



The Blazer Newsletter KANSAS CITY BLAZERS SWIM TEAM

COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE



Eternal Loyalty

Passion Education

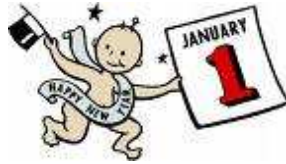
Discipline Dedication

Commitment Leadership

Excellence

January 2009 Edition

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The Kansas City Blazer Parent Board and Coaches would like to wish each and every one of you a very Happy New Year! We wish you a year of peace, joy, and great success!

BLAZERS..The Next Generation January '09 Update

Well, Phase I is behind us. As we set our sights on Phase II, we need to evaluate some things from the first few months of the season and see where we have opportunities to improve in the New Year.

Virtual Club Championships – It is fun to look at the scores online at USA Swimming's website. From the front page, you can search for the results by clicking in the search box at the top right of the screen and typing in Virtual Club Championships. There is an overview of the program, but you'll need to scroll to the bottom of the page to see the link that says "Click Here to see the USA Swimming Virtual Club Championship Rankings". You can choose as many teams as you want to rank, but you'll only need to go down to the top 25 since the Blazers are currently in THIRTEENTH in the country (our goal is to be in the top 10 each year – 2009-2012).

After searching for rankings, you can click the "view detail" link to the right of the team name and find out who is scoring power points in each event. Swimmers will need to be aged 11-18 to be included in the competition. But since our goal is to be in the top 10 each year 2009-2012, even swimmers who are not 11 right now will help us achieve this goal in the future. If we move up one spot each month for the rest of the short course season, we'll be in the top 10! Go Blazers.

IMX Rankings – While we are still trying to become familiar with the concept of what a good total IMX score is, we are all in the agreement that becoming a well-rounded swimmer by competing in the IMX events has great value. We've set a goal that all swimmers in the program who are in Advanced Blue, Gold, Senior and Elite will have an IMX score. At the midpoint of the short course season, most of the Gold and Elite swimmers have completed the slate of events that are required to form an IMX score, but we are still working to get ALL of them in the events and working to get all Advanced Blue and Senior swimmers ready to race these events. Please understand that this will influence our entry strategy into meets in Phase II. We are looking for the following events to form a complete IMX score (if you are missing even one of these, you don't get an IMX score):

9&10 year olds – 200 Free, 100 Back, 100 Breast, 100 Fly, 200 I.M.

11-12 year olds – 500 Free, 100 Back, 100 Breast, 100 Fly, 200 I.M.

13-18 year olds – 500 Free, 200 Back, 200 Breast, 200 Fly, 200 I.M., 400 I.M.

In the next newsletter, we will feature a ranking of our top 100 IMX swimmers, but you can also view how your child ranks in the nation, zone and LSC by going to the USA Swimming website.

Inside This Edition

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A Speedo Sponsored Team



Blazers Outshine the Competition at Level 1s!

The Kansas City Blazers had so many brilliant swims at the recent Level I meet held in Topeka, Kansas it is easy to see why they again walked away from the meet with yet another victory. It was easily the most successful meet of the year for the Blazers. The Level I meet has set the team up to be poised for many more successes through out the short course season.

There were countless best times for our Blazers, and so many highlights it will be hard to cover them all, so let it suffice to say the whole team was awesome.

The Blazer team was honored to have 5 high point winners of the meet. Those honored were Haley Hynes for 10 and under girls, Tiffany Liu for the 11-12 girls, Kat Sickle for the 13-14 girls. Our boy's division winners were Chris Hurl for the 13-14 boys and Seth Musser for the Senior boys.

