

The Swimmer's Ear

NBAC Harford Newsletter

October 2nd, 2007

From the Coaches' Desk....

Welcome to another year of NBAC swimming. It promises to be an exciting one filled (as always) with lots of fast swimming, exciting races and lots of learning and improvement. It is always exciting to be a part of one of the best swim teams in the world, but during an Olympic year, being part of NBAC is even better! At this moment, 13 of your teammates have already qualified for the Olympic Trials next summer including current World Record holder Katie Hoff. As the year goes on, look for opportunities to watch some of the best swimmers this country has to offer, as they prepare for the biggest meet in the quadrennium.

You can keep up with all that is happening with our world renowned team on the NBAC website (www.nbac.net.) In addition to all the basic info that you might need (schedules, directions, emails etc.) you can read about your or your teammate's accomplishments at all the meets this year, see pictures from these events and learn about upcoming events. Don't forget that we often post last minute practice changes on the website and you can always see the latest edition of this newsletter (in case you lose yours!)

I like to start out each season with some reminders and guidelines that will allow our swimmers and their parents to have a smooth and successful year. Please take the time to read through this whole newsletter so that you don't miss out on any important info. If you have any questions regarding the information in this newsletter or about the team or your swimmer, please feel free to contact me. I am happy to answer all questions (including ones that you think are stupid.) Please do not feel as though you are bothering me when you call my phone. I am available at most hours of the day EXCEPT when the kids are practicing. If you prefer to talk in person, I am more than willing to set up a time when we can meet. If you have an important message for me or your child while practice is happening, please feel free to call the Arena Club front desk...they will deliver the message to me at the pool or send a text message to my cell phone. Although I will not often answer my phone during practices, it is always with me and it is easy to read a text message quickly.

RACHAEL'S RULES

At least once a year, I like to present the NBAC Harford kids and families with "Rachael's Rules." Over the years, I have come up with three basic rules for swimmers (and parents and coaches) to live by. Most of the kids already know them and many of you have seen them here in this newsletter before, but I give you this opportunity to review them:

1. *Listen when someone is talking to you (BE RESPECTFUL.)* This is not just for when the coach is giving the directions, it also applies to when a swimmer has raised their hand and been called on or when mom is talking to someone else. Not only is it rude to interrupt, but I have found that you can't learn anything if you don't stop talking.
2. *Worry about yourself.* Of course I am not suggesting that we shouldn't care about one another as people, however many of the kids (and adults) spend a lot of energy worrying/discussing what other people are doing, rather than focusing on what they themselves are doing.
3. *NO FREAKING OUT!* Getting DQ'd, missing an event, making mistakes, not going a best time are all part of the learning process. When things do not go as planned or turn out the way you wanted them to, you have a choice in how you deal with it and often times there are many ways to turn the negative situation into a positive learning situation. Very rarely does something happen in swimming (or in life) for which the best response is to "freak out."

Rachael

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Here are some general guidelines that we try to follow at NBAC. These guidelines are for both swimmers and parents and will help you be successful not only in swimming, but also in life:

BE ON TIME- If your practice starts at 6 pm, then walking in the door at 5:59 pm is not considered on time. Start times indicate when the instruction will begin, so make sure you are there **at least 10 minutes before** so that you are prepared for that practice or meet. When you are late, you often miss important announcements and instructions and at least a portion of the warm up. It is hard to be successful when you do not know what the activity is and/or you body isn't really ready to do it. For those rare occasions when circumstances arise that make it impossible to get there on time, please minimize the effect by hurrying to get yourself ready and by being even more attentive than normal so that you can figure out what the directions are.

BE PREPARED- If your practice starts at 6 pm, then you should have done everything possible to fully participate and focus for the entire duration of your practice. That means that you should have finished your pre practice warm up, used the bathroom, have all your equipment ready, have your water bottle or drink with you and your cap and goggles on. In rare circumstances, it may be necessary for a swimmer to use the bathroom during practice, but if you are in the habit of going **BEFORE** you swim, you will probably never have to **MISS** practice time so that you can go.

BE RESPONSIBLE- Being on a swim team is a great way for children to **LEARN** to be responsible. However, unless they are given the opportunity to, they will never become responsible. All swimmers should be in charge of their own gear and equipment. This means that they can pack their own bag, carry their own gear out to the pool and make sure they pick up their own stuff after practice. Even our littlest swimmers are able to keep track of their own stuff when given the opportunity to.

