



Volume 5, No. 10
October, 2004

www.swimaqua.org
Hotline 281-488-1582

Bay Area Aquanauts
Houston, TX 77062

Turning today's potential into tomorrow's performance

Meets that can't be beat!

Bay Area Aquanauts

President
Patty McElhany

Vice-President
Ken Baliker

Treasurer
Marcy Barr

Secretary
Scott Cragin

Directors
Rick Jones
Fritz Claydon
Dan Joines
Jim Kolodgie

Meet Entries
Kelli Baliker

Head Coach
Harold Johnston

AQUA is hosting a practice meet on Saturday morning Sept 18 at La Porte HS pool. We have 50 kids entered already, and you can enter as late as the morning of the meet by showing up and entering at the Clerk of Course table. Cost is \$5 per swimmer (to pay the cost of pizza and drinks afterward), and each swimmer may enter 3 events. This will be a realistic meet environment to allow kids new to competitive swimming a chance to get familiar with meets and start procedures. It's also a great chance to meet some new teammates. There will also be some "veterans" there who just want to race. This is also a chance for AQUA to test some new equipment and practice meet operations for the Gulf Swimming meet we will host October 2-3.

OCT. 2 MEET TO BE "THE REAL DEAL" FOR AQUA

AQUA has volunteered to host an official Gulf Swimming meet at La Porte HS pool on Oct 2-3. The format is *12-&-under open*, which means all our 12-year-old and under swimmers can compete. We're also hoping all our "13-&-overs" will come to the meet to help out as volunteers. This meets a volunteer obligation AQUA feels that it has to USA Swimming in our area. We look for a HUUUUUGE turnout of AQUArians to be good hosts to the other teams attending, to be loud in supporting our team, and to be fast swimmers! We recognize swimmers at

each meet for accomplishment, but you have to compete to make headlines.

What should our AQUA families do in anticipation of this meet? The same as you would for any normal meet – discuss with coaches the best events for your child to enter and submit entries early if possible. Meets are really fun, and are an opportunity to show improvement from the many hours of practice. Just do it!

SHORT COURSE SEASON '04-'05

AQUA will support the entire Gulf Swimming short course meet schedule published on the Gulf Swimming website, www.gulfswimming.org, with three exceptions:

- 1) AQUA will schedule coaches for such Gulf S/C meets based on the number of swimmers who enter during the advance entry period (normal deadline is two weeks before a meet),
- 2) AQUA will support the COR invitational in Dallas December 3-5 should any AQUA families wish to travel and enter that Prelims/Finals meet, and
- 3) AQUA will not support the Pentathlon meet which was recently added to the schedule.

AQUA Board Meeting
Mon., October 11, 2004
8:30 pm – Room 113 - Gloria Dei
Nassau Bay

"I can't afford to die . . . it'll ruin my image." — Jack LaLanne, age 90 [kids, ask your parents who he is!]

In the case of exception #1, if we have no entries, AQUA will not schedule coaching coverage for the meet. If an athlete later decides to attend via on-deck entry, there will not be an AQUA coach assigned, and other arrangements may need to be made for warm-up, etc. AQUA coaches encourage all AQUAnauts to “make a splash in competition.” Consult the AQUA website for upcoming meets and invitations. If you have any questions, ask a coach, consult the meet invitations, or contact our meet entry chairperson, Kelli Baliker, at kbaliker@houston.rr.com.

CALL FOR OFFICIALS

There is always a need for officials to volunteer in support of Gulf LSC meets. Anyone interested in becoming an official should contact a Board Member or Coach Harold. AQUA pays all non-athlete official registration fees, and Gulf Swimming provides all training. AQUA will need to provide 4 officials and/or trainees for its meet Oct 2-3. Don't be shy, certify (as an official, that is!).

P.E. WAIVERS TAKE NOTE

Along the theme of meet participation, Coach Harold has revised slightly the AQUA P.E. waiver policy. Ninety percent [90%] of a swimmer's grade each grading period will be based on practice attendance and 10% will be based on attending one meet each grading period. Swimmers may decide and should be encouraged to attend more, but these are the minimum criteria for grading. Please keep up with attendance and make sure your child is attending at least the number of practice hours each week required by your school district P.E. Waiver policy.

