2024-25
Darien YMCA
Piranhas
Team Handbook

PSDY

Our Mission Statement: Along with the YMCA Core Values, we, the Piranha Swim Club, are committed to excellence and dedicated to developing both the finest of athlete and the finest of citizen through the sport of swimming and our swimming program.

The Iceberg Illusion
Success is an iceberg
SUCCESS!
WHAT PEOPLE SEE
WHAT PEOPLE DON'T SEE
Persistence
Failure
FAIL
Sacrifice
Disappointment
Dedication
Hard work
Good habits
@sylviaduckworth

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Piranha Swim Team, the Darien YMCA's year-round competitive swimming program. The Piranhas are open to all swimmers of Darien and the surrounding communities. We offer swimmers of varying abilities the opportunity to swim and compete at the YMCA and USA Swimming levels and reach the highest level of swimming available in the US.

The goal of the Piranhas is to create an environment for developing not only the finest of athletes but also the finest of citizens. We strive to teach life lessons and skills through the sport of swimming and to create lifelong swimmers. As a member of the Piranhas, your family will join a first-class organization. Piranha swimming is open to swimmers 6 years of age and older.

For an age group swimmer (usually 6-12 years), focus is on stroke technique, simple sets and having fun. As swimmers get older, even though fun is still a goal of the program, the level of commitment increases to longer and more challenging workouts, early mornings and more meets. Invaluable life lessons are learned, and friendships are made throughout the journey.

The Piranhas compete in two seasons throughout the year. The short course (SC) season features meets that are swum in 25 yard pools (like our pool) from September until March. The long course (LC) season features meets that are swum in 50 Meter pools (the Olympic Distance) from March/early April to July/early August. Each season ends with a Championship meet for all levels of swimmers. Please see the *Swim Meet* portion of this Handbook for more details and Championship meet descriptions. For the start of the 2022-23 season meets are TBA.

The Piranhas compete as members of USA and YMCA Swimming. USA and YMCA Swimming are recognized as the highest level of swimming available to athletes at the amateur level, providing regional, National and international levels of competition. Both USA and YMCA Swimming meets are offered throughout the season providing the Piranhas the opportunity to swim in invitational meets, dual meets and championship meets. All swimmers are expected to swim in their respective Championship/end-of-the-season meet.

Registration is open to all returning swimmers in good standing (all swimmers must be current on all fees). New members are admitted to the Team after participation and evaluation in the Fall, Spring or Winter Stroke Clinics. Eligibility is based on both ability and space by training group. Piranha Swim Team members must maintain current full Darien YMCA memberships.

The Piranha Swim Team is under the leadership of Head Coach Jason Memont.

This handbook is one of the mediums we use to educate and inform parents and swimmers. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with our philosophies and policies.

TEAM PHILOSOPHY

Coaches - Coach
Swimmers - Swim
Parents - Support

For those in Darien and the surrounding communities, the Piranhas, as a YMCA Swim Team, are here to offer all swimmers of varying abilities the opportunity to swim and learn.

Swimming and youth sports are supposed to be fun activities that help kids grow and learn, and also provide the opportunity to build the mind and body. Swimming does this the best!! (Winning and fast times are awesome, but those are not the only two aspects of our sport, nor the most important.)

Swimming can best be described as a "delayed gratification" type of sport. It rewards kids who stick with it and put in the time and effort to improve. Sometimes it takes seasons, if not years, to make major changes and to see the rewards. In swimming you get what you work for not what you wish for.

COACHING PHILOSOPHY

Along with the core values of the YMCA, Piranha coaches believe in having fun, longevity in the sport and teaching our swimmers life lessons through the sport of swimming. We want all kids to improve, swim fast and win races, but that is not why we coach.

In regard to coaching younger swimmers (typically 12/unders), the Piranha coach's top three priorities are technique, technique and more technique. When coaching 12/unders, our main focus is to teach proper technique and mechanics for all four competitive strokes along with the drills that reinforce proper technique. We strive to teach proper practice and meet etiquette, good listening skills, Team unity and all the other "little" things that help swimmers develop and improve. Even though there is a "training" aspect, our overall goal is fun, learning and longevity.

When 14 year old and over swimmers are promoted to the top training level the Piranhas offer, they will be expected to become role models to the younger swimmers on the Team. They will be introduced to longer, tougher practices and will need to make more of a commitment to the Team and sport in order to continue developing and improving. Technique is still a major aspect of training, as is reinforcing the good habits and the "little" things that were taught as age groupers. Learning will continue with race strategy, more drills (as well as the same ones they learned as 8/Unders), how to swim longer sets, proper health and wellness, and commitment to the Team and swimming will be stressed.

Although our sport is measured in time, time is **NOT #1** in regard to measuring success for swimmers. As a coaching staff we want all kids to improve and swim *'fast'* but we believe if you attend practice regularly, listen to coaches, pay attention to technique and take care of the "little" things, faster times will come. Everyone at the swim meet wants to swim fast, but how many have prepared themselves to swim fast? We feel the best measure of success is if a child is a happy swimmer.

CODE OF CONDUCT & COMMITMENT

The Darien YMCA Piranha Swim Team abides by a strict Code of Conduct governing all coaches, swimmers and parents. The purpose of the Code is to ensure that all those associated with Darien YMCA Piranha swimming treat others with dignity and respect.

The Code of Conduct is a condition of membership for all swimmers, parents and coaches. All members of the Piranha Swim Team and their parents agree to abide by the Code of Conduct and agree to be subjected to the consequences of violating the Code.

