

An Update From Coach Dave

Dear Team,

As we navigate these unprecedented times, I am so grateful that we have been able to swim with some sense of normalcy at USC high school. PEAQ as a whole looks a bit different right now as we have many swimmers from surrounding communities who are not able to practice at USC high school, which for the time being is available only to members who reside in the community. And with Canon-MacMillan and Chartier's Valley High Schools still closed to non-high school youth athletics, the sad reality is that many of our club members have had to return to their former clubs in order to have access to a swimming pool. I'm hopeful that when we are finally able to return to our "new normal," we can repatriate most of our team members who reluctantly left the club.

In the meantime, we are going to continue to charge forward with our USC residents practicing at our awesome new facility at the USC high school. I know that our practices have been curtailed somewhat due to indoor gathering limits as well as our commitment to maintaining 3 swimmers per lane.

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PEAQ Swimmers Compete at East Coast Open Water Championships

Mac Clark, Liam Randolph, Sal Punturiero, and Isaac Tabanchnick accompanied by head coach at PEAQ at Pitt, Marian Clark competed at The East Coast Open Water Championship in Huddleston, Virginia at Smith Mountain Lake on Sunday, October 4th. Liam Randolph impressively placed 4th for 13-15 boys in the 5k and 5th in the mile for 14-15 boys. Equally impressive was Mac Clark who finished 1st for 13-year-old boys in the 5k and 3rd in the mile for 12-13 boys. Isaac Barton and Sal Punturiero both did a fantastic job swimming the mile. Sal swam in the 10-11 boy age group, and Isaac in the 14-15 boys age group. Way to go boys!



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I also know that—based on my conversations with coaches around the country, as well as discussions I’ve had with some of the leaders of USA Swimming—we are extremely fortunate to have the situation we do at USC. For the most part, our swimmers have been swimming uninterrupted since early June and all of our team members are currently swimming a regular, though slightly reduced, practice schedule. In my unofficial estimate, I would say we are better off than 90% of the teams in the country. So we have much to be grateful for!

One of the most persistent questions I get from our swimmers and parents is some variation of “when are we going to have a meet?” At the time of this writing, the AMS Website has zero meets listed for this season. The sad reality is there are so many unknowns, along with pretty strict gathering limitations, and it is highly unlikely that anything resembling a normal swim meet will be offered prior to the release of an effective vaccine for COVID-19.

This means that we need to take charge of our own destiny and create meets for our swimmers using our facility and officials. With this in mind we have identified 2 weekends for potential sanctioned meets at USC HS: the weekend of November 14-15 and the weekend of December 12-13. We still need to work it out with the school district and determine how exactly we will run the meets. We will also reach out to see if we can arrange some type of “virtual meet” with some of our local competitors. Our priority in these meets will be to offer as many races as possible to our whole membership. And we also want to provide our members with opportunities to achieve official IMR and IMX scores, as well as to qualify for any higher-level meets for which they might be eligible.

When swimmers don’t have a meet on the horizon it is easy for them to fall into a habit of practicing without a purpose. Just know that our coaching staff is aware of this and we are going to do everything we can to make sure our swimmers have meaningful opportunities to compete while we navigate the daily challenges of this global pandemic.

Sincerely,

Coach Dave

Topher Bishop Elected Senior Athlete Representative for AMS

This fall Topher Bishop, a senior at Upper Saint Clair High School and a swimmer on PEAQ, was elected to be the Senior Athlete Representative for Allegheny Mountain Swimming, which is PEAQ’s local swim committee that is governed by USA Swimming. Topher will lead our local team of AMS athlete representatives, and they will advocate on a local and national level for the 4,000 AMS swimmers that make up our LSC. He will work hard to be a voice for our athletes to the AMS board and to USA Swimming.

Topher urges our swimmers to follow @amsswimming on Instagram, so they can be aware of all the exciting ideas that the student representatives have planned for our athletes. He also would like to welcome any of his fellow PEAQ swimmers to approach him with questions or ideas that they may have.

Thanks for representing PEAQ and AMS, Topher!



