



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

YMCA of Indiana County Piranha Swim Team Handbook 2019-2020



indyswimming.org

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YMCA of INDIANA COUNTY

PIRANHA SWIM TEAM

Swimmers, welcome to the YMCA of Indiana County Piranha Swim Team. Parents, welcome to the Piranha Swim Team Parents Organization (P.S.T.P.O.). It is great to have you as members of our team. To help you become acquainted with the workings of our team, we have prepared this introductory package of information. Hopefully, it will assist you in becoming an ACTIVE participant and supporter of the YMCA of Indiana County Swim Team programs.

Goals of the Swim Team Program

The purpose of our swim team program is much the same as the other programs in the YMCA structure. We focus on the YMCA Four Core values of: Honesty, Caring, Respect and Responsibility to teach and train our young athletes how to become young adults. Of course, along the way, we make every effort to help them become exceptional swimmers as well. Our program has a long track record of being one of the best in the league and that doesn't come about by accident. Our coaches are exceptional and will take the time to ensure the development of every child along the way.

It is our expectation that all swimmers follow the recommended training schedule for their assigned group. We also expect that all parents will play an active role in the PSTPO as well as be an active advocate to your children to listen to their coach(es) and put forth their best effort at all times even when the task may seem daunting. It is this type of teamwork from all folks involved that builds a winning program with exceptional youngsters.

Overview of the Team: Piranhas

The YMCA Swim Team is a competitive program for boys and girls ages 5 to 18. Team members train based on which of the 5 training groups he/she falls into based on individual abilities. Those groups are: Gold Team; White Team; Advanced White Team; Red Team; Blue Team. Each of these groups has different days/times they meet to train. Fall season typically practices from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Monday-Friday and 6:00-7:00 p.m. 3 nights each week for the Gold Team. The summer swim team trains from 4:00-6:00 p.m. until IASD dismisses and then trains at Mack Park Pool times determined each season.

Occasionally there are additional "optional" training programs swimmers may choose to enroll in to advance their skills. At the beginning of each season we encourage current swimmers to invite their friends who may be interested in participating on the swim team to try the "Try It You'll Like It" program. This is a one weeklong training experience for non-swim team members to see if they are interested in joining the team. We also offer a Stroke Clinic for current swimmers to participate in as a way to spend a full week focusing completely on improving stroke technique and efficiency. The last additional swimming option we offer is a Saturday morning practice option. Swimmers who wish to have the option of practicing on Saturday mornings may register for this program. Lastly, we offer a strength training component led by a fitness specialist. The trainer will work with each swimmer to maximize strength and stamina to help them advance their swimming skills.

Our YMCA competes regionally in the WPYSL (Western PA YMCA Swim League) in the Western District of PA Swimming. Swimmers may also choose to compete in AMS (Allegheny Mountain Swimming) as a participant in US Swimming (United States Swimming). This is a similar program to the YMCA program and is available as an extra program to the YMCA program. Swimmers may not choose to be an AMS/USS swimmer only. Swimmers must fully satisfy all YMCA obligations to be eligible to participate as an AMS/USS swimmer with the INDY Piranha Swim Team.

We have swimmers from several different school districts and do our best to make all swimmers feel welcome. We ask that swimmers make every effort to arrive early enough to begin practice at the scheduled time. When high school swim season begins, we realize several of our swimmers may attend high school swim team practice as opposed to attending YMCA swim team practice. We understand this and relax any attendance requirements for practice during the high school season for swimmers who are training with their school team. However, YMCA dual meet participation is still required.

The team trains based on a seasonal schedule. There are 2 primary seasons: Fall (Sept-March) and Summer (April-July).

The team is divided into 5 age groups for competitions for both boys and girls. They are as follows (All ages are determined based on your age as of December 1st of the Winter season and May 1st of the Summer season.

- ✓ Novice: Swimmers ages 8 & under
- ✓ Cadet: Swimmers ages 9 & 10
- ✓ Prep: Swimmers ages 11 & 12
- ✓ Junior: Swimmers ages 13 & 14
- ✓ Senior: Swimmers ages 15-18

Team Requirements

To be a member of the swim team, you need to meet a few simple requirements:

- ✓ You have to be a member of the YMCA of Indiana County
- ✓ You must register and pay for the swim team program
- ✓ You must possess a minimum swimming ability - this may sound silly, but this is a swim team, not a lesson program. To be evaluated for swim team assignment, please contact Marty Kessler at martykessler@icymca.org. Swimmers not yet ready for the full swim team program, will be directed to the swim lesson program or our developmental team.
- ✓ You may not represent another swim team - the only exceptions are High School or Middle School teams.