All enforcement decisions made by the Darien YMCA are final and are not subject to review. No refunds will be granted to those swimmers dismissed from the team for their or their parents' violation of the Code of Conduct.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Swimmers-

1. Respect your teammates, coaches, officials and opponents in and out of the pool at all times.
2. Give 100% effort at each practice and meet.
3. Support and encourage your teammates.
4. Set a positive example.
5. Wear the required Spirit Wear at all meets and practices.
6. Display good sportsmanship at all times both on and off the pool deck.
7. Don't be afraid to make a mistake; that's part of learning.
8. Listen to and learn from your coaches.
9. Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
10. Promote the Swim Team in a positive light.
11. Have fun!

Parents-

1. Teach and practice good sportsmanship at all meets and practices. You are role models!
2. Respect the sport. Respect the officials. Respect the coaches. Respect other parents, who often serve as volunteers.
3. Do not coach your child. Let swimmers swim and coaches coach, and support both positively.
4. NEVER criticize other swimmers, coaches or officials regardless of the circumstances.
5. Follow the "24 Hour Rule". If you have a complaint resulting from a meet (or practice) situation, speak with the coach on the following day.
6. Notify the Head Referee or the Meet Manager if there is a serious problem at a meet.
7. Emphasize the FUN of the sport and the benefits of training, competing and putting forth effort at all times. Do not emphasize winning or beating another swimmer.
8. Promote the Piranhas in a positive light.

Coaches-

1. Be role models and act with the highest moral character possible in and out of the pool.
2. Reinforce the self-image of each swimmer: Be positive and constructive.
3. Emphasize the FUN of the sport and the benefits of training, competing, putting forth one's best effort at all times. Do not emphasize winning or beating another team.

4. Respect the sport of swimming. Respect the officials. Respect the parents. Respect the swimmers.
5. Teach the rules of swimming and abide by those rules in practices and meets.
6. Teach and practice good sportsmanship.
7. Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.

All-

1. Any conduct, including abusive language and/or gestures, racially insensitive remarks, damage to property or belongings, or any other conduct that reflects poorly on you, the Darien YMCA, and/or the Piranhas is deemed to be unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This rule applies to all swimmers, parents, siblings and guests at all times when at meets and/or practices, on the pool deck, in the locker rooms or any other associated facilities.
2. You represent the Piranhas and the Darien YMCA during any meet or practice, home or away. Any conduct such as shoplifting, destruction of property, illegal consumption of drugs or alcohol, or any other questionable activity will not be tolerated. This rule applies for the entire duration of such meet or practice.
3. The Piranha coaching staff and the Executive Director of the Darien YMCA will deal with unacceptable conduct at their sole discretion, imposing warnings, suspension or expulsion, as they deem appropriate. ANY SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FROM THE TEAM BASED ON VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT WILL NOT BE ACCOMPANIED BY ANY REFUNDS.
4. Please note that most meets DO NOT allow photography or videotaping of any kind on deck or at deck level by parents. Some hosts do not allow it anywhere and this exclusion is at the discretion of the meet host. At all meets using USA swimming rules (the majority) there is no photography or videotaping of any kind allowed from behind the blocks or at the turn end of the pool. This applies to coaches as well.

"The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a person's determination."

~ Tommy Lasorda

PIRANHA BULLYING POLICY & ACTION PLAN

Purpose: All members of the Piranha Swim Team have the right to feel safe at the Darien YMCA and attend Team practices/meets free from bullying. All members of the Team will treat their Piranha Teammates with courtesy and respect. Bullying is counterproductive to Team spirit and cohesion and can be devastating to the victim. The Piranhas and the Darien YMCA are committed to providing a safe, caring, inclusive and friendly environment for all Team members.

Description: Behavior becomes bullying and hence unacceptable when it is deliberately aggressive, persistent and intended to scare or hurt another person. It may involve hitting, taunting, name calling, rumor spreading or social exclusion, verbally or on social media.

Objective: Bullying behaviors will not be tolerated. Parents and swimmers alike are encouraged to report incidents of bullying behavior as soon as they are known to a Team Coach. Incidents will be investigated, and appropriate disciplinary action taken.

Piranha Bullying Action Plan

PHOTOGRAPHY

Please note when you sign your commitment and waiver form for the Team, unless stated, you are allowing your swimmer to BE photographed and filmed for Y and Team use. Photography and film can be used for the Y and/or Team Facebook and Instagram pages, YouTube channel, website or any Y or Team advertisement. Although you are allowing your swimmer to BE photographed and/or videotaped there are rules and guidelines set by USA Swimming, Darien YMCA and the Piranha Swim Team that must be followed.

Please note that most meets **DO NOT ALLOW** videotaping of any kind on deck or at deck level by parents. Some meets do not allow it at all anywhere. The exclusion of photography and taping is at the discretion of the Meet Management. Coaches are allowed to photograph and video for coaching purposes only while on deck. At any and all USA meets or any meet using USA Swimming rules, there is absolutely NO photography or videotaping of any kind from behind the blocks or at the turn end of the pool. This is true for coaches as well.

Anyone who wishes to photograph or video at Piranha practice or Home meets **MUST** get permission from a coach on deck. We will allow both as long as it is not disruptive to practice or the Team in any way. We understand that parents, want to document memories but please understand our main concern is the safety of your child and we do need to know who is documenting.