BE A GOOD TEAM MATE- You are a member of one of the **BEST** swim teams in the **COUNTRY!** Take pride in that! Get to know the other swimmer's in your group, at your site and on your team. Whether you are the fastest swimmer on the team or the slowest, whether your child has been on the team for years or if you are a parent of a new swimmer, each and every one of you plays an important role, and we cannot continue to be #1 without you. Work hard and work together to help keep NBAC on top.

From the Pogues.....

Earlier this year, one of our favorite NBAC families moved to Ft. Drum in New York. Before they left, the family gave me this letter to share with all of you.

Dear NBAC families-

We have loved being a part of this wonderful team for these past two years. You very quickly became a family to us. Thank you for all your support and especially for all the fun we had. We will miss you all! Please keep in touch, and remember that the Pogue house is always open and we love visitors.

Love, Garner, Jennifer, Maggie, Billy, Betsy, Lillia, & Jack.

*Swim fast, and when you can't think of what else to do, swim faster!
Go NBAC!*

*The Pogue family
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2007 Fall/Winter Meet Schedule

It is often difficult to know which meets your child will be swimming in, even when you have a meet schedule in front of you. Some of the meets we attend are just for certain ages, some are for kids who have achieved certain time standards and some are by coaches' invitation. Below is a list of all the meets NBAC Harford kids will be attending this fall and a description of who will attend each one. We frequently go over the upcoming meets and who will be swimming in each one at practice, so the kids should also know which meets they will be attending. If you still have questions after reviewing this list, please feel free to contact Rachael.

RAC COLUMBUS DAY CLASSIC October 6-7 @ UMBC

This meet is for all the kids who are 9-13 and are in the Blue Group, AGP or either Senior group. Kids who were entered in this meet should have already received their sheets with their entries on it.

NBAC PENTATHLON October 21st @ Meadowbrook

All the kids in the Yellow group will swim at this meet which is just for the youngest members of our team. Kids who are entered in this meet should have already received their sheets with their entries on it.

NBAC vs. CUBU DUAL MEET October 28th @ Georgetown Prep

Each year we have a dual meet with our D.C. area rival Curl-Burke. This meet is for 14 & under only and the team is selected by the coaching staff. We are allowed to enter 4 kids in each individual event and we can have up to three relay teams for each of the two relay events. Kids will be notified by their coach if they are chosen to participate in this meet.

NBAC FALL FESTIVAL November 2-4 @ UMBC

Kids must have achieved certain time standards to swim at this meet. 12 & unders must have BB times and 13 & overs must have A times. We may be able to enter kids who have are at the time standard below (B times for 12 & under and BB for 13 & over) if the meet is not full. However in past years, the meet has been extremely full and we have had to remove kids that we wanted to enter. We will try to enter as many kids as possible; however we are planning on attending a new meet this year (GBSA) so none of our kids lose out on an opportunity to race.

HARY DISTANCE MEET November 10-11 @ Magnolia Middle School

We may take some kids to the swim some distance events at one session of this meet. We will NOT be attending the MINI meet portion of the meet.

GBSA THANKSGIVING SWIM FEST November 16-18 @ CCBC

Kids from Blue/AGP /Seniors who are unable to attend the FASTival will be able to swim at this GBSA meet. We may attend only one or two days of the meet depending on the number of kids who are going to swim at this one.

NBAC CANDY CANE MEET December 2nd @ Meadowbrook

All of our 8 & unders will swim at this one along with any 9-10's who are unable to swim at the Christmas Meet.

NBAC CHRISTMAS INVITATIONAL December 7-9 @ USNA

We will try to have as many of our 9 & overs swim in this meet. In the past, 12 & unders have had to have three BB times in order to participate. We may have some kids swim just one or two days.

Meet entries are often due several weeks before the meet actually happens. Once we have sent them off, we are usually unable to make any changes including removing swimmers from the meet. Even if your child does not attend, we must pay for all the entries we send in. Therefore, if you are unable to attend one of the meets, please let Rachael know in writing (email is great) so that she remembers not to enter you.

If you would like more information about any of these meets please visit www.nbac.net or www.mdswim.org. Both places have links to the meet notices which include order of events, directions to the meet, warm up times etc. Please note.....warm up times are sometimes changed once all the entries have been received.

