

Smoke Signals

1/10/09

FGAC BREAKS TOP 300 IN USA SWIMMING VIRTUAL CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

At the conclusion of 2009, FGAC was ranked 277th in the Virtual Club Championship national rankings, thanks in large part to another great December championship meet. This is the first time we have gone under the 300 mark in our club's history. Currently there are a total of 2255 clubs in USA Swimming, putting us very close to the top 10% nationally!

The Virtual Club Championship is an ongoing ranking of all teams in the country, scored on a power point system by individual age group and gender, ages 11-18. There are team and individual event limits factored into the tabulation, but to a significant degree the rankings reward a team's size, since they have more results to pull from. (The two biggest teams in the country, CUBU and RMSC, which register in the neighborhood of 1500 swimmers each, are #1 and #2 respectively.)

For a team of only 85 swimmers, this is quite an accomplishment for us. Congratulations to everyone.

We are currently ranked 11th in PVS.

APPAREL WRAP-UP

The last remaining item on the 2009-2010 apparel agenda, is the additional team issue t-shirt order, **which is due to us by this Monday, 1/18**. All other sale apparel, including parkas, should have been received. Please notify Dan if you have any questions.

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SPORT FAIR WINTER CLASSIC HIGHLIGHTS

Once again Sport Fair Winter Classic proved to be a fantastic meet, putting an exclamation point on a decade of sustainable growth in swimming excellence. Thank you for your time, energy and resources in allowing your children to attend, and to those who volunteered as officials and timers.

Senior Level – Many of our senior level swimmers made Top 16 finals . In the process of doing so, and scoring big points for the team, they achieved a slew of “A” level or higher meet qualifications standards:

Senior National Qualifiers

Matt Thomas

Sectional Qualifiers

Eric Brothman

Joey Devlin

Colin Schwartz

Junior National Qualifiers

Spencer Sterling

Matt Thomas

Men’s 800 FR relay - Sean Gallagher,
Colin Schwartz, Spencer Sterling & Matt
Thomas

Men’s 400 Med Relay - Joey Devlin, Matt
Thomas, Spencer Sterling & Sean
Gallagher

PVS Senior Championship Qualifiers

David Altobelli

Alejandro Chavez

Katherine Cleary

Paige Fox

Rachel Jaffe

Moira James

Julia Rivera

Cara Wagner

Kieran Broder

Daniel Chavez

Morgan Dailey

Sean Gallagher

Sam Jaffe

Andrew Latona

Kylie Sheapp

Age Group Level – 261 points were contributed by the age group level and a number of Junior Olympic qualifying times were achieved. The following is a list of finalists, with some additional statistics showing the progress of our age group level as a whole:

Top 8 finalists

Marcela Chavez

Audrey Richter

Top 16 finalists

Margarita Ryan

Kira Myers

Ethan Shinn-Miller

Rachel Sigwalt

Emily Stutzman

Improvement Stats

12 of 23 swimmers got 100% best times

19 of 23 swimmers got 75% or better best times

75% best times for all 12 and unders

TEAM TRAVEL MEET WEEKEND IS BACK 2/6-7/10!

After a one year hiatus we were able to re-schedule the popular Travel Meet Weekend. On Saturday February 6th, we will attend Central Delaware YMCA's 3D Invitational in Dover. (*Please see attached meet announcement*). After the meet we'll head to Rehoboth for a team dinner, stay the night and then the following day have a beach workout at nearby Gordon's Pond State Park.

- 3D Invitational Swim Meet 2/6/10 – ALL AGES - Dover, DE (Entries due 1/24/10)
- Team Dinner Afterward – Rehoboth Beach, DE
- Beach Workout 2/7/10 - 10:00-11:30am – Gordon's Pond State Park

This is a great team activity, one of the few where we can all come together. The meet itself is great for our 13 & unders, who benefit from the change of venue. Plus it's a one day meet, within a more intimate YMCA pool setting, so it's scaled well for the younger ones. Older swimmers who have high school meets are welcome to come to Rehoboth afterward for the team dinner and beach workout portions of the trip.