Coaching Staff

Marty Kessler	Head Coach	Jen Reiter	Assistant Blue & Red Coach
Garet Weston	Blue Team Coach		
Kate Braun	Adv. White Coach	Lori Bozzer	Assistant Adv. White Coach
Sarah Brown	White Coach	Heather Reed	Assistant White Coach
John Zarpentine	Gold Team Coach. We are still looking for a volunteer assistant coach. Please let me know if you are interested.		
Noah Brockway	Marion Center Coach		

Interesting Websites

YMCA Website: www.icymca.org

Piranha Team Website: www.indyswimming.org

National YMCA site: www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org

Western PA YMCA Swim League: www.wpysl.org

WPIAL-School Sports: www.wpial.com

American Swimming Coaches Assoc: www.swimming.org

Piranha Swim Team Parents Organization (PSTPO)

The PSTPO exists to support the YMCA swim team program and enhance the experience of our swimmers. This volunteer led group of parents provides critical assistance and serves in numerous functions which enable the YMCA to continue to keep our swim team program affordable for all. Below is a list of: volunteer leadership positions; chairperson positions and swim meet volunteer positions. It is essential that all parents fulfill the expectations of the team in serving in these roles to ensure the success of the team as a whole.

President - The President adheres to the policies and procedures and is responsible for all aspects of the PSTPO organization.

Vice President - The Vice President keeps swim team records up to date including policies and procedures, team handbook, phone list, email list and assists the President. He/She would become the President should that position be vacated.

Secretary - The Secretary keeps minutes of the meetings.

Treasurer - The Treasurer collects all monies (excluding YMCA swim team program registration and membership fees), keeps accurate record of swim team finances and prepares purchase orders to be reviewed and processed by the YMCA Director of Business Services. Manages all swimmer accounts and communicates low balances to parents.

Concessions Chair - Responsible for all aspects of concession operations for home dual meets and INDY sponsored invitational events.

Entertainment Chair – Coordinates all aspects of: Fall season banquet, Del Grosso Day, Fall Festival, and any other special events.

Meet Manager – Coordinates all swim meet volunteer workers for swim meets we host or sponsor. A detailed list of all necessary swim meet volunteers is found later in this guide.

Fundraising Chair – Coordinates all aspects of additional fund-raising events organized by the PSTPO. Ensures all “small games of chance” guidelines are in compliance when using the YMCA’s license.

Public Relations Chair - Handles outside communication concerning activities, dual meets, league standings etc. with local newspaper and radio. Also updates the swim team bulletin board with photos of swimmers and distributes them at the banquet. Coordinates swim team yearbook and team pictures.

Purchasing Chair - Orders team apparel, ribbons and other related items.

Transportation Chair – Coordinates all aspects of bus transportation to approved swim meets.

U.S. Swim Chair – Coordinates all aspects of our USS/AMS swim participation including swimmer registration, coaches’ registration, team registration, swim meet announcement/registration. Some of these responsibilities require knowledge of Team Manager Software and require assistance from head coach.

Website Chair – Manages the swim team website content. Updates information, meet results, parent communications and the like.

The PSTPO coordinates various Events/Activities throughout the swim season that are intended to be team building and enjoyable for all. Some events include: DelGrosso Amusement Park Day, Fall Festival, a Night at the Races, pizza/pasta parties and more.

The PSTPO meets once a month at the YMCA in the conference room at 5:15p.m. The officers select a consistent day of the month at the beginning of the season that will work for most parents. Meetings usually last about an hour. At this time we discuss and make the decisions necessary to operate as PSTPO. We ask that all parents attend these meetings, since all of your children will be affected by the decisions made at these meetings. Notice for these meetings and important swim team information will be sent via email so be sure to check often during the swim season.

Fall Program

Fall season begins in mid-September and runs through the end of February or until the beginning of April, depending on your age/ability. Practices are held as scheduled for your group Monday-Friday. All swimmers are expected to participate as directed by their coaches. Time at IUP from 6:00– 8:00 p.m. is rented for our Blue Team/High School age swimmers to train beginning the first day of practice and continuing until the first day of high school swim practice.

There are 4-5 dual meets during the fall season and swimmers are expected to attend all dual meets. During these meets we compete against another YMCA swim team within each of the 5 age groups. Meets are scored on a total point basis.

The fall league champion is determined at Fall Section Championships. All swimmers are expected to attend this meet as it is an invitational format that determines the league champion for the fall season.

