | 8:00 AM | Time Trials @ Twin Farms |
| Wed | 11-Jun | 5:00 PM | B Meet @ Home vs. Norbeck Grove |
| Sat | 14-Jun | 8:20 AM | WEEK 1 A Meet @ Diamond Farm |
| Wed | 18-Jun | | Morning Practice Begins |
| Wed | 18-Jun | 5:00 PM | B Meet @ West Hillandale |
| Sat | 21-Jun | 8:20 AM | WEEK 2 A Meet @ Home vs. Flower Hill |
| Wed | 25-Jun | 5:00 PM | B Meet @ Home vs. Rock Creek |
| Sat | 28-Jun | 8:00 AM | WEEK 3 A Meet @ Home vs. James Creek |
| Sun | 29-Jun | 8:00 AM | Relay Carnival @ Hillandale |
| Sat | 05-Jul | 8:20 AM | WEEK 4 A Meet @ Fallsmead |
| Tue | 08-Jul | 6:00 PM | Coaches Long Course Meet |
| Wed | 09-Jul | 5:00 PM | B Meet @ Home vs. Forest Knolls |
| Sat | 12-Jul | 8:00 AM | WEEK 5 A Meet (SENIORS MEET) @ Home vs. Hillandale |
| Wed | 16-Jul | 5:00 PM | B Meet @ Robin Hood |
| Sat | 19-Jul | 7:00 AM | DIVISIONALS @ Flower Hill |
| Mon | 21-Jul | 6:00 PM | Sports Banquet |
| Sat | 26-Jul | 10:00 AM | Relay All-Stars @ Rockville |
| Sun | 27-Jul | 8:00 AM | Individual All-Stars @ Rockville |

(Pool addresses are available from the MCSL web site: <http://www.mcsl.org>)

Team Swim Suits

While all swimmers are encouraged to wear the team suit, it is not mandatory. Team suits are our team colors this year – red, black, and white. They may be purchased at Capitol Sport and Swim in Kensington, MD. Any swimsuit questions should be directed to Katherine Verderese at klively@gmail.com or 703-439-0941.

Team Communications

Swim Team news will be communicated in the following ways:

- Regular e-mails to swim team families from the team reps and/or coaches
- In person as often as opportunities present themselves
- On our Tiger website <http://www.teamunify.com/team/recmcsltfst/page/swim-groups/swim>
- If you have a suggestion, question, comment, or concern, please let the coaches and team reps know. Whether it is in person, via e-mail, or on the phone, we will strive to be as accessible, responsive and as informative as we can be. When communication is flowing, the team is more fun and more successful!

One Team with Two Swim Meets Per Week

The Twin Farms Swim Team is one big, happy team that, most weeks, has two swim meets: 'A' Meets, which start promptly at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday mornings, and 'B' Meets, which generally start at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday evenings. All swimmers signed up to compete in the meet will participate in a group warm-up before each swim meet. Warm-ups are essential and usually begin 45 minutes before the start of the meet. In a typical year, there are five 'A' Meets, the 'A' Relay Carnival, and Divisionals. In addition, there are four or five 'B' Meets. The 'A' Meets typically last about 2 ½ hours while the 'B' Meets usually last 2½ to 3 hours. Unlike 'A' Meets, team scores are not kept at 'B' Meets.

'A' Meet on Saturday Mornings

The fastest swimmers in each age group will be asked to swim on Saturday mornings. There are two heats of freestyle for all age groups, so the fastest six swimmers in freestyle will swim on Saturday mornings. All other events in the meet have only one heat, and the three fastest swimmers will swim in those events. Swimmers are allowed to swim up to three individual events (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, or butterfly), plus the Individual Medley, and one relay per meet. 'A' Meets follow the rules established by MCSL. The rules are printed in the "MCSL Handbook" available on-line at <http://www.mcsl.org/Handbook.aspx>

'B' Meet on Wednesday Evenings

Swimmers who do not swim in the 'A' Meet on Saturday are eligible to swim in the following 'B' Meet on Wednesday. In addition, 'A' Meet swimmers can swim their non-'A' Meet events in the following 'B' Meet. (The week starts with the 'A' meet on Saturday and ends with the 'B' meet on Wednesday.) Swimmers cannot be entered in their A-meet event at the B-meet if they placed 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in the event on the previous Saturday. All rules to be followed during 'B' Meets have been agreed upon by the opposing team and Twin Farms; however, the same MCSL "stroke & turn" rules still apply.