Coaches will video using Team iPads to analyze technique and stroke correction at practice and sometimes at meets. Coaches may take photographs and/or video using iPhones for Facebook, Instagram, YouTube or for website use. Any video or photo taken with a personal iPhone must be deleted once the photo or video is posted. Videos will only be posted on Team Social Media accounts.

All cameras, camera phones and picture taking devices may not be used in the Team area by 12/unders. Any posting of a swim picture on Social Media by any swimmer must have consent from all parties in the picture.

There is absolutely NO photography allowed in the locker rooms at the Y or at any swim meet venue, NO EXCEPTIONS!!

If you DO NOT want your child photographed or filmed for YMCA or Piranha use, please let the Piranha Office know **as soon as possible**. Please also note those wishes on the commitment and waiver form on the last page of this handbook.

Any violation of this policy can lead to suspension or expulsion from the Team.

PIRANHA SAFE SPORT

The Piranhas and the YMCA are committed to keeping the swimmers and children of the YMCA safe. Here will you find links to USA Swimming's and Piranha's Safe Sport resources.

USA Swimming has adopted a new safe sport policy in 2019. USA Swimming Member clubs are required to implement the USA Swimming Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP) in full by June 23, 2019. MAAPP contains five sections: one-on-one interactions, travel, social media and electronic communications, locker rooms and changing areas and massage, rubdowns and athletic training modalities. Please read below for the Policy and other education materials. All swimmers, parents and coaches MUST sign off that they have read and agree to the MAAPP. Parents and swimmers sign off on this at registration.

Piranha Safe Sport Webpage

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Piranhas use Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube as mediums of communication. These "Social Media" outlets are for up-to-date information, inspirational quotes and entertainment purposes. Negative comments from parents, swimmers, coaches and any "airing of dirty laundry" will not be permitted or tolerated. Such acts can lead to suspension and expulsion from the Team. Please also read the above for the Piranha Photography and Videotaping policy and how it pertains to social media.

SOCIAL MEDIA OUTLETS

Facebook - search Piranha Swimming @ Darien YMCA
Twitter - search @DarienYPiranha
Instagram – search PiranhaSwimCT
YouTube Channel – search Piranha Drill Series

Piranha Family Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy

THIS POLICY APPLIES TO:

In-Program Contact: Any contact (including communications, interactions or activities) between an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport. Examples include, but are not limited to: competition, practices, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post event meals or outings, team travel, video review, team- or sport-related team building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community services, sport education, competition site visits, conventions and/or summits.

Adult Participants: Any adult 18 years of age or older who is a:

- USA Swimming member, either athlete or non-athlete;
- Participating non-member (e.g., meet marshals, meet computer operators, timers, etc.);
- Authorized, approved or appointed by USA Swimming, Zones, Local Swimming Committees ("LSCs") or member clubs to have regular contact with (e.g., ongoing interactions during a 12-month period wherein the individual is in a role of active engagement) or authority over Minor Athletes; and/or
- Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USA Swimming, Zones, LSCs or member clubs.

GENERAL REQUIREMENT

USA Swimming Zones, LSCs and member clubs are required to implement this Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy in full. The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy must be reviewed and agreed to in writing by all athletes, parents/legal guardians, coaches and other non-athlete members of member clubs on an annual basis with such written agreement to be retained by the club or LSC, as applicable.

DEFINITIONS

Athlete: A USA Swimming athlete member.

Authority: When one person's position over another person is such that, based on the totality of the circumstances, they have the power or right to direct, control, give orders to, or make decisions for that person (e.g., when a power imbalance exists).

Dual Relationship: When an Adult Participant has a relationship with a Minor Athlete that is outside of the sport program. Examples of Dual Relationships include, but are not limited to, family members, mental health professionals, teachers, medical professionals and family friends.

Emergency Circumstances: A serious, unexpected and possibly dangerous situation that requires quick action and cannot be avoided. Emergency circumstances include, but are not limited to: a physical, mental or

emotional medical emergency involving the Minor Athlete, relative of the Minor Athlete or relative of an Adult Participant; a Minor Athlete's suicidal ideations/behavior; a report of abuse; a severe weather event; and last-minute practice changes.

Electronic Communication: Includes, but not limited to, phone calls, emails, videoconferencing, video coaching, text-messaging and social media.

Event or Facility Under Partial or Full Jurisdiction: Includes any USA Swimming sanctioned event (including all travel and lodging in connection with participation in the event) or any facility that USA Swimming, Zones, LSCs or member clubs owns, leases or rents for practice, training or competition.

In-Program: Activities related to participation in sport. Examples include, but are not limited to: competition, practices, meetings, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post event meals or outings, team travel, video review, team- or sport-related team building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community services, sport education, competition site visits, conventions, conferences, summits and/or workshops.

In-Program Contact: Any contact (including communications, interactions or activities) between an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport. Examples include, but are not limited to contact occurring at or related to: competition, practices, meetings, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post event meals or outings, team travel, video review, team- or sport-related team building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community services, sport education, competition site visits, conventions, conferences, summits and/or workshops.

In-Program Massage: Any Massage involving an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport. Examples include, but are not limited to Massage occurring at or related to: competition, practices, meetings, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post event meals or outings, team travel, video review, team- or sport-related team building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community services, sport education, competition site visits, conventions, conferences, summits and/or workshops.

In-Program Travel: Any transportation or travel involving an Adult Participant and any Minor Athlete(s) related to participation in sport authorized or funded by the Organization. Examples include, but are not limited to transportation or travel to or related to: competition, practices, meetings, camps/clinics, training/instructional sessions, pre/post event meals or outings, team travel, video review, team- or sport-related team building activities, celebrations, award ceremonies, banquets, team- or sport-related fundraising or community services, sport education, competition site visits, conventions, conferences, summits and/or workshops.

