

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

What is the minimum criteria for Summer Piranhas?

At minimum, a swimmer must already be able to swim 25 yards independently multiple times over the course of a practice in both freestyle and backstroke.

Our first day (or two) of practices will be a fun swim trial of sorts to determine if there are any safety concerns. If your child is not actually ready, staff will be there to aid you in a shift to lessons or to process a refund (minus credit card fees).

My kid is not that great at swimming. Is this something for them?

It depends. If they can actually swim, as defined above, but are not the fastest or prettiest or smoothest, then YES, this is the place for them. If they cannot swim, then NO, unfortunately it is not an experience that they can be a part of at this time.

Who coaches the team?

Our Summer Piranhas are coached by a diverse group of coaches. This year, we are happy to expand our staff and pull in a few more folks to lead our team.

Coach Brooke Madden '24 (fourth year with Summer Piranhas)

Coach Brooke is an MLAC alum who has worked with our Developmental level over the years as well as being a fixture of our Summer Piranhas staff. An education major at Ohio University, Brooke is excited to be back on deck!

Coach Kathryn Hart '26 (fourth year with Summer Piranhas)

Coach Colleen Hart '28 (second year with Summer Piranhas)

Coach Kate Sheets '23 (second year with Summer Piranhas)

Coach Kate is an MLAC alum who has filled-in on deck occasionally over the holiday breaks in the past. This is her second summer with us, after a four-year stint coaching at South Hills Country Club where she led the team to two consecutive league championships with one being the sweep of overall, diving, and swimming trophies.

Coach Aidan, Coach Donati, & Coach Jake - MLAC coaches

Coach Aidan will have direct oversight of the Summer Piranhas this year. He, along with Coach Brooke, will be guiding our program to another summer of swimming fun! Coach Brooke will be absorbing the administrative load this summer. Coach Donati and Coach Jake will be pivotal guides to all of our swimmers and coaches along the summer and will be on deck when needed.



REGISTRATION OVERVIEW

What is this USA Swimming registration I read about when signing up with MLAC? Do we need to do that? How do I do that?

This membership provides the essential insurance we need to stay in the water: similarly to our athlete members, our coaching staff, board members, officials, and our club itself all have clearances and memberships through USA Swimming. Your swimmer will not be allowed to enter the water if they do not have a USA Swimming registration.

*This cost is on top of the MLAC registration. It will vary depending on athlete age - ages 12 & under should select **FLEX** and ages 13-14 should select **SEASONAL**.*

The link to register with USA Swimming is available [here](#), along with step-by-step instructions and additional FAQs for this purpose only. You will need to create an account with USA Swimming with an email address. Please be cautious to follow the instructions carefully so that you do not register yourself by accident!

My kid did Piranhas last year in the summer. Do I need to register them again?

YES - USA Swimming is an annual competitive membership that expires December 31st of that year (eg - 2025 registration expired on 12/31/25).

However, if your kid was a Fall '24 or Winter '25 or Spring '25 Developmental swimmer as part of the current swim season, that should have already been registered for the 2026 USA Swimming Athlete membership and will not need to do it again.

This is a lot of work for a summer thing for my kid. Do we really need to do it?

While we understand that multiple registrations is a bit time consuming, it is needed for all of our athletes, in order for us to comply with our national governing body, facility contracts, and insurance policies.

Is there a multi-swimmer discount?

No, all costs (MLAC registration and USA Swimming membership) associated with Piranhas are per swimmer.



SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

When are practices offered?

Practices are offered Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday mornings from 9.30-10.30AM at the Rec Center Pool (outside) as well as Monday through Thursday evenings from 6-7PM at the HS Pool (inside). We will not have practices on Wednesdays when there is a meet scheduled.

When do practices begin? Are there any special dates?

Practices start on Tuesday, May 26th in the evening only and continue as such on Wednesday the 27th, Thursday the 28th, Monday the 1st, and Tuesday the 2nd. We are unable to offer practices on 6/3 and 6/4 due to MTLHS Graduation.

Our [full schedule](#) is available online.

WAIT. This is a summer league and you are offering practices twice a day. Does my kid really need to come twice?

ABSOLUTELY NOT. We offer mornings and evenings as options to our families - feel free to pick which practice they attend based on your schedule. There is no need to only attend one or the other. Life happens, we understand, and we want to accommodate.

It's raining outside. Are you still going to have practice?

In dealing with inclement weather, MLAC adheres to the operating procedures of our facility, set by the Mt Lebanon Recreation Department following the Allegheny County Bathing Code. At the first observation of thunder/lightning, swimmers are exited from the water and are only cleared for re-entry after the defined waiting period of the last observed instance. Piranhas coaches will make that determination or take the lead from facility staff.

