

# *The Meadowbrook Woods Sporting Times* *Holiday Weekend Edition* *1 July 2016*

## Leading Off

A strong management and coaching team is the hallmark of a program's success potential. Over the years, countless parents and swimmer coaches have contributed the Manassas based Makos swim club. Many thanks to those serving this year.



## 2015 - 2016 Board of Directors

Name	Position
Bob Marks	President
Doug Smith	Vice President
Jill Guice	Treasurer
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## MAKOS Coaching Staff Summer 2016

**Head Coach** - Bradley Morrison

**Assistant Head Coach** - Mike Weiser

### Junior Assistant Coaches

Matthew Healy      Colin Turner  
Kathleen Weiser    Sam Case  
Brigit Turner

### Mini-Makos

**Head Coach** - Kathy Meltzer

## Streiking Makos Kickoff Holiday Weekend at Urbanna

A recent special report by *The Economist* magazine suggests that artificial intelligence will soon revolutionize our way of life due to recent advances in machine "deep learning." For example, machines are touted as now being able to recognize random objects in photographs more accurately than human subjects. From healthcare to financial forecasting, advanced computerized modeling will doubtless be helpful moving forward. However, the authors cautioned that computerized systems will not likely ever match human empathy, spirit, and determination; especially when it comes to predicting youth league summer swim results!

Preseason prognosticators may have thought a linear regression model based on the slope intercept equation (*that's  $y = mx + b$  to you and me*) would accurately predict this summer's results. However, the models didn't account for variables like team spirit and enthusiasm that led to some jaw-dropping decreases in personal best times during the season's first two weeks as the Makos quickly demonstrated that a much larger magnitude rate-of-change ( $m$ ) was appropriate.

The Makos swam past Montclair in the season opener (2703-2244) and followed that up with another home win vs. Southbridge (2932-2076). Dating back to the 2015 season, MBW has reeled off an unprecedented seven consecutive wins. Doris over the archives department confirmed it is a club first. The defending Divisional champs now hit the road for an extended 3-week road trip prior to returning to the friendly confines of Superior Court on July 16 to host Ridgewood.

Head Coach Bradley Morrison is pleased with the progress and likes the team's chances going into the Urbanna meet. At the 6U level, Lauren Pahls has improved tremendously since moving up from mini-Makos last season. Since last summer, she has dropped 32-sec off the 25 Freestyle and 27-sec in 25 Backstroke; and become legal in Breaststroke. With those improvements, it's easy to see why she's atop the leader board in multiple events.

As we near the season midway point, Emma Weaver is putting up impressive numbers in the 12U flight. During the two weeks after Time Trials, she dropped 3-sec in the 50m Breaststroke, 5-sec in the 50m Backstroke, and 6-sec in the 100m IM. "She works extremely hard in practice and I have no doubt she will continue to shed seconds in the second half of the season," said Coach Morrison.

Fireworks are expected just after dawn on Saturday as the Makos take on the Urbanna Otters. Fans and swimmers are encouraged to hydrate early and often as warm, summertime conditions are expected to prevail over the Manassas area this weekend.

## **A Cap Tip to the Ball Coach**

On a crisp fall day several years ago, two men gazed towards the driving range. The first was a novice whose hooks and slices resembled graphs of quadratic functions. His last shot shattered the nearby dining hall window and landed in the soup-of-the-day barrel. A bit frustrated, he took a break while his more experienced colleague calmly offered words of encouragement while skillfully driving laser beams towards the 400-yard marker.

The conversation went something like this:

"Relax and just try to swing through the ball."

"Easy for you to say. Let's talk about something else. How does the high school team look this year?"

The ball coach pondered the question while readying another tee shot that whizzed skyward and landed within feet of the target.

"We're young but hungry for success. Last spring, the girls hit well and their fielding improved. There is a graduating middle-school pitcher named Weatherholtz that may help a bit next year; we'll see."

After a few adjustments prescribed by the ball coach, the novice hit several shots straight down the pipe. It occurred to him what a wonderful mentor the coach must be for the high school softball team. Over the years, the two exchanged pleasantries at home football games where the ball coach would often be seen working the concession stand and grilling hamburgers on Friday evenings. The novice thought to himself: "I hope he wins a championship someday. He deserves it."

