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www.swimaqua.org
Hotline 281-488-1582

AQUASTAR
Houston, TX 77062

Turning today's potential into tomorrow's performance!

AQUASTAR

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Ken Baliker

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Dan Joines

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Ed Mullery

Secretary
Scott Cragin

Directors
Rick Jones
Glenn Piper
Lailing Tsai
Jim Kolodgie

Meet Entries
Kelli Baliker

Head Coach
Harold
Johnston

NEXT BOARD MEETING

Tuesday,
December 13

8:30 pm

Gloria Dei
Church,
Nassau Bay

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

Want the Latest AQUASTAR News and Info?

Check Out the Website and Hotline

Many new AQUASTAR swimmers and parents don't know that the AQUASTAR website, www.swimaqua.org, and the AQUASTAR hotline, 281-488-1582, are the best sources of the latest team information. The daily practice schedule is available on both the site and the hotline and is updated each morning.

The website also contains just about everything you would ever need to know about your swim team, including:

- meet entry information and forms
- meet results
- registration forms and information
- team policies and bylaws
- record and leader boards
- links to Gulf Swimming & USA Swimming
- and more!

If you have not visited the website, check it out. It will help you become an educated team member and take advantage of all the beneficial information the team has to offer.

Clearing Up the Mystery of Meet Entry Deadlines

Why AQUASTAR Deadlines are Earlier than Those Listed in Meet Invitations

The AQUASTAR homepage contains meet information on the left side including the name of the meet, a link to the meet invitation, a link to AQUASTAR's online entry form, and AQUASTAR's entry deadline. Members who read the meet invitation will find it also lists a meet entry deadline. This has caused a lot of confusion over the past few months. The deadline listed in the meet invitation is the host-team's deadline for all teams to submit their team entries. Individual AQUASTAR members should ignore this deadline as it applies to our volunteer meet entry coordinator.

The meet entry deadline listed on the AQUASTAR homepage is approximately five days earlier than the date listed in the meet invitation. This is your deadline for submitting your swimmer's entry to the AQUASTAR meet entry coordinator.

(See "Deadlines, page 2)

Ellen Lobb Selected for USA Swimming Southern Zone Select Camp

Ellen Lobb has been selected to attend USA Swimming's Southern Zone Select Camp in Chattanooga, TN in June 2006. USA Swimming hosts Zone Select Camps to help identify emerging young athletes in each of four geographic zones and offer them a unique motivational and educational experience. The Zone Select Camps are viewed as an integral step for athletes to move from the local and Zone level onto to the national scene. Only 28 female and 28 male swimmers are invited to attend each zone's camp. To be eligible, girls must be age 12-13 at the time of selection. The fastest swimmer in each Zone in each Olympic event (excluding the 50 free, including the 800 and 1500 for both sexes) is invited, for a total of 13 male and 13 female athletes. An additional 15 athletes of each sex is selected based on IMX point scores.

Congratulations to Ellen, Coach Harold and our coaching staff for this great achievement!

"To dream anything that you want to dream. That is the beauty of the human mind. To do anything that you want to do. That is the strength of the human will. To trust yourself to test your limits. That is the courage to succeed." --Bernard Edmonds

Simplify the Meet Entry Process—Set Up a Pre-Paid Meet Entry Account

AQUASTAR has pre-paid meet entry fee escrow accounts available to members as a convenience to eliminate multiple check writing. Accounts are set up and tracked by our treasurer and work something like Harris County's EZTag toll road accounts. You open an account with an initial payment, and then the balance is drawn down as you enter meets.

Members open accounts by paying, for example, \$50 toward any future meet entry fees, and then draw down on the account over time as each meet occurs. **No per-meet transaction is required by the member**, other than indicating on the meet entry form that you wish to pay for that meet in this manner. When your escrow account balance drops below \$10, you will automatically be invoiced for the amount necessary to build your account back up to \$50 or whatever amount you choose.

Using the escrow account with our [online meet entry form](#) eliminates all paperwork when entering meets. It is particularly convenient for those not typically on deck at practice at the time entries are due. This also makes the meet entry process easier to do in advance, avoiding the higher cost of entering "on-deck" at a meet.

A more detailed account of the mechanics of the meet entry escrow account process is at <http://swimaqua.org/PDFs/escrow.pdf>. Contact Ed Mullery at jmullery@houston.rr.com about setting up *your* meet entry escrow account!

