

NOTEWORTHY NEWS XV

WE BEGIN OUR CHRISTMAS PRACTICE SCHEDULE THIS WEEK STARTING THURSDAY MORNING . . . and that means altered practice times. We will run this schedule until the swimmers return to school with some days off around Christmas itself. Please click on the link on the website.

THANKS TO ALL WHO DONATED CHRISTMAS PRESENTS AND ALL WHO WERE PART OF THE DELIVERY . . . because you were part of a NOVA task force that successfully delivered a memorable Christmas to our "adopted" Goochland Christmas families. At the Manakin Fire Station, our little project always becomes translated into heartfelt wonder, speechlessness and tears. We re-molded ourselves (in a big way) later that afternoon into a competitive swimming team, but from 1:15 until the last family pick-up, we became an instrument of holiday joy. Thanks to all the group leaders for making the wrapping parties and gift collection. Major bows to Mary Sue McClintock, Tiffany Sweetser and Jamie Maccaroni for leading our holiday charge! Always a secretly proud moment for NOVA, this outreach program reminds our NOVA swimmers, I hope, that the less fortunate have names and faces and that NOVA is so much more than a swim team - we make a difference in our community!! That delightful feeling of holiday warmth wafted back to the NOVA Aquatic Center where . . .

LATER THAT AFTERNOON . . . (hoping that first blurb teaser intrigued you), a small group of NOVA 13 and over swimmers articulated a final statement on the Fall 2017 season. Well, perhaps shouted one from the pool tops. Imagine a meet starting with a NAG record - that would this meet. Imagine the NAG record being broken by 6 seconds. Imagine no more. The NOVA 13-14 girls 800 free relay - Grace Sheble, Caroline Sheble, Olivia Erickson and Cooper Ackerly - went 7:18 and re-wrote the record book. Six seconds?!? Well, these young ladies probably remembered that last year they broke the record only to find that Dynamo of Atlanta had topped them. Best to give themselves a healthy buffer this year. A video of this race is posted for your viewing pleasure but be warned by all of us who were there that you will not be bathing in the excitement level there on deck (WWBT aired the video on Monday AM!). For the rest of the meet, NOVA turned into a delightful blend of Motown and Sun Records: the hits kept right on coming. Junior cuts vied with best times; our coaches could complain that a few Junior cuts were missed but that would be ignoring the time drops that made that closeness possible. Aidan Duffy reached into Swimming Claus' mesh bag for the 200 breast and pulled out a first time Junior cut. Grace Sheble also broke the team record in the 200 free leading off the relay. Coach Luke moved into the Top All Time performances chart in the 100 breast with a smoking 56.9 and later added a fine 1:41 200 free. Enough palaver, time to let the results speak.

NAG 13-14 record

13-14 girls 800 free relay G. Sheble, C. Sheble, O. Erickson, C. Ackerly

NOVA Team Record

13-14 girls 800 free relay G. Sheble, C. Sheble, O. Erickson, C. Ackerly

Grace Sheble 13-14 200 free

Virginia State Record

13-14 girls 800 free relay G. Sheble, C. Sheble, O. Erickson, C. Ackerly

Grace Sheble 13-14 200 free

NCSA Junior Cut

Mary Cornett	400 IM
Zach Cram	200 breast
Aidan Duffy	200 breast
Josephine Fuller	200 back
Maura Graff	200 breast
Cole Gvozdaz	400 IM
DC Hellams	200 breast
Reid Hutcherson	500 free
Stephen Laming	50 free
Alexa Owen	200 fly
Peyton Proffitt	200 breast
Rebecca Rogers	200 fly
Caroline Sheble	200 fly
Grace Sheble	100 back, 200 free
Sophie Svoboda	100 back
Nicholas Viers	100 breast
Zach Wassmer	200 IM

NOVA All Time Top Ten Performances

13-14

Josephine Fuller	200 back 3 rd
Grace Sheble	200 free 1 st , 100 back 3 rd

15-16

Mary Cornett	400 IM tied for 10 th
Peyton Proffitt	200 breast 6 th

17-18

Sophie Svoboda	100 back 2 nd
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Senior

Luke Nelson	100 breast	6 th
Grace Sheble	200 free	3 rd
Josephine Fuller	200 back	10 th
Sophie Svoboda	100 back	2nd

