



The McLean Marlins Swim Team

GRIT
OVER
GLORY



2026
MCLEAN MARLINS
FEAST



About Us

The Northern Virginia Swimming League (NVSL) was founded in 1956 to promote competitive swimming and diving at community pools in Northern Virginia, close to Washington, D.C. Our mission is to foster a passion for the sport, improve aquatic skills, build teamwork, and encourage good sportsmanship.

The success of the NVSL and the McLean Marlins relies heavily on the support of volunteers from the swimmers' families and friends. Currently, the league comprises 102 teams across 17 divisions, with the McLean Marlins representing the McLean Swim and Tennis Association (MSTA) in Division III. To join the Marlins or Future Marlins, membership in the MSTA is required. All MSTA members aged 6-18 are welcome to participate.

Introduction

The MSTA, Inc. Board of Directors governs pool activities, overseeing day-to-day operations and protecting member investments.

Team Representatives (Team Reps)

Team Reps serve as the primary liaison between the NVSL and the Marlins, facilitating communication among parents, coaches, and the MSTA board.

Head Coach

The Head Coach oversees the aquatics program, which includes:

- Supervising Assistant and Developmental Coaches
- Promoting sportsmanship
- Developing swimmer workouts
- Enhancing swimmer performance
- Preparing weekly meet sheets in collaboration with the Team Reps

Swim Team Overview

The Marlins swim team is both developmental and competitive, designed to involve the entire family through enjoyable social activities. Whether you are a beginner or an experienced swimmer, everyone is welcome. New swimmers must be able to swim one full length of the pool unassisted in freestyle (with minimal stopping) and another stroke. Future Marlins must swim at least 15 meters unassisted to qualify.

Swim Team Priorities

While winning is enjoyable, the primary focus of the Marlins swim team is to instill valuable life skills through sports. Our top priority is "Sportsmanship." We have developed a "Portrait of a Swimmer," which outlines eight essential characteristics and skills that reflect important sportsmanship attributes.

"Portrait of a Swimmer" Characteristics

- **Respect:** Consideration for others by listening to their input and valuing their efforts. Respectful swimmers foster a positive and healthy competitive environment.
- **Positivity:** Maintaining optimism in the face of challenges and resisting the notion of "I can't." Swimmers practice self-compassion and gratitude, always striving to do their best.
- **Teamwork:** Collaboration with coaches and encouragement for fellow teammates. Swimmers work together towards common goals, embodying the spirit of teamwork.



- **Humility:** Recognizing the role of others in success and celebrating team achievements. Humble swimmers credit their teammates and acknowledge the contributions of everyone involved.
- **Determination:** Staying focused and putting forth effort in both easy and challenging situations. Determined swimmers embrace challenges and aim to improve with each practice and meet.
- **Integrity:** Being dependable and truthful, both in and out of the pool. Swimmers with integrity align their actions with their words.
- **Inclusivity:** Bringing the team together and treating everyone fairly, regardless of background or ability. Inclusive swimmers actively work to create a welcoming environment.
- **Leadership:** Encouraging and supporting fellow swimmers to achieve their goals. Leaders model the other characteristics and set a positive example for their teammates.

Marlin coaches will emphasize these characteristics each week and recognize a swimmer who exemplifies these values of sportsmanship.

Future Marlins Assessments/Evaluations

The Future Marlins program offers group training for children who can swim 15 meters of the pool unassisted. The focus is on improving proper breathing, stroke technique, and building endurance.

Children can transition to the competitive team once they demonstrate the ability to swim one full length of the pool in freestyle (keeping their face in the water with minimal stopping) and one full length in another stroke. An evaluation is required before participation in the program to ensure readiness.

Swim Team Structure

The Marlins swim team operates during an exciting and intensive 8-week season, running from mid-May to the end of July. To fully participate in all team activities, please avoid scheduling vacations during this period, or ensure that you can return for Saturday and Monday meets.