Which Swim Meet Will My Child Participate In?

Time trials and performances during the season determine the fastest swimmers in each event in each age group. Times are evaluated each week to give every swimmer an opportunity to demonstrate improvement and compete in 'A' Meets. Swimmers do not automatically keep their place for 'A' Meets. Any swimmer who competes in a 'B' Meet and swims faster than the slowest Saturday time in that event earns the right to swim that event during the next 'A' Meet. Coaches' discretion will be used when making entries for 'A' Meets to place swimmers where they are needed most to help the team. The coaches will notify each swimmer about 'A' and 'B' meet participation and will have the final say on who will participate in any meet.

'A' Meet Lineups

Line-ups for 'A' Meets will be emailed to swim team families by the Thursday before the meet. It is extremely important for all swimmers to check the 'A' Meet line-ups that are emailed to see who is swimming. **Please notify the coaches or team reps in advance, if you will be unable to attend an 'A' Meet. Notifying the coaches or reps in advance will allow the next eligible swimmer to swim and will ensure we don't have empty lanes!**

Time Trials

On the Saturday before the first 'A' Meet, Twin Farms holds its Time Trials meet. This meet follows the standard meet format, except that only Twin Farms swimmers compete and there are no relays. Each swimmer is expected to attempt to swim all four individual events and the IM (except for the younger children). We encourage swimmers to participate in all events, even if they are not yet legal in the stroke.

The main objective of Time Trials is for each swimmer to be timed in every event, which will give the coaches the base from which to work in assembling the line-up for the first 'A' Meet. Time Trials also gives the swimmers a chance to swim under meet conditions. **Therefore, attendance at Time Trials is very important, and competing in time trials after a good first two weeks of practice will get the season off to a great start!**

Time Trials also helps the meet officials, timers, and Reps “fine tune” their skills for the first “A” meet. If you are not able to attend Time Trials, please let the coaches and team reps know in advance. If you are unable to attend, you will be timed in practice instead, usually the following week.

Swim Team Practices & Schedule

Practice is held every weekday afternoon when public schools are in session. After public schools close, practice is held every weekday morning and afternoon, except for the afternoon on the day of a ‘B’ Meet and the Friday afternoon before an ‘A’ Meet. **We encourage swimmers to attend morning practices over afternoon practices since all lanes are available in the morning.** Swimming is a skill that takes time to master. You will be amazed at the progress swimmers make by attending practice consistently. All swimmers are encouraged to practice as often as possible, so please join us. (Please Note: After practices start, the coaches may re-evaluate the schedule and shift an age group to a different practice time to avoid overcrowding in the lanes. If this becomes necessary, an announcement will be made at practice and an e-mail will be sent announcing the change to all swim team families.)

Wednesday, May 28 through Tuesday, June 17

Mon-Fri

4:30 - 5:00 pm / Pre-team

5:00 - 6:00 pm / 10yr & Under

6:00 - 7:00 pm / 11yr & Older

Saturday (May 31): 8:00-9:30 am / All age groups

Saturday (June 7): 8:00-11:00 am / **TIME TRIALS**-all age groups

Note: Please bring sneakers to practice. If the weather is too cold, there will be dry land practice.

Wednesday, June 18 through Friday, July 11

Morning Practice (recommended)

Mon-Thurs

7:30 - 9:00 am / 11 yr & Older

9:00 - 10:00 am / 10 yr & Under

Wednesdays: Dry land practice, bring sneakers!

Fridays: 8:30 - 10:00 am / All Swimmers, followed by breakfast. Cost \$1

Afternoon Practice

Mon, Tues, Thurs

4:30 - 5:00 pm / Pre-team

5:00 - 6:00 pm / 10yr & Under

6:00 - 7:00 pm / 11yr & Older

Fridays: 4:30 - 5:00pm / Pre-team only

Monday, July 14 through Friday, July 18

Morning Practice

Monday, July 14: 8:30 – 10:00 am / **Fun Meet** – everyone!

