

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT 2017

WE ARE PROUD OF YOU... CONGRATS!

Best of luck on your new adventures!

Maegan Rudolph attended Riverside High School where she was named the Valedictorian for the Class of 2017. She plans to study Chemical Engineering at Cornell University where she will be part of the swim team. When asked what she will miss most about YSSC, Maegan responded her teammates, the team's unity and the team spirit that is exhibited at YNationals. She says Coach Ted has had a great impact on her swimming because "he's been patient and supportive at times when I've been frustrated with the sport. In the last few years, he's encouraged me to exceed my expectations, and he's taught me to enjoy swimming even more than I used to." One of her greatest races was the 100 fly at this year's SC Y Nationals. After feeling like she had hit a plateau the last couple of years, she was thrilled to finally drop a significant amount of time. Maegan says that in the midst of a rough season, recognizing that some of her teammates had faced similar setbacks but came back stronger than ever gave her hope that she could do the same. To seniors, she says to enjoy every day—even Tuesdays with GOLF, "because your last year on the team truly goes by faster than you can imagine. Also, if you're planning to swim in college, don't stress yourself out over the recruiting process—you'll end up at the best place for you, even if it is not initially your dream school." Maegan also advises the discouraged swimmer to keep at the sport because "you'll learn so much about sportsmanship and work ethic, and the memories you'll gain will help you to love the sport again." She guides the younger swimmers to be encouraging teammates and be there for them when they succeed and when they fail. Her most embarrassing swim moment was missing the "GO!" of a relay start, rushing her start, subsequently doing a belly flop and choking on the water. If she weren't a swimmer, she may have pursued track, although no long distances, and her favorite treats: coconut cream pie and ice cream.

MICHAELA ROGERS is a graduate of Dorman High and plans on studying Biology at Boston University. She will also be swimming for the university. She will miss her teammates the most because they are "basically a second family to me". She says that Coach Bart has had the biggest impact on her swimming adding "he knows how to motivate me and has been able to talk me out of being nervous before my events. He has seen all of my growth as a swimmer and as a person and I appreciate everything he has done to help me". Her greatest accomplishment was when she achieved her first YNAT cut in the 100 breaststroke last year. She fondly recalls many of her teammates standing at the end of her lane and yelling "GO!" as she raced. Michaela references her later start in swimming and has learned the value of perseverance in practice. She encourages others with her favorite quote 'don't compare your chapter one to someone else's chapter 20'. It reminds her "to focus on myself, and that's what motivates me the most" to keep swimming. She advises rising seniors to fight for yourself. Don't be afraid to lead a lane or go in front of someone when you need to. Each swimmer should "fight for their chance to be a leader and get the most out of a workout that they can". To the swimmer who contemplates leaving the sport she says "Don't let your work go to waste. Don't ignore all the progress you've already made. Don't compare yourself to other people; you have to focus on yourself and your own improvement". She adds that younger swimmers should listen to the coaches because "details matter—that's what separates a good swimmer from a great swimmer. Trust in your coaches..." Her most embarrassing swim moment was when she joined YSSC for the first time and wore these "clear goggles that suction cupped to my face really well", but clearly not the goggles suitable for racing. Now it is an inside joke with her teammates. If she weren't a swimmer, she would probably have been a runner and her favorite treats are ice cream and cheesecake.

Jake Young is a graduate of Riverside planning on studying Chemical Engineering at USC this fall. He will miss the coaches most from YSSC and credits Coach Harmilee with having the greatest impact on his swimming because he showed him how to reach his goal of attending YNATS. He believes attending YNATS was his greatest accomplishment with regard to swimming. His advice to a swimmer struggling to stick with the sport is to “make sure you have given it your all before you leave. It helps to set a goal.” He encourages younger swimmers to attend practice as much as they are able, although it can be difficult at times. His most embarrassing swim moment was when he arrived at State meet and realized he did not have a bathing suit. Fortunately, his dad purchased him a competition suit! If he had not been a swimmer, he would have run cross country. His favorite treat when he was not training is apple fritters!

PRICE AGNEW graduated from Boiling Springs High School and plans to attend USC Honors College to study Electrical Engineering. He plans on swimming at the club level. Price points to both Coach Ted and Coach Bart as having tremendous impacts on his swimming. “Ted first recognized my potential to be a great distance swimmer and did a fantastic job fixing my stroke and laying the groundwork for the rest of my swimming career. Bart picked up right where Ted left off and coached me to heights that I never anticipated. They both have always been extremely encouraging to me in all facets of my life, and I greatly appreciate them for it.” His greatest accomplishment was achieving the Summer Junior Cut in the 1500 Freestyle and Long Course YNats in 2016. He says he will always “remember seeing Ted run down the pool with me as I swam my final lengths”. To the discouraged swimmer he reminds that swimming is a brutally honest sport and that your performance is a direct reflection of what is going on around you. He adds that swimming “offers an escape”. He encourages seniors to be a leader by “the way you treat people, the facility, how you practice, and how you carry yourself. There are people watching”. He would have taken up golf or cross country if he were not a swimmer, enjoys oatmeal crème pies and root beer float, and cites trying to hop over a fence and failing miserably as his most embarrassing moment.