Practice Schedule:

- **Frequency:** Practices occur daily.
- **Timing:** When school is in session, practices are held in the afternoon. Once school is out for the summer, practices transition to the morning.
- **Age Groups:** Swimmers are organized by age group, and each swimmer must practice with their peers since competitions are age-specific. **Swimmers are not permitted to join practices in other age groups.**

Practice Schedule: DRAFT. Will be finalized before season

<u>Time</u>	<u>Age Group</u>
7:15 am – 8:15 am	8 & under 13 and older
8:20 am – 9:20 am	9-10 11–12-year-olds
9:20 am – 10:15 am	11-12 9–10-year-olds
10:15 am – 11 am	13 + 8 and under
5:00 pm- 5:45 pm	Futures
5:30 pm – 6:00 pm	Groups
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	T/TH Marlin Practice Option



What is a Time Ladder

A time ladder is a tool utilized by coaches and team representatives to determine swimmer eligibility for Saturday morning division swim meets. It records each swimmer's fastest times for various strokes.

Key points about the time ladder include:

- **Personal Bests:** Once a swimmer achieves a personal best, that time remains on the ladder until they improve upon it.
- **Event Placement:** The time ladder is the sole method for placing swimmers in events (including strokes and relays) at meets.
- **Alternate Swimmers:** If the top-ranked swimmer is unavailable to compete, the next fastest time on the ladder is used to fill their spot.
- **Availability:** Time ladders are accessible to parents and swimmers. They serve as a tool to help swimmers set personal goals and allow parents to assess a swimmer's likelihood of attending a Saturday A meet.

Time Trials

Time trials are the **first Marlin-only meet** held at the MSTA pool, allowing each swimmer to establish their starting times for the time ladder. During time trials, each swimmer will compete in every stroke they can swim legally, as assessed by the coach.

Swim Meets

The Marlins swim team participates in **five** NVSL Division meets against all teams in their division. To compete in the divisional meet, a swimmer must be at the top of the time ladder. Additionally, the Marlins will participate in 5-6 non-sanctioned meets with local pools, providing opportunities for all Marlin swimmers to compete.

Monday Nights (B meets/Developmental Meets)

All Marlins are invited to participate in B meets, which are held on Monday evenings starting at 6:00 PM, with warm-ups at 5:00 or 5:30 PM. Swimmers must be on deck 10 minutes before warm-ups. The meets typically conclude by 8:30 PM or 9:30 PM.

Each Monday, the Marlins compete against another NVSL team. While this is not a points-based competitive meet, it provides swimmers with the chance to compete, develop their technique, and gain comfort in a competitive environment.

- Swimmers may choose to swim in two strokes and/or the individual medley (IM) on Mondays.
- Not all Monday meets will include the IM event. To qualify for IM at Divisionals, swimmers should participate in a Monday meet.
- If a swimmer competes in a stroke on Saturday and earns points for the team, they are not permitted to swim that stroke in the Monday event.
- Technical suits are not allowed during Monday night events.

Saturday Morning (A meets)

Saturday morning dual meets begin promptly at 9:00 AM, with warm-ups starting at 8:00 AM or 8:30 AM. Swimmers must arrive by 7:45 AM. Swim meets usually conclude by 11:30 AM. After the meet, a team lunch will take place (self-pay).

These Saturday swim meets are highly engaging and enjoyable for all team members, regardless of whether they are selected to compete. The Marlins are recognized as one of the most spirited teams in the NVSL, thanks



to our supportive community. We encourage all team members to come out, watch, and cheer for their teammates!

- Each Saturday, the Marlins will go head-to-head with a Divisional team for competition. The meet is scored.
- Only the top three (3) fastest swimmers per event swim in the competition. The top 3 finishers earn points for their team.
 - First = 5 points
 - Second = 3 points
 - Third = 1 point
- There is one heat for each stroke event and relay event in each age group.

A Week in the Life of a Marlin Parent (see Appendix A)

Sunday: Parents confirm swimmer availability for the upcoming Saturday meet by **2 PM** and declare strokes for the Monday night meet.

Monday: B meet occurs in the evening, providing swimmers the opportunity to compete and develop their skills.

Tuesday: Coaches and team representatives review the updated time ladder to assess swimmer placements.