Massage: Any massage, rubdown, athletic training modality including physical modalities (e.g., stretching, physical manipulation, injury rehabilitation, etc.) and electronic or instrument assisted modalities (e.g., stim treatment, dry needling, cupping, etc.).

Minor Athlete: An athlete under 18 years of age who is a USA Swimming member or was a USA Swimming member within the previous 12 months.

Organization: Darien YMCA, Piranha Swim Team

EXCEPTIONS

[Note: Exceptions apply only where specified]

Close-In-Age Exception: In-Program Contact between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete is permitted if:

a. The Adult Participant has no authority over the Minor Athlete; and
b. The Adult Participant is not more than four years older than the Minor Athlete.

Dual Relationship Exception: An Adult Participant has a dual role or relationship with a Minor Athlete. This exception requires written consent of the Minor Athlete's parent/legal guardian at least annually.

ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

I. Observable and Interruptible

All one-on-one In-Program Contact interactions between a Minor Athlete and an Adult Participant must occur at an observable and interruptible distance from another adult, except:

a. In emergency circumstances.
b. When a Dual Relationship exists; and/or
c. When the Close-In-Age Exception applies.

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PRACTICE ATTENDANCE

Specific attendance requirements and suggestions for each training group are included in the training group descriptions on the website. A swimmer's promotion and improvement are contingent on commitment, age, ability and the practice test sets we've done over the past year; meet results play a role but are a distant 5th on the list of reasons for promotion. Although we try to keep swimmers grouped by age, eventually a swimmer's lack of attendance and dedication to the Team will catch up with him/her in many ways. Swimmers who are committed and attend practice as outlined for their group will find themselves rewarded in their advancement through the training groups, their development as a swimmer and improvement in their times. Swimmers must earn promotion. We cannot promote a swimmer who has not demonstrated he/she is ready for advancement.

DRY LAND SESSIONS

The Piranhas will be offering Dry Land sessions for the benefit of our swimmers. Swimmers will be expected to attend both dry lands and swim practice on the days they have both. Choosing to do dry lands and not swim practice will not be permitted. Swimmers must show up dressed properly for dry lands i.e. sneakers, shorts, t-shirt and bathing suit underneath clothing. The coaches and/or fitness staff reserve the right to disallow a swimmer to participate if he/she is not dressed properly, especially footwear. Please note this is for the safety of your swimmer.

The main focus of the Piranha dry land program will be helping your swimmer in the pool. First and foremost, swimmers will practice safety, proper technique and dry land etiquette. The Y instructors and Piranha coaches will set up programs that best fit the age and ability level of the training group. Exercises will be geared toward core body strength, stability, stamina and coordination. As swimmers progress through the dry land program, strength training will be added. This usually happens in the top training groups, when swimmers are ready.

"I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

~ Michael Jordan

WORDS OF WISDOM FOR PIRANHA PARENTS

PARENTS AS SPECTATORS

As a parent of a swimmer, your best contribution is as #1 fan and supporter. Parents are not allowed on deck during practice but are more than welcome to watch practice from the lobby windows. It is recommended that you watch practice [or really pay attention] once every few weeks. When watching practice intently every day, improvement is difficult to gauge. At meets, unless you are a volunteer needed on deck, you are not allowed on deck but can remain in the designated spectator areas.

LEAVE THE COACHING TO THE COACHES

The coaching staff wants every swimmer to become the best swimmer he/she can be. It is the YMCA's responsibility to hire quality coaches. Please give the coaches the respect and space they need to do their job effectively.

COACH-SWIMMER-PARENT RELATIONSHIP

A good relationship between a swimmer and coach is imperative for positive results. The coaching staff works hard to build and develop a positive relationship and gain your swimmer's respect. You, as parents, are the ultimate word for your child. When conflicting opinions are discussed openly with swimmers (or other parents) this can be severely detrimental. Any issues of concern you may have should be taken up with the Head Coach.

PROMOTE AND SUPPORT THE TEAM

As a Piranha you will be expected to support and promote the Darien YMCA and Piranha Swim Team. There is nothing more disruptive to a Swim Team than parents and/or swimmers who speak negatively about the program to other parents and swimmers. Please be a positive member of the Team and the Y.

PLATEAUS

Swimmers are often observed to improve steadily for a period of time and then reach a point where improvement in performance does not come as easily, essentially "hitting a plateau". When referring to plateaus, it is usually not a question of 'if' but 'when.' Every swimmer goes through this at some point. This is usually not an easy time for a swimmer, but with patience, motivation, encouragement, rest periods, etc., most swimmers will bounce back. Our goal is to encourage our swimmers through these times so they will still be around to enjoy inevitable future successes.

"A DIAMOND IS A HUNK OF COAL THAT STUCK WITH IT"

Many of today's elite swimmers didn't shine from the start. Years of training, sacrifice and hard work resulted in future success. Often swimmers who rise quickly face more hardships than those swimmers who progress steadily. For most, success requires hard work and sacrifice.

THE COACH IS A PROFESSIONAL

As coaches, our job is to develop swimmers. We will ensure a safe training environment and do what we can to make swimming fun and a good character-building activity. Please help us by reminding your swimmer to use appropriate and respectful behavior with their teammates and other users of the facility, especially in the changing rooms and common areas of the Y.