Maddie Baker is a graduate of Christ Church Episcopal School. She will attend the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in the fall. She will be swimming for the Tarheels and contemplates a degree in Biology. What she will miss most about YSSC is her teammates. She cites Coach Karl Kozicki as having the greatest impact on her swimming because he “taught me how to work hard and how to push past my limits. He also taught me the importance of confidence and believing that you could achieve something that seems impossible”. She advises seniors, “You’re almost at the end of the road, just stay focused, stay motivated, work hard and try not to stress out.” Her greatest accomplishment was making the 400 IM C- final at YNATS during her first when she was just 12 years old. Her teammates drove her to keep swimming after a rough season because having them around makes it worthwhile. Maddie tells swimmers to stick with swimming because it provides you with incredible opportunities you may not find elsewhere. To younger swimmers she says “have fun and be thankful for your friends”. Maddie would have been a tennis player if she had not been a swimmer. Her favorite treats are cake from Brick Street Café (mmmm!) or apple pie with vanilla ice cream.

Rak Hovart is a graduate of Christ Church Episcopal School and will attend Boston College. He is considering a degree in Chemistry or Physics and would like to swim for the Eagles in the future. He, too, says he will miss most the friendships he has made with his teammates of YSSC. He feels his greatest accomplishment was making the 200 free final at 2016 Long Course YNATS. Rak credits Coach Ted “for helping me develop into the swimmer I am today. The ups and downs I have gone through with him have helped me to be the swimmer I am today.” Rak also credits Coach Harmilee “for always being available to give me a different perspective on swimming. Whether it is race strategy or stroke technique, he always has different ideas for me to think about that helped me to develop as an athlete.” He acknowledges that swimming will most certainly have ups and downs, but to reach your goals, you have to “travel through the valleys”. He advises discouraged swimmers to remember the goals they have and to not give up until they reach the goal! His advice to rising seniors is to set a good example and be responsible for helping the team reach its goals. Rak says swimming “is a hard sport but some of my best memories are from swimming”. His most embarrassing moment was at 10 when he stopped at the 150 mark in a 200 free race. Ben and Jerry’s Ice Cream is his favorite treat!

Alaina Riordan graduated from Wade Hampton High School. She will attend the University of Tennessee(Knoxville) where she will pursue a major in Pre-Medicine or Biology. Although Alaina will not be swimming for the Volunteers, she WILL be running on the track and cross country teams! In the couple of months that Alaina has been away from YSSC swimming to concentrate on her running, she has missed the people the most! She says that she and teammates “have suffered through hard practices (and Murph), gone to countless breakfasts, spent 8 hour bus rides together, and celebrated a National Championship! They have been there for me through everything and will always be on my list of closest pals. The community of people I’ve met through swimming (parents, coaches, competitors, etc.) have all positively influenced me.” Alaina appreciates Coach Karl’s ability to challenge her and give her the confidence and skills to overcome the practices and difficulties she faced. Her greatest accomplishment was when, after 4 years of being extremely close, finally achieving the 200 breaststroke Junior National Cut at 2017 Long Course State Meet. Overcoming this mental block meant a great deal! When she was discouraged, her love for swimming and support from friends, family, and the coaches helped get her back to training. She tells the seniors to don’t rush through their senior year! She advises to keep “All of your options open” when considering college. She tells younger swimmers to “trust your coaches”.

Jessi Snover will be attending Gardner-Webb University this fall to study art/graphic design. She will be swimming for the Runnin’ Bulldogs. She credits Coach Karl and Coach Eddie (Riverside) with helping her become the swimmer she is today saying Karl “encouraged my large dreams” and Eddie provided a team environment that always “felt like a family”. One of her best moments in swimming was at Age Group Sectionals (2012) when she earned 6 Junior National times and the High-Point Award. Jessi was inspired by coaches and an inner drive to keep swimming even when she had a rough meet or season. She advises seniors that “there are many others behind you that look up to you as a leader. The way you conduct yourself, the respect you show teammates and the love you have for the sport will shape the program you leave behind. Be a good example!” Jessi says she would “tell a swimmer who is contemplating leaving, to stick through it for a little while longer, because situations are always changing and you never know when that “once in a lifetime” swim or moment will happen.” She advises younger swimmers to keep working hard because “it is the hard work that makes you a better swimmer. Learn to love the sport and learn how to set your own goals. Remember that quitters never win and winners never quit”. Jessi’s most embarrassing moment was at 2012 Y Nationals during the 200 Breaststroke. She was in lane 1, her only competition in lane 8. Jessi heard the announcer say that she was on national record pace, but Jessi had lost count and began to swim cautiously. As she finished, her coach was laughing because he knew she had lost count. Although she missed the record, she did achieve a personal best time and a US Open time. If Jessi had not been a swimmer, she would have devoted more time to art and crafts. Her favorite treat is ice cream from Dillard’s!!!