While those athletes garnered the top positions, many other Blazers distinguished themselves by setting new personal best and moved up a notch or two in the national motivational time standards. The following athletes are listed alphabetically:

Drew Adams AA in the 1650 fr, and the 100 fr
Kyle Adams A time in the men's 1000 fr
Kelsey Bakalar AAA in the 200 IM and AA in both the 100 and 200 breast stroke
Mat Benson AA in the 100 fly
Lexi Bergeron achieved AAs in the 500, 1000, and the 1650 fr
Becca Bond with AAs in the 1000 fr, 100 back
Ben Bravence AA in the 1000 free
Hallie Breidenthal AA in the 500 free and AAA in the 100 free
Liam Bresette A in the 50 free
Ryan Dake AA 100 back
Amy Davis AAA in the 400 IM
Monica Dudley AA in the 400 IM and an AAAA in the 1650
Yousef Eldakak got 2 AAA in the 200 IM, 100 Free, and AA in the 100 Fly, 100 breast
Bobby Faulkenberry had an impressive 4 new AAA times in the 1650, 200, 500 free, and 200 back
Jacob Fisher achieved AA times in the 400 & 200 IM, 200 back, 100 fly, and a new A time in the 500 free
Nick Foster made new As in the 200 IM & 200 breast and AA in 400 IM, 1650, 1000 free
Stephan Franke AAA in the 100 free
Rilye Fries also established a new AAA in the 50 fly
Michael Glen was rocking and established 6 new AAA times in the 400 IM, 1650 free, 200 IM, 200 breast, 100 breast and the 1000 free
Katie Grover got two new AAAA times in both the 100 IM and the 50 Free
Chris Hurl had a super meet with an AAAA time in the 100 back, AAA in the 200 & 400 IM, and the 50 & 100 free, and an AA in the 1650 free
Adam Houghton A in the 50 back
Rosie Hutchison AA in the 100 breast
Danny Hynes AAs in the 500, 200, & 50 free
Awesome Haley Hynes started her 10 year old reign with 6 new AAAA times in the 100 IM, 50 back, 100 breast and 100 back, and lastly the 50 breast and fly
Brother Michael Hynes established 3 new A times in the 200 IM, 50 breast, 50 fly
Alec Jackson achieved AA in both the 200 IM and free
Greg Jacobs AA, 400 IM
Laura Klover AA in the 400 IM
Mighty Tiffany Liu with AAAA in the 100 free, IM, and back and also in the 50 fly
Alex Lombardo 2 new AA in the 200 IM, 100 free
Heath Maginn got AAA in the 100 & 200 back, and AA in the 400 & 200 IM, and the 100 free;
Mat Martin AA 200 free
Jordan Milhon A in 400 IM and the 500 free, with AA in the 100 free
Katherine Miller A in the 200 breast
Natalie Morris with AAA in the 400 IM and 1000 free
Mighty Hannah Musser got AAAA in 100 IM, 50 back, 100 back, with AAA in the 50 fly
Brother Jesse Musser got AAAA in the 400 IM and AAA in 1000 & 1650 free, and 100 back
Other brother Seth got AAAA in the 100 back and AAA in 1650 free
Mackenzie Neeley AA in the 100 fly

JT Nelson AA 200 free
Jack Pluenneke AA 100 free, A in the 100 breast
Mackenna Rife got AAA in the 500 and the 200 free, and AA in the 1000 free, 200 IM, 1650 free, and A 100 fly
Kaela Ropson got AA in 400 IM, 1000 free, 200 IM, 500 and 1650 freestyle
Ben Scheffer AAA in the 200 fly and back
Amy Sevcik AA in the 100 fly & free
Haley Sieben AA in the 200 breast
Ryan Smith A 100 fly
Audrey Snyder AA 200 IM & fly
Jack Snyder A 200 free
Kate Snyder A in the 400 IM, AA 1000 free, and AAA in the 100 free
Kristine Sullivan AAA in both the 20 and 100 breast, AA in the 50 free
Andrew Swetnam AA 400 IM, A in the 100 back
Aubrey Torkelson AA in the 50 back
AA for Katya Vakshteyn in the 200 IM
Chelsey Weatherford with AAA in the 400 IM, 1000 free, 200 Fly

It's easy to see with that many new standards broken why Kansas City clearly had the brightest team in Missouri Valley on the weekend with the Level I meet. KCB is on track for a super season.