Wednesday: The meet roster is created and sent to families for review, ensuring everyone is informed about swim assignments. Parents review and respond accordingly.

Thursday: The meet sheet is finalized and shared with NVSL in preparation for the Saturday competition.

Friday: A pep rally is held to boost team spirit and excitement for the upcoming meet.

Saturday: The dual meet takes place, starting at 9:00 AM, with warm-ups prior to the event.

Sunday: The cycle repeats, beginning anew for the following week.

This schedule keeps swimmers and families engaged and organized throughout the swim season!

Volunteer Opportunities: We Need You! PARTICIPATION IS NOT OPTIONAL - All families must fulfill their volunteer commitment for their children to participate in the swim team.

IMPORTANT NOTE

If a swimmer qualifies for Divisional meets, Relay Carnivals, All-Star Relays, or Individual All-Stars, PARENTS ARE REQUIRED TO VOLUNTEER; ***FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN THE SWIMMER BEING SCRATCHED FROM THE EVENTS.***

Your participation not only supports the team but also enriches the overall experience for your child and our community. Thank you for being involved!

Expectations & Parent Volunteer Requirements

- **Team Philosophy:**
 - While swimming is an individual sport, the summer league prioritizes team collaboration. The strength of the team lies in the active participation of its members.



How It Works:

Volunteer Service

- Complete a minimum number of volunteer events throughout the season (see chart below)
- Volunteer requirements are based on the number of swimmers in your family and their participation in A meets, B meets, or as Future Marlins swimmers
- Sign up for volunteer positions before the swim season begins - this is required for swimmer eligibility
- A \$150 deposit is collected during online registration
- Upon completing your volunteer hours, you can choose to:
 - Have your deposit refunded, **OR**
 - Donate it toward coaches' end-of-season gifts, off-deck festivities, bonuses, and other expenses.

Volunteer Needs Overview:

- Approximately **50 parent volunteers** are required for a typical home B meet
- Approximately **40 parent volunteers** are needed for a typical home A meet
- Active family engagement in volunteering is crucial for the program's success

How many Children on the Team	How many are Swimming A Meets?	Volunteer Requirements - Minimum Number of Jobs			
		B Meets/ Time Trials	A Meets	Social Events	Overall
Future Marlins ONLY		*	0	1	1*
1	0	3	0	1	4
2+	0	5	0	1	6
1	1	3	4	1	8
2+	1+	4	5	1	10

- **Volunteer Participation Guidelines:**
 - Only **1 social job** counts towards your volunteer requirements. Most volunteer help is needed at swim meets, specifically for roles such as timing and officiating.
 - **Action Item:** If unsure whether your swimmer will be selected for A swim meets, initially sign up for all B meet jobs. If your swimmer is selected for A swim meets, you will need to commit to working at most of those swim meets.

Registration Deadlines:

- **Important Note:** ALL volunteer sign-ups must be completed by **the first meet**. Failure to do so will render your swimmers **ineligible** to participate.

Volunteer Season Support Crew

- **Volunteer Coordinator (VC):**
 - The Volunteer Coordinator organizes volunteer lists in Team Unify, categorizing them into three groups: **Drinks, Food, and Staff**.



- The VC will pre-load volunteer opportunities into the events calendar, making it accessible when the season begins.
- **Monday Night Meet Coordinator:**
 - Responsibilities include:
 - Scheduling swim meets with local pools for the following year.
 - Organizing and facilitating home swim meets on Monday nights, which involves:
 - Coordinating pool setup with lifeguards and coaches.
 - Managing data and ribbon boxes.
 - Ensuring volunteer assignments are fulfilled.
 - Collaborating with visiting and host team reps.
- **Snack Bar/Concessions Coordinator:**
 - Responsible for managing concessions sold at home swim meets, including:
 - Reporting donation items to the Volunteer Coordinator.
 - Pricing items for sale.
 - Develop a list of items needed for concessions in advance of each meet.
- **Data Team Coordinator:**
 - Manages the data team, which consists of four members led by the Data Coordinator.
Responsibilities include:
 - Operating the Hytek system.
 - Acting as a contact point for other teams.
 - Creating meet sheets and leading the data table.
- **On-Deck Officials:**
 - The following officials are required during swim meets:

■ Referee: 1	■ Relay Take-off Judges: 8
■ Announcer: 1-2	■ Data Entry: 1
■ Starter: 1	■ Chief Timer: 1
■ Clerk of Course: 1	■ Verifier: 1
■ Stroke and Turn Judges: 4	■ Timers: 18
■ Place Recorder: 1	■ Awards Clerk: 1
	■ Marshals: 2
- **Announcer:**
 - The announcer engages the audience by announcing events and swimmers, helping to maintain an energetic atmosphere at swim meets.
- **Marlin Banquet Coordinator:**
 - Organizes the end-of-year celebration for Marlin swimmers, which includes dinner, dessert, awards, music, and late-night pool party fun.
- **Marlin Outreach Navigator:**
 - **Responsibilities:**
 - Develop and execute outreach strategies to connect with local schools, PTAs, swim programs, and community members to promote engagement and participation in organizational initiatives.



- Coordinate efforts with Pros to You and seasoned parents to enhance community visibility and outreach. Align outreach strategies with broader community goals.
- Engage seasoned parents and collaborate to maximize networks for effective outreach.
- Manage marketing initiatives, including procuring and distributing flyers, for effective community recruitment and participation.
- Partner with Realtors and engage new residents to promote involvement in swim programs. Coordinate information sessions with local swim clubs and developmental swim programs during the latter part of the swim season. A second information session is optional.

Team Social Events/Activities

- **Team Photo:**
 - Coordinate with a team photo photographer. The photographer should be booked in January for the upcoming summer.
 - The photography fee is included in registration. Each swimmer receives one free download, and the photographer will provide a 16" x 20" photo for the clubhouse as well as a coach's headshot.
 - Organize sibling session options and friend group photos to encourage camaraderie among swimmers.
- **Pep Rallies:**
 - Organize weekly pep rallies held every Friday at 6 PM, where team spirit is emphasized.
 - Coordinate contributions: families with the last names A-L provide main dishes, while M-Z provide sides, rotating each week.
 - Ensure swimmers dress in costumes for festivities, and facilitate a schedule where swimmers eat first before participating in coach-led activities on the lawn.
 - Communicate that selected swimmers do not swim after pep rallies and should typically go home by 7:30 PM.
- **Pancake Breakfast:**
 - Plan and oversee pancake breakfasts hosted by parent volunteers, where hot stacks of pancakes are served to each swimmer age group one Friday following practice.
 - Collaborate with the "Pancake Dads" to ensure quality and variety in toppings.
- **Laser Tag:**
 - Organize two laser tag sessions—one for swimmers aged 11 and under, and another for those aged 12 and older.
 - Promote this fun mid-week event to encourage participation and team bonding.
- **York Racing Clinic:**
 - Coordinate sessions with York Swim Club, providing Marlins with on-deck coaching focused on racing techniques to improve swimmer performance.
 - Ensure all swimmers are informed about the clinic and its value.
- **Senior Sendoff Event:**
 - Plan a special recognition event for the senior swimmers during the last Saturday home meet, celebrating their contributions and achievements throughout the season.



- **Lock-In:**
 - Organize a lock-in event for senior swimmers on the pool deck after a home meet, extending into the night.
 - Coordinate with coaches to lead the event, ensuring board approval for the selected date and times.