Time Standard Improvements

Cameron Adams	200 IM	A
Caroline Baber	100 fly	AAA
Anderson Broughton	200 IM	AA
JP Brunetti	100 breast	A
Zach Cram	200 breast	AAA
Maura Graff	200 breast	AAA
Cole Gvozdaz	400 IM	AAA
Reid Hutcherson	500 free	AAAA
Hunter Locher	200 breast	AAA
Nate Pfeffer	400 IM, 200 back	AAA
Dain Ripol	100 breast	AAA
Javier Rodriguez	100 fly	A
Xander Schreck	200 IM	AA
Kylie Semo	400 IM	AA
Grace Sheble	100 back	AAAA
Conrad Tan	50 free	AA
Nicholas Viers	100 breast	AAA
Zach Wassmer	200 IM	AAA
Michael Wood	100 breast	A

Barrier Breakers

Christian Mayr	< :50	100 free
Javier Rodriguez	< 1:00	100 fly
Nick Viers		100 breast
Luke Nelson		100 breast
Zach Wassmer	< 2:00	200 IM
Nate Pfeffer	< 4:30	400 IM
Kylie Semo	< 5:00	400 IM
Charlotte Wishnack	< 5:30	500 free

IF YOU HAVE VISITED THE POOL LATELY . . . , you have seen the work reputed last week to be the work of aquatic elves. That rumor can be professionally put to rest. The lobby drawings are the work of Moseley and Associates and they are official renditions of our planned 50 m expansion. I encourage all parents to see what we have planned for your children. Some official blurb points now to stoke the excitement!

- o Letters have been sent to all members of the NOVA community these last two weeks. Thanks to all who have pledged!
- o To build the first pool, we secured a 100% pledge rate! Let's recreate that magic! We politely and humbly request that all unpledged families join us in making this necessary expansion happen.

- o To build this pool, we need resumption of the original pledges and \$800 K of new pledges so that we may break ground in April.
- o Yes, it will be 50 meters and outdoors. Only the older groups will use this pool year-round. Yes, we will be building it with an eye at enclosing it later.
- o We will put you in the know! Informational socials by practice group will dot the month of January. Explanations provided, questions answered.
- o Interested in hosting a social or helping with the Capital Campaign? Contact Executive Director Ann McGee.
- o Finish date? October 2018.

THE TIME TRIAL RESULTS HAVEN'T BEEN ADDED BUT WE WILL PROBABLY END 2017 AN IMPRESSIVE AND HUNGRY THIRD . . . in the Virtual Club Championship. Again last week's battle cry: Third? In the US? What other Richmond area team in any sport has climbed this high? Can't think of any. So maybe this is a team that richly deserves an opportunity to spread its butterfly arms even farther!! That pool expansion might be just the answer!! See above in case you chose naughty over nice and failed to read NN in a logical sequence.

CHRISTMAS BREAK/JANUARY IS . . .

. . . **often quite cold** and sometimes brings the white stuff. Here at NOVA, we take snow in stride: we rarely cancel but we do respect the danger and inconvenience it presents. If bad weather is forecast, we take a wait and see attitude. Richmond is on the snow/ice line so long experience has taught us that the forecasters often miss. Snow invites respect; ice provokes healthy fear and concern. So we will make a go/no go call fairly close to practice. The worst weather situation involves a late afternoon/early evening storm. The coaching staff typically is already at NOVA as the storm begins so we will ask incoming traffic how the roads are doing, all the while consulting the various internet and TV weather reports. Daylight and overnight calls are easier because we have more information and can drive out to sample and survey the roads ourselves well in advance of practice. We will err on the side of caution - not HCPS caution, more like private school caution. As always, we remind all NOVA parents to make their own decision and proceed with caution. Then there is that reminder to dress for the weather. We still observe bare-footed or sandal-clad children arriving for practice. The coaching staff strongly advises dressing for success - warm sweats, socks and shoes. Slipper and sandals are comfortable but bad choices! Train like an athlete, dress like an athlete. Parents are specifically asked not to encourage the "run to the warm car" behavior. Convenient and easy - but not in an athlete's best interest.

