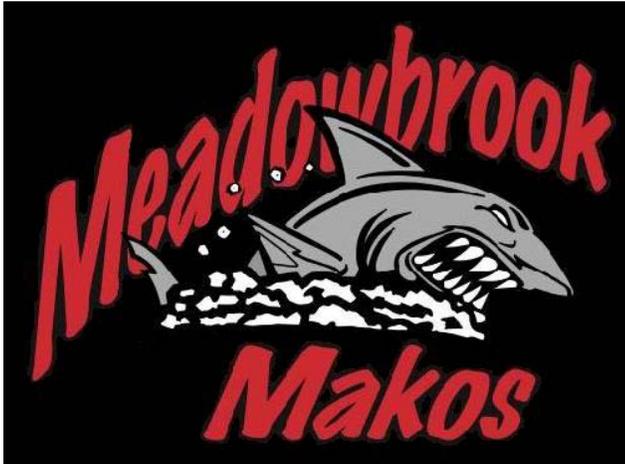


The Meadowbrook Woods Sporting Times

15 June 2013



Leading Off

Way back in the early 2000's, longtime MBW resident Karen Gambarani and several others laid the groundwork for the successful Makos' swim club as we know it today. She and Lynn Sikora managed the team for several years. Karen's efforts came full circle last summer as the second of her two sons swam his final race for the Makos. Sean Gambarani capped a brilliant career with MBW at Divisionals by lowering his personal best 50m freestyle to 28.32s and by helping the 18U boys 200m freestyle relay drop below the "buck-fifty barrier" with a time of 1:49.34.

Sean led MBW to two Divisionals championships during his career and earned High Point honors in his final season. Sean's older brother (Andrew) was part of a fantastic relay team including Cougar Hagen, Richard Arena, Brett Spencer, Ty Lang, Nicolas Marsilio, Kyle Alonge and Eric Sargent that set several 18U club records between the years 2006-2009. On July 25, 2009, the brothers Gambarani swam together with Hagen and Sargent to lower the 18U 200m freestyle relay record to 1:50.15. Doris over in the accounting department estimates that Sean and Andrew combined for more than

400 Saturday morning splashes during their combined careers – an unofficial club record for two brothers. "Which brother was the better swimmer?" you ask? Tough call. We'll leave that one to supper table debates in the coming decades.

In what some would consider "déjà vu all over again" relative to the Gambarani brothers, the Makos welcome brothers Alex and Isaac Villavicencio to the 18U division this summer.

Here we go again.

Thank you Makos Board of Directors

Every successful sports organization has a terrific front office staff and MBW is no exception. Our BOD has worked tirelessly throughout the year to make this summer successful. Thanks for all you do.

Kathy Meltzer	President
Jared Goff	Vice President
Bob Marks	Treasurer
Beth Claessen	Meet Manager
Kathleen Pahls	Communication
Kim Sargent	Secretary

MBW to Host Brookside in Season Opener

With just a few days of school remaining, area youngsters are gearing up for a wide variety of activities such as summer reading programs, community service, and sports. Meadowbrook Woods and neighboring communities are a cornerstone for such endeavors and proudly support student athletes. Now in its 15th season, MBW is part of the 24-club Prince William Swim League (PWSL). The team's mission is to provide a safe and fun environment for swimmers of all experience levels in which everyone

is encouraged to learn proper swimming techniques, good sportsmanship and the experience of team competition.

This summer, the Makos welcome coaches Bradley Morrison and Rachel Lund to the helm. A 2008 graduate of Brentsville District High School and senior at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Bradley comes to MBW after serving as assistant coach at Victory Lakes for the past seven years. Known for his attention to detail, spirit, and friendly attitude, Bradley strikes a solid balance between hard work and having fun. Welcome!

Having grown up in Meadowbrook Woods, Rachel Lund (and her family) has been a friend to the Makos' swim program since its inception in 1999. Osbourn Park High School's female student athlete of the year for 2010, Rachel is now a senior at Towson University where she swam competitively with the Tigers for two seasons. In her final appearance for the Makos on Divisionals Saturday in July 2010, Rachel set 18U club records in the 50m breast (39.64s) and butterfly (33.04s) events. She also anchored the 2008 18U relay squad (also featuring Rebecca Heck, Mary Kate Sterling, and Mellissa Ferrone) that set club records at Ridgewood in the 200m medley (2:26.00) and freestyle (2:06.06) relays.