13 and Over Opportunities

- **13+ Progressive Dinner:** This unique off-deck experience allows 13+ swimmers to enjoy a three-course meal in a "house progressive" fashion, showcasing a more casual side of the team. Hosted by three Marlin families for appetizers, the main course, and dessert, swimmers travel between homes in a fun and bonding atmosphere, singing together along the way. Parents pick up the swimmers at the end of the night.
- **Junior Coaching (Futures/Lessons):** Under the guidance of the Futures head coach, 13+ swimmers can enhance their coaching skills by applying to assist with Future Marlin lessons and swim lessons for younger children not yet on the team. This opportunity helps older swimmers build relationships with the younger participants.
- **Mentorship/Leadership Program:** This program pairs older swimmers (13+) with younger swimmers (12 and under) in a Big Swimmer-Little Swimmer initiative. Older swimmers will guide younger ones in learning strokes and help them acclimate to their first summer on the team, fostering engagement and excitement about being a Marlin!
- **Fun Fridays:** Each Friday, following the fun practice, treats are provided by the parents of 13+ swimmers for everyone to munch and mingle. This enjoyable tradition offers a great team-building opportunity that senior swimmers should not miss!
- **Lock-In:** Senior swimmers are invited to a special event on the pool deck for an evening of fun and bonding after the pool closes. This exclusive gathering allows seniors to connect in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.

MSTA Delay Information

Weather Delays: The goal is to have every practice and every meet without delays or interruptions; however, per pool rules, thunder and lightning will cause a delay. ***There are no delays due to rain.***

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Time Delay</u>
Thunder/Lightning	30 minutes off the deck With each event, the clock resets

When a delay occurs, swimmers will be required to leave the pool deck for safety. Lifeguards will communicate the wait time. It is recommended to have access to Team Unify, a mobile phone, or email. Team Representatives will keep swimmers and parents informed about schedule updates, including any cancellations.



2026 Meet Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Start Time</u>
June TBD	Deadline – Scholarship Applications	10:00 PM
June 13 th	MSTA Time Trials	8:00 AM
June 15 th	Monday Meet (All Swimmers)	5:00 PM
June 20 th	Division Dual Saturday Meets (1)	9:00 AM
June 22 nd	Monday Meet (All Swimmers)	5:00 PM
June 27 th	Division Dual Saturday Meets (2)	9:00 AM
June 29 th	Monday Meet (All Swimmers)	5:00 PM
July 4th	Division Dual Saturday Meets (3)	9:00 AM
July 6 th	Monday Meet (All Swimmers)	5:00 PM
July 8 th	Divisional Relay Carnivals	9:00 AM NEW TIME
July 11 th	Division Dual Saturday Meets (4)	9:00 AM
July 13 th	Monday Meet (All Swimmers)	5:00 PM
July 15 th	All-Star Relay Carnival	4:00 PM
July 18 th	Division Dual Saturday Meets (5)	9:00 AM
July 20 th	Monday Meet (All Swimmers)	5:00 PM
July 25 th	Division Individual Championships	8:30 AM
July 25 th	MARLIN BANQUET	6:00 PM
August 1 st	Individual All-Stars	8:30 AM

**** This is a short, intense, fun-filled 8 weeks. Please consider delaying family vacations until the end of the season. ****



NVSL and McLean Marlin Code of Conduct and Oath

NVSL Standards of Conduct

All participants of the Marlin Swim Team, swimmer, parents, and volunteers will abide by the NVSL Conduct of Standards. *Read, acknowledge, and return the second page of the Standards of Conduct.*

The following Standards of Conduct shall guide swimming and diving within the Northern Virginia Swimming League (NVSL). They promote respect, fairness, civility, honesty, responsibility, and appropriate behavior. These Standards foster a positive environment at all swim and dive meets; establish an atmosphere of respect for all participants, officials, and spectators; produce positive learning outcomes for all; build participant and team spirit; and enhance the sports of swimming and diving.

All Athletes, Coaches, Team Representatives, Officials, Parents, Spectators, and NVSL Leadership shall:

- Abide by the established rules of the NVSL.
- Respect all officials at all times and address them in a courteous manner.
- Avoid using inappropriate language, profanity, humiliating or intimidating remarks or behavior, **(including through social media)**, verbal or physical assault toward any athlete, coach, Team Representative, official, NVSL leadership representative, or spectator.
- Follow applicable management, pool, and facility rules, respecting others' property at all times.
- Display respect, courtesy, and good manners toward athletes, coaches, Team Representatives, and spectators. Team Representatives shall assist officials in maintaining control of spectators during meets.
- Demonstrate humility in victory and courtesy in defeat.