Following the dual meet season there are various championship meets held including: Novice Championships for 8 & Under, B Districts for swimmers who have not qualified for Western PA Districts, Western PA Districts for those who qualify, YMCA States for those who qualify, and YMCA Nationals for those who qualify.

Summer Program

Summer season begins in mid-April and runs through the end of July depending on your age/ability. Practices are held as scheduled for your group Monday-Friday 4:00-6:00 p.m. until school dismisses for the summer and then meets. at Mack park Pool at a designated time.

There are 4-5 dual meets during the summer season and swimmers are expected to attend all dual meets. During these meets we compete against another YMCA swim team and the meet is scored for total points. A typical meet score is based on the total points awarded and could be something like 400 - 350.

The summer league champion is determined at Summer League Championships. All swimmers are expected to attend this meet as it is an invitational format that determines the league champion for the summer season. The season may be extended for swimmers who qualify for YMCA Summer Nationals if they choose to participate.

Cost

There is a fee to join the swim team. Please visit the front desk at the beginning of the season to familiarize yourself with that fee. Additionally, all swimmers must be YMCA members. There is a membership fee for either a youth membership or family membership.

We have a scholarship fund established in honor of our long-time coach Mark Hess. This fund provides assistance to swimmers who may not be able to afford the costs of participating in the program on their own. Assistance may be used to aid with: registration fees, necessary swim team equipment like suit, goggles, caps, gym bag and will aid in covering championship meet entry fees. Folks who need assistance must meet with the Aquatics Director and complete our financial assistance paperwork to determine assistance amount.

We always accept donations into this fund to aid those swimmers who need this financial assistance.

Practice Groups

The Indiana YMCA Swim Team has training groups to fit the ability levels of all swimmers. From our newest swimmers just learning the competitive strokes to our national competitors, everyone can be included in this wonderful sport. We have physical requirements list for each team but moving up is always at the coach's discretion. To be evaluated for swim team placement, please contact the Aquatics Director or Head Coach.

Gold Team

The gold team includes our Piranhas who are learning the sport of competitive swimming. An emphasis is put on proper stroke technique and competitive swimming instruction.

- ✓ Requirements to join
 - Swim 25 yards freestyle
 - Swim 25 yards backstroke
 - Swim 3 of the 4 competitive strokes legally or have completed Level 5 YMCA swim lessons
- ✓ Work
 - 25's of all strokes
 - Learning IM
 - Emphasis on learning all four competitive strokes
 - Staying healthy and having fun with swimming

White Team

The white team is for swimmers who are able to compete in all four competitive strokes but need refinement on technique and increased endurance. The white team still has an emphasis on technique but teaches technique while building the endurance necessary for successful completion

- ✓ Requirements to join
 - Swim three of the four competitive strokes under :30 seconds for 25 yards
 - Complete a legal 100 IM in competition
- ✓ Work
 - Increments of 25s, 50s, 100s, and the occasional 200
 - Focus on mastery of all four competitive strokes with drills
 - Introduce endurance training during with paced sets
 - Competitive starts and turns

Advanced White Team

The advanced white team is for swimmers who are able to compete in all four competitive strokes but need refinement on technique and increased endurance. The white team still has an emphasis on technique but teaches technique while building the endurance necessary for successful completion.

- ✓ Requirements to join
 - Swim four of the competitive strokes in the following times:
 - ☒ Under :48.5 seconds – 50 yard butterfly
 - ☒ Under :48.5 seconds – 50 yard backstroke
 - ☒ Under :53.5 seconds – 50 yard breaststroke
 - ☒ Under :41 seconds – 50 yard freestyle
 - ☒ Under 1:39 seconds – 100 yard Individual Medley
- ✓ Work
 - Over 1500 yards per practice
 - Increments of 25's, 50's, 100's, and the occasional 200
 - Focus on a mastery of all four competitive strokes with drills
 - Introduce endurance training during paced sets
 - Starts and turns

Red Team

The red team increases the level of yardage for our swimmers who are beginning to get really serious about competitive swimming. This is for our younger swimmers who want to compete at a higher level and will practice 4 times/week. Stroke development is still added, but a higher emphasis is placed on training speed and endurance.