OLYMPIC "DREAMITIS"

Often during a swimmer's career sudden improvements will be apparent. This is very exciting for swimmer, parent and coach alike. Sudden successes are stepping stones on a long, long path which includes hours of practice and sacrifice. We encourage parents to be supportive but to not get struck with Olympic "dreamitis" every time your swimmer wins.

YOUNG SWIMMERS

We are committed to offering a program of competitive swim training and competition for our young athletes. To ensure these young athletes will continue swimming we stress fun with learning. The youngest swimmers can be the most inconsistent athletes on the Team and this can be frustrating to parents, swimmers and coaches. Patience and encouragement help to minimize the frustration.

"ALL AN EQUAL MEMBER, BUT SUPPORT OUR CHAMPIONS"

We expect all Piranha swimmers and parents to support each other no matter a swimmer's level of ability. Our program attempts to field a Team that provides for all swimmers fairly. Because of the intensive training regimen and travel required to compete at the highest level, our older, top level swimmers require additional coaching time, pool time, and administrative and financial support. The fee structure for each Training Group reflects the commitment in all areas.

"Don't measure yourself by what you have accomplished, but by what you should accomplish with your ability."

~ John Wooden

LATE ARRIVALS/EARLY PICK-UPS

Darien YMCA staff do all they can to ensure a safe environment for their patrons. When a child is dropped off at practice there is an implied assumption that the child will be supervised and safe. All swimmers should be on deck, sitting on the bleachers with their caps on five minutes prior to scheduled practice time. Scheduled practice time is in-water time. If practice is scheduled 6:15-7:15p swimmers will be jumping in the water at 6:15p already secure in the knowledge of what they are supposed to do. When swimmers arrive late and leave early it is a safety concern for the staff. Coaching staff are not in the locker rooms or lobby (although the Y always has staff in the lobby) to supervise. Any swimmer who needs to leave early from practice must bring a note for the coach to ensure the coach that someone will be at the Y early to pick up your swimmer.

Although less important than safety, swimmers arriving late to practice are also a distraction to those swimmers already in the pool. It takes time away from the group for the coach to explain what is going on, and often a few more moments to regain control of the group. Please assist us by making sure that your swimmer is on time for practice.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

All YMCA patrons are required to abide by the following practices when picking up and dropping off at the curbside. Your cooperation in creating a safer environment for all is greatly appreciated.

1. The semi-circle is for **ACTIVE PICKING UP/DROPPING OFF ONLY**. This means that if your child is not at the curb ready to get in the car, you **CANNOT** stop and wait.
2. We do not condone 'circling the parking lot' while you wait. Our lot is dark early in the afternoon in the winter and very busy. The extra traffic activity will create additional risk.
3. Children should only be allowed to exit/enter your car when you have safely pulled up to the curb. Children should never be let out when you are in the 'through lane'.
4. NEVER park your car along the curb and leave it unattended. This area is a designated Fire Lane. Leaving your car unattended against the curb is dangerous and illegal.
5. NEVER park your car, even if you remain inside it, in the Disabled Parking spaces.
6. ALWAYS stop and take a good look around when at the drop off area Stop Sign. Please be mindful that there is a lot of pedestrian traffic here and throughout the entire parking lot.

Further information:

COACHING STAFF

http://www.darien-ymca.org/piranhas/piranha-swim-team-coaching-staff/

TEAM STRUCTURE

http://www.darien-ymca.org/piranhas/piranha-swim-team-training-groups/

YMCA & USA SWIMMING & MEETS

The YMCA of the USA is the governing body of YMCA swimming in the United States. YMCA swimming provides the Piranhas with dual meet competitions (Piranhas vs. one other team) and competition for all ages at the State, Regional and National level. As a YMCA team, Piranhas compete against other YMCA teams in the CT YMCA Swimming League and at a State Championship meet later in the season. Swimmers are grouped by age for competitions, and the age group a swimmer competes in is determined by their age the day the meet begins. Usual age groupings are as follows: 8/Under, 9/10, 11/12, 13/14, 15/Over, Senior.

USA Swimming is the governing body for Swimming in the United States. USA Swimming provides competition for swimmers of all ages, levels and abilities at the State, Regional, National and international levels. Meets are offered throughout the winter and summer seasons, and both seasons culminate with Championship meets. In order to swim in meets, a swimmer must be a registered member of USA Swimming. Connecticut participates as a LSC (Local Swimming Committee) of USA Swimming. Our Club code with USA Swimming is PSDY.

USA and YMCA Swimming Meets are conveniently held on weekends and meet locations are primarily in the Greater New Haven, Middlesex and Fairfield County areas, but meets can take place in other areas of Connecticut, New York and New England. Swimmers are grouped by age for competitions, and the age group a swimmer competes in is determined by their age the first day of the meet. Usual age groupings are as follows: 8/Under, 9/10, 11/12, 13/14, 15/Over, Senior.

At the end of each season, USA and YMCA Swimming offer championship meets for all swimmers of varying levels of ability. There are qualification standards for certain championship meets. Descriptions of these meets can be found on-line. In order to compete in any CT USA Championship Meet, a swimmer must have swum in at least one CT USA sanctioned meets during the respective season. In order to swim in Age Groups and/or Seniors (meet for 13/Overs) a swimmer must also meet a qualifying time standard.

Transportation to these swim meets is the responsibility of each swimmer.