2008 Kansas City Splashdown



No wonder everyone in the city wanted to swim at the Kansas City Splashdown meet, it was a beautiful site to swim. We had 175 swimmers at the meet with 121 KC Blazers swimming their best times and 15 event winners. It was amazing to see everyone so excited to swim and do so well.

Our overall event winners for the 2008 Kansas City Splashdown meet were: Kyle Adams, Yousef Eldakak, Bobby Faulkenberry, Rilye Fries, Madison Jarman, Marguax Kent, Tiffany Liu, Jean Madison, Heath Maginn, Alli McCollum, Hannah Musser, Mackenzie Neeley, Heather Snyder, Kristine Sullivan, and Andrew Swetnam.

The only set backs that I heard about was the timing system went down for a while but kudos to the officials for the KC Splashdown for getting it fixed so quickly. Thank you to the parents who sat in the stands cheering the KC Blazers to another great meet.

Short Course Junior Nationals Meet



USA Swimming has reestablished the Short Course Yards Junior Nationals meet, and will be held annually two weeks after the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. This meet will mimic the Short Course Nationals which follows the NCAA Championship format. The University of Texas served as host and did an outstanding job at their world class natatorium.

The Blazers had 10 swimmers qualify for this inaugural meet, and was a great success for 18 and under swimmers. The level of performance from winning times and top 16 were great and reflect a bright future to USA Swimming. The Blazers will have to elevate expectations and year round dedication to an enhanced level of training if we are to be competitive at this level.

Point scoring swims came from our men's 200 medley relay placed 14th (Jon Benson, Nathan Hoisington, Joe Knight, Nathan Welchlin) and Luke Musser placed 13th in the 200 breast. Hoisington and Musser placed 17th and 18th in the 100 breast, Haley Smith placed 22nd in the 200 back, and Austin Acheson was 17th in the 1500 free.

The other swimmers attending this meet were Brooke Brull, Vito Cammisano and Griffin Peavey. The group performed well for the conclusion of Phase I. They posted 43 best times and had only 13 swims that did not surpass previous bests.

Thank you to Belinda and Kris Smith for serving as our chaperones at this championship meet. Their logistical and overall support for the meet was special.

After participating in this meet, the vision is clear as to what we will need to do if we are to be one of the best competitive swim programs in the country.

Chaperon Feedback

Several times throughout the year there are some great opportunities for KCB parents to be chaperons on out of state KCB swim meet trips. Please contact Rosemary at either by phone at 913-814-0804 or by e-mail at kcbblazersemail@yahoo.com to see what opportunities are currently available. Below is a letter sent to Pete Malone from Kris & Belinda Smith giving their feedback from a recent trip with the Blazers. Based on my personal experiences from last year with the Plano, TX trip last February, I echo these comments. I look forward to being a chaperon myself on a KCB trip in 2009! Don't miss a chance to be a chaperon this year; it is a rewarding experience, and a great way to give back to the organization!

"Pete,

We have a bit of time before our flight leaves to return to KC, so I am going to shoot you a quick note regarding the last four days at the Jr. Natl's in Austin, TX . We had the honor of chaperoning a group of 10 Elite swimmers - we had a great time with all of the kids.

We found them ALL to be well mannered, extremely respectful, and a totally fun bunch of teenagers. I know that you too often hear negative comments about the swimmers. We have nothing negative to report! We had a great time and really enjoyed getting to know some of the kids even more.

The only thing that we did not understand was their "taste" in music! I learned a couple of new artists on this trip...."Little Wayne" and "T Pain"..... Besides that experience, we both want to thank you and this group of 10 swimmers! We had a blast and we are both very proud to be Blazer parents.