Head Coaches shall:

- Ensure athletes and assistant coaches demonstrate maturity and good sportsmanship toward other athletes, officials, coaches, and spectators at all times.
- Lead by example to instill a love for the sport, advanced aquatic skills, teamwork, and good sportsmanship in their team.

Spectators shall:

- Maintain an appropriate distance from the competition area by remaining in established viewing areas and shall not encroach the pool deck or interfere with any officials.
- Not engage in loud, intimidating, disrespectful, or negative behavior toward officials, athletes, other spectators, support personnel, or pool staff (including lifeguards).



OATHS

Athletes & Coaches:

"As representatives of all athletes and coaches, we promise that we will take part in this NVSL competition, respecting and abiding by the rules and standards of conduct which govern it, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the advancement of the sport and the honor of our teams."

Officials:

"As a representative of all judges and officials, I promise that we will officiate in this NVSL competition with impartiality, respecting and abiding by the rules and standards of conduct which govern it, in the true spirit of sportsmanship."

The McLean Marlins prioritize **respect and sportsmanship** and have a **zero-tolerance** policy for bullying and poor sportsmanship conduct.

The McLean Marlins will follow the NVSL Standards of Conduct rules above to foster an overall positive team community. If rules are found to be broken by any athlete or group of athletes, the following consequences will ensue:

1. The **first** offense will lead to a **warning** from the Head Coach and Team Reps.
2. The **second** offense will lead to **suspension** from 3 team practices and the following meet (Saturday and/or Monday).
3. The **third** offense will lead to **suspension from competition and dismissal from the team for the remainder of the season.**

Swimmer

Date

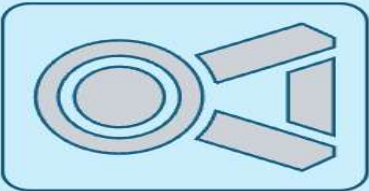
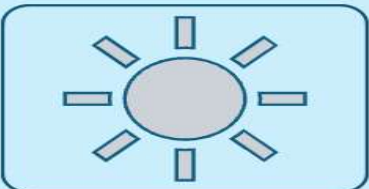
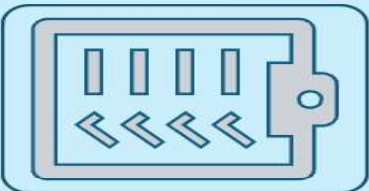
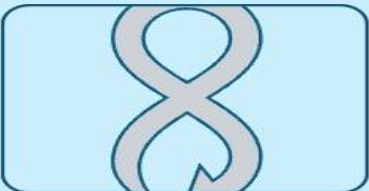
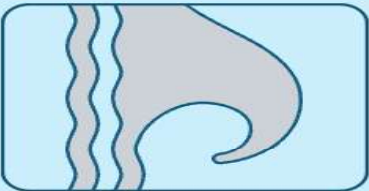
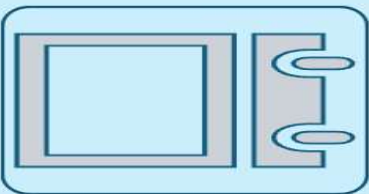
Responsible Party

Date

*****Return the signed acknowledgment of the NVSL Code of Conduct and Marlin Oath before the first practice. Signatures are required to participate with the Marlins*****



MARLINS WEEKLY SCHEDULE/TASKS



SUNDAY

- Print weekly email
- Parents sign up swimmers for Monday Events in the App or on swim website by 4 PM

MONDAY

- Weekly meet
- Arrive 30 minutes before warmups
- Prepare to volunteer for assigned event, or find coverage

TUESDAY

- Declare Saturday's availability in App or on website

WEDNESDAY

- Review Swimmer Board
- Saturday Roster List
- Alert Team Reps if NOT able to swim Saturday in Team Unity

THURSDAY

- Practice

FRIDAY

- Pep Rally Back Patio 6 PM – 7:30 PM
- Saturday Swimmers return home at 7:30 PM
- Sleep/Rest
- HYDRATE

SATURDAY

- Dual Meet Saturdays
- Anticipate 7:30 AM – 12 PM
- Team Lunch
- REPEAT