TRAVEL MEETS

The Travel meet the Piranhas attend during and at the end of the season is at the discretion of the Head Coach. In addition to achieving qualifying time standards, a swimmer must be at least 13 years of age and may need to achieve a meet attendance requirement. There will be a sufficient number of meets on our schedule to meet this requirement. Swimmers are responsible for participating in these meets. Meets will not be added to the schedule for kids who neglected to participate in the required number. Also, a swimmer must be in good financial standing with the Team and the Y, have shown that he/she is a dedicated “Senior” member of the Team and mature enough to handle an overnight trip. The coaching staff reserves the right to select which swimmers attend these travel meets based on the standards listed above. Swimmers travel as a Team to these National level overnight trips.

SWIM MEET INFORMATION

A schedule will be available on-line and on the Piranha bulletin board at the beginning of each season and meet information for each meet will also be posted. These "meet announcements" will list start times, location, directions, events and a ton of other information you don't need to worry about.

The coaching staff decides in which meets the Team will compete. All swimmers are encouraged to attend all meets in which the Piranhas participate, unless told otherwise by the coaches. Please note the Piranhas cannot and do not allow swimmers to attend meets not on the Piranha schedule. We are a team and as a team we will attend meets together.

Sign- ups for all meets will be through the **Active** system (see below). If you are new to the team you will need to register your new Active account. It is the swimmer's and parent's responsibility to sign up for a meet. If a swimmer is signed up for a meet and fails to attend, he/she will be responsible for the meet fees. Meet fees apply to all USA and YMCA Invitational meets. Generally, there are no meet fees for dual meets.

The Piranhas is a competitive swim team. Because we are a competitive Swim Team, all members of the Darien YCMA Piranha Swim Team will be expected to attend meets faithfully.

All Team members will need to attend at least one CT USA in-season meet for the winter season (meets between September and the end of February) and one CT USA in-season meet for the summer season (April-July) to be eligible for any CT USA Championship meet; Piranha Intrasquad meets and Y meets do not count towards these requirements. Times achieved at those meets may count as long as the proper number of officials are working. Also, any swimmer who does not meet these criteria will risk losing his/her spot on the Team the following Fall.

Swimming in meets is part of the developmental process for swimmers. Learning how to race, how to split races properly, how to 'win' and how to 'lose', is as much a part of swimming as learning proper stroke technique. A swimmer is missing a huge part of the sport if he/she does not compete. Please make time for swim meets.

ACTIVE NEWTORK INFORMATION

"For me, winning isn't something that happens suddenly on the field when the whistle blows and the crowds roar. Winning is something that builds physically and mentally every day that you train and every night that you dream."

~ Emmitt Smith

MEET ENTRY/SCRATCH PROCEDURE

The preparation of a Piranha meet entry is a complex and time-consuming effort. Variables to be considered are many:

- Is a swimmer attending all or some days of a multi-day meet?
- Which events has he/she swum recently/not swum recently?
- What is the meet order of events, to avoid back-to-back swims?
- Which events is he/she close to qualifying for championships, or for which events does he/she have the qualifying time?
- Which events can a swimmer manage? Is he/she ready for a certain event?

These variables are considered for every one of our approximately 100 swimmers for each meet. Your coaches do their best to create the best opportunities for each swimmer. The procedure is detailed and may generally be categorized into the Meet Entry Process (weeks and months before the meet) and the Scratch Process (days before and day of the meet).

Meet Entry Procedure

1) Meet Schedule is published. Parents need to study the meet schedule and block off days/weekends in their calendar.
2) **Registrations are invited via the ACTIVE network (by email).** Detailed meet dates and session times can be found in the meet schedule page on the home page, as can the sign-up deadline.
3) Invitations to the eligible swimmers are sent from 2-8 weeks prior to the sign-up deadline
4) Because of the time required to complete the process, the coaches may begin the meet entry preparation while the meet is open to new entries.
5) The deadline to sign up for a meet usually follows the last practice on the day of the posted sign-up deadline (unless stated otherwise).
6) Once submitted, an entry is final. No additions can be made. Deletions (scratches) will not happen until meet day.
7) The entry will then be linked online through the meet schedule and posted on ACTIVE.

Meet Scratch Procedure

The scratch process is the 'last minute' removal of swimmers from a specific session of a meet. This process ensures that every lane is used throughout the meet. Lanes with 'no-shows' slow a meet down and remove competition for those swimming beside empty lanes.

1) Coaches receive a scratch sheet (basically an attendance list) prior to each session of the meet in their coaches' packet. A scratch sheet lists all swimmers entered in that session of the meet.
2) Coaches must mark all swimmers on the sheet who are absent and turn the sheet in to the Timer's Table by a specified deadline (usually 15-20 minutes after the start of the first warm-up). At the Timer's Table, the swimmers' marked absent are removed from the meet. Heat Sheets and Timer Sheets are then printed and posted around the pool deck. Once a scratch sheet is turned in a swimmer cannot be re- entered.
3) If you are running late for warm-up and still plan to attend the meet, it is VERY important that the coaches know so you are not scratched.

a. Please exchange cell numbers with several teammates, so you can call someone who you know is going to the meet from the road when you are running late.
b. The next best way to get info to a coach is via email. The coaches will be checking emails using their phones as long as there is good cell service. They may not respond but they will check.

4) If you are entered in a meet and you know in advance of the meet that your swimmer will be unable to attend any portion of the meet, please let the coaches know. This applies in the days/week before the meet for reasons such as injury or illness.

Advanced notification helps take the guesswork out of whether a swimmer is running late or not attending a meet. Coaches hate to scratch a swimmer and then have him/her arrive later ready to swim. Once scratched, a swimmer cannot be reentered.

"The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand."