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*Column Intermission:*

*MBW is blessed with many terrific student-athlete-performers. We added the 3<sup>rd</sup> category as a tip of the cap to the highly anticipated 12<sup>th</sup> Prince William County high school. Whether you're an aspiring mathematician, softball player, swimmer, concert pianist, or actor, there will be something for everyone at nearby Colgan High this fall.*

*Former Virginia Senator Charles Colgan declared the school "a treasure," following a sneak-preview tour of the facility that will bear his name. The Charles J. Colgan Sr. High School will be dedicated August 22 and open for classes a week later. Go Sharks!*

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## **OP Girls Softball Wins State**

The annual sports championship jubilee was held in early June at Robinson Secondary School in which teams from around Virginia assembled to compete in multiple sports including baseball, softball, lacrosse, soccer. Madison High of Fairfax County is a fixture at championship weekend. The Warhawks have

collected 33-state championships and 23-runner-up finishes. An unprecedented six championships came in girls' softball (1979, 1984, 1987–1989), and another championship in 2016 was at hand. Rarely do the Warhawks falter under such conditions.

Amidst the chaos and excitement of the jubilee weekend, it would have been easy for Osbourn Park High head coach Tim Garner to settle for 2<sup>nd</sup> vs. Madison as the Yellow Jackets had reached the quarterfinals on several previous occasions but had never before advanced to the finals. On the contrary, settling for less isn't in his nature.

The winning formula was the same as usual for Osbourn Park – timely hitting with a stingy defense and solid pitching as the Yellow Jackets (25-3) defeated the Warhawks, 4-0, in the title game of the Virginia High School League's 6A state tournament.

With the victory, Osbourn Park became the first Prince William County high school to win a state softball title since Stonewall Jackson achieved that feat with a 1-0 win over Madison in 2004.

Junior right-hander Emily Weatherholtz led the way to OP's 20th straight victory with a 4-hit, no-walk, four strikeout performance. A relatively young team with no seniors, the Yellow Jackets played errorless ball and scored two runs in the bottom of the first inning when Sydney LaScola blasted a shot over the left field fence after Kieara Edwards (3 for 4) doubled. The Jackets added two insurance runs in the sixth on an Edwards double.

The homer was LaScola's seventh of the season and proved to be the game winner. "The ball was a little inside and a perfect pitch to hit," LaScola said. "That set the tone for us to jump on them. It's so exciting to win the state."

Indeed, a much deserved championship for the ball coach and his team. Savor the victory, spend time with family, and enjoy a few rounds on the links this summer.

*Thanks Tim - not for delivering a championship season and not for the astounding effort associated with earning Virginia's 6A Coach of the Year award, but simply for being who you are. Go Jackets!*



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### *Column Intermission 2:*

*With the holiday weekend upon us, special thanks go out to the many soldiers, care givers, medical professionals, firefighters, and law enforcement officials that maintain safe conditions under which youth athletic competitions can be conducted.*

*Since its inception in 1999, Meadowbrook Woods has strived to foster a safe and fun environment for swimmers of all skill levels to learn proper swimming techniques, good sportsmanship and experience team competition. Many of our community's youth have gone on to successful careers and college and beyond armed with lessons learned from their years at the friendly confines of Superior Court. Following is a purely fictional story intended to spark fun filled memories and inspiration for future stars.*

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### **An Open Letter to an Old Friend**

Nestled in the Laurentian Highlands near the town of Saint-Donat, Quebec, Canada, beautiful Lake Ouareau is approximately 100 minutes by automobile north of downtown

Montreal. The lake is home to many freshwater sport fish such as largemouth bass, yellow perch, smallmouth bass, and, in some areas, muskellunge. Sunset views over the forested perimeter are priceless.

The lake is also home to a summer camp offering girls aged 6 to 16 the opportunity to develop language skills through a cultural exchange. The annual contingent of campers is a mixture of Francophones and Anglophones. The campers live in mixed groups to develop friendships with girls from both backgrounds.

Among the many traditions carried forward from the camp's 1922 inception is the morning Polar Bear dip. On this particular week, a group of young adult 20-something-year-old friends had returned to the camp to reminisce and test their skills in variety of sports including tennis, basketball, and a run-bike-swim triathlon to be concluded with a 1600-meter freestyle polar bear medley relay.

The fun loving, eclectic party included a London based speed skater/economist studying the effects of Brexit; a Swiss grass court specialist with lightning fast serves and an affinity for alpine skiing; a Brazilian soccer star/medical researcher studying a cure for the Zika virus; an Argentinian Polo player/philosopher currently studying Voltaire's *Candide* and Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*; and several Americans – a Lubbock, Texas, based equestrian practicing veterinary medicine at Baylor University; a lacrosse aficionado turned marine biologist after learning to swim in the open waters off Cocoa Beach, Florida; a field hockey stickster/mechanical engineer from a sleepy little town in Virginia with a flair for restoring vintage car engines; and a cross-over dribbling point guard from the City of Angels turned building constructioner interested in developing energy and cost effective geothermal well systems. All had participated years earlier with their respective swim clubs. A straw-hatted girl of about 18-years sat crisscross on the wooden dock softly playing harmonica.