- ✓ Requirements to Join
 - High level of efficiency in all four competitive strokes
 - Competitive times that meet four of the following requirements:
 - ☒ Under :41 seconds - 50 Yard Butterfly
 - ☒ Under :42 seconds - 50 Yard Backstroke
 - ☒ Under :46 seconds - 50 Yard Breaststroke
 - ☒ Under :35 seconds - 50 Yard Freestyle
 - ☒ Under 1:29 seconds - 100 Yard Individual Medley
- ✓ Work
 - Over 2500 yards per practice
 - All distances up to 500 yards
 - All four strokes covered daily
 - Daily stroke drills working on technique and efficiency
 - Increased emphasis on general endurance and speed training

Blue Team

The blue team is our highest training group. It includes our fastest swimmers as well as our Piranhas who also compete on the teams of our area high schools. Although technique is incorporated into every practice a main goal of this group is to make swimmers faster using specifically designed sets to increase a swimmer's speed in their chosen events.

- ✓ Requirements to join
 - Mastery of all four competitive strokes
 - Competitive times that meet or exceed four of the following requirements:
 - ☒ Under :33 seconds - 50 Yard Butterfly
 - ☒ Under :35 seconds - 50 Yard Backstroke
 - ☒ Under :39 seconds - 50 Yard Breaststroke
 - ☒ Under :30 seconds - 50 Yard Freestyle
 - ☒ Under 2:50 seconds - 200 Individual Medley

✓ Work

- Over 3000 yards per practice
- All distances up to 1000
- All four strokes covered daily
- Daily stroke drills
- Very high emphasis on the necessary training for speed and endurance

Equipment

Basic training equipment is provided by the YMCA, however, many swimmers choose to own select pieces of equipment. Please ask a coach about pull buoys, kickboards, hand paddles, zoomers etc. if you wish to purchase your own. All swimmers **MUST** have their own swimsuit, goggles, and a cap (if he/she wears one).

Dress Code

Black swimsuit and Indy swim cap for all dual meets. Indy swim cap for championship meets.

Team Pictures

Every season a team picture is taken. All swimmers are expected to wear black and be in this picture. The picture is normally taken prior to a home dual meet. All swimmers **must** wear black suit if they wish to be in the picture.

Private Swim Lessons

Many swimmers look for opportunities to gain additional coaching to help them excel in a particular aspect of their race. Also, many swimmers look for additional help in overcoming difficulties that they may be having with one particular aspect of a stroke. Private Swim Lessons are excellent ways to help your child in these areas. Check with your coach first to confirm he/she is available to work with you. Packs of four – 30-minute private lessons can be purchased at the front desk.

Recruitment

The continued success of the Piranha Swim Team is in each swimmer's hands. The growth of the team is directly related to the active recruitment of new swimmers by our current swimmers. We rely on our swimmers to invite their friends to "Try It You'll Like It" to introduce the program to new children. The ideal age for a child to begin the swim team is 5 years old. Understand that not all 5-year olds are ready at this age.

Information

The ability to clearly communicate with the large number of people involved with the team is vital. In order to accomplish this, we communicate mostly via email; bus information, meet workers, invitational announcements, concession needs etc. are all sent via email. It is each parents' responsibility to read and respond to these emails. Please make sure all contact information for you is current and up to date.

Swim Meets

All swimmers have both optional and mandatory swim meet requirements each season. A detailed description of each type of meet follows, but optional meets include: YMCA invitationals, USS/AMS meets, Nationals; mandatory meets include: dual meets and championship meets.

Dual Meets

This is our most important type of meet. Swimmers are expected to participate in these meets. Your participation counts as closed competition, which is required to participate in Championship meets (Districts, States). In the Fall/Winter format, the points for each event are added together within each age group, and the age group is either won, lost, or tied. Individual events are scored for places 1-5 and relay places 1 and 2. There are a total of 5 separate age groups for both the boys and the girls. Each swimmer is allowed to swim a maximum of 5 official events, two of which must be relays. As a swimmer, you will be swimming against people in the same age group, and the boys swim against the boys and girls against girls. Unlike baseball or basketball, there is no bench; **EVERYONE** gets to swim. We will never do anything that is unethical, unsportsmanlike, or against the rules in order to win a meet. You may request the events that you like to swim in a dual meet, but these are strictly coaches' decisions and what they say goes. You will be placed in the events and age groups where you can most help the team. All relay entries are tentative until the time of the event.

Relays can and do sometimes get changed at the last minute during the swim meet. All changes are done in the best interest of the team and are at the discretion of the head coach. Usually half of our dual meets are at home and half are away. Busses are sometimes available to take the swimmers to the away meets - sometimes even the parents have a chance to ride the bus.

