



Volume 6, No. 10
October, 2005

www.swimaqua.org
Hotline 281-488-1582

AQUASTAR
Houston, TX 77062

Turning today's potential into tomorrow's performance!

AQUASTAR

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Meet Entries
Kelli Baliker

Head Coach
Harold
Johnston

**NEXT
BOARD
MEETING**

Tuesday,
October, 11

8:30 pm

Gloria Dei
Church,
Nassau Bay

**ALL PARENTS
INVITED AND
ENCOURAGED
TO ATTEND!**

Upcoming October Meets!

HCAP 10 & Under, Oct. 1-2 Kashmere HS

(On-deck entries still accepted!)

This meet is for swimmers 10-years-old or younger as of Oct 1, 2005. Swimmers of all abilities and those without official USA Swimming times (NT) can attend. It is a great opportunity for younger swimmers to get their first official USA Swimming times; giving them a baseline for improvement for the season. It also gives those in the Red and White training groups who meet all other requirements, the opportunity to meet final requirements to advance to the next higher training group.

Advanced entry deadlines have passed, but swimmers can still go to the meet and enter "on-deck" for \$7 per event. **AQUASTAR warm-ups are at 8:05 a.m. on Saturday in lanes 4 and 5, and 7:30 a.m. on Sunday in lanes 6 and 7.** Therefore, families can send swimmers to warm-ups while parents "on-deck enter" their swimmers for the meet. Be sure to complete the on-deck entry process at least 30 minutes before the 9 am official meet start time.

Klein 14 & Under A & Up, Oct. 21-23 Klein Oak HS

(Online entry form now available on the AQUASTAR website.)

This meet is open to swimmers 14-years-old or younger as of Oct 21, 2005. Qualifying times are USA Swimming Motivational "A" times. Because the "Up/Down" and "Three-Event" rules apply, swimmers may be able to enter for which they have not achieved "A" times and may even enter some events with NT. **For more information about these rules, see the AQUASTAR September newsletter** and review the meet invitation by clicking the link above. Watch the AQUASTAR website for more information.

BTA 11 & Up Open, Oct. 7-9 Kingwood HS

(On-deck entries still accepted!)

This meet is open to swimmers 11-years-old or older as of Oct 7, 2005. Swimmers of all abilities and those without official USA Swimming times (NT) can participate. It is a great opportunity for newer swimmers to get their first official USA Swimming times; giving them a baseline for improvement for the season. It also gives swimmers who meet the age and other requirements, the opportunity to meet final requirements to advance to the next higher AQUASTAR training group.

Although advance entry deadlines have passed, you can still enter the meet "on-deck" for \$7 per event. To enter on deck, complete the meet entry process at least 30 minutes before the official meet start time on the day(s) you will attend. Review the meet invitation for start time and other details, by clicking the link on the AQUASTAR webpage or by going to the [Gulf Swimming Meet Information Page](#). About 48-hours before the meet, the warm-up times will also be posted on the Gulf site. Go to the meet information page and click the "warm-ups" link to find AQUASTAR's (AQUA) warm-up time, then plan to arrive in time to on-deck enter and get swimmers to warm-ups.

Senior Meet, Oct. 21-23

(Meet location and entry form will be posted on the AQUASTAR website when available.)

This meet is open to swimmers with at least one 2005 Texas Senior Circuit "A" short-course qualifying time. More information will be available once the meet invitation is posted on the Gulf Swimming Website. Watch the AQUASTAR website for links to the meet invitation and the online entry form.

See "Meets," page 2

From "Meets," page 1

14 & Under, BB & Under, Oct. 28-30 Location TBD

(Meet location and entry form will be posted on the AQUASTAR website when available.)

This meet is open to swimmers 14-years-old or younger as of Oct 28, 2005. Swimmers can enter any event for which they have not yet achieved a USA Swimming Motivational "A" time or higher. Swimmers can also enter with NT. It is a great opportunity for newer swimmers to get their first official USA Swimming times; giving them a baseline for improvement for the season. It also gives Red and White Training Group swimmers who meet the age and other requirements, the opportunity to meet final requirements to advance to the next higher training group. More information will be posted on the AQUASTAR website as it becomes available.

Window Decals Now Available!



AQUASTAR window decals are now available. Purchase decals from the Parent on Deck (POD) at your practice pool or at the Anniversary Bash Oct. 16. Cost is \$8 for one decal, \$15 for two.

AQUASTAR Masters Program

An AQUASTAR Masters Program is underway at the Strawberry pool from 5:15 to 6:45 pm on the days/dates practice is held at Strawberry.



The new program is open to any swimmer, age 22 and over, who wants to improve their fitness through swimming. Masters swimmers must be USA-S registered (annual fee of \$85). Monthly training fees are \$50 and are **independent of the team's family maximum.**

Those participating will need the same equipment as the Blue training group; kick boards, pull buoys, fins, hand paddles and sneakers. Emphasis will be on stroke technique and endurance. Send questions regarding this program to [Coach Harold](#).

