

Name: Lauren Belloff

High School: Severna Park High School

Years on SPY: 10

College attending in the fall: undecided right now

Hobbies when I'm not swimming: When I'm not swimming on spy I'm probably hanging out with my best friends (from spy) Katie and Matt. I love going downtown, watching Keeping Up with the Kardashians and other reality TV, going shopping, and hanging out with my friends and of course keeping up with my school work. I've also swam on the High school team for all of high school which keeps me even busier during the school year!

Most Memorable Swim: I've been on Spy way too long to have only one most memorable swim, but I think the one that has stuck with me is one that goes all the way back to when I was nine or ten. It was one of my first years going to the big travel meet (and my all-time favorite meet) of the season, Wilton, and I had just learned how to do butterfly a few months before. Jim put me in 50 fly at the last meet which at the time was pretty daunting to nine or ten year old me. I still remember how panicked I felt when I got to the Saturday session of Wilton and someone told me I was in the 100 fly. I freaked out and ran over to Jim and said it wasn't fair; this was only my second time ever swimming fly in a meet. I don't exactly remember how I felt before the race, but I remember the whole race very vividly. The first 25 felt ok, but I progressively got more exhausted and started to panic. By the third 25 I was thinking to myself that if I didn't stop I would probably drown, so naturally I got out at the far end of the pool at the third 25, during my race, and broke out tears while I ran into the bathroom. I remember how the official tried to help me out but I was too embarrassed and how I tried to avoid everyone by hiding after. Since then I've made Long Course Nationals 2013, 2014 in 100 and 200 fly (which is definitely a most memorable swim) and I've been a butterflyer for as long as I can remember 😊

Most Memorable/funny moment: I think that every practice that we are too tired to function is when the funniest moments happen. Sometimes we make up songs about not getting in on time, or we (Katie) throw all the cones in the pool out of anger and frustration that we have to get in the pool soon, or we pour our water bottles on each other! Or sometimes we take the stickers off the sides of the blocks which will make the whole deck smell awful. Even though the coaches probably don't appreciate it I have the most fun when we goof off during relays in practice and cool downs and such.

Best Event: Either 200 or 100 fly, but I really like 100 and 50 free.

Favorite Set: The one practice before either Raleigh or Wilton were Charlie made up all these unique games using kickboards and even our goggles. I love all the games practices, but I also like a good 200 stroke set where we have to descend or hold our time. Also the grinder sets on Saturday morning that would make you feel super accomplished after finishing the whole thing.

Least Favorite Set: I love kicking sets, therefore I hate pull sets. I also have a love/hate relationship with long distance free sets, because I usually get bored or lose count.



Pre-Swim rituals: I like to focus before a race, but not too far in advanced. I usually like to listen to some terrible rap with Katie or some of Matt's music. Talking and laughing with people behind the blocks or while I'm waiting to swim helps me calm down and takes off some of the pressure I put on myself before a big race. I try to have an open mindset because I've learned swimming is a very very very mental sport. A few heats before mine I always do the same stretches behind the block and then right before my race I take a few deep breaths, stretch each leg on the block, wiggle my arms and legs, and then go!

Favorite meal before a big meet: Pesto pasta or fettuccini alfredo; with lots of French bread.

Advice for next year's graduating class: Make sure to always stay positive. Every race won't be your best, and even every season, but there's always room for improvement if you stay committed and see the benefit of being on a team. Make SPY great, be nice, and also good luck with the college search I'm going to miss you guys!