As a swimmer, you will be responsible for knowing when, what stroke, and in which lane you will be swimming. Bring a pen to write your events on your hand. While you are packing your suit and your towel for the meet, you may want to pack some food and sports drinks, too. We have a great concession stand at our meets, but you never know about the other teams. As a parent, you have a responsibility to help at the home meets. **YOU COULD BE A TIMER, HELP AT THE CONCESSION STAND, OR WHATEVER YOU ARE ASKED TO DO.** If we take a bus, on the way home from an away meet, we usually stop at a fast food restaurant, so you may want to send your swimmer with enough money to eat. The dual meets usually last about five hours and they are never more than a two-hour drive from Indiana.

We expect all swimmers to attend all dual meets. With everyone's participation we can achieve the best results. For the new swimmers, a dual meet will probably be their competitive swimming experience. It is important to stress that you are competing to improve. All we ask is that you do your best. Please remember that dual meets are considered to be a cornerstone of the Indiana Swim Team. You are expected to attend. The first couple of meets can be a bit intimidating, but they are essential to building the kind of kids our team is known for. All swimmers are expected to remain at the meet until it has concluded unless otherwise approved by the head coach.

There are usually 4 dual meets during the fall season and 4 dual meets in the summer. A dual meet is our team versus another team.

Fall - In the fall, a dual meet winner is determined by the accumulated point total from all events. We have 5 different age groups for both boys and girls resulting in 10 different divisions that will accumulate points. The overall fall league champion is determined solely by the results of the Fall Championship swim meet invitational.

Summer - Summer dual meet winners are determined by the total number of points scored from all age groups combined. The summer league champion is determined solely by the results of the Summer Championship swim meet invitational.

Season Meet Schedule

There are many meets scheduled during the course of the season. These meets begin as early as October and last through April. Some meets on the schedule are mandatory while others are optional. All meet information including registration, deadlines, etc. is available on our website indyswimming.org. All dual meets, Novice championships (8 & under) districts and states are mandatory meets. Swimmers may be excused for certain circumstances. The acceptance of this excuse is at the sole discretion of the head coach.

Invitational Swim Meets

An Invitational Meet is a meet to which our swimmers are invited to compete along with those of many other teams. This type of meet is strictly optional. Generally, the level of competition is somewhat higher than that found at a dual meet since many teams are participating. Additionally, awards such as medals, trophies, and ribbons are awarded. Swimmers are responsible for their own transportation to invitationals, and a coach may or may not be present. Often, we have a number of our swimmers who will attend a particular meet, so there may be plenty of your teammates there. There is a fee for participating in each event. Usually this is between \$3.00 and \$6.00 per event. The team will send in one check to the meet by the deadline, but you must register for the meet with all entry fees paid in full prior to the posted entry deadline thru team unify. You must maintain a positive balance in your personal team account with the P.S.T.P.O. to be permitted to participate in these meets. You may choose your individual events in an invitational meet, and the coach will set up all relays. If you sign up for an invitational meet but do not attend, you are still responsible for the entry fees. Invitational meets are a great way to meet swimmers from other teams in the area and also represents an ideal way to gauge your competition in a meet format.

All invitationals require pre-paid entries. Entry deadlines are set in stone and can't be extended; therefore, all entries must be complete in team unify by midnight on the entry deadline.

USS Meets

A USS meet is very similar to an invitational with a couple of minor differences:

- ✓ You must be a registered USS swimmer. You may sign up to become a USS swimmer at the YMCA front desk. There is an additional annual fee to be a part of this program. You must also be a current YMCA of Indiana County swimmer to participate in our USS swimming component of the program.
- ✓ These meets typically are structured based on different time standards (B-AAAA). Your swimmer must have achieved the necessary time rating to be able to enter into the meet.

Championship Meets

These are meets that occur at the end of the season and have several teams participate. Currently, the following meets are our Championship meets:

- ✓ Novice Championships – for all of our 8 & Under swimmers

- ✓ B Districts – For swimmers who have not achieved a Districts qualifying time standard.
- ✓ Section Championships – In February. All swimmers participate.
- ✓ Districts – In March for all swimmers who have achieved the qualifying time standards and minimum meet requirements. We compete in the West District.
- ✓ States – Follows Districts and participation is determined at the District meet. Swimmers for individual and relay events qualify for states based on the place they finish in. The top 6 individual and relay finishers in each event are eligible to participate at states.

Novice Championships

These are the league championships for those swimmers aged 8 and under. This meet is usually held after the conclusion of our dual meet season and it is an excellent way to introduce young swimmers to the format of championship competition. All Novice swimmers (8 and under) are expected to participate in this meet.