. . . **a time to remind parents of our bad weather policy . . .** that older, driving swimmers check with parents before leaving

for home if a storm hits or intensifies during practice. That way parents can tell a child to stay put if conditions have seriously deteriorated. We cannot monitor every call but we do want parents to know that this will be our posted advisory. Practice changes are based on the conditions on the roads leading to NOVA which are generally well plowed and treated.

. . . **a great time** for swimmers to embrace a more challenging practice schedule, train smarter and harder, explore new and challenging events. It is the phase of the season before the storm of February meets that begin the championship season.

FEBRUARY AND MARCH . . .

. . . **are marked by strict meet entry deadlines for the championship series of meets** (see later). Parents attempting to enter the meets after the deadlines will pay a hefty penalty mandated by Virginia Swimming. Even those meets run here at NOVA must follow those guidelines. Meets hosted here and coach and swimmer departures to away meets may disrupt the schedule in small and large ways.

. . . **Ah, that Championship season business.** . . that seems to consume these two months. For those of you new to NOVA, I'll sketch out the championship season and then offer a quick glance on later spring into summer. The first "championship" meet is the 8 and Under District Champs on February 9-10th. This meet is open to all 8 & U swimmers regardless of time qualification. The next meet is the 9-12 Central District Championships, February 16th-18th and it is for all swimmers lacking Age Group Champs qualifying times (see the website for time standards links). This meet has been expanded this year to include Trials and Finals for 9-10 and 11-12 year olds, one heat of finals for the former, two heats for the latter. Entry deadlines for these meets will be firm, without wiggle room. The coaching staff would like see all eligible swimmers entered into each meet with a maximum line-up of events. All 13-18 swimmers who haven't qualified for AGC or Senior Champs will attend the Regional Champs, held February 23-25th at the Jeff Rouse Center just north of Fredericksburg. All those 14 and unders from these meets who make Age Group Champs (AGC) Qualifying times move on to the State Age Group Champs March 8th-11th in Christiansburg. All 15 and over qualifiers move on to the Virginia Senior Champs, March 1-4th, moving back this year to Richmond and the Collegiate School Aquatic Center (this year's edition hosted by NOVA!!!). A compressed timetable:

2/9-2/10	8 and Under District Champs
2/16-18	12 and under District Champs
2/23-25	13 and over Regional Champs
3/1-3/4	Virginia State Senior Champs
3/8-3/11	Virginia Age Group Champs

We term this rush of meets the "championship season". Following these meets are the various high level All Star or fast qualifying times championship meets listed below. These meets are generally travel meets to the land of Far Far Away.

3/13-3/17	NCSA Juniors, Orlando, FL
3/21-3/24	NCSA Age Group, Orlando, FL
3/23-3/25	South Zone Speedo Sectionals, Christiansburg, VA

NOVA concludes the short course (25 yd) segment of the season with the 2 day NOVA Short Course Send-off March 30-31st. This is an excellent meet open to all 14 & under swimmers who did not qualify for State Champs and provides a fitting conclusion to the short course season. So there it all is - a tidy summing up of what lies ahead.

Remarkable advances are often made by swimmers who immerse themselves in the championship season. The acts of qualifying for a meet, then participating in it often change the trajectories of swimming careers. You must be present to win these sometimes astonishing advances!

THE WINTER MONTHS BRING MORE THAN COLD They bring - no big surprise - darkness and that darkness makes the parking lot more of a hazard than in better-lit months. I am asking that all drivers exercise extreme caution upon entering NOVA from Gayton Road. Some of the swimmers play outside; some swimmers aim swift charges at warm cars. The potential for serious mischief is there and slowing down is certainly a good way to minimize or avoid it. Thank you in advance for your support of my yearly slow down initiative.

PERUSE OUR LIST OF COLLEGE-BOUND SENIORS AND YOU WILL NOTE THE PRESENCE OF SOME IMPRESSIVE SCHOOLS We are delighted to announce the following future destinations. Our rule here is simple: gotta know before a name is added to this list. So here's what we currently know. If you know and we don't, stay calm and drop me a line. Happy to add any new decision-makers (NCSA insider joke!).

