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[www.swimaqua.org](http://www.swimaqua.org)  
Hotline 281-488-1582

Bay Area Aquanauts  
Houston, TX 77062

*Turning today's potential into tomorrow's performance*

## Meets push Aquanauts to new limits

### Bay Area Aquanauts

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Meet Entries  
Kelli Baliker

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AQUA has had athletes participate in three meets since the last edition of *Streamline*. AQUA had 17 swimmers in the Gulf Champs Meet December 12-14. Swimmer of the Meet was Caroline McElhany, with 100% improvement in eight swims. Other swimmers with 100% improvement include Ellen Lobb (6), Julia Sepulveda (5), Rachel Cragin (4), and Cameron Dyer (3). As a team, AQUA improved in 75% of the events entered, and that fact signals that the swimmers continue to improve at a high rate as a team. Twenty-one new team records were set at the meet by Jenny Claydon (5), Cole Cragin (6), Cameron Dyer (1), Mark Grijalva (1), and Caroline (8). There were five new T16 times recorded by Cole in the 50 back, by Caroline in the 50 and 100 fly and 100 IM, and by 11-12 girls 400 medley relay of Christie Latimer, Julia, Caroline and Ellen. There were six new TAGS times by Jenny (100 and 200 back), Rachel (100 fly), Ellen (100 fly), and Julia (50 and 100 breast). Great swims and teammates cheering for one another was the order of the day, and all attending the meet did a great job.

AQUA participated in the 11 & Up Open Meet at the Spring Branch Natatorium Jan. 9-11 and improved in 62% of the swims, a great rate considering all the hard work the swimmers have done since the December championship meets (Winter and Gulf Champs). Swimmer of the Meet was Maggie Eicks, with 100% improvement in seven events. Way to go, Maggie! Other swimmers with 100% improvement included Mark

Grijalva (6), Craig Hobbs (2), Shanna Jones (2), Shannon Orlando (3), Adriana Sepulveda (1), and Cameron Shannon (1). Team records kept falling at this meet — 13 in all, by Jenny Claydon (1), Mark (1), Jennifer Joines (1), Caroline McElhany (5), John McElhany (1), and Jared Schneider (4). Caroline also had a new T16 time in the 200 fly. Ironman, Taylor Cryan, swam a total of 4600 yards over the three days. AQUA continues to set the example by filling its timing assignments and supporting its swimmers while they compete.

### MAKE FEBRUARY MEET PLANS NOW

Now is the time to look at the February meets on the Gulf website and make plans to attend. An Open meet Jan 30-Feb 1 is next up. Swimmers that plan to attend the Spring Champs meets in February will need to have official times before those meets, making the end January open meet critical for attendance. We see great strides in the practice pools, and it is time for the kids to show off in competition.

If you have any meet entry questions, contact Kelli Baliker at 281-488-3943. Please submit short course times or NT (no time) with meet entries. Whenever possible, please try to email meet entries to Kelli via the on-line form for each meet. As we grow as a team, and utilize multiple practice facilities, communication of things like meet entries becomes more complicated if we don't use email. You can still pay entry fees to the coach or parent on deck.

*A swimmer's most common lament: "I can't! I have swim practice!"*

## COACHES' CORNER

*Meets Are More Than Meets the Eye*

This short course season extends through early March. Then, a series of evaluations will be conducted to review team goals, coaching, and swimmer improvements at meets. All teams are evaluated at meets. Those that score the most points and have the most swimmers in attendance usually are perceived as the better teams. Those with very few swimmers or those with a number of disqualifications are seen as poorer teams. Those teams with swimmers consistently dropping time are also quite visible.

Coaches use practice time to teach and improve techniques with their swimmers, but it is difficult for a coach to always anticipate how a swimmer will perform in a meet. Some swimmers may under perform in a meet environment, while others seem energized by the meet excitement and swim much faster there than in practice. Regardless, coaches make use of meet times to help place swimmers in practice groups. Coaches also utilize times generated in meets to be able to focus on the needs of their swimmers.

End-of-season awards are based on meet times. Every AQUA award ceremony in our 3½-year history has ended with some number of unclaimed plaques because of an insufficient number of swimmers participating in one age group or gender category or another. AQUA would like to always be represented in end-of-season meet relays, but we need a large number of meet times and familiarity with meet environments to help qualify the relays.

As the end of this season approaches, it would be helpful for every swimmer to visit with his or her coach to see if an end-of-season meet would be appropriate. The team, the coaches, and the swimmers all depend on the feedback that can be generated by meet attendance.

***AQUA Board Meeting***

***Mon., Feb. 9, 2004***

***8:30 pm***

***Gloria Dei Church — Nassau Bay***

## GULF ALL-STARS SHINE

Cole Cragin, Ellen Lobb and Caroline McElhany were selected as members of the Gulf team for the Texas Swimming Association LSC All Star Meet in Austin January 3 and 4. Each led their respective age groups helping secure a team victory for the Gulf LSC team over teams representing the other four LSC's in the state of Texas.

## SUMMER WARM-UP IN SPRING

We plan to use the Stevenson Park pool in March and most of April for a summer league warm-up program offering. More details will be made available soon, but the offering is expected to be reasonably priced and include USA registration and approximately 8 weeks (3 days per week) of instruction and training leading into the CCSL season. Spread the word of this offering as we continue to utilize the outdoor heated Stevenson Park pool in Friendswood.