Sincerely,
Kris and Belinda Smith"

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH ELITE GROUP, December 2008 Mill Valley High School LEXI BERGERON

CRITERIA:

A: Attendance

B: Attitude

C: Growth as a Swimmer

D: Growth as a person

E: Inspiration to staff & team

Lexi was a new addition to the Elite group this year and the transition this fall was not as seamless as hoped. There were a couple of practices her first 1-2 weeks, where she questioned the decision to move up as right. However, Lexi has proven to herself and staff that she did make the right decision. Her daily hard work and determination has been an example of someone pursuing excellence truly is. Lexi has gone from "survival" mode in practice, to leading sets and swimming close to best times in practice. The Elite group does an annual 100 x 100 set over the Christmas break. Lexi was able to complete the set on the 1:20, quite an improvement from where she started in August. Her meet performance has seen continually improvement thru the fall as well. She reached one of her season goals at Level 1, by qualifying for Sectionals in the 1650 free. Congratulations on your hard work and dedication to being excellent. Keep looking up and your work ethic will get you there.

Head Coach Peter D. Malone

Assoc. Coach Scott Bliss

Asst. Coach Kate Zabler

**MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
BLUE VALLEY WEST – ADVANCED BLUE GROUP**

December 2008

GARRETT WILDER

The Advanced Blue group is a diverse group. We've got some of our top 10&Under swimmers in the group. We've got some able swimmers in the 11-12 age group, and it is also a group where swimmers turning into teenagers prepare for their first meets with teen age events (200 Fly, 200 Back, 200 Breast, 400 I.M.). Garrett Wilder is twelve now, but will soon be one of the latter group and he is preparing for the age-up by coming to practice and working harder than he's ever worked.

While Garrett is still working on maintaining faster intervals in practice, he is making strides in and out of the water. Over the last two weeks of December, I know for a fact that he put in some good work during dry-land (albeit sometimes reluctantly).

At the only meet he swam in December, he was a perfect six for six best times across three different strokes and an I.M. He also added a second "A" time leaving him one more to get to Plano before he turns 13 in February. With work like that, whether he makes it to Plano or not, he'll be more ready for his teen age future in swimming!

Coach Derek

**MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
BLUE VALLEY WEST – SENIOR GROUP**

December 2008

MARDI BUCHANAN

Usually, I provide a whole bunch of tangible data to support the selection for most inspirational swimmer of the month – attendance data, test set data, meet results. Nobody in the Senior group was at more practice in the month of December, but other than that, there aren't a lot of data to look at that make Mardi Buchanan's December stand out. She didn't swim a ton faster at Level I than she did in November. She didn't add a ton of lengths to her T-30 total. If you weren't at practice in December, you wouldn't understand.

If you **were** at practice, you'd TOTALLY understand. There wasn't a practice in December where Mardi wasn't working as hard as she could in or out of the water. There was a day of dryland where there was very little time between exercises and I noticed Mardi had already switched, and started the next exercise, before I said "ready go".

In December, we've had a lot of people getting sore from the work we're doing. Mardi has gotten really sore and kept coming back for more. If she's stretching in the pool, it's stretching during a break, not taking a break to stretch. It's been noticed by her teammates as well. When I even mentioned that I needed to finish writing up the Swimmer of the Month for December, several people mentioned her name.

Again, if you hadn't been at practice, you might still not understand, but keep an eye on her at meets in January, and maybe you will. Great job, Mardi!

Coach Derek

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
BLUE VALLEY NORTH – GOLD GROUP
December 2008
NICOLE DANISI



There were two things that really stood out about Nicole. First there was her sheer determination, competing at Level II, to make "A" times and advance to Level I. This would also allow her to participate in the Plano, Texas meet in early February. The second thing was a workout over the holidays. It was a freestyle workout and Nicole was given the option of swimming in a slower lane on easier intervals. She said that she wanted to stay where she was and on the two hardest sets, she swam with such drive that she was one of only two swimmers in her lane to make the two sets.