Tuesday, July 15: 7:30-9:00am / 11yr & Older

9:00-10:00am / 10 yr & Under

Wednesday-Friday: 8:30 – 10:00 am / Divisional & All-Star Swimmers

Afternoon Practice

Mon-Fri

5:00 - 6:00 pm / All ages Divisional & All-Star Swimmers

Monday, July 21 through Friday, July 25

Morning Practice

Mon-Fri: 9:00 - 10:00 am / All-Star Swimmers

When Are Ribbons Given Out?

Ribbons for both A and B meets can be picked up at the Pool Desk the next day.

Pep Rallies & Meet Themes

A pizza pep rally will be held on a Friday evening during the season. All swimmers and their families are encouraged to participate in a pep rally. Coaches rally the swimmers together to do cheers and show their spirit. Swimmers also get a chance to show off their creative talents by making banners and posters to decorate the pool. For each away meet, swimmers are encouraged to show their team spirit by dressing according to the meet theme.

Away Meet Themes for 2024:

Week 1A, Saturday, June 14 – Tie Dye / Hippie

Relay Carnival, June 29 – Superhero

Week 4A, Saturday, July 5 – Patriotic

Divisionals, Saturday, July 19 – Tiger Pride

What Can Parents Do To Support Our Swimmers and Our Team?

The first thing parents can do is encourage their children, and all the children on the team, to do their best and support each other. Remember, team spirit is contagious, so cheer, cheer, cheer!

The second thing parents can do is **VOLUNTEER!!!** Swim meets require a tremendous number of volunteers and cannot happen without your help. There is a fun and rewarding job choice for everyone!

Summer swim is heavily dependent on volunteers to ensure the team can function and the swimmers can have a fun and successful season. Twin Farms expects that each family make every effort to support the team and their child with their time, talent, and energy. Swim meets cannot take place without parents actively fulfilling the role of timers, judges, announcers, starters, scorekeepers, and concession attendants. **In order to ensure that our swimmers have a fun and successful swim season, Twin Farms has a mandatory volunteering requirement if your child(ren) are swimming.**

To ensure that each meet has the support it needs, Twin Farms uses *TeamUnify* to organize our swimmers as well as to ensure that each family supports every meet by filling at least one volunteer slot. We will be keeping track of the volunteer requirements and if you are unable to fulfill the obligation, it will be your responsibility to find a replacement. There is no shortage of jobs at every meet and the new program will track each family's participation throughout the season.

We understand that everyone has other commitments, but these swim meets cannot function without the necessary volunteers. Any family member or surrogate 13 or older can fill a role necessary to run the meet. A volunteer sheet will be posted on *TeamUnify* for every meet under the "job signup" tab and you will be required to sign up for a volunteer position at least 48 hours prior to the meet. If you have not selected a role for the meet by the 48-hour deadline, the volunteer coordinator will assign you a remaining position if your child is swimming in the meet.

We are sympathetic to conflicts that may impact your ability to volunteer for every event, but we are a small pool and we CANNOT run these meets without the assistance of every family. If you have a conflict, please work with other

families to assist you in meeting your obligation and stay in communication with the Team Reps so they fully understand the situation.

Please be courteous and make sure you are on time and ready for each event. Each volunteer must check in with the Team Reps 15 minutes prior to the start of their shift. This is very important as the Reps need to know that all roles are filled for the meet to begin. If you are running late for a meet, please CALL or TEXT the Reps at least 15 minutes before the start of the assigned shift. Staying in contact with the Reps will alleviate them from having to “hunt down” volunteers to ensure a timely start to the meet.

Twin Farms prides itself on being a small pool with a tight-knit community that supports the success of its swimmers. If families are identified as not supporting the success of our swimmers, the team may be implementing a penalty fee to help support the team financially.

Friday Breakfasts and Pep Rallies

Friday Breakfasts will occur once morning practices begin. We will be looking for parent volunteers to host each week. Please let the Team Reps know if you are interested.

Meet Officials

We need volunteers to serve as the referee, starter, and stroke & turn judge positions during our meets and automation. FREE Training and certification is offered by MCSL. Please see the MCSL website for the list of online training for this year.