Caroline Baber	Washington & Lee
Carter Bristow	University of Virginia
Ian Densley	Roanoke College
Grace Edwards	Boston College
Cade Elliott	Washington University in St. Louis
Maddie Hadd	Georgia Tech
Ana Kuzemka	George Mason
Sarah Malloy	Texas Christian University
Lauren Meeker	Virginia Tech
Ashley Meyer	University of Richmond
Rebecca Rogers	William and Mary
Annie Sanchez	Campbell

Nori Sanchez	Barton College
Kayleigh Seitz	Oklahoma Christian
Sophie Svoboda	Air Force Academy
Patrick Townsend	University of Tennessee
Maria Vinson	Roanoke College
Matthew Whelan	Duke
Gracie Wielar	Villanova

We will aim to have some of the pictures from the senior signing event posted on the lobby TV's so that the entire team can connect a name with a face.

THE COACHING STAFF IS ALWAYS LOOKING TO IMPROVE THE MEET ENTRY PROCESS . . . both for parents and for our meet management folks. Each meet entry is posted and coaches strongly request that parents either accept or decline a meet entry. We do aim to accommodate late entries whenever possible but that means extra work for our meet entry team. So please let us know your intentions for meets listed for your swimmer's training group. Just log in, find the appropriate meet and let us know your intentions. The coaching staff will also often send reminder e-mails as meet deadlines approach.

WE HAVE A TRADITION OF PLAYING CHRISTMAS SONGS . . . during practice beginning at Thanksgiving. Some of the songs are traditional, some silly, some unusual, but it is all part of a long Holiday tradition here at NOVA. Enjoy!

COLD WEATHER WILL ARRIVE AND WILL BE HERE TO STAY FOR A MONTH OR TWO OR THREE . . . so it is definitely time for warm gear, dry socks and shoes and warm hats. Each year, NOVA swimmers continue to arrive at NOVA I the winter as if it was summer, dashing from or to a car in a bathing suit. The good habits of a swimmer's career begin early and that means dressing warmly when cold winds blow. Shoes, socks, gloves, wool hats and warm parkas do much to blunt winter's bite. An athlete emerging from a taxing practice needs to let his body and muscles recover inside some warm wrappings.

PARENTS BE ADVISED THAT CHILDREN PLAYING OUTSIDE THE BUILDING ARE NOT UNDER THE SUPERVISION . . . of any NOVA staff member. If your child plays outside and that is OK with you, please remind them that ours is a "trafficked" parking lot and that swiftly darting young children should be wary of the driving lanes. On the other hand, we are asking that all parents be especially vigilant when you enter our parking lot. On a slightly related note, please respect the handicap parking places. I know folks like to use these spaces for picking up swimmers but they are there to provide easy access for handicapped or special needs swimmers and visitors. We appreciate your support !

DO YOU HAVE ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBERS WHO HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN NOVA? FRIENDS WHO SEEM INTERESTED? We stand ready to evaluate any and all who have summer swim team level abilities. Evaluations are quick, easy and free. Interested? E-mail Drew or Geoff. We can take care of most swimming levels somewhere in our program. From lessons to Masters, NOVA is a full service swimming organization, the best in Richmond and in Virginia. Modesty forbids us to say more so we'll stop with that minor bragging.

BEFORE DONATING ELSEWHERE . . . check with the staff to see if NOVA has a need. For example, re-doing your kitchen? Have a decent refrigerator? Consider taking the tax write-off and helping NOVA. We have three such refrigerators here at NOVA but we are always looking to update. Thanks !

WE HAVE THE NOVA FLAT HAT BULLETIN BOARD . . . that traces, through pictures, the travels of NOVA families and their NOVA caps. I thought it would be fun to see NOVA's international bloodlines. Here is the rule: only parents and children count. So parents or children have to be first generation here in the United States. Here's what we have gathered - I suspect we have more. 33 countries and counting! Don't hold out on us regarding your point of origin!

China	Russia	Poland	Korea
Japan	India	Colombia	South Africa
Iran	Turkey	Sri Lanka	The Philippines
Australia	Canada	Singapore	Serbia
Armenia	Cambodia	Germany	Czech Republic
Latvia	Burma	Seychelles	Bosnia & Herzegovina
Bangladesh	Venezuela	Ireland	Switzerland
Italy	Brazil	England	Mexico
Cuba			

E-mail Coach Geoff with any additions. I suspect we will have an amazing NOVA tapestry when we are done.