

## Hallowell's 2006 Graduating Seniors

### Matt Baker

Matt Baker became swimming for Hallowell at age 6. From the beginning, Matt was clearly one of the most naturally talented swimmers to ever compete in Hallowell pool. That very first year, he qualified as an alternate relay for MCSL All-Stars, the first of his many All-Star appearances. As he aged up through the team, Matt set numerous team and pool records and still holds the oldest pool record on the books - the 8 & under boys free style record, as well as one of the oldest team records, the 8 and under boys breaststroke record. Many an 8 and under boy has set their eyes on those marks but none have been able to break them. Matt, along with his sisters Kelly and Emily, established so many team and pool records, that the team record board was often affectionately (or perhaps enviously) referred to as the Baker Board.

In 2002, Matt's record setting hit the county level, when he was a major contributor to our boys 14 & under graduated freestyle relay team, which set the MCSL event record while taking first place at All Star Relays. Though that record has since been broken, the relay time still stands as a team record. For many years, Matt's presence at County All Star and Coaches Long Course meets was a given, and his performance on numerous All-Star relay teams helped many a Hallowell swimmer bring home the gold.

But Matt's talents didn't just shine in the water. His on-stage performances were always the highlight of the team talent show. Who could ever forget Matt's lip-synched rendition of the Spice Girls singing "Tell Me What You Want What You Really, Really Want" while clad in a wig, bikini top and really big red lips. Frankly Matt, our Talent Shows haven't quite been quite the same since you gave up performing.

In addition to swimming for Hallowell, Matt swam two years for Blake High School. He is a Sherwood High graduate and is interested in studying accounting when he attends Montgomery College this fall. Matt, as you pursue your degree, please know how much we've enjoyed watching you compete and how much we appreciate what you've contributed to the team through the years. We wish you much success in wherever life takes you.

Graduating with Matt are his parents Brian and Patty. While guiding three children through the Hurricane storm, we can honestly say that there's not a volunteer parent position that these two haven't held - team rep, concessions, meet official, head timer, announcer, and just about anything else needed to run this team. Rumor has it they even competed in a parent relay or two, but that was before my time and there's no video footage to prove it. In the early years of the team they performed many of these positions simultaneously, while mentoring young swim parents in the numerous responsibilities of running a summer team. I remember when our oldest achieved his first all-star time. Brian and Patty were the first to offer congratulations. When I asked them what getting an all-star time meant, Brian replied something along the lines of ... "it means you can never leave town until mid-August." I consider that our first official swim parent life lesson. Whenever we'd arrived for an all-star or coaches long course meet, Brian and/or Patty would be there, saving our usual spot along the rail at Rockville pool. It's the same spot where many of us stand today. They would offer insightful commentary on which races were ones to watch and which swimmers to keep a close eye on. Everyone on Hallowell would like you both to know that if you're ever in the mood to watch a meet, please know there will always be a spot reserved along the rail for you.

### Nick Conrad

Nick joined Hallowell when his family moved to Olney in 2003. Word spread quickly that one of the fastest freestylers in the county had moved within the Hallowell pool community. We couldn't believe our luck. We're thrilled that Nick's reputation as a fast freestyler proved true, but we're even happier to have had such an enthusiastic, respected and hard-working young man as a part of our team these past four years.

As a Hallowell team member, Nick quickly made his presence felt in MCSL, qualifying for All Stars, All Star Relays and Coaches Long Course during his tenure with the team. He also made his mark on our team record board, where he holds the team record for the 15-18 100 meter freestyle and was the anchor of the Open Age Medley relay teams that hold both the team and pool records in this event. He was an assistant coach for Hallowell for 2 years and frequently can be seen leading team cheers, and participating in team skits and dances, even those that include the wearing of tights-whiteys. His most memorable Hallowell memories are participating in the Hallowell Hurricane Gods skit and contributing towards the team's division A Championship season in 2004.

Prior to moving to Olney, Nick swam with Whitehall Pool and Tennis Club in the PrinceMont Swim League and for one year at Dematha High School. He swam three years for Sherwood High School where he was 1<sup>st</sup> team All-County, All-Gazette and Washington Post All-Met, as well as team co-captain his senior year. At Sherwood Nick was an honor roll student, member of the jazz band and co-founder of the Ultimate Frisbee Club. As a member of the Rockville Montgomery Swim Club, Nick has participated in Junior National and Senior National meets, most recently competing in the Senior National meet held in Seattle, Washington this past April and in the National Grand Prix meet in Charlotte, NC in June, where he competed along with Olympians Michael Phelps, Ryan Lochte, Peter Vanderkaay and many others. Evidently Nick has become quite famous at these meets for his warm-up antics, which include annoying Michael Phelps by swimming too close to him and nearly smacking Katie Hoff in the head.