Nicole has embraced the coaching changes and has made them work for her. She is truly a delightful person to have at practice. For Nicole, Phase I was just the beginning of a great year of swimming ahead for her. I am extremely proud of her achievements thus far and look forward to even greater accomplishments in Phase II.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Coach Bob

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
BLUE VALLEY NORTH – BLUE GROUP
December 2008
GRACE BRIMACOMBE



During Phase I, no one has been a bigger inspiration than Grace. She has had the highest attendance rate of all the Advance Blue Group swimmers. With each month, her "coachability" has improved. Her leadership and dedication in the Advance Blue Group has enabled her to move on to the X-Blue Group with the start of Phase II. Since the move, she has had 100% attendance during the last half of December.

Her last two meets have been a testament to what high attendance, leadership, "coachability" and the overall desire to become a better swimmer can do. She swam 10 events (all personal bests) in the Splash Down Meet November 21-23. Grace came back two weeks later, swimming in Level II on December 6 & 7th, and had 6 out of 6 best times again. Grace is one of only 5 Blue Valley North swimmers to have perfect attendance over the holidays which, hopefully, will give her a great jump start on becoming a member on the list of "A" swimmers at BVN. It certainly will be exciting to watch Grace compete in the upcoming meets!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Coach Bob

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
ROELAND PARK – SENIOR GROUP
December 2008
OLIVIA TUCKER



Each month, it is difficult selecting swimmer of the month. It is even more difficult when one of them is a twin. Some people have difficulty telling Olivia Tucker apart from her sister (Adrienne), but in December, she set herself apart from the group with solid attendance, and hard work.

While Olivia is usually not in the fastest lane, she is usually at the front of the lane. It takes extra effort not just to stay in front, but to keep the set organized and leave on the correct send-offs. This is even more important in the lane that Olivia leads. While many people stop, and stopping can be contagious, she continues to stay on track with the sets – regardless of how much rest she’s getting.

The hard work is paying off. At the Level II meet in December, five of her six swims were the best times she’s posted this fall, and two were lifetime bests. She’s working hard in practice and racing well into 2009. That bodes well not just for the entire lane that she’s leading. Keep it up, Olivia.

Coach Eric & Christie

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
SHAWNEE MISSION NORTH/ROELAND PARK – BLUE GROUP
December 2008
CLAIRE McCLELLAND



All year long Claire has been an inspiration and a joy to coach. She has done everything that I have asked of her from changing her strokes to having great attendance to working hard in practice. Claire possesses all the traits needed to reach her goals in the sport. She will always rise to the level of work that is asked of her whether it is related to technique or to the challenge of a greater work intensity. Claire’s attitude in practice is unchanging and positive and she is consistently working hard to excel in the pool. The thing about Claire is she doesn’t always stand out because she steadily works at a high level and does what is expected of her. Her quiet demeanor often hides the competitive intensity to do the best she can and perform at her highest level possible. In short she is the type of swimmer that makes coaching a wonderful and enjoyable profession. Her passion for the sport and her future with swimming looks exceedingly bright and, short of hitting a brick wall, I see Claire improving for many years to come.

Sincerely,
Coach Henry

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
KCB EAST – MO ADVANCED BLUE GROUP
December 2008
ALEX NUTTER



December's swimmer of the month has been an inspiration. Whether her teammates are ready to match her level of dedication and focus or not, her work ethic has inspired me to give more responsibility to the swimmers in practice, to feel confident giving longer and more complicated sets, and to be able to re-focus on practice at times when I was feeling overwhelmed by the "playful" mood. I can honestly say that Alex Nutter has made coaching so much more fun and rewarding in the month of December.

Alex has been a great support for her teammates, too, whether she knows it or not. It is hard to feel like the only swimmer putting in 110% on a set, but in the month of December, squeezed in at the center of 3 holidays with all that "holiday break energy" to contend with, sometimes that's what it takes. I can say with some certainty, Alex was the only swimmer in the pool with enough courage to be the only swimmer giving it her all on a set. And that courage inspired others. All it takes is one swimmer, and the others feel more comfortable to follow their example and motivated to give it their all. But being that one swimmer is tough. It means going against the crowd; ignoring everyone, to push you to make the interval on the set while everyone else is chatting to each other over their kickboards.