KEEP UP WITH PRACTICE SCHEDULE CHANGES

AQUA will utilize Clear Lake, La Porte, Friendswood and Pearland pools in combination during the school year in keeping with our various pool rental

agreements. We anticipate switching from Pearland to Friendswood beginning Oct 4. Pearland is not heated, Friendswood (Stevenson Park) is heated. Also note that water polo conflicts anticipated to last through the month of October are expected to delay Lake practice start times to 6:30pm on Monday and Wednesday evenings. Please consult weekly training schedule updates and the website, particularly with this cool weather transition coming up.

**LONG COURSE SOCIAL
A SOGGY SUCCESS**

Thanks to Barb Kolodgie and Beth Fiske for organizing the LC social at the La Porte wave pool. Attendance was really good despite the soggy weather. Congratulations to all LC award winners as follows:

Most Valuable:

Rachel Cragin **10 & under**
Blake Swaney

Caroline McElhany **11 - 12**
Ryan Swaney

Jenny Claydon **13 - 14**
Cole Cragin

Jennifer Joines **15 - 18**
Jared Schneider

Most Improved:

Sarah Cragin **10 & under**
Jacob Pendegrass

Adriana Sepulveda **11 - 12**
Peter Silkowski

Katharine Silkowski **13 - 14**
Mark Grijalva

Sara Pendegrass **15 - 18**
Mark Egerman

PARENT FEATURE: KNOW THE RULES ON MEDICATIONS

If you are involved in swimming long enough, you are sure to hear accusations that an athlete is cheating or using prohibited medications to enhance performance. In almost all cases, we find athletes following the rules and accusers suffering from an ignorance of the rules. USA Swimming, the governing body for most competitive swimming in this country, has very specific rules and references on its website regarding medication and supplement use, classifying them as either **allowed**, **restricted**, or **prohibited**. The terms allowed and prohibited seem clear enough as relate to competition; you may use them or not as the case may be. Be advised that allowed medications, particularly certain over-the-counter [OTC] items, should be taken with care since labels listing contents may not always be comprehensive, and the user may not know prior to taking a medication that it happens to contain a prohibited substance. Prohibited medications are not to be used at any time. Prohibited substances include the various banned agents that have made headlines recently in track and field and cycling. The least understood of the three is the restricted

category. Ignorance of this category of medications tends to be at the root of the most accusations of inappropriate use.

Most asthma inhalers fall into the category of *restricted* medications. These are permitted in competition when an Abbreviated Therapeutic Use Exemption (ATUE) form is filed with USA Swimming along with a doctor's diagnosis indicating a therapeutic necessity. Restricted does not mean prohibited. Kids with legitimate medical needs for these inhalers should use them as prescribed without being made to feel guilty by other swimmers or parents. At the level most age-group swimmers compete, they will never be subjected to a drug test. Regardless, everyone should know the rules and, as needed, file the appropriate paperwork disclosing therapeutic use of any restricted medications. Good luck!

AQUA TOWELS

Are you interested in a monogrammed AQUA towel? We are taking orders — white with our AQUA fish and swimmer's name for \$13.59 each. Please contact Patty McElhany if you are interested, at mcelhany@earthlink.net.

“SWIMPOSIUM” ANNOUNCED

This event is publicized on the Gulf Swimming website. It will be September 25 at the new University of Houston pool complex. Check out the various information sessions and clinics available to parents, coaches, officials, and athletes including two ½-day clinics by Olympian, Colleen Lanne. Clinics are first-come first-served. AQUA will also be represented at a club leadership seminar.

SWIM EQUIPMENT EXCHANGE

AQUA members have asked if there was some good way to notify others about lightly-used, outgrown swim items and equipment. Many times, these items can be made available to other team members at a savings versus the cost of buying new. It was agreed at the last board meeting to offer space in this newsletter and on the website for such items, but please, swim-related equipment items only! Email information on the item, and size, and provide a contact number or email address to kbaliker@pmicim.com.

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 and Barb 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. Benefit of the programs has held steady at about \$60 per month between the 2 programs. That's nice, but renewed awareness and emphasis on these programs is now needed to reach our goal of \$100 per month. Keep using the cards, and benefit AQUA at no cost to you.

AQUAWEAR AVAILABLE

Check out AQUAwear on the team website 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.