**GOLD AND PLATINUM GROUP!**

Welcome to this edition of NEWS to the GOLD and PLATINUM GROUPS! What a season we had - WOW! We set out to accomplish some goals and we reached many of them this season!

I have to admit, the last 2 months have been a little bit of a blur as we were working hard and preparing for the championship meets. In reflecting on the groups success, we made huge leaps and bounds. One of the common threads you will see below that caught me by surprise is our success in Backstroke! Do we have backstrokers? Yes and Yay!!!

* Early November - SoCal swim meet. Although it was long, dark and crowded, we had new cuts and big drops! The kids received Blue cuts, WAG cuts, and JO cuts across the board.
  + - * + **Rylee Kervick** made some Blue Cuts for the first time ever in several events and **Andy Schnieder** earned his first WAG cut in the 100 Back.
* A week and a half later, we had our Annual Turkey Mile! Each year the kids race a 1650 Freestyle the day before Thanksgiving. So fun to watch! A close race that stands out in my mind in the Gold Group was where **Matthew Nye** and **Merek Maziarz** raced neck and neck the whole way. Next year, I am thinking of making the challenge a little harder: 3000 yard freestyle for time!
* December: last chance meet at RIP TIDE was a huge success in the Backstroke events.
  + - * + **Devon McKeen** earned 2 individual spots at WAGS in the 100 and 200 backstroke.
        + **Miles Baron** dropped 5 seconds in his 200 Back and **Allie Cooper** dropped 9 seconds in her 200 back! Way to go backstrokers!

Then there was WAG! We hit it out of the ballpark! There were so many amazing races. I am probably going to forget some and/or not mention one. I try to rotate with each newsletter. I apologize if I do miss someone.

**10 and under kiddos:** Holy cannoli! They were on fire!

* + - Relays: One of my goals this year was to get top 3 in our relays. I shared with the group what it took 2 years ago at WAG’s to be “Top 3” and had the kids practice to see where they were. Well, I can say it worked!
      * + The first relay was the 200 Freestyle Relay. **Taryn McKeen**, **Maddyn Ortiz**, **Grace DiGiovanni**, and **Macie Weingarten** made that goal come true! They earned a bronze medal!
    - Then the girls made a bet with me…The terms of the bet were that if they got 1st place in the 200 Medley Relay, they got to coach me the next day at practice. I lost!

**Taryn McKeen**, **Maddyn Ortiz**, **Wren Collins**, and **Macie Weingarten WON!!!**

Due to the cold, I still owe them a workout where they “Coach” me, but Monday afternoon they did get to write the workout and have fun.

**Individual highlights:**

* + - **Ashley Toal** started the meet off with getting everyone’s attention and won her heat way out in front! She took 8 seconds off her 200 freestyle!
    - In the girls backstroke events, we had **Taryn McKeen** earn 3rd place in the 50 back and **Grace DiGiovanni** dropped 7 seconds in the 100 Backstroke.
    - **Phineas Keenan** had an amazing meet in dropping time in everything he swam. His 5th place finish in the 50 backstroke stood out as he started the meet dropping 3.5 seconds.

**Our 11/12 and 13/14 year olds had just as much success!**

* + - **Neva Phillips** broke the team record in the 100 IM and **Chase Matheson** broke the team record in the 200 butterfly!
    - **Lucas Munoz** dropped 45 seconds in the 1650 freestyle where he placed 4th!!!
    - **Mitch Anderson** also dropped in the distance events with a 15 second drop in the 1000 freestyle.
    - **Makenzie Granum** had an amazing 50 free in prelims where she made her Sectional Cut by dropping 2 seconds!

In looking back, there is always room for improvement, growth, and self reflection. I am truly excited where this age group is going and motivated to get going in January for our next adventures!

Have a wonderful Holiday and a Happy New Year!

Coach Julie

**New Year’s Resolutions**

**Gold Goup**

* + - **Collin Ellsworth** (11 years old): Collin would like to improve in the 100 backstroke by having a goal of dropping 5 seconds.
    - **Lucy Weingarten** (10 years old): Lucy would like to improve her breaststroke events. When she ages up next year, she would like to earn a Summer JO Cut.

**Platinum**

* + - **Sydney Hawfield** (12 years old): Sydney would like to get under 1:00 in the 100 freestyle and get a good grade in her Math class.
    - **Aiden Root** (13 years old): Aiden would like to learn how to control his nervous energy he has before a race to go towards swimming fast.