Straw hat hit a sharp note and the race was on. As was her custom, the Manassas native most enjoyed the relay events and was often asked to swim the freestyle anchor of the 4-legged medley relay.

Long ago memories of the MBW Makos flooded her mind – along with some lake water – as she took flight towards the water. There were the famous Gambarani brothers who were the first ever duo to concurrently swim on the 18U relay A-team; the record setting Mizerak sisters who both swam in college; the Sargent siblings who compiled the most ever total team points by a brother-sister combination; and the Sterling sisters and Pomajevich brothers who hold the unofficial club record of most triple-triple wins by three sisters and brothers.

At the half-way mark, she circled the buoy and caught a faint aroma of burgers on the grill. This spurred further recollections of the legions of coaches, volunteer timers, runners, recorders, and officials that made Saturday morning meets possible.

Now with only 25-meters to go and the Swiss and Spaniard closing quickly, she thought back to those first days with the popular mini-Makos program. It seemed like a much shorter distance now... "Wonder how the Makos are doing today?" she wondered.

Straw-hat's harmonica notes became clear with only 5-meters to go for the photo finish and the crowd of onlooker going wild. "Guess I'll finish up, get a burger, and discuss the usual goings-on with friends...just like the old days," she thought.

After touching the pier, she waited patiently for all swimmers to complete the swim as was customary and followed up with the usual smiles and handshakes glad handing. "Feels like I'm back on Superior Court," she thought. The harmonica played on.

*Happy birthday - CB. Swim fast and have fun; add a round of squat jacks to this week's workout series; and remember to stay low on defense and make the Lithuanian go left on the dribble drive. Love ya.*

## For the Record

Every few years, there comes along an effort so incredible that it boggles the mind. At home vs. Southbridge, Aaron Kintz lowered an 11-year old 10U 50m freestyle club record set by MBW's Matt Pomajevich way back in 2005 by 2/10-second with a blistering time of 34.27s. Coach Morrison was very excited for Aaron – "He has become much faster in every event since the end of last season through hard work during the winter. In addition to breaking the longstanding freestyle record last week, he is within striking distance of team records in the 100 IM, 50 Breast, and 25 Fly."

Coach Morrison further cited MBW's Jason Smith who is also all about breaking down barriers. At home vs. Montclair, he lowered the 14U 100m IM club record to 1:08.89. A week later vs. Southbridge, he became the first ever Mako to break the 30-second barrier in the 14U 50m butterfly (29.83s).

Also at the Montclair meeting, Jason teamed up with Michael Gerhart, Jared Rouffa, and Andrew Healey to break the 14U 200 medley relay club record with a time of 2:13.53. This puts the foursome in good company with former greats Kevin Olsen, Sean Rouffa, Mike Weiser and Nick Vaccaro who set a record in that event back on July 3, 2010 at Brookside (2:18.92).

Coach Morrison believes the 14U boys are this year's strongest age group. Relay speedsters Gerhart, Healey, Rouffa, and Smith are in the top five in the Prince William Swim League (PWSL) in both the 200 Freestyle Relay and 200 Medley Relay. "In addition to their being atop county standings, it's also fun to watch the good natured sibling rivalry as Andrew and Jason have eclipsed or are nearing records set by their older brothers."

## Faces in the Crowd



*After recently completing another academic year at nearby schools such as Thurgood Marshall and Coles Elementary, swimmers like Zach Smith and Patrick Burke swapped their vocabulary flash cards for heat assignment cards as the annual outdoor season got underway in June. With plenty of parent volunteers available to handle the paperwork, Zach and Patrick are expected to have another excellent meet this week.*



*Shown here between events, 10U swimmers Gillian Rehrig and Alexandra Morrow are all wrapped up in the excitement of summer swim. At the Southbridge meet, Gillian dropped a half-second off her 50m breaststroke while Alexandra lowered her freestyle time by more than 3-seconds. Coach Morrison added, "This is Alexandra's first summer with the Makos. She's made lots of friends and is swimming well. We hope she'll continue with the program for years to come."*



*After chipping in a PWB time the 10U 50m freestyle, Keira Orwig (middle) gets a well deserved lift from pals Lauren MacDonald and Serafina Nguyen. Look for the trio to be hanging around with some Otters this Saturday.*



*The Makos' early season success has been all the talk at coffee shops between home and Euclid Avenue, and 18U swimmers Ryan Marks, Tyler Bills, Colin Turner, and Nick Olsen have been a big part of the team's progress. Not to be overlooked, statuesque six year old Lauren Pahls (far right) recently lowered her 25m backstroke to PWB time and is swimming on the 8U mixed medley and freestyle relay teams.*