Will Patterson is a graduate of Oakbrook Preparatory School. He will be attending the Honors College at the University of South Carolina pursuing a degree in Economics. Will hopes to swim on the club team at USC. He says what he will miss most about YSSC is his friends at the TOM. He credits Coach Bart as having a great impact on his swimming because "he was the first swim coach that really pushed me and drove me to meet my goals and also, was just as excited as I when I met my goals". Winning the High School Championship with Oakbrook last Fall, the school's first, was a highlight of his swimming. He says that the "bad meets" were what would drive him to keep swimming and train harder. He knew if he "put the effort in six days a week, the results would show up on meet day". He tells the younger swimmers to make sure to have fun.... "Swimming is a grind, so find enjoyment with the sport along with the work". Will said "anytime I swim the 200 fly could qualify as my most embarrassing swim moment". (ha ha ha!) Will would have played baseball and put more time into Cross Country if he had not been a swimmer. When he is not in training, Will enjoys Cheerwine!

Sydney Baker is a graduate of Christ Church Episcopal School and will be attending UNC Chapel Hill this fall. She will be swimming for University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She will miss her teammates most from YSSC. Like her sister, Sydney credits Coach Karl with having a great impact on her swimming because he "challenged me and taught me the importance of perseverance". One of her favorite accomplishments she experienced was when MTY won the Combined Team National Championship at Short Course Ys in 2014. When asked what drove her through a bad meet or tough season, Sydney said she would not want to quit because she would miss her friends at YSSC. She advises seniors not to stress too much about college. The advice she gives swimmers contemplating leaving the sport is to remember that swimming "isn't just about getting best times or hard practices, it can teach you life lessons such as dedication and self-motivation AND it will help you make life-long friends". She tells the younger swimmers to "keep swimming and challenge yourself whenever possible". She would have been a soccer player if not a swimmer and she loves cake when not in training. And, finally, her most embarrassing moment—"one year at sectionals I was in the first heat of the 1000 and I was late. As I was rushing to the blocks, everyone was staring because they were waiting to start the meet and I slipped and fell down". Hee hee!

Spencer Ashby graduated from Spartanburg High School and will attend Lenoir-Rhyne University in the pre-engineering department. Spencer says he will miss Coach Bart for "taking me into the program and pushing me to my limits and never giving up on me in tough times. I will also miss Y-Nationals and being able to compete at such a high level with all my friends". He emphasizes that Coach Bart has had the greatest impact on him. "Coach Bart took me in three years ago. He trained me and guided me. There were rough times in those three years but he was there with me the whole time. Without him, I honestly don't know how I could have gotten through it. For that I am very thankful. He truly changed who I am as a person and in a very good way." He advises the seniors to push themselves so they won't regret not putting the work in. He adds "make your senior season your best season!" Spencer says his most embarrassing moment occurred this year at the Capital Classics swim meet. "I was swimming the 50 free and on the turn I slipped on the wall and I did really bad in the race. It was very embarrassing because it was my best race and I made a mistake in it. It is funny to laugh at now looking back on it." He credits his ability to focus on making Y-Nationals on driving him to keep swimming even when things were tough. One of the highlights of his swimming career occurred at High School State. Spencer was the anchor in the 200 free relay. He swam the fastest 50 free of anyone in the meet and was able to help their relay bring home a 1st place finish, despite being seeded out in lane 2! He goes on to say, "It was My LAST state meet and my brothers FIRST state meet, so it meant a lot to me since he was able to witness the win along with my parents." Spencer urges the discouraged swimmer to keep working so all the time that has been invested so far is not a waste! He reminds the athletes to "never give up on this sport because it won't give up on you". To the younger swimmers, he says to have fun and make strong friendships and be careful not to stress too much about swimming. Keep it fun. Finally, Spencer would have played football if he had not been a swimmer and he enjoys OREOS, what he deems as the "best treat known to man" but has to be careful or he will eat twenty in a single sitting!