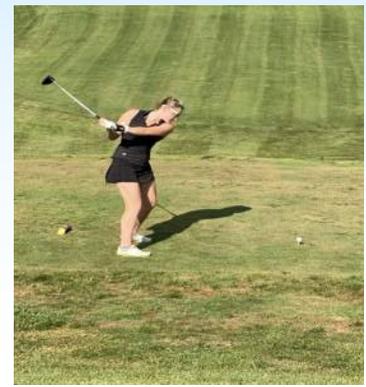
Fish Out of Water

PEAQ has some great swimmers, but they don't just swim! Check out some of these amazing accomplishments and awards that a few of our swimmers have received this fall.

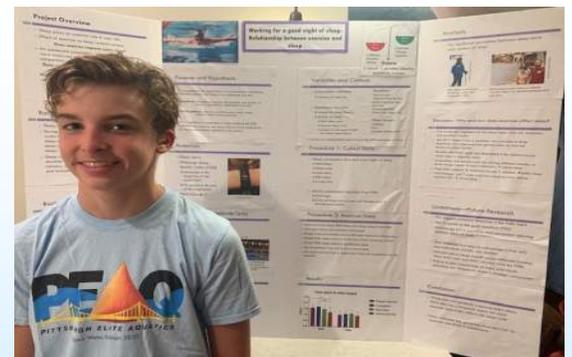
On September 9th, Upper Saint Clair senior and PEAQ swimmer, **Jason Zhang** was named a National Merit Semi Finalist. The National Merit Scholarship program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarship. Of the 1.6 million students who entered, only the top 1% qualify as a semi finalist.



On October 8th, Upper Saint Clair senior and PEAQ swimmer, **Caroline Wright** placed 22nd at the WPIAL golf individual finals at Oakmont Country Club. Caroline was also a WPIAL and States swimming qualifier, making her a two-sport WPIAL qualifier in 2020.



8th grader at The Falk School and PEAQ at Pitt swimmer, **Luke Hartman** was selected as one of the Top 300 competitors in the 2020 Broadcom MASTERS[®] STEM competition for middle school students sponsored by the Society for Science & the Public and Broadcom Foundation. The Broadcom MASTERS seeks to inspire young scientists, engineers and innovators to solve the grand challenges of the 21st Century. The title of his project was: "Working for a good night of sleep: Relationship between exercise and sleep".



On October 2nd, **Eliza Miller** a freshman at Kiski Area High School and a PEAQ @Pitt swimmer ran the WPIAL Section IV Championship meet at Northmoreland Park. Eliza was the top girl finisher and set a new course record by .3 seconds with a time of 19:22.5! Eliza will compete WPIAL Cross Country Championship Meet on October 28th and 29th where she hopes to secure a spot to travel and compete in the PIAA state cross-country championship meet on November 7th in Hershey, PA.



* Feel free to submit ideas to Megan Whiteford

PEAQ Coaches Reflect on Past Olympic Trials

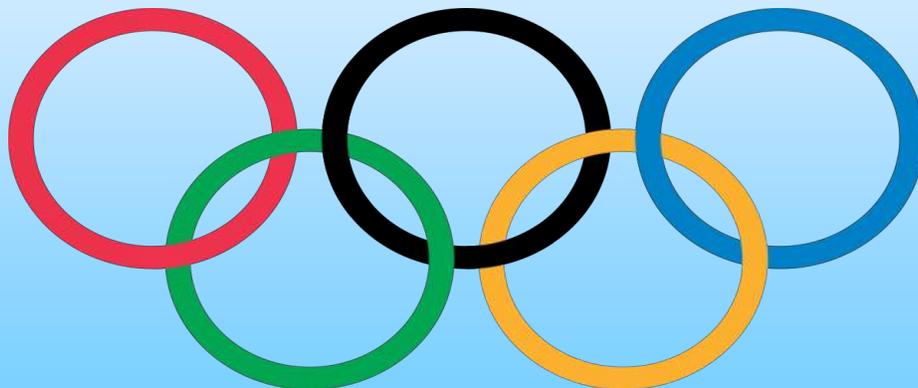
We all know that due to the Covid pandemic that the 2020 Olympics were rescheduled for the summer of 2021. PEAQ's very own Josh Matheny will be competing in the Olympic Trials this June in Omaha with the hopes of making the Olympic team, and we will all be cheering him on. With the Olympic Trials approaching, we thought it would be fun to ask some of our PEAQ coaches to reflect upon their own trial experiences.