As a courtesy we have blocked 20 rooms at the Admiral Hotel on Baltimore Avenue & Boardwalk. Attending members are not required to stay in this hotel:

Admiral Hotel
Baltimore Ave
Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971
888-882-4188
<http://www.admiralrehoboth.com/>

- ~\$89.00 per night for double occupancy, plus 8 % tax (children under 13 are free)
- ~Late check out of 4:00 pm if necessary
- ~Must call 888-882-4188 and ask for FGAC rate
- ~Cancellation policy: prior to 7 days - \$25.00 cancel fee, 7 days or less no refund
- ~Credit card required for booking

FGAC TO ATTEND SPRING CHAMPIONSHIPS 3/26-28/10

This year we will attend MSSC's March Spring Championships as our final "No Faster Than" swim meet of the short course season for those swimmers who do not qualify for events in either JO's or Junior Champs or a higher level Senior meet. Last year we went to PVS 18 & under Championships and it proved to be too early in the season and too much of a conflict for our high school swimmers at that time of year. We had hoped to attend what was to be an RMSC Invite, but due to scheduling conflicts they cannot host one this year.

This meet, which falls at the very end of the short course season, will be open to all swimmers in those events for which they are eligible. Swimmers who have no prior end of season championship meet qualifications will focus on this as their end of short course championships. Those who have a majority of events in other championship meets may be exempt. A third possibility is to swim a combination of two championship meets, including this one.

NEW PROGRAM INITIATIVES

We are excited to announce these latest developments in programming:

1. *Videotaping* - Thanks to the modest but consistent raising of funds from apparel and holiday greenery sales and the annual \$15.00 equipment fee portion of program fees, we've been able to purchase a state of the art videotaping set-up, featuring an HD video camera and flat screen monitor. This system not only features great video capture, but also portability for efficient field use and instant feedback, something older technology did not affordably offer.

At this time we are still in the testing stages, taping senior level kids during the production-friendly early morning practices. Our goal is to develop a system with a variety of formats to be able to eventually serve all age groups in some way, shape or form. We'll keep you posted on our plans so you can be sure to take advantage.

2. *Basic criteria for moving from Level 4 to Level 5* – It has been decided by the Team Council, through several meetings, much discussion and a majority vote, that there will now be three basic criteria swimmers must meet in order to become eligible for Level 5:
 - A. Practice Attendance – Must meet minimum Level 5 requirement of 5 practices per week
 - B. Skill – Must be able to complete the current minimum “Cruise” test set standard
 - C. Race Experience – Must have competed in 11 of the total 14 *senior* level events, including at least one mid-long distance FR and one IM

This policy will not go into effect until next season's move-up class. (Practically speaking, those who have been named eligible this season meet the requirements already, but they are officially grandfathered.)

PRACTICE SCHEDULE

***No practice Sunday January 24th** due to January Open at Fairland

MEET SCHEDULE

We are entering the more chaotic portion of the short course season, with high school swim season factored in and everyone preparing for different championship meets in March. It is essential that we plan ahead in order to put each swimmer in the best position possible in finishing out the short course season. Please see pvswwm.org for complete meet announcements:

***January Open 1/23-24/10** - Entries closed - Deck entries allowed at \$10.

***February Team Travel Meet Weekend 2/6-7/10** – Entries due 1/24/10 – See info above

***Winter Gator Mini Meet 2/13-14/10** – Entries due 1/31/10 - Last mini meet before Mini Championships in March!

***February Distance Meet 2/14/10** – Entries due 1/31/10

***RMSC February Qualifier 2/28/10** – Criteria/coach's selection TBD

NEWS & NOTES

1. This spring is our biennial Swim-A-Thon. We have some new wrinkles planned this time around, with an emphasis on actual per length sponsorship. We will preview more details in next month's newsletter.
2. FGAC's Training Squad has resumed Winter Session practice at Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex in Landover. For the Spring Session we are looking to add a few swimmers to create a more spirited summer league prep environment. Since this facility better serves those in the Prince-Mont Swim League, if you know of anyone in PMSL who may be interested, please direct them to our club website for information. We have registered a few swimmers recently from the Bowie area, so the future for this program in serving that sector of the metro area looks plausible.
3. A tentative plan to take a senior level, early summer training trip to Blacksburg VA is in the works. The H2okie Aquatic Club, which brought a dozen swimmers to train with us last summer, has invited us to come down and knock the construction dust off their brand new 50 meter natatorium. There is also a local rock quarry they use regularly for open water practices which will be part of the plan. If things pan out, the trip will occur early in the summer league season. At this point we expect to travel by team van, paid for by the club. Depending on how many choose to participate, we will likely look for a communal lodging option, such as renting dorm rooms or a house for the week, with that cost divided evenly among participants. More info will be posted as we know it.