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www.swimaqua.org
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Bay Area AQUASTARS
Houston, TX 77062

Turning today's potential into tomorrow's performance

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**NEXT
BOARD
MEETING**

Tuesday,
Jan. 11

8:30 pm

Gloria Dei
Church,
Nassau Bay

ALL PARENTS
INVITED!

S.T.A.R. Merger Official as of January 1, 2005

The much discussed club consolidation with S.T.A.R. will become official as of January 1, 2005. Current AQUA families will notice very little change. More pools will be available for practice, so continue to consult the practice calendar. There will also be some new faces on the coaching staff which we will introduce over the next few months via coach profiles in this newsletter. AQUA swimmers should continue to work hard in practice, show improvement at meets and warmly welcome approximately 100 new teammates.

New Column, "In Your Lane," Features Different Swimmers Each Month

Beginning this month, the newsletter will contain a new column, "In Your Lane," profiling one or two swimmers each month. The column allows swimmers to learn more about other team members so the person swimming alongside them becomes a friend and teammate, not "just another cap and goggles."

Don't be surprised if you get a call asking to be interviewed for this newsletter feature; however there is no pressure to participate if you're not interested. Parents, if your swimmer would like to be profiled and you give your permission for them to be featured; you don't have to wait to be asked. Simply forward a JPG or BMP format, head and shoulders photo of your swimmer to Amy Castro at Amy_Castro@ICTSTexas.com. If you don't have a digital photo of your

swimmer let us know and we can take a photo at practice. Also, please provide the following information about the swimmer. We'll try to include as much as possible each month:

- ◆ Swimmer's name, age and training group
- ◆ Grade in school and school he/she attends
- ◆ What he/she likes best about being part of AQUASTAR
- ◆ Favorite/least favorite stroke
- ◆ Favorite/least favorite part of practice
- ◆ Pets, favorite music, hobbies and interests outside of swimming, etc.

Changes to AQUASTAR Fee Structure and Policies

Late Fee to be Imposed Beginning with February Billing Statement- AQUASTAR monthly training fees are due at the end of each month. As of Dec 15, training fees due Nov 30 had not been received from more than 50% of the team. This has become a big problem for the team over the past year as training fees are used to pay coaches and pay for facility usage. Therefore, beginning with the February training fees, payments not received 10 days after the due date will incur a \$10 late fee which will appear on the next month's statement.

Minor Fee Changes due to S.T.A.R. Merger and USA/Gulf Swimming Increases- The board approved modest fee changes effective January 1, 2005 consistent with provisions of the S.T.A.R. merger. First, the family maximum charge will increase from \$135 to \$140 per month.

(Continued on pg. 2)

(From "Changes," pg. 1)

Also, due to increases in USA and Gulf Swimming registration fees, annual registration fees beginning with the 2005 calendar year will increase from \$81 to \$85 per swimmer. Those who have already completed their 2005 registration at the \$81 fee will not pay the new rate until they register for the 2006 calendar year in the fall of 2005.

"In Your Lane"



Name: Shannon Orlando
Age: 14

School: La Porte High School - 9th grade
Swim Facts: Swimming with AQUA for a little over a year; also swims for the La

Porte High School swim team

Practice Group: Blue

Favorite Stroke: Breaststroke

Least Favorite Stroke: Freestyle

Favorite Part of Practice: Sprints

Least Favorite Part of Practice: Hard freestyle sets

Hobbies & Interests: Has played the viola in the school orchestra since 6th grade

Pets: Three dogs- Cocoa (her favorite), Shaby and Zelda

Favorite Music: Classical



Name: Chris Berger
Age: 12

School: Home School
Swim Facts: Began with AQUA in August and was previously a member of Hub Fins in Hattiesburg, Miss., for more than two years.

Practice Group: White

Favorite Stroke: Freestyle

Least Favorite Stroke: Backstroke

Favorite Part of Practice: Warm ups

Least Favorite Part of Practice: Main set

Hobbies: Playing video and computer games and collecting Dragon Ball Z and Star Wars characters

Pets: One dog- Freckles

Favorite Music: Contemporary Christian (KSBJ radio)

Meet Summaries-Awesome!

SCAT 14-under Open-Thirty-eight AQUA swimmers participated in the SCAT Open Meet Nov. 19-21 and improved in 68% of the events entered. Year-to-date improvement stands at 76%. "Swimmer of the Meet" is Alyssa Buffum, with eight best times in eight swims. Other swimmers with 100% improvement include Kacie Baker (7), Jenny Claydon (4), Michelle Eggebrecht (1), Mark Grijalva (3), Teale Horbach (3), Allen Hu (3), Jorge Jimenez (2), Ellen Lobb (6), Amanda Maniet (3), Katharine Silkowski (2), Stephen Sun (3), and Dennis Wang (3).

Five new TAGS times were earned by Ellen Lobb in the 11-12 girls 100 breast, 200 breast and 100 fly and by Julia Sepulveda in the 11-12 girls 500 free and 100 back. Julia also swam a T16 time in the 200 breast. Eight AQUA records were set by Jenny Claydon in the 13-14 girls 50 free, 100 free and 200 free and by Caroline McElhany in the 11-12 girls 200 free and 100 fly and by the 11-12 girls 200 free and medley relays composed of Ellen Lobb, Caroline McElhany, Adriana Sepulveda, and Julia Sepulveda and by the 13-14 boys 200 free relay of Kyle Gonzalez, Will Kolodgie, Paul McGuire, and Stephen Sun.