AQUASTAR 5th Anniversary Bash & Awards Ceremony

Sunday, Oct. 16, 1-4 pm

Free for First 100 to RSVP!

The AQUASTAR 5th Anniversary Bash and Awards Ceremony will be Sunday, October 16, from 1-4 pm at Armand Bayou Nature Center. The party will begin with a Fajita Dinner catered by the El Toro Mexican Restaurant in La Porte.

Following the meal, the 2004-2005 season achievement awards will be presented as well as annual membership awards for swimmers who have been with the team one year or more. Tenure with STAR will count towards a swimmer's anniversary year. Anniversary cake will be served following the ceremony.

Throughout the meal and after the ceremony, there will be games and activities for the kids and families can take time to visit the various displays in the nature center. There will also be hayrides through the tall-grass prairie from 2:30-4 pm. Families will also be able to visit the center from 4 pm until the nature center closes at 5 pm.

Those who attend will also have the opportunity to purchase AQUASTAR caps, T-shirts and window decals. Additionally, the team plans to have one of the local swim shops available to allow members to purchase suits, caps and other swimming equipment.

The first 100 swimmers, parents and siblings to RSVP receive free admission, which includes admission to the nature center, meal and activities. After the first 100 RSVP's, admission is free for registered AQUASTAR swimmers and \$5 each for parents and siblings.

RSVP by October 13, 2005 to the AQUASTAR Social Coordinator, Barb Kolodgie, via email at kolodgie@ev1.net or phone at 281-990-8579. For more information, watch your email for a flyer announcing the party, or contact Barb!



Happy 5th Anniversary!

AQUASTAR to Host 10 & Under Meet November 12-13, 2005

Parent and Teen Volunteers Needed!

Because we did such a great job last year running our inaugural **12 & Under Meet**, AQUASTAR was selected by Gulf Swimming to host a **10 & Under Meet**, Nov. 12-13, at Baytown Sterling High School.

Swimmers, officials and families alike who participated in last year's meet commented on how well the team ran the meet and about the great hospitality we showed our visitors!

AQUASTAR Head Coach Harold Johnston says the competition between this year's host teams to have the best meets in the Gulf will be tougher than ever. **Dan Joines will serve as our Meet Director and will require a lot of participation from swimmers, parents and other volunteers to maintain the great reputation we earned last year.**

Be sure to watch for more information in the newsletter and on the AQUASTAR website as the meet date gets closer.

Swimmer Safety Alert!

Recently, in the parking lot at one of the practice pools, a parent observed an adult male in a van stopping swimmers to ask for directions. When the parent approached the man, she said he no longer seemed interested in the directions. Although this could have been a completely innocent situation, it brings home the importance of escorting swimmers all the way to the pool for practice.

Several articles have appeared in our newsletter asking parents to escort swimmers to and from the pool for safety reasons. In addition to the safety risks walking to the pool alone, we are still having intermittent problems with swimmers left waiting to be picked up after practice, which is an additional opportunity for them to be approached by a stranger.

Please do not sacrifice safety for the convenience of a quick "drop off." Swimmers should be escorted to and from the pool to ensure they make it there safely. Additionally, when you escort your swimmer to the pool, it gives you an opportunity to communicate with coaches and the parents-on-deck about swimmer progress, training fees, upcoming meets, etc.

October Birthdays

Please be sure to wish the following swimmers "Happy Birthday!"



Taylor Barnett, 10/1 ☺ **Melanie Acker, 10/2** ☺ **Nathan McCloskey, 10/2**
Jack Zhao, 10/2 ☺ **Elizabeth Noriega, 10/3** ☺ **Vivien Tsou, 10/3**
Caitlin Laird, 10/7 ☺ **Catherine Permetti, 10/7** ☺ **Jessica Canfield, 10/12**
Tom Nowobilski, 10/14 ☺ **Lauren Butcher, 10/15** ☺ **Zoe Grumbles, 10/15**
Taryn MacArthur, 10/17 ☺ **Shane Moran, 10/17** ☺ **Rachel Butcher, 10/19**
Carleigh Temofonte, 10/20 ☺ **Kaitly Temofonte, 10/20**
Kyle Mitchell, 10/21 ☺ **Maryann Moyer, 10/21** ☺ **Madi Kolodgie, 10/22**
Lauren Marullo, 10/24 ☺ **Dean Tzouanas, 10/24** ☺ **Christa Walker, 10/24**
Amanda Ingram, 10/26 ☺ **Kevin Goebel, 10/28** ☺ **Mary Grace Pruet, 10/29**
Michael Chang, 10/30 ☺ **Blayre Copeland, 10/30** ☺ **Sarah Mize, 10/30**

"In Your Lane"



Name: Emily Chiou

Age: 12

School: Space Center Intermediate

Swim Facts: Four years total with Star & Aquastar

Practice Group: White

Favorite Stroke: Freestyle

Least Favorite Stroke: Butterfly

Favorite Part of Practice: Practicing flip turns

Least Favorite Part of Practice: Hard sets

Hobbies & Interests: Plays cello, loves pets and "Phantom of the Opera."

