

Name: Jenna Kirchoff

High School: Severna Park High School

Years on SPY: 9

College attending in Fall 2012: University of Rhode Island



Hobbies when not swimming: Baking cookies, Rice Krispy Treats and cupcakes for my boys; shopping; eating; sleeping; talking trash about every summer swim team in the ESPL with Coach Sean and Captain Jack; spending hours watching Dawson's Creek and Friday Night Lights with Allie Muha; and becoming an avid traveler flying up to Boston to visit Midshipman Vagts at MIT.

Most memorable swim: My most memorable swim is the first time I qualified for Short Course Nationals. I had qualified for Long Course Nationals at Wilton in the 200 freestyle and was within a second of the cut time for SCYNATS from Wilton until District finals (AKA the absolute last chance to qualify). I was swimming in the same heat as Emily, Kendall and Nicole, and was about to pee myself I was so nervous. Kendall came up to me before we swam and told me, "Remember, when you can't feel your arms because it hurts so badly... that's when you go faster". The race was a blur, and I was never able to see the scoreboard, but as soon as I touched the wall Emily jumped over two lane lines to drown me in a hug; Kendall and Nicole swam over and we pretty much put the meet on hold because four swimmers were in one lane. (Seriously, the officials had no idea what to do because we were just treading water together in celebration). And I will never forget walking over to talk to Jim afterwards and seeing Tori just standing there sobbing because she was so happy! The whole experience was so surreal and something I will never forget.

Most memorable/funny moment:

Every practice in Lane Three was memorable with Nicole, Kimmy, Allie and Hannah. But nothing beats right before I turned thirteen, Hannah and I were kicking together during a set and she was telling me all about teenagers. Mostly about how awful they are and all the things that happen when you turn thirteen. Jim almost had a heart-attack when he overheard Hannah's lecture and yelled to make her stop. Other memorable moments include: Firehouse Subs runs with Mike Cooke and Jack Bremer; Giant adventures with Colin Heil; writing notes all year with Allie Muha; my rookie year at YNATS finaling in the 200 freestyle relay with Emily, Nicole and Kendall; and meeting the smartest, funniest, sweetest, greatest guy I know.

Best Events: 500, 1000, 1650 freestyle (my favorite is the 500).

Favorite Set: Back in the day when Chet was coaching he made a practice where each lane was a different set according to everyone's best events. I swam 12x500's freestyle on 7 minutes holding under 6 minutes. I didn't exactly enjoy the set, but I have never felt as accomplished as I did after that practice. The most fun I've had during a set was 2x1650's I swam last year with Allie. We would blow bubbles in between and chat with Crystee trying to distract her from making us swim the second mile.

Least Favorite Set:

"Stroke" sets. Freestyle is a stroke, people (i.e. Crystee, Jim and Richard). There are six events (and a whole meet) dedicated to freestyle, and you're going to tell me that it's not a stroke? Bologna.

Pre-swim rituals:

I warm up a ton before a meet. And then normally I have to stretch Jack before he swims. I'll eat some cereal (Honey Nut Cheerios) or a power bar (Triple Threat). I go back and forth drinking water and Gatorade (only blue or purple flavors) because if I only have one or the other it starts to taste bad. I go behind the blocks about twenty minutes too early and I have to awkwardly ask someone to flip my cap because I can't do it by myself. If I'm about to swim a distance event I loosen my goggles a little or else I'll start to get a headache while I'm swimming. If I'm swimming a sprint (which is a pretty rare experience), I tighten my goggles too tight. Then I stretch a little and jump up and down a few times and I'm ready to swim!

Favorite meal before a meet:

There is a pasta dish from Squisito's - penne pasta, broccoli and chicken that's delish.

Advice for next years graduating class:

Swimming is a lifelong sport; not only in the physical aspect, but also in the friendships that you create. I know that if I'm having a bad day or I need someone to talk to, I can come to practice and confide in any of my teammates. We are a support system for each other in and out of the pool. I think over the years, the SPIES group has evolved into a tighter, family like atmosphere. My advice to younger swimmers is to appreciate the relationships that you form because they will truly last a lifetime.