Coach Dave: *I went to the Olympic Trials in 1988, which were held in Austin, Texas. I swam the 200 IM. My favorite memory was the party after the meet on Saturday night—no, wait, I mean my favorite memory was simply that I swam really well and did a best time by 3 seconds. I was not a good long course swimmer versus short course and back then you could qualify for Trials with short course times. So I was in heat 1 with a short course time and had a nice race which ended up being the last race of my career (which is a story for another time....)*

Coach Marian: *Far and away, my favorite memory of the Olympic Trials was seeing the tradition that began when trials were usually held in Indianapolis. The names of the Olympians were calligraphed on the wall as soon as they made the team. When the meet moved to Omaha, the more recent version of this had the athletes signing a "wall" or actually a phone booth for London and a flip flop for Rio!*

Coach Mike: *I swam the 1988 Olympic Trials in Austin, Texas...same years as Dave. I tied the qualifying time for the 100 breast, so I was seeded 68th (last). I was in the very first heat of the event and remember the playing of the national anthem just before the race. It gave me chills. I swam my event and won my heat. I remember the announcer saying my name for the next two heats maybe three heats – With the fastest time in the event so far "Mike Densmore" – I'm not saying my time :) It was only a matter of time before the really big guns beat my time, but it was exciting while it lasted.*

Coach Shannon: *My favorite memories of the Olympic Trials are not my swims at all (I did not have any personal best swims at the Olympic Trials.). I came away with so much more than times. It was the first time that I truly experienced the excitement of national-level swimming. To see so many spectators, camera crews and news reporters was almost overwhelming, but I was mesmerized by it all and loved it. I loved going back to watch finals and just be able to say that I swam in the same pool as the United States Olympic Team.*



A Call for Volunteers

Are you looking for a way to get more involved in your child's sport? We are always looking for volunteers. If interested in any of these positions, contact Kristin Matheny (pghmatheny@gmail.com) or Megan Whiteford (MCWhiteford@gmail.com) at Upper Saint Clair and Mimi Perez (mimiperez71@gmail.com) at Pitt.

Scrip Fundraising Coordinator - This volunteer monitors the Scrip fundraising option for the club. Much of the set up for this has been already been done for the club. *** This only pertains to the Upper Saint Clair site and not the PEAQ @Pitt site.

Daxotronic Timing /Operator – This volunteer position requires training. The Daxotronics timing system consists of the console, which connects directly with the touch pads, pickle and starter box that record the times during each race at a swim meet. **We need parents of younger swimmers to consider being trained. Many of our DAK and laptop operators are all parents of older swimmers who will be graduating!**

Laptop Operator – This position requires training. At a swim meet, the daxotronic timing system interfaces directly with a laptop to allow the laptop operator to verify and adjust any time discrepancies. This person may also be an administrative official.

USA Swimming Officials – These volunteer positions require training. Officials work on deck at swim meets to make sure that swimmers are in compliance with the rules. Officials are thoroughly trained and are required to shadow at least six meet sessions prior to becoming certified. More information is available under the officials tab on the AMS swimming website under the "officials" tab.

***** Parents, when considering these roles and other volunteer jobs, please remember to get your PA clearances!!!**



Healthy Habits: Squash Soup

It's fall soup time! Make this healthy soup ahead of time and heat it up for a quick dinner before or after practice!

Ingredients:

1 ½ pounds of cubed butternut squash soup (Save time and buy it cut up.)

2 large onions, chopped

2 large potatoes, peeled and cubed

4 cups of water

2 cubes of chicken bouillon

Salt and pepper to taste

8 ounces of sour cream

fresh chopped chives

Directions:

Place squash, potatoes, and onions in a large soup pot and add the water. Cook on high heat and bring to a boil. Add bouillon. Decrease the heat, cover and simmer until the squash and potatoes are tender. Remove from the heat and allow to cool for 15 minutes. Using an immersion blender or a food processor, puree until smooth. Re-warm the soup and top with sour cream and chives. Season with salt and pepper.

Enjoy!!!

* Recipe taken from *The Heart of Pittsburgh* cookbook