AQUASTAR Responds to Hurricane Katrina

To ensure USA swimmers displaced by Hurricane Katrina are able to continue their training, AQUASTAR has adopted a new policy for swimmers affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Any registered USA-S swimmer may participate without paying training fees in AQUASTAR practices while they are temporarily in the area. Participation in meets will follow Gulf policy; some meets are restricted to Gulf swimmers, so the visitor would have to formally transfer in order to compete.

For more information about the Gulf Swimming policy, go to the Gulf Swimming website at www.gulfswimming.org.

On-Deck Policy Ensures Safe and Effective Practices

AQUASTAR's On-Deck Policy was put in place to ensure coaches can give 100% attention to swimmers in the pool during practice and to ensure we are good stewards of the facilities where we swim as guests. One key facet of the policy regards "spectators," defined as anyone other than coaches and athletes participating in the practice. Spectators should remain on the deck space and bleacher or other seating areas provided **outside the pool-length buffer at each practice facility, which includes pool-end deck spaces.**

Additionally, spectators should avoid activities that may be disruptive to coaches, swimmers and other spectators during practice; including parents communicating with or attempting to help "coach" their swimmers during practice. Parents should view practice as a chance to sit back, relax and observe swimmer progress from afar, leaving the coaching to the coaches.

Parents should also avoid disrupting or delaying practice by talking to coaches during practice sessions. Coaches will gladly answer questions and discuss swimmer progress before practice, after practice or via email. Parents can contact coaches by going to www.swimaqua.org/Info/coaches.htm and clicking the coach's name.

Each pool's "Parent on Deck," or POD can also answer many of your questions and concerns. PODs have the latest information on fees, schedules, upcoming meets and other AQUASTAR policies and procedures and can answer your questions anytime during practice.

Another facet of the policy is the use of equipment, such as fins, kickboards, etc., belonging to the host facility. AQUASTAR swimmers are expected to come to practice with all equipment needed and are prohibited from using any equipment belonging to the facility's host team.

The complete policy is on page 5 of this newsletter.

AQUASTAR ON-DECK POLICY

May 14, 2002

The following is the AQUASTAR team policy relating to use of facilities during official team-sanctioned practices. AQUASTAR recognizes facilities included in its pool rental agreements and various covenants of its insurance policy in formulating this policy statement. AQUASTAR's objective is to maintain a safe environment for athletes, coaches and spectators. The policy is written to provide general guidelines; individual pool layout and local rules may vary.

1. Coaches and Board members shall have authority to administer the policy.
2. All athletes, coaches and spectators should read, understand and adhere to local rules posted at practice facilities.
3. The coaches on deck have responsibility for supervising practice and assuring proper use of practice facilities.
4. The practice facility includes pool, deck space, restrooms, walkway access, bleacher areas and parking lots. During the hours of team-sanctioned practices, only coaches and athletes should utilize on-deck areas. On-deck areas are defined as those utilized by athletes and coaches during the normal course of practice that include the pool, pool-end deck space and a buffer along each side necessary for unrestricted movement of the coaches and athletes.
5. Spectators, defined as anyone in the pool area other than coaches and athletes participating in the Practice, may utilize deck space and bleacher or other seating areas provided outside the pool-length buffer at each practice facility. Spectators should avoid pool-end deck spaces.
6. Spectators should avoid activities that may be disruptive to coaches, athletes and other spectators during the hours of team-sanctioned practices. Parents or guardians should ask questions of the coaches either before or after practice, and they should supervise their minor children to assure proper use of practice facilities and adherence to this policy.
7. Some practice facility deck spaces include diving boards and non-swimming equipment such as exercise bikes and tumbling mats. These are not included in our rental agreements and as such should not be utilized by AQUA coaches, athletes or spectators.
8. Other areas of the practice facility such as equipment lockers and storage rooms are also off limits. AQUASTAR athletes are expected to come to practice with their own training equipment, and equipment owned by others and stored at the practice facility is not included in our rental agreements.
9. It is the expressed desire of the Board that each practice facility have a knowledgeable parent or Board member available to answer questions relating to registration, meet entry, etc., who should be positioned so as to avoid disruptions to practice. If individual pool layout requires use of on-deck space for information displays, these may be provided in areas accessible to spectators that do not disrupt practice and that are permitted by the coaches at that facility.
10. We should leave practice facilities clean and free of debris regardless of their condition when we arrive. AQUASTAR is a guest at practice facilities, and as a team, we should work to maintain good standing at all times.

It is not the intention of the Board to restrict spectator access to practice or to the coaches, nor is it the intention of the board to detract from the AQUASTAR team experience. It is our obligation, however, to provide a safe practice environment. The board endorses this policy and it reminds all who use our practice facilities to be gracious guests there.