Winter Champs-Twenty-eight AQUA swimmers participated in the Winter Champs meet Dec. 3-5, at Kashmere High School and improved in 57% of the events entered. Year-to-date improvement stands at 73%. Kelsey Gonzales was "Swimmer of the Meet" with four best times out of four attempts. Other swimmers with 100% improvement are Caroline Baliker (1), Ruth Bernay (3), Michelle Eggebrecht (2), Jorge Jimenez (3), Will Stephens (3), and Fernando Tejada (3).



Winter Champs 10-under relay team: (L-R) Lauren Fiske, Grace Baliker, Alyssa Buffum, Alyssa Mullery

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(From "Meet Summaries," pg. 2)

COR Winter Classic- At the COR Winter Classic, Dec. 4-5 in Dallas, Caroline McElhany improved in all eight of her events. She finished first in all her events and captured the "Female Swimmer of the Meet" trophy. Along the way, she swam eight AQUA records, three Gulf records and two State records.

Gulf Champs- Eighteen AQUASTAR swimmers participated in the Gulf Champs age group meet Dec. 10-12 at the Don Cook Natatorium in Sugar Land and improved in 74% of the events entered. Improvement rate for the short course season stands at 73%. Swimmers of the Meet, with seven best times out of seven events entered, are Mark Grijalva, Ellen Lobb, and Adriana Sepulveda. Ellen also earned the 11-12 girls high-point award and swam three National Reportable Top 16 times in the 50 free, 100 free and 100 IM.

Twelve new TAGS times were earned as follows: Benny Berezin in the 11-12 boys 100 free, Cole Cragin in the 13-14 boys 200 fly, Cameron Dyer in the 11-12 boys 100 and 200 back, Mark Grijalva in the 13-14 boys 1000 free, 1650 free and 200 IM, Josh Hurley in the 13-14 boys 200 fly, Jorge Jimenez in the 13-14 boys 100 fly, Adriana Sepulveda in the 11-12 girls 100 fly, and Julia Sepulveda in the 11-12 girls 50 and 200 back.

Nine new Sectional times were earned by Kacie Baker in the 200 breast, Jenny Claydon in the 50 free, 200 free and 200 IM, Mark Grijalva in the 200 breast, Ellen Lobb in the 100 free, Caroline McElhany in the 200 fly, and Kenna Terry in the 100 and 200 back.

Twenty-two AQUASTAR records were set by Kacie Baker in the 13-14 girls 200 breast, Benny Berezin in the 11-12 boys 50 free and 100 free, Jenny Claydon in the 13-14 girls 50 free, 100 free, 200 free and 200 IM, Cole Cragin in the 13-14 boys 200 fly, Mark Grijalva in the 13-14 boys 500 free, 1650 free, 200 breast and 200 IM, Ellen Lobb in the 11-12 girls 50 back, 100 back, Caroline McElhany in the 13-14 girls 100 breast and 200 fly, Kenna Terry in the 13-14 girls 100 back and 200 back, the 13-14 girls 400 free relay consisting of Caroline McElhany, Kenna Terry, Jeannette Wacker and Jenny

Claydon, the 13-14 girls 400 medley relay consisting of Kenna Terry, Kacie Baker, Jenny Claydon and Jeannette Wacker, and the 13-14 boys 400 free and medley relays consisting of Cole Cragin, Mark Grijalva, Josh Hurley and Jorge Jimenez.

Congratulations to all and Way to Go, AQUASTAR!!

Congratulations to Newly Promoted Swimmers

Five swimmers earned promotions at the SCAT meet: Stevie Garcia from Red to White, Teale Horbach from White to Blue, Shannon Orlando from White to Blue, Stephen Sun from Blue to Gold, and Dennis Wang from Red to White.

Seven swimmers earned promotions at the Winter Champs meet: Kelsey Castro from White to Blue, Michael Jacoby from Red to White, Jorge Jimenez from Blue to Gold, Will Kolodgie from Blue to Gold, Ryan Swaney from White to Blue, Fernando Tejada from Red to White, and Will Stevens from White to Blue.

Eight swimmers are qualified for Senior group due to meet performances and group requirement changes: Jenny Claydon, Cole Cragin, Mark Grijalva, Josh Hurley, Ellen Lobb, Caroline McElhany, Justin Russo, and Jared Schneider.

Tell Us How We're Doing:

Member Feedback Always Welcome

The board is interested in input from our families. Do you feel we follow our corporate mission, to work together as parents, swimmers and coaches to minimize the gap between potential and performance? We welcome your praise, constructive criticism, questions and comments. Comments can be submitted via the web or at the beginning of monthly board meetings during a period available for open member feedback. Web comments can even be anonymous if you wish; however it may be more difficult for the board to address your concerns and questions if we don't know who you are. From team cheers to promotion fears, the Board is always interested in what is on your mind.