-Vince Lombardi

PARENT COMMITMENT & RESPONSIBILITIES

UNATTENDED SWIMMERS

Swimmers under the age of 16 MAY NOT be left unattended at meets. Parents must arrange to have another consenting adult (not a coach) responsible for an underage swimmer alone at a meet.

VOLUNTEERING

Within the Piranha Parents Association (every parent of a swimmer on the Team is a member of the PPA), there is an opportunity for everyone to volunteer no matter your skills, interests or availability. These opportunities include running bagel or pizza parties after practice, becoming a swim meet official, running a sign making party and much, much more.

MEET VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

The Piranha swim team instituted a MANDATORY timing/meet volunteering requirement for all Piranha families. This applies regardless of your level of meet participation. Each family (regardless of # of swimmers), will be required to work a minimum of six timing/meet volunteer shifts during each year (Sept-July), one of which MUST be done during the Long Course season (May-July). Each "season" is defined by the respective start date of the season up to and including CT Regionals. Please note for Age Group championships and Senior championships those parents of entered swimmers must fulfill those requirements regardless if yearly Piranha requirement is already fulfilled. A "shift" is defined as a predetermined amount of time a person times/volunteers at a meet, usually no more than two hours. The Piranhas usually divide assignments into 2 shifts but can divide into 3 or 4 shifts, if necessary. A "shift" DOES NOT include timing for your own swimmer at Distance meets. Volunteers sign up using the Active network.

Each family (with their registration) has paid a "volunteer fee." If you fulfill all 6 timing shifts, the entire "volunteer fee" will be returned as an on-line YMCA credit (ASSUMING ALL OUTSTANDING BALANCES ARE PAID).

Swimmers who join as Short Season swimmers are required to time in two (2) meets during their session. Swimmers who join the Team in the Summer are required to fulfill three (3) shifts during their respective Season to receive a full refund as an on-line YMCA credit (ASSUMING ALL OUTSTANDING BALANCES ARE PAID).

If you do not fulfill your requirement, the amount paid will be forfeited. If you leave the Team for another USA Swim Club you forfeit your volunteer fee *regardless if you met the requirement*.

Families can "volunteer it forward" up to 5 shifts by working more sessions in the Short Course Season, giving that family continued credit for the Long Course BUT at least one of the total six shifts must be completed in the Summer Long Course season. All 6 can be completed in the Long Course, if necessary.

The Piranhas will take into consideration volunteering at parties, for those parents who have timed/worked at meets but may have fallen a little short of the volunteer threshold. Please note, you MUST do meet work during the season, working parties only is not enough to fulfill this requirement.

Active & current Piranha USA Officials will not be required to adhere to these requirements.

MEETS

At home meets, jobs range from Timing Coordinator to selling programs. At away meets, according to the size of our entry, we are assigned a proportionate number of jobs (mostly as timers) and will be fined if our volunteer requirement is not met. Working at a swim meet is a good way to meet other parents and increase your understanding and enjoyment of the swim program. Most parents actually find it more enjoyable to participate than to sit in the bleachers. Please make your presence known to the Timer Coordinator to help the Team avoid a fine and ensure that no parent ends up working for an entire session. Remember, many hands make light work.

Any of the following jobs fulfill the meet volunteer requirements:

- Timers (home &away)
- Computer Work (home)
- Ribbons (home)
- Heat Winners (home)

MEET VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTIONS

AWAY MEETS

- **Timers -** assigned to time a lane at either home or away meets (shifts are usually no more than 2 hours). When the Piranhas are given a timing assignment, it is for the entire meet. No leaving until you are relieved, or the meet has ended. IF YOU TIME AT A MEET BUT DID NOT SIGN UP PLEASE NOTIFY THE PIRANHA OFFICE OR THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR IN A TIMELY FASHION AFTER THE MEET.

HOME AND INTRASQUAD MEETS

- **Timers -** assigned to time a lane at either home or away meets (shifts should not be more than 2 hours). The Piranhas are assigned a timing assignment for the entire meet. Please don't leave until you are relieved, or the meet has ended. IF YOU TIME AT A MEET BUT DID NOT SIGN UP PLEASE NOTIFY THE PIRANHA OFFICE OR THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR IN A TIMELY FASHION AFTER THE MEET.
- **Runners -** collect the timing sheets from timers and deliver to the scorer's table.
- **Posters -** post the results as events finish periodically throughout the meet.
- **Marshal -** one male and one female; periodically check the bathrooms.
- **Ribbons -** gather ribbons from the swim office. Apply name and place sticker to the back of the ribbons and sort by club.
- **Heat Winners –** hand out awards to swimmers who win a heat.

Officials for both home and away meets are coordinated separately. Our Officials reduce our timing commitment!

CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON

All parents of swimmers in Championship Meets (Age Groups and Seniors) will be expected to fulfill the respective meet volunteer requirement. If your child is swimming in finals, you may need to work during both trials and finals.

MEET VOLUNTEER SIGN-UPS
Approximately every Monday before a meet in which your child is entered to swim, you will receive an email or text via ACTIVE Network alerting you to volunteer/timer opportunities for that meet. Simply sign up for a shift using Active. If the shifts don't fill up by the end of the week, reminder emails/texts will be sent out. Please note the "Meet Volunteer Requirements" mentioned above.

EXPLANATION OF FEES

OTHER FEES & REFUNDS:
MEET VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENT FEE: As explained above, each family pays a set amount, decided upon by the PAC, with their registration towards this fee. When families fulfill their meet volunteer requirement the amount is returned at the end of the year. Please see page 19 *'Meet Volunteer requirement'* for details on this requirement.