Section Championships

Swimmers are required to participate in this meet. Swimmers will participate in events the coach selects for the swimmer up to the maximum number of events. Any fees associated with participation in this meet are the responsibility of the swimmer's parents. At the conclusion of the dual meet season, there will be a championship meet for each division. The winner of this meet will be crowned division champion.

Districts

The District Championship Meet is held each year at the conclusion of the dual meet season. To participate in this meet, you must have achieved a qualifying time prior to the entry deadline. These qualifying times are available to us early in the season and a coach will inform you as you get close. In the District meet, you may swim in a total of four events, one of which must be a relay. This meet is like a cross between a dual meet and an invitational. We do our best to do as well as possible as a team, and this usually coincides with what each swimmer wants to swim. However, if a conflict should arise, the coaches will have the final decision. As always, the coaches will determine the make-up of the relays. As with dual meets, the make-up of each relay is tentative until the event is actually swam. Districts take place over a period of three days. This meet is the first step for most of our swimmers on the road to true championship competition, and participation is an important accomplishment in competitive swimming.

States

If you are fortunate enough to be able to qualify for Districts and you place in the top six in an individual event or a relay, then you have qualified for the State Championship meet. This meet combines the best YMCA swimmers in Pennsylvania. It is held following the District meet, and for many years has been held at the natatorium on the campus of Penn State, in State College. This is a remarkable meet that has all the pomp and glamour of a true championship athletic event. For most of our swimmers, this is the ultimate meet to which they may aspire during the course of the season. For Indiana, this is an extremely important meet. Over the past several years, we have had many of our swimmers become either individual State Champions or members of an age group that won the State Championship. It is an honor to participate in this meet, and many swimmers achieve their personal best times. Again, the details of the meet can be intimidating for first time participants, and information will be posted and made available as it is received.

Relay Races

Relay races will take place during all of our swim meets. Relay participants are determined by the coach. Many factors go into the decision-making process as to who will participate on a relay. It is never quite as simple as to putting the four fastest swimmers on a particular relay even though that may be the case frequently.

It is important to recognize that relays swum throughout the season do not determine who will swim them in championship competition. All swimmers in a particular division as well as swimmers from the division below them are eligible to participate on a relay during championship meets, for example: a Novice age swimmer may swim in a Cadet relay at Districts even though that swimmer never swam on that relay during the season. Also, the four swimmers who swim on a relay at Districts that qualifies to swim at States may not be the same four swimmers who actually swim on that relay at States.

This is often one of the most difficult and confusing realities of being on the swim team for our swimmers. We urge parents to understand these realities well in advance of the championship part of the season so that you can aid the coaching staff in making our swimmers aware of the process.

Summer/Winter Nationals

This meet represents the epitome of competition in the YMCA program. There are stringent qualifying times, and the meet will be

attended by swimmers from all over the country. To be eligible, you must meet the time standards and be at least twelve years of age on the first day of the meet.

JO's/Zones

These are similar to YMCA Districts and states but are for USS swimmers. Swimmers are chosen based on their times in specific events to become eligible to participate in JO's or be a part of the "Zone Team" and participate in these meets.

Keystone Games

Similar to States, but it is an amateur athletic competition for the state of PA. The games provide a statewide multi-sport program with an Olympic format to encourage and assist PA athletes to enter national and international competition. Usually held in late July.

What to Bring to a Meet:

Depending on the type of meet you are headed to, the longer or shorter it will last. Most common items you should plan to take:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Gym bag✓ Towels/Shami✓ Flip Flops✓ Sweats (more than 1 set)✓ Suits, caps, goggles – more than 1 of each | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Water bottle✓ Clean/dry clothes✓ Deck chair(s)✓ Sharpie, highlighter and pen✓ Stopwatch✓ I-pod, book, puzzle etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Snacks or cash for snacks✓ Highlighter & pen✓ Parents should take shoes that can get wet (just in case) |
|---|--|---|

Typical Meet Duration

Dual meets in the fall/Winter – typically 6 hours including warm ups

Dual meets in the summer – typically 4 hours including warm ups

YMCA Invitational – 8 hours, usually 1 day

USS Invitational – 6-8 hours sometimes Saturday AND/OR Sunday

Novice Championships – All day late February/early March

Summer Championships – All day Saturday in July

Section Championships – All day Saturday in February

Districts - half day on your scheduled day in March (Saturday or Sunday)

States - half day+ on your scheduled day in March (Saturday or Sunday)