Special Meets and Events

Relay Carnival

The Relay Carnival is held mid season. All six teams in Division M participate. Each team may enter one (1) four-person team for each relay event. There are boys' relays, girls' relays, and mixed relays spread out over the age groups. Coaches prepare the line-up for the Relay Carnival based on the swimmers' fastest times to date and may use their discretion to place swimmers where they are needed most to help the team. ***It is extremely important to notify the coaches if you cannot attend this meet. If one swimmer doesn't show up, the entire relay can't swim their event.***

Divisionals

The Saturday after the last 'A' Meet, the Divisional Championship Meet is held. All six teams in Division M participate. Each team may enter two (2) swimmers in each individual event and one (1) four-person team for each of the four relay events. Like in 'A' Meets, swimmers are allowed to swim up to three individual events (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, or butterfly), plus the Individual Medley, and one relay per meet. The meet follows the standard 'A' Meet format, except that there are two (2) heats for each individual event. Just like in 'A' Meets, time trials and performances during the season determine the fastest swimmers in each event in each age group. Again, coaches' discretion may be used when making entries for Divisionals to place swimmers where they are needed most to help the team.

Swim Team Banquet

The Swim Team Banquet is held on the Monday evening after Divisionals. The awards portion of the night begins after the dinner, where the coaches recognize all of the swimmers for their outstanding performances and accomplishments. Graduating seniors are acknowledged at the banquet with special recognitions including slide show pictures. Graduating seniors with a birthday after June 1st will be recognized with their high school graduating class. The night ends with a “slide show” presentation of the season. Copies of the slide show will also be available for purchase.

End of Season Awards

Awards

Every athlete on the swim team will receive a medal. The top point earners for the team, both girl and boy, will earn the “high-point” trophies. Based upon the coaching staff’s determination, the most improved girl and boy swimmer will be given a special trophy.

All-Tiger Team

Several boy and girl swimmers will receive this award/honor. The “All-Tiger Team” is a special group of swimmers that are considered the heart and spirit of the team. These athletes need not be the fastest, only that their love for the sport and the team are the greatest.

Daniel McGivern Coaches Award

The coaches’ award is given to those athletes that show true dedication and commitment to not only their own personal achievements, but to their fellow team members as well. Starting in 2004, this honor was renamed in memory of Daniel McGivern. Daniel was truly a coach’s dream. Daniel was both an outstanding young man and one of the most gifted swimmers that has ever been part of the Twin Farms family. Tragically, Daniel died at the age of 16.

Daniel struggled with depression, a serious medical illness. Left untreated, depression can lead to low self-esteem, academic and social difficulties, anger and despair, as well as life threatening behavior such as drug abuse, self-injury, and suicide. Fortunately, depression is one of the most treatable mental health illnesses. Many people with depression can find relief with support, therapy, and/or medication.

Daniel represented the epitome of a fine swimmer. He combined swimming skill with a great love of the sport and commitment to the Twin Farms team. We have renamed this award in his honor to carry on his spirit for swimming. We will miss and remember Daniel always.

Other MCSL Swim Meets

Invitational Coaches Long Course Meet

This meet, held at the Rockville Municipal Swim Center’s outdoor 50-meter pool, highlights the top 8 swimmers in MCSL, plus 2 alternates, in each individual event in each age group. Qualifying times are based on events swum through the first three ‘A’ Meets. Events that a swimmer qualifies for are double the distance of the ‘A’ Meet event. For example, if an 11-12 year old swimmer qualifies in the 50-meter freestyle race, at this meet they will swim 100-meter freestyle. Swimmers are limited to two (2) events. This meet takes place in July on the Tuesday before the last dual “A” meet.

All-Star Relay Swim Meet

This meet, also held at the Rockville Municipal Swim Center’s outdoor pool, features the relay teams with the fastest official times in each MCSL division. Qualifying times are based on the results of each division’s ‘A’ Relay Carnival, plus ‘A’ Meets, and Divisionals for those relays swum during ‘A’ Meets. This meet takes place on the Saturday, the weekend after the Divisional meet weekend.

All-Star Individual Swim Meet

This meet, also held at the Rockville Municipal Swim Center’s outdoor pool, features the top 16 swimmers in MCSL, plus 3 alternates, in each individual event in each age group. Qualifying times are based on events swum through Divisionals.

Swimmers are limited to two (2) events. This meet takes place on Sunday, the weekend after the Divisional meet weekend.