The upside of it is that you end up a leader. Whether it's a leader of 20 or only a leader of two, as sometimes is the case, Alex has been a leader. In fact, I wish I had a big spotlight hanging from the ceiling that I could point at her so more of her teammates would notice her example on a daily basis. Sometimes their attention gets directed to the loudest in the crowd, rather than the most inspiring. I just know that the more her teammates notice what she is doing in the pool, the braver they will get with their sets as well. In fact, she probably hasn't noticed, but a few swimmers on the team have started quietly putting themselves in her lane. The other focused and motivated swimmers in the pool are gravitating toward her, the ones that want to work really hard and don't want distractions. This great group of swimmers has silently picked her as their leader, and it is spreading. I am so glad it is. Alex's focus lately, on her sets, on her strokes, and on her goals, has been so strong. I think she is the single most focused swimmer that I have coached this year, and it is amazing to watch.

And I really, truly hope it pays off for her in a big way in 2009. It should. Congratulations Alex!

Thanks for the inspiration!

Coaches Mike Lewellyn and Ann Gibler

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
KCB EAST – MO GOLD GROUP
December 2008
MATHEW IVEY

Since Coach Mike has been back with the Blazers, no high school boy has joined the team and made it longer than six weeks before quitting. There are many reasons. Boys don't like little girls kicking their butts. Boys don't like to feel incompetent. High school boys don't like to kick and they like to think that they are the top of the food chain. I gave all of these reasons to Matt when he joined.

Matt decided to show me what he was made of. He put his head down and swallowed his pride and took his butt kicking and put up with the getting run over parts. His skills were not very good in the first practices and he struggled to just do flip turns after the first 1000 yards. But he did work hard.

Over the next six weeks things got worse and there were nights when I just knew I was going to lose him, but the next day, there Matt was. After a few weeks he was doing flips all the time. He was doing underwater pullouts on breaststroke. He was getting lapped by fewer and fewer kids. He was keeping up with the returning Blazer high school boys.

It was with great pride that Matt approached me at the end of six weeks and announced that he was still here, was intending to stay here, and wanted to know what to do next. It is because of this wonderful spirit that Matt is this month's winner. It is because of his openness and willingness to listen to critique without hearing "bad person" that he is the winner. It is because of his ability to accept the challenges we put to him that he is the winner. Next comes that breathing on both sides thing!

Congratulations Matt, thanks for the inspiration!

Coaches Mike Lewellyn and Cathy Dowd

USED SWIM GEAR FOR SALE

KCB Parents & Swimmers,

From time to time ads to sell gently used items are submitted requesting that they be placed in the KCB Newsletter. Please submit any ad to sell items to Mrs. Denise Holm, KCB's Business Manager at dduncan600@aol.com for approval. Upon approval by Denise, your ad will be forwarded to me for publishing in the next newsletter.

Thanks! 😊
Dan Savage

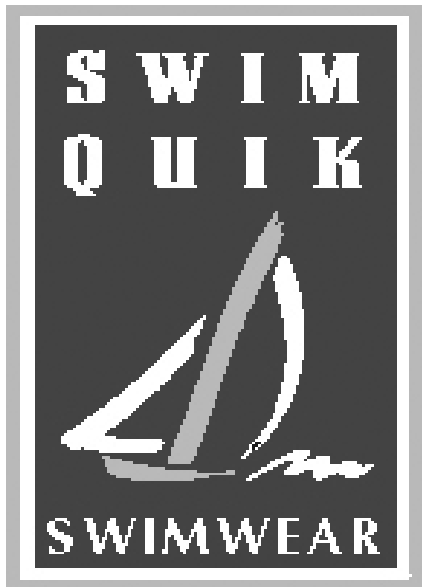
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