Be Sure to Get Your 2006 USA Swimming ID Card!

The USA Swimming ID card proves your swimmer is a registered member of USA Swimming and contains the swimmer's USA Swimming ID number, which is required on meet entry forms. You can also use it to prove your AQUASTAR membership to obtain team discounts from team-sponsored stores, such as A-Gleam Swim Shop.

If you have completed your 2006 USA Swimming Registration form, see the "Parent-on-Deck" at the pool where you practice most to pick up your card.

(From "Deadlines, page 1)

This earlier deadline gives the volunteer meet entry coordinator time to assemble entries, verify times, make corrections and submit an AQUASTAR team entry packet to the host team by the deadline listed in the meet invitation. This process can take as long as two weeks to complete, depending on the number of swimmers entered and how quickly members submit entries.

Therefore, please pay careful attention to and abide by the deadline listed on AQUASTAR homepage, not the deadline listed in the meet invitation. If you decide to attend a meet and the AQUASTAR deadline has passed, you cannot pre-enter the meet through AQUASTAR's online meet entry system. However, you can still enter the meet! Simply go to the meet on the date you would like to attend and "on-deck enter" your swimmer.

For more information on on-deck entries, see the parent-on-deck at your practice pool, or read the meet entry articles in the [September 2005 Newsletter](#) or contact meet entry chairperson Kelli Baliker at kbaliker@houston.rr.com.

"Swap Shop" Now Open!

Just about every swim family has a drawer or box of swim equipment they are not using. From outgrown fins to goggles and suits purchased, but never worn because they didn't fit or the swimmer didn't like them. Don't let this equipment go to waste! List it in the new AQUASTAR Swap Shop column.

To have your items listed, simply submit a short description of the item including things such as the item's condition, size, color, and cost, if any. You can also take a digital photo of the item to be included with your "ad." Finally, you will also need to provide your contact information so those interested in your items can contact you directly to arrange to receive the items. You can even resubmit your item each month until it finds a new home!

To submit an ad to the swap shop column, send the information and any photos to Amy Castro, Amy_Castro@ICTSTexas.com.

"In Your Lane"



Name: Fernando Tejada Castro

Age: 11

School: James F. Bay Elementary

Swim Facts: 1 ½ years with AQUASTAR

Practice Group: White

Favorite Stroke: Freestyle

Least Favorite Stroke: Breaststroke

Favorite Part of Practice: Relays and mostly everything else

Least Favorite Part of Practice: Doesn't have a least favorite part of practice, he likes it all.

Hobbies & Interests: Reading, movies, ride bicycle. Improving swimming skills. Wants to be an actor.

Other: Enjoys baseball, football and skiing. Likes to go to parties and talk with his friends.



Name: Amanda Maniet

Age: 11

School: Sablatura Middle School

Swim Facts: With Aquastar two years

Practice Group: White

Favorite Stroke: Freestyle

Least Favorite Stroke: Butterfly

Favorite Part of Practice: Dives

Least Favorite Part of Practice: Warm ups

Hobbies & Interests: soccer

Other: Three pets

Training Group Promotions

As a result of their performance at recent meets, the following swimmers are now eligible to move up a training group. Congratulations to all of them!

From Red to White:

Bob Brisco, Kyra Drake, Sarah Fixel, Michael Fowler, Caleb Hayman, Caitlyn Marr, Jennifer Schmidt, Brittany Surber, James Tomerlin and Christopher Westerlund.

From White to Blue:

Chris Berger and Vivien Tsou.

December Birthdays

Be sure to wish each of these AQUASTAR swimmers a HAPPY BIRTHDAY this month!

Rachel Cragin, 12/1

Jackson Hayes, 12/4

Michael Tomerlin, 12/7

Megan Hopkins, 12/8

Meagan Duke, 12/9

Caroline McElhany, 12/10

Steven Vu, 12/10

Andrea Riojas, 12/14

Gina Fossati, 12/17

Sam Kane, 12/17

Elizabeth Smith, 12/17

Stephanie Tzouanas, 12/17

Kimberly Hermann, 12/21

Lauran McCormick, 12/21

Jared Schneider, 12/23

Curt Seward, 12/23

Caitlyn Clemmer, 12/27

Jacquelyn Traylor, 12/29