Winter Nationals (late March/Early April) 5 day meet in a southern state

Summer Nationals (late July/early August) 5 day meet in a southern state

JO's – multi day USS meet twice a year

Keystone State Games – two day meet in July

Officials

All organized sports have officials. In swimming, the officials consist of Administrative Officials, Meet Officials, Meet Referees, Timers, Starters, Stroke & Turn Judges, Take Off and Finish Judges, and Scorers. If this seems like a lot of people, it is. For our home meets we are expected to provide all the necessary people to officiate a swim meet. Most of these positions require a level one or level two certification. It is necessary to take a class and pass an EASY written test to become certified. We usually sponsor a class and want as many parents as possible to take it so that we will have an ample number of officials. You will find that officiating enhances your understanding of swimming and adds to your enjoyment of the meets. Please consider taking the necessary courses to become a qualified official. Do not be intimidated by your inexperience with swimming; nearly all officials start from a similar position. It should be noted that officials in swimming at the Y level are all volunteers. These are people that are here to preserve the integrity of the sport and should always be treated with respect. If at any time you have a disagreement with an official judgment, you should take your concerns to a coach who will deal with the matter appropriately. Booing, taunting, or any display of unsportsmanlike conduct is completely unacceptable at the athlete or parent level. Swimming is an extremely honorable sport. We must all strive to keep it that way.

Code of Conduct

SWIMMERS:

- Be cooperative and respectful of the YMCA, all coaches, and swimmers at all times.
- Be supportive and refrain from negative talk about swimmers, coaches, spectators and officials.
- Arrive to the pool deck at least five minutes before practice start time to stretch and prepare equipment for the days practice.
- Observe all rules, regulations, and obey all YMCA staff and volunteers.
- Respect the personal property of others.
- Behavior that could be interpreted by the coach as frightening, harassing, and hurtful to others will not be tolerated.
- Set an example for younger swimmers. Your actions can be imitated and duplicated. As a team, we want our younger swimmers to imitate good training and stroke techniques as well as good behavior.
- Resolve differences through conversation and compromise or refer them to your training group coach.
- Always practice lane etiquette.
- Avoid unreasonable physical contact.
- Inappropriate relationships wanted or unwanted will not be tolerated
- Attend all dual meets and any championship level meets for which you qualify.
- Continually challenge yourself to become a better athlete
- I will “honor the ROOTS of the game”. ROOTS meaning Rules, Officials, Opponents, Teammates and Self.

PARENTS:

- Be cooperative and respectful of all coaches and swimmers at all times
- Be supportive and refrain from negative talk about swimmers, coaches, spectators and officials.
- Refrain from over competitiveness and pressuring swimmers.
- Drop off and pick up your swimmers at the pool. It is the parent’s responsibility to ensure that practice is taking place. Every attempt will be made to contact parents if the status of practice has changed, but the ultimate responsibility falls with the parent.
- I will help my child value learning and improvement over outcomes and comparison with other children.
- I will “honor the ROOTS of the game”. ROOTS meaning Rules, Officials, Opponents, Teammates and Self.
- Discuss any team issues with the coach outside of practice time by scheduling a meeting. Exceptions can be made in case of emergencies.
- Do not interrupt a coach during practice.
- Have a family representative attend and participate in the monthly Piranha Swim Team Parent Organization (PSTPO) meeting.
- Be a working swim meet volunteer during all home swim meets and hosted invitationals.
- Make sure all team dues, membership dues, and bills are up to date and/or maintain a positive balance in my swimmer PSTPO account.
- Understand that all dual swim meets are required and have their swimmer attend all dual meets. If unable to attend, parents will notify the coach in writing as soon as possible prior to the meet start date. Notification will include a reason why the swimmer is unable to attend.

CONSEQUENCES

- Verbal warning and or discussion of the inappropriate behavior with the coach.
- Continuous inappropriate behavior will result in the swimmer being asked to not participate in a team activity. The length of time will be determined by YMCA Staff/Coaching Staff.
- Parent must discuss the behavior with the coach prior to the swimmer returning to practice.
- Consequences for parents will be dealt with on a case by case basis by the head swim team coach/YMCA Staff.
- Discipline is the decision of the head coach/YMCA Staff. Behaviors that are deemed disruptive to the harmony of our team will be dealt with appropriately. Swimmers can be dismissed from the team if resolutions are not found.

The evolution of an athlete is a three-step process. In the beginning of their careers, they will look to their parents as their primary source of help and encouragement. They will swim to please you. Be careful how you use that power. As they develop, they will depend on their coaching staff to be their primary source of encouragement. They will be swimming to please the coach.