Arena Club Practices

Please be aware of the following items during the time that we practicing at the Arena Club:

*The Arena Club has members who pay to use their facility. Therefore, if you are not a paying member, you are not supposed to use their facility. That includes sitting at a table while your child is practicing.

*Locker room usage is a privilege, not a right! Any swimmer who chooses to abuse this privilege will lose it. Shouting, yelling, running, soap fights and other horseplay will not be tolerated. Parents are encouraged to supervise their child in the locker room after practice.

*Regardless of the facility, NBAC does not allow parents to watch practices. Parents are encouraged to drop their kids off and pick their kids up on the pool deck. Feel free to come a few minutes early to watch from afar the last 5-10 minutes of practice.

*The Arena Club closes at 9 pm on Friday evenings. Most evening, the club is still open after we finish practice, however on Fridays, the staff is ready to leave at 9 pm. Therefore, we do our best to let the kids out a few minutes early and hurry in the locker room so that we can allow the Club to lock up as close to 9 pm as possible. If your child has a Friday night practice, please plan on picking them up at 9:00 pm on the dot.

*The Arena Club opens at 6 am on Saturday mornings. On every other day, the club is open well before we start practices and the kids are allowed and encouraged to come early so they are prepared for practice. However, on Saturday mornings, the facility does not open it's doors until 6 am. Please remember this detail so that you do not wake up even earlier on Saturday to arrive at the club at 5:30 am!

Inclement Weather

Although NBAC tries not to cancel practice due to inclement weather, we do have to abide by the policies of the Arena Club. Please read through the following situations:

*In the event of thunder, the lifeguards will clear the pool (even when the dome is up.) NBAC practices will continue with dryland.

* If there is lightning, the lifeguards will clear the deck (even when the dome is up.) On most occasions, NBAC practices will continue with dryland activities in one of the multi purpose rooms or the mind/body studio. Depending on the length of the storm, practice length may be shortened.

*In the event of bad winter weather, snow and/or ice, the Arena Club may decide to open later or close early. If the facility is not open, then we cannot have practice. The Arena Club likes to remain open whenever possible, but sometimes the weather requires them to close and they must do so without lots of notice. While NBAC is always the first to know, we still have to rely on emails, phone calls and website postings as our method of notifying you of a last minute practice change or cancellation.

Email List

I often use email as a way of communicating important information to the swimmers and their families, especially for last minute announcements. Sometimes, it is the only way for me to make people aware of a pool closure and practice cancellation (like in the event of bad weather.) I strongly encourage EVERYONE (parents and swimmers) to supply me with an email address(es) that they would like me to send the announcements to. All you have to do is email me from the address that you want me to include and I will save you on my contact list. If you are already on my email list, you do not need to resend your address.

100 % Club

The following swimmers attended 100 % of the practices and meets offered to them during the month of September. Each member of the 100 % club receives a yellow 100 % practice cap and a high five. Congratulations!

Roin Brocato

Caitlin Carter

Taylor Casalena

Sean Dunnigan

Salem Edmundson

Frankie Roman

Lydia Thompson

There is a LOT of room on this list for more people. Can you give 100%?

Upcoming Events & Practice Changes

**Saturday October 6th-
Sunday October 7th** **RAC COLUMBUS DAY CLASSIC @ UMBC**
(all 9-13 year olds in Blue/AGP/Senior)
NO BLUE/AGP Practice on Sunday

Monday October 8th **NO PRACTICE FOR ALL GROUPS (Dome Up Day)**

Thursday October 18th **AGP will practice with Seniors from 7-9 pm**
Yellow Group will have regular practice

Friday October 19th **Seniors will practice from 10:30 am-12:30pm**
AGP/Blue will practice from 12:30 pm-2:00 pm

Saturday October 20th **No Yellow Group practice**

Sunday October 21st **NBAC Pentathlon @ Meadowbrook**
(all members of the Yellow Group)

Sunday October 28th **NBAC vs CUBU Dual Meet @ Georgetown Prep**

**Friday November 2nd-
Sunday November 4th** **NBAC Fall FASTival @ UMBC**
12 & unders w/ BB times, 13 & over w/ A times

**Friday November 16th-
Sunday November 18th** **GBSA Thanksgiving Swim Fest @ CCBC**