This summer, Coaches Bradley and Rachel are in the enviable position of providing leadership for more than 100 eager and willing swimmers. The Makos will get their first test of the 2013 campaign when Brookside comes to call this Saturday. The two clubs last met on July 3, 2010, and the Hurricanes slipped past the Makos by a score of 2603-2330. MBW will try to even the score today as county wide action begins.

Look for 8U swimmers including Maddy Ingram and Lily Quimby to set the pace in the early going today. At time trials, Ingram lowered her 2012 best times in the 25m freestyle and backstroke events by a combined seven seconds. Quimby is now 6-

sec faster in the 25m freestyle than last summer.

One of the most intriguing stories of the season could be the 18U boys that may field as many as three relay teams. Eighteen year olds Dylan Gehr and Josh Feshari will provide leadership to a virtual "Who's who" group of PWSL swimmers – several of whom have set club records for the Makos in various events during the past decade.

After a terrific junior year indoor season with the perennial powerhouse Osbourn Park High School swim team, Mike Weiser is seeking an unprecedented third straight season lowering of the Makos 18U 50m backstroke club record. Weiser will be joined by fellow rising seniors Kevin Olsen, Sean Rouffa, and Tanner Curry. They'll get plenty of help from a speedy group of rising sophomores including Colin Turner, Alex Pion, Reid Ouellette, Hunter Herbert, Joshua Ogden. Also moving up is last year's record setting 14U relay team of Daniel Smith, David Bennett, Matthew Healey, and Brock Cudahy who completed an undefeated season and set club records at Divisionals in the 50m medley (2:16.03) and freestyle (1:57.49) relays.

First splash will be shortly after dawn on Saturday. Be there or be square!

Time to Circle Back

By the spring of 1993 (the year Sean Gambarani was born), some welcomed winds of change were swirling across the American landscape. With interest rates reasonably low, housing prices affordable, and business opportunities on the upswing in part due to emerging telecommunication technologies, economic conditions were much more favorable than they had been just a few years prior. Signs of growth were apparent and excitement was in the air. Entrepreneurs were starting businesses and young families were purchasing first homes.

An economic boom-let was occurring in Atlanta as the city had been selected to host the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games.

Contractors from Austell to Alpharetta were on the move as transportation infrastructure, stadiums, and arenas needed to be constructed rapidly. Best of all, the Braves had crawled out of the cellar and were having a great season on the baseball diamond.

On this particular sunny Saturday morning in June, John Paul Evriman stood chatting with his friend Jeff Noles who worked in the lumber department at the local Home Depot. Twenty-something year old Evriman had been charged with constructing a backyard fence to contain a sweet potato sized golden retriever puppy that had an affinity for creeks and ponds. Rather than hiring a contractor skilled in such endeavors or renting power tools, Evriman had unfortunately elected to dig the post-holes and nail the planks by hand. The project could have taken two days but had unraveled into a two month fiasco that pushed Amy Sue Evriman's nearly limitless patience to its boundary. *At least the Braves were winning.*

Nineteen-year old Noles grew up on a farm in Valdosta and was working his way through The Georgia Institute of Technology on a partial baseball scholarship and by working weekends. He had a keen eye for fastballs as well as straight-and-true fencing boards. The lumber department always seemed a little more organized during his work shift.

Evriman glanced across West Paces Ferry Road and noticed a commotion at the local high school. "Looks like quite a crowd is queuing up at the gym. Any idea what's going on?"

Noles heaved an arm-full of fencing planks onto the truck and responded, "Yep. One of the Braves' rookies is signing autographs this morning. Newspaper says he hits well from both sides and fields his position. Name's Larry Jones. That's about all I know."

After loading the truck, Evriman grabbed a baseball from the glove box and made his way across the road. The line at Paces Ferry High School snaked through the gymnasium, past the packed trophy case and out the side

door offering a view of the football field that lay on the banks of the Chattahoochee River. A group of eight high school boys were running 4-on-4 passing drills on the field. Further back, a lone figure was fly fishing. The smell of honey suckles wafted through the air.

After a short wait, Evriman met the young slugger and wished him well in the big leagues. It proved to be the first and only time the two would meet face to face, but Evriman followed Jones' progress closely during the next twenty years.

Later that day, Evriman treated Amy Sue to Felini's pizza in the heart of Buckhead. As the sun set over Peachtree Road, the pair sprung for an extra topping to celebrate completion of the fencing project. The summertime heat and humidity were oppressive, but Atlantans were giddy with anticipation of a pennant as the Braves had reeled off ten straight victories and were challenging Los Angeles for first place.