If weather conditions are questionable throughout the morning before practice begins, Piranhas coaches will provide a status update to families via email and push/SMS notifications from our TeamUnify platform. Practices held outside will only be cancelled if there is severe weather (thunder, lightning, flooding, etc) and/or there is an inability to access the facility. Refunds are not given for cancellations. We are fortunate to have a heated pool outside and thus do not cancel for cooler weather days.

DAY IN THE LIFE OVERVIEW

What does a given practice look like for Summer Piranhas?

Our practices run an hour long, and will be a mix of technical training, team building, and fun. Our coaches have planned different activities and themes for each day as well. While there certainly will be a familiar vibe to each practice, no two days will be the same!

What is needed to bring to a practice?

Swimmers should have a swimsuit, goggles, and towel with them each day, at minimum. While competitive year-round swimming has guidelines on swimsuits, our Summer Piranhas are a part of a league with a more casual and seasonal flair: the perfect swimsuit for our league should allow a diving start and not wrap around arms during laps (swim shirts are ok, especially for outdoor practice, but are not recommended). The only no-go is a bikini. Additionally welcome to bring is some hydration - water, Gatorade, etc.



Where do parents / grandparents / babysitters / siblings go during practice?

For practices held at the Rec Center pool outside, spectators are to remain in the concessions seating area (tables with umbrellas) if they are remaining inside the pool area. All other areas of the facility are off-limits during this time, as staff will be preparing for opening the facility to the public and the pool is unguarded. The play areas and zero entry parts of the pool are closed during this time - siblings, etc are not permitted in them at all.



For practices held at the HS Pool inside, spectators are to be up in the spectator seating in the balcony, which is on the second floor, accessible from any staircase or the elevator.

Can I help my swimmer change in/out of their swim stuff?

Absolutely not. Per compliance with our USA Swimming Safe Sport policies, parents/guardians are not permitted in the locker rooms.

There are family restrooms at both facilities that we use located in the hallways leading up to the respective pool decks that parents/guardians can utilize for these purposes.



MEETS OVERVIEW

What should we expect from a Summer Piranhas meet?

Our summer league is structured around a schedule of four dual meets and one Championship meet. Each meet is typically scheduled on a Wednesday evening (holidays or facility conflicts will dictate a move to a different day of the week) and only lasts a few hours, including arrival, warm-ups, and competition.

These meets are perfect for beginner and novice swimmers as they get introduced to the racing scene. They get multiple chances to practice reading heat sheets, following a meet schedule, physically lining up for their event, dealing with pre-race nerves, getting on the blocks, diving in for the race start, and competing – plus, all the downtime socializing with their teammates!

We will have a more extensive overview for parents about meets during our Mock Meet and Parent Meeting.

For contrast, year-round club swimming has a various number of meets each month, spread over 2-3 days anywhere in Pittsburgh and has an extensive list of many heats and races. These meets are split by age, times, etc.

What time do we show up?

Each meet has a report time listed on [our schedule](#) and weekly emails. Swimmers are asked to arrive at this time so that they can be corralled together, complete warm-ups, make sure they are prepared for their races, and so that we can begin the meet on time.

By a couple of hours, what do you actually mean?

From arrival to finish, yes - we mean a couple of hours. On average, expect to be at a meet for 2-3 hours.

How do I let you know that my kid is going to attend / not attend a given meet?

You will need to declare them on [our website](#). Log into your account, click on the meet, and then hit EDIT COMMITMENT.



Then, click on your swimmer, select YES or NO from the drop-down, and hit SAVE.



Piranhas v Kraken (Jun 11, 2025)

Member Athlete:
Luke Modrak

--SELECT--

Yes, please sign [Luke] up for this event

No, thanks, [Luke] will NOT attend this event

(days cannot attend, etc.):

Do I need to worry about picking events for my kid?

Nope! Our coaches will take care of that.

How do I know what my kid is racing for a given meet?

It is our intent to send a copy of our lineup (events for each swimmer) by 12PM the day of a meet, and, if possible, a copy of the heat sheet (events for each swimmer with the lane they are racing in) by 4PM the day of a meet. When we host a meet, we are able to generate a heat sheet and send it out ahead of time - not all meet hosts have this ability.

Updates / Changes to a lineup / heat sheet will be sent via email.

Once a swimmer gets their heat/lanes, it is helpful to have them written on their hand / arm, aka “the swimmer tattoo!”



- The first column, E, is the event # -- this is the event number of events entered
- The second column, H, is the heat # -- this is the race grouping within each event
- The third column, L, is the lane #
- The final column is the actual event -- aka, the distance and stroke

Can I do something during a meet other than sitting in the stands?

YES! We are always happy to take some parents to help on deck as a Timer, hugely important to the running of our meet (more timers = faster meet!).