Eventually, they will swim for themselves and seek out their peers for support and validation.

It is important to remember that in all phases, parents have an active role in their child’s development. However, be aware that your role of parent will change throughout, much as it will change throughout your child’s life. It really isn’t hard to be a good swim parent. One of the best things about the Piranha Swim Team is the way our swimmers form supportive relationships with each other.

Finally - THE TEAM DOES NOT RUN ITSELF! As a parent, you undoubtedly have some talent that can be utilized by the team. Try to find how you can best help. We have a list of volunteer needs for the season. Please review the list and select where you fit best.

Closing

We hope this booklet makes it a little easier for the new parents and swimmers to understand our team and how it works and is a good refresher for our veteran swimmers. We are very proud of the PIRANHAS and hope you spend many years with us. REMEMBER - the key to clearing up any confusion is to ask questions!!

Swim Meet Parent Volunteer Job List/Descriptions

Concession Manager

Organize the concessions for every home swim meet and hosted invitational. Duties include: asking for and organizing donations, organizing concession workers, determining cost of items, and tracking sales.

Concession Worker – need 6

Work concessions during all home swim meets and hosted invitationals

Meet Manager

Facilitate the setup and tear down of all home swim meets including: tables, chairs, Colorado Timing System, touch pads, wiring harnesses, and back up buttons. Organize the meet workers to help streamline the process.

Meet Set-Up Worker – ALL

Assist in the setup of every home swim meet based on the instructions of the Meet Set-Up Worker

Meet Tear-Down Worker – ALL

Assist in the tear down of every home swim meet based on the instructions of the Meet Tear-Down Director.

Meet Score Keeper – Need 3-4

Compares computer printout for each event to official's place card to ensure accuracy and translates results for each event onto score sheet. This position is not needed for summer season meets.

Swim Meet Timer – need 24

Serve as a backup timer for all home swim meets. A backup timer acts as a backup to the primary electronic timing system in the event of a soft touch or system failure. Timers begin timing at the start of the race and complete timing when the swimmer in the lane they've been assigned touches the wall. Timers will only time for half of a swim meet.

Swim Meet Official – need 4-8

Complete level I or II official training for US swimming and maintain certification. Act as starter, referee, administrative official or stroke and turn judges during home swim meets. Volunteer for championship meets to ensure we are represented.

Colorado Timing System Operator

Operate the Colorado Timing System during home swim meets. Work with the meet starter and Meet Input Programmer to ensure a smooth meet.

Colorado Timing System Operator Apprentice

Learn how to operate the Colorado Timing System under the direction of the System Operator. Assist the operator when and where needed.

Meet Input Programmer

Import data from the Colorado Timing System into the team's computer. Check back up times from watches and ensure swimmers swam in the proper lane during the proper event.

Meet Programmer Apprentice

Learn how to import data from the Colorado Timing System into the team's computer under the direction of the Meet Input Programmer. Assist by reading times or where needed.

Award Ribbons

Receive award ribbon labels from the head coach. Place labels on each ribbon based on first, second, or third place finish. Sort the ribbons based on the swimmers' names. Distribute the bag to each swimmer that earned a ribbon.

Given after each meet.

Publicity Manager

Using results and special accomplishments, gain recognition for the team in local publications to generate increased interest in the team and to acknowledge the numerous accomplishments of the swimmers on our team.

Team Webmaster

Maintain the team website with up to date information regarding the Piranha Swim Team. Updates should include: meet results, upcoming events, team records, team stats, as well as other important information based on the needs of the head coach.

Locker Room Monitor - need 2 for each locker room Monday-Friday

Make sure the swimmers are using the locker room appropriately and transitioning as fast as possible. Work with other locker room monitors to be sure the male and female locker rooms are monitored every day after practice.

Registration Forms

Collect team forms from parents and organize them in a binder to be used by the head coach and aquatics director. Check to see that each swimming family has turned in the forms and remind those that have not.

Team Data Entry

Distribute and collect forms and update all information in team database.

Transportation Director

Schedule transportation to away meets including dual meets and single day championship meets. Coordinate payment from PSTPO to bus company, decide on fees for riding the bus based on total bus charge, collect money from bus riders.

US Meet Entry Chairperson

Assists in scheduling US Swim Meets. Submit meet entries for our US Swim meets using the current software platform. Keeps track of entry deadlines for meets and coordinates these with our US Swim Parents.