

January/February 2012 Smoke Signals

Welcome to 2012! What a year it has been; with the departure of FGAC founder Dan Haines, the change in ownership and coaching staff has challenged us all to be at our best and we have stepped up to this challenge. As a team, FGAC is as strong as ever and finished 2011 with a great championship swim meet at the Sportfair Winter Classic and we are primed for a great second half of the season.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of our parents for their continued support of our system and coaches. Swimming is a sport that demands a lot of time and energy from the athletes and is a major drain on their parent's as well with late night and early morning practices. Thank you all for making the sacrifices necessary to be part of the FGAC family!

Reminder: Our regular practice schedule for all levels resumes Monday 1/2/12

In this issue: Sportfair Winter Classic review

Winter meet preview

Practice cancellations

Inclement weather policy

News and Notes

Sportfair Winter Classic Review:

As always, Sportfair was a long weekend for swimmers, coaches and parents alike but the kids performed great and even those that didn't come out of the meet with as many personal records as they would have liked they all took steps towards achieving their ultimate goals.

As we always point out to our swimmers, it's important to remember that the championship qualifying times they are trying to achieve are incredibly fast and difficult to achieve because PVS is one of the largest and fastest LSC's in the country. While it makes qualifying for these meets difficult and at times frustrating it is also part of what makes our swimmers as great as they are, it raises the bar to a level where they must raise their practice and competition goals that high as well.

At Sportfair we had 65% best times and 47 top 16 swim performances at a meet that was much faster than the past few years!

On the senior level (13 and up):

Placing top 16:

David Altobelli, Kieran Broder, Riani Carr, Daniel Chavez, Katherine Cleary, Michael Cleary, Ryan Gallagher, Andrew Latona, Margarita Ryan, Rachel Sigwalt, Jessica Schipani, Kylie Sheapp, Kristen Toth

Achieving new Eastern Zone Southern Sectional times:

Kieran Broder, Michael Cleary, Jessica Schipani

Achieving new Senior Champ times:

David Altobelli, Daniel Chavez, Michael Cleary, Margarita Ryan, Kaitlyn Toth

Achieving new JO times:

Keara Lindsay, Margarita Ryan, Alex Toth

Top 16 performers on the Age Group side:

Shakeelah Jordan, Keara Lindsay, Sophia Ryan, Sunil Surprenant, Alex Toth

Thank you all again for all of the: driving back and forth, feeding and taking care of the kids and of course supporting them through the highs and lows of the weekend. It is only through failure that we can become better and appreciate our successes.

Winter meet preview:

Below are all of our meets between now and March when our Championship meets begin. Please get us meet entries on time so we can get them to the meet director on time and complete. It is important that parents pay special attention to meet emails as March approaches because we will have many swimmers competing in 2-3 different championship meets.

January Open (1/21-1/22)	Ages 9+	Entries due 1/9
February Distance meet (2/12)	Ages 11+	Entries due 1/29
Winter Gator Mini Meet (2/25-2/26)	Ages 8 and under	Entries due 2/12
RMSC Qualifier (2/25-2/26)	Ages 9+	Coaches Select entry

Practice cancellations January and February:

- 1/22 No practice all levels due to January Open
- 1/27 No practice L1-3 at Takoma
- 2/17 No practice L1-3 at Takoma

2/26 No practice L1 due to Winter Gator meet

2/26 L2-5 at Takoma with following schedule:

L4-5 11:00am-1:00pm

L3 11:30-1:00pm

L2 1:00-2:00pm

Inclement weather policy:

While it may seem like we will never get any snow or ice this winter, at some point in time it will get cold and we will have to deal with inclement weather. It is important to remember that we do not follow any school system's cancellations. Our most important factor in determining whether or not to have practice is safety, we always take into account that we have many young drivers and we will not ask anyone to put their kids in harm's way.

Typically speaking, if Fairland remains open we will hold practice, so please call the facility and if they are open **and** you don't receive an email then practice is on.

Anytime there is practice on a day where there is weather or a threat of weather we will be on a liberal leave policy where practice becomes voluntary.

Please be sure to check your email and our website before you leave for workout in these types of situations as we will be sure to send an email IF THERE IS A CANCELLATION, if there is no email sent then practice is on.

News and notes:

Holiday Greenery:

A special thank you to Bruce Kalen, Jill and Vince Cleary and Carol Toth for putting together our Holiday Greenery sale, it went great again this year. Thank you to everyone that took advantage of these great items we had for sale.

Program fee payment:

Just a reminder that everyone on payment options 2 and 3 have their next (and final for non-Annual members) payment due on 1/15.

Swim-a-Thon:

This spring is our biennial Swim-A-Thon. We will be using the same format as 2 years ago, with an emphasis on actual per length sponsorship. We will preview more details in our next newsletter.