In the fall, Nick will return to the University of Connecticut, where he is a member of the swim team and the Dean's List and is currently studying Political Science.

Nick, best of luck to you at UConn. We certainly hope to see you on deck next summer cheering on Colin, Eric & Megan as well as the many other Hurricanes you've inspired these past four years.

### **Katie-Kelly**

I can honestly say that one of my proudest day as a Hallowell parent was the day I learned the secret to telling you two apart.

### **Kelly Suthard**

Kelly is a Hurricane original -- one of Hallowell's very first preteamers, joining the team at age 4 during Hallowell's first year of MCSL competition. As a well-rounded swimmer, Kelly earned points for the team in every event through every age group, though she seemed to much prefer the breaststroke and freestyle events. She set several of our team's early records, and still holds a spot among our team's Top 3 times in several events. A frequent participant in All Stars and All Star Relays, Kelly also qualified multiple times for the prestigious Coaches Long Course meet, finishing as high as 6<sup>th</sup> place among all County breaststrokers. In 1998, Kelly teamed with Matt Baker, her sister Katie and former Hallowell swimmer Greg Mercer to take second in the 9-10 mixed free relay at All Stars.

Speaking of Matt, one of our team's most talked about social events was Kelly and Matt's wedding, organized and officiated a few years back - okay several years back -- by Matt's sister Emily. As the story goes, I believe hot dogs were served at the reception, and rings pops were used to seal the union.

In addition to swimming for Hallowell, Kelly swam for Sherwood High School, where she qualified for Metros each year and was elected co-captain her senior year. She swam 9 years for the Rockville Montgomery Swim club as a member of the team's Junior, National Development Group and Advanced Senior programs, and participated in numerous championship meets throughout the Washington DC area.

It's no wonder that Kelly became one of our team's preteam coaches - in her younger days, she and her sister Katie both enjoyed following around Coach Marcia Cruscio and Coach Jessica - so much so that they were nicknamed "Little Marcia" and "Little Jessica." During her two years as a Hallowell preteam coach, many of our 8 and unders could be seen following her around -perhaps she, too has helped inspire one of our future coaches.

### **Katie Suthard**

Like Kelly, Katie is one of Hallowell's original pre-teamers, swimming since age 4. Katie's natural flair for breaststroke was quickly evident. Through the years, she displayed this talent as a participant in MCSL individual All-Stars, all star relays and Coaches Longcourse meets. In the year 2000, in an incredibly exciting race, Katie touched out an extremely competitive field while winning the 11-12 100 meter breaststroke event at the prestigious Coaches Long Course meet. The difference between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place in that race was decided by a mere 7/100ths, but it was Katie who took the gold that evening. Katie still holds the Hallowell team record for the 13-14 girls breast stroke event, and holds several other Top 3 team breast stroke marks.

Katie swam 9 years for RMSC, where she qualified for numerous championship meets throughout the Washington, DC area. As a member of the Sherwood High School swim team for four years, Katie qualified for Metros two years and was elected team captain her senior year.

Katie also served as Hallowell's preteam coach for 2 years, helping to develop the swimming skills of many of our team's current 8 and under swimmers.

She's always willing to offer a helping hand, like the night the Hallowell Moms were "decorating" her house in celebration of her Mom's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. Rather than turning us in, she happily demonstrated the proper way to throw toilet paper so that it reached the very tallest limbs of their front yard tree. We can't imagine where you learned how to do that Katie.

Katie and Kelly, you both have been an energetic presence at every single Hallowell meet and nearly every event for the past 15 years. It is truly impossible to imagine this team without you two. We certainly welcome and expect you both back here for the next several years cheering on your brother Frankie.

To Nick, Kelly, Katie, Matt & Angela Geer, whom we graduated earlier in the season, don't be strangers. If you find yourself with nothing to do on a Saturday morning or Wednesday evening next summer, stop by for a visit. You certainly know where to find us.