## DECK RULE REMINDER

It is a good idea to review deck rules periodically for the benefit of all meet contestants, whether rookies or veterans. One of the first things to do upon arrival the morning of a meet is **circle in** for EACH event you have entered. This lets the host team know a swimmer is present for that event. Circle-in rules allow host teams to seed heats "on deck" as the meet runs, and helps assure heats are full. If you have registered for an event, but intend to scratch, please do not circle in for that event. If you do circle in and are seeded into a heat during the meet, but fail to appear for your scheduled heat, the team is fined by Gulf Swimming.

Kids miss events for a variety of reasons, but the most common is that they don't pay attention to progress of a fast running-meet. We do have situations come up where a swimmer becomes sick or is injured after circle-in, and is unable to compete. Rules permit late scratches without fines in such

cases, so be sure to let the coach on deck know if this occurs so that the scratch can be done properly with meet officials. Also, if you have circled in, but find you can't swim an event, it may also be possible to scratch the swimmer on the circle-in sheet if it has not been pulled for seeding. Event circle-in sheets are typically pulled or "closed to scratches" 45 minutes or so before the event.

### COVER UP THAT WET HAIR

We continue to utilize the outdoor heated Stevenson Park pool in Friendswood most Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, but this applies to each of our practice locations. As the weather changes and occasionally becomes cold, swimmers should remember to come to practice well-equipped for transitions to and from the water, and on the trip to and from practice. Extra towels and warm clothing, especially those easily put on and taken off, might be helpful. Check the calendar for practice schedules, and also consider taking advantage of the Stevenson Park practice facility if this is convenient for you

### MEMO TO ALL OF AQUA's MEET VOLUNTEERS

Whether timers, officials, coaches or enablers behind the scenes such as meet entry and volunteer coordinators, or the treasurer – we continue to have successful meets and always help cover volunteer needs of the meet. **Thank you!**

### HOT FASHIONS FOR COOL WEATHER

Check out AQUAwear on the team website [www.swimaqua.org](http://www.swimaqua.org). There are a large number of team logo items available, including sweatshirts, t-shirts, parkas, caps, window decals, and towels. AQUA makes these items available to members at cost as we are a swim team, not a clothing retailer. These items offer attractive designs, and really are a great value. If you have any questions, contact AQUA via the website or ask a parent on deck. Other teams comment regularly that our kids are a cohesive and enthusiastic group at meets, and a part of that is the recognized logo and team banner available on AQUAwear.



### BEWARE OF ILLEGAL RECRUITING

This has become a permanent feature of this newsletter because, unfortunately, illegal recruiting of USA Swimmers never seems to go out of season. What is illegal recruiting? The easiest way to identify this is, if you are approached by another swimmer, coach or parent about switching teams. Any contact or comment (no matter how innocent or subtle) by such persons with the intent to sell another program or encourage a transfer is illegal and can result in disciplinary action to the offending party and team. AQUA discourages its members from contacting other USA registered swimmers currently with other teams with the intent of marketing AQUA. If you are asked questions about AQUA by anyone (including USA swimmers or parents of swimmers on other teams), you can answer without any problem. If you are contacted, please report any unsavory recruiting activity to a coach or board member.

## TRAINING FEES REMITTANCE

Please remember the correct address to which your monthly training fee remittances should be sent:

Bay Area Aquanauts  
15403 Pleasant Valley  
Houston, TX 77062

*Mailing assures [pending the efficiency the US Postal Service] that your payment will not get misplaced if hand-delivered at the pools.*

## KROGER MINI-SHARE CARDS

AQUA has mini (ultra convenient) Kroger Share Card stickers that may be used on your key chain Kroger Card. These work the same as the business card-style we have been using.



Simply have the cashier swipe the bar code on the card at checkout, and Kroger will donate 1% of the purchase amount to AQUA. If you have had a problem with the bar code wearing off, Marcy Barr and Barb Kolodgie have plenty of replacements on deck at evening practices. Otherwise, you might try laminating your existing card.

This program — along with the similar Randall's program (simply have a cashier or customer service person code AQUA's Good Neighbor number **9266** into your Randall's card) — has become a high-impact, low-effort fundraising vehicle for AQUA and the benefits have helped AQUA maintain low training fees. We currently receive about \$60 per month between the two programs. That's a nice benefit, but still short of our goal of \$100 per month. Keep using the cards, and benefit AQUA at no cost to you.



## PRE-PAID MEET ENTRY ACCOUNTS = CONVENIENCE!!

AQUA has optional meet entry fee accounts available to our members as a convenience. Accounts are set up and tracked by our treasurer, and they work something like pre-paid EZTag toll road accounts. Members open accounts by paying, for example, \$50 toward future meet entry fees, and then draw on the account over time. We will send a notice when the account balance drops below the amount of a typical meet entry. Some folks have even used the account to pay for AQUAstore purchases. Your choice. Contact Kelli Baliker for info.

This is most convenient to families that email meet entries or use the new "eAQUA" on-line meet entry form, or to anyone not typically on-deck at practice when entries are due.

## NEXT BOARD MEETING & BOARD ELECTIONS

This is an early notice that Board elections will be held for four positions at the April meeting. A notice has been sent soliciting interested board candidates. Terms are two years, and this is a great way to volunteer for the team. Whatever stirs your inspiration to run, excitement from the current presidential election primary season or simply a desire to serve, please let Coach Harold know if you are interested. Also, make plans to attend this important election where we require a quorum to validate the election results.

Our **next** Board meeting is Monday, February 9 at 8:30 pm in Room 113 at Gloria Dei in Nassau Bay. These meetings can be informative. They allow parents to keep up on events and team plans, and the Board always welcomes participation by parents.