Evriman kept one eye on the television monitor. The Big Red Machine from Cincinnati was in town - bottom 7, runners on the corners with two outs, all star 3rd baseman Chris Sabo at the plate with the Braves clinging to a slim 3-2 lead. Amy Sue sipped her beverage and weighed in on the precarious situation, "Isn't that the guy who hit a home run in the first inning of our first date?" Evriman cringed, inched closer to the screen, and recalled that July evening several years ago when the two had attended a game at Atlanta Fulton County Stadium. The Reds pummeled the Braves but all was not lost as Amy Sue was originally from Cincinnati and was happy to see Reds win. Maybe tonight would be different.

Sabo stepped to the plate slapped a deep drive towards center field. A hush came over the normally boisterous crowd as the ball arced its way into the southern night. In an amazing feat of athleticism, Otis Nixon scaled the center field wall at the last second to save the home run. The hometown crowd roared its approval. After Nixon landed safely on the

turf, Evriman gazed at Amy Sue and boldly predicted “This will be our year!”

The evening had one more twist in the bottom of the 9th with the score knotted at three apiece. Evriman bit into a piece of pepperoni pizza and watched as Larry Jones strolled towards the plate. Amy Sue queried “Is that the guy you met today?”

“Yep.”

At 6’-4” tall and 230-lb, the 21-year old shortstop from DeLond, Florida, had captured the imagination of major league scouts from around the country before being drafted by Atlanta. On the first pitch, Jones promptly hammered a game winning single back through the middle.

During breakfast at the counter of “The OK Café” next morning, Evriman studied the sports page. Finishing her eggs and grits, Amy Sue asked whether Jones could be the final piece of a puzzle that would bring a pennant to Atlanta.

“Not sure yet. Newspaper says his nickname is ‘Chipper’. I think he’ll be a good one.”

As Evriman hammered the final nails into the fence, Ron Harper returned to his Las Vegas home after a busy shift on a construction site. The construction business in Vegas was booming. On this particular day, Harper and his crew had placed more than 20-tons of steel reinforcing bars into slab and column formwork for a new high rise concrete building. He brought home a one-inch diameter x 4-ft long rebar and proudly showed it to his wife who was feeding the baby.

“This bar will make a good warm-up bat for him one day.”

Eying the 20-lb rod wearily, Mrs. Harper replied, “But Honey, what if he doesn’t like to play sports?”

“He will. By the way, I’ve thought of a good nickname. Let’s call him ‘Bryce’.”

- The End -

Epilogue

In July of 1996, Atlanta hosted the Olympic Games and the Evriman’s welcomed a bouncing baby girl into the world that would change their lives forever. The Braves won 96 games that summer. Jones batted .309 and was elected to the first of several all-star teams. Some of the baby’s first words were “Chipper” and “Big Cat” (1st baseman Andres Gallaraga) as she was subjected to many baseball games during her formative years.

The Braves advanced to the World Series five times in the 1990’s and won it in 1995. Jones retired from baseball last year after a 20-year career with the team.

Mr. and Mrs. Harper gave their son the gift of a strong work ethic. Twenty years later, Bryce Harper is one of the most electrifying players in baseball and is a fan favorite in Northern Virginia. While their styles and positions on the field are vastly different, Jones and Harper share the commonality of those that can change the game with one swing of the bat.

As for the dog (Ginger), she had a great career chasing tennis balls in the fenced yard and loved to swim at Lake Allatoona.

Author’s note: The story you have read is mostly fictional. It is meant as a salute to two of baseball’s best and as a tribute to all those moms, wives and daughters whose unwavering patience does not go unnoticed.

Several of the 18U swimmers have just one or two years remaining with the team before heading off to college or other endeavors. Take a moment to enjoy their accomplishments. Then, circle back your thoughts and enjoy younger swimmers following their legacy. Go Makos!

Faces in the Crowd



Meadowbrook Woods is known for good sportsmanship. Shown here at Time Trials, 14-year-old Liam Turner continues that tradition by remaining in the pool until all have completed the event. Returning for his second season in the 14U flight, Turner led the way last week in multiple events for the Makos. Look for him to battle Brookside's Garrett Finan and Andy Whitted in the 50m freestyle this week. Outside the pool, Liam is a good ping-pong player.



Zach Marks and his 8U colleagues got off to a fast start at last Saturday's time trials and hope to build momentum this week as the Makos host Brookside in the 2013 season opener. A rising third grader at nearby Thurgood Marshall Elementary, Zach has PWB times in multiple strokes and will likely be a key to the 8U group's success this summer. In addition to swimming, Zach enjoys baseball and Cub Scouts.