FUNDRAISING: Each Piranha family is required to participate in the Team's fundraisers. Every other year, the Team runs a Swim Challenge, a large effort swim-a-thon for which all Piranhas are obliged to collect pledges at minimum levels. The minimum required level of financial participation will be determined by the PAC during its annual budgeting process. On alternate years, the PAC will determine if a smaller fundraiser is required to meet their goals in support of the Team. Fundraiser participation is a requirement of Team membership. Any family who fails to raise the required amount will have the said amount deducted from their meet fee account. Any swimmer in arrears of fundraising requirements will not be permitted to practice until account is settled.

REFUNDS:
- SWIM TEAM - After the season begins, a swimmer (this includes high school swimmers) who withdraws from the team two weeks (or less) after the first day of scheduled practice will receive a 25% online credit of the 30% initial training fee deposit charged for that swimmer's registration in an assigned group. Paid PPA fees and volunteer fees are 100% refundable; USA fees are not refundable. A check refund will incur a $20 administrative fee. If the swimmer starts mid-year, the same policy applies, ie two weeks from the swimmer's start date for the current season.

After two weeks, no refunds of any kind will be offered.

PIRANHA STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

Jason Memont, Head Coach
Office: 203-655-8228 x1397
Email: jmemont@darien-ymca.org

Mary McCarthy, Competitive Swimming Administrator
Office: 203-655-8228 x1329
Email: swimadmin@darien-ymca.org

"Funny thing about life – if you refuse to accept anything but the best, you often get it."

~ Somerset Maugham

PARENT AND SWIMMER COMMITMENT

Fees:	I agree to keep my Piranha account and Darien Y membership current and to pay all invoices upon receipt.
Fundraising:	I understand that the Parents Advisory Committee sets a per swimmer fundraising requirement (the Swim Challenge) every other year. Families who do not pay on time may have their meet fee account debited to fulfil their respective fundraising obligation. 2021-2 IS a fundraising year.
Refunds:	I have read and understand the refund policy as outlined in this handbook.
Volunteering:	I understand that the Team needs my support at swim meets and I commit to giving my time to facilitate the smooth operation of the team. I understand that lacking in volunteer hours will lead to forfeiting my volunteer deposit.
Photography:	I permit the team and Y to photograph my child and our family to use on Y or team websites, publications, signage, social media and for submission to local news. I will note here if I do not grant permission and I will notify the Piranha staff.
Team Handbook:	I have read and understand all team policies in the team handbook and will not violate any said policies which I understand can lead to dismissal for the team.
Code of Conduct:	I have read, understand and will abide by the Piranha swim team's code of conduct.
USA Swimming MAPP	I have read, understand and will abide by USA Swimming's policies detailed in the Safe Sport Minor Athlete Protection Policy

Both parents/legal guardians (if applicable) and all swimmers on the Team MUST sign:
This is done electronically Via ACTIVE 2024-25

DARIEN YMCA WAIVER

Adult Participant Release & Waiver of Liability and Indemnity Agreement

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY. THIS DOCUMENT EFFECTS YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND IS LEGALLY BINDING. BY SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT YOU ARE RELEASING DARIEN YMCA FROM ALL LIABILITY AND FOREVER GIVING UP ANY CLAIMS THEREFORE

Assumption of Risk
I acknowledge and agree that any use of Darien YMCA facilities, services, equipment and premises ("Facilities") and any participation in Darien YMCA programs and activities ("Programs") comes with inherent risks including, but in no way limited to: (1) moderate and severe personal injury, (2) property damage, (3) disability, (4) death, and (5) sickness or disease. I voluntarily accept and assume full responsibility for these risks as well as any and all other risks of the use of Facilities and participation in Programs. I agree that I have full knowledge of the nature and extent of all such risks and am not relying on all such risks being described in this document.

Waiver, Release, Indemnification & Covenant Not to Sue
In consideration of the use of Facilities and participation in Programs I, the undersigned, agree that Darien YMCA, it's officers, directors, agents, employees, volunteers, insurers and representatives ("Releasees") will not be liable for any personal injury, property damage, disability, death, sickness or disease incurred by myself, my family members, dependents, or guests, including minors, however occurring including, but not limited to the negligence of Releasees. I understand that I will be solely responsible for any loss or damage, including personal injury, property damage, disability, death, sickness or disease sustained from the use of Facilities and participation in Programs.

I further agree, on behalf of myself and any and all legal successors and proxies, to release and **HEREBY DO RELEASE, WAIVE AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE** Releasees from any causes of action, claims, suits, liabilities or demands of any nature whatsoever including, but in no way limited to, claims of negligence, which I and any and all legal successors and proxies may have, now or in the future, against Releasees on account of personal injury, property damage, disability, death, sickness, diseases or accident of any kind, arising out of or in any way related to the use of Facilities or participation in Programs, whether that participation is supervised or unsupervised, however the injury or damage occurs, including, but not limited to the negligence of Releasees.

In further consideration of the use of Facilities and participation in Programs, I agree to **INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS** Releasees from any and all causes of action, claims, demands, losses, suits, liabilities or costs of any nature whatsoever, including claims of negligence, arising out of or in any way related to the use of Facilities and participation in Programs by myself, my family members, dependents or guests, including any minors.

(Both parents/legal guardians (if applicable) MUST sign:
This is done electronically Via ACTIVE 2024-25