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YMCA OF GREATER WESTFIELD SWIM COACH JAMIE BLOOM HEADS TO SCOTLAND FOR INTERNATIONAL MEET



Jamie Bloom, YMCA of Greater Westfield's Head Swim Team Coach, was recently named as the Assistant Team Manager to USA Swimming's "Duel in the Pool" team. Swimming All-Stars, Katie Ledecky and Cullin Jones will be leading the United States against Europe's best in this Mutual of Omaha "Duel in the Pool" meet, set for Dec. 20-21, 2013 in Glasgow, Scotland. This is an outstanding honor for Jamie and the YMCA of Greater Westfield.

In September 2012, Jamie attended the Manager Training at the USAS Convention. At the training, she suggested that USA Swimming should consider creating a mentor program for managers, which would allow new people the opportunity to learn from the best, be trained, and have guidance to fill roles in the future. She had experienced being an Assistant Team Manager with the Eastern Zone Camp in the past, but wanted more opportunities like that to further her growth. In order to be considered for an Assistant Team Manager position, Jamie completed the application, obtained professional and personal recommendations and medical clearance. In October 2013, she received the call asking her to be the Assistant Team Manager for the "Duel in the Pool" 2013 meet which she graciously accepted.

Jamie is a phenomenal leader and coach who is respected both in and out of the YMCA. She is the Age Group Chair for New England Swimming and she serves on the Board of Directors of the local swim committee, a member of USA Swimming Eastern Zone. She also serves on the USA Swimming National Convention Education Committee. She has been a YMCA Swimming Group Rep for the last three years representing MA, ME, NH, RI, and VT.

Prior to her arrival at the YMCA of Greater Westfield nearly nine years ago, she served as an Assistant Coach at the University of Tennessee from 2000-2005, a perennial top 20 Division One Swim team.

This is Jamie's thirty-third year as a swim coach. Over the years, she has worked with many high ranking officials in both the USA and YMCA swimming worlds, fine tuning her coaching and administrative skills. As an age group coach, she has been instrumental in helping swimmers develop skills at an early age providing a solid base for them to continue swimming throughout their lives.

She shared her coaching philosophy recently with the writer. "Having coached kids of all different swimming levels, I have learned that swimmers are basically all the same. They want their coach to be fair, they want to have fun at practice, and they want to swim faster than the last time they swam. This is the environment we strive to set every day at the YMCA pool. We

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are constantly learning from the science behind good swimming technique and we implement that knowledge in our teaching with our swimmers.

I am proud of our great coaching staff. The core staff has been here with me since I started nine years ago. Each coach brings their own personality, experience and knowledge to the sport so the swimmers are always able to find a coach to connect with and experience the joy of the sport. Lastly, I would add that I really respect the influence that a coach can have on an athlete. We make a difference in their lives, especially when they spend so many years with us. We really get to help shape who they are and who they will become."

Jamie is looking forward to her trip to Scotland. She shared, "I've never before been to a swim meet outside the U.S. and I am especially excited about the opportunity to work with a group of athletes representing our country".

The meet will be aired on NBC television as part of a two-hour show on Dec. 22nd, from 4:00-6:00PM.

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