



FAST is a member team of USA Swimming, Inc. and United States Masters Swimming, Inc. We are sponsored by Speedo, Inc.

TIMES



.... AT WILKERSON-GREINES
VOLUME 19 NUMBER 4 OCT 2007

* BY THE NUMBERS *

Total FAST Membership: 154

| | | | |
|------------|----|-----------|----|
| Marlins | 13 | Senior II | 11 |
| Barracudas | 13 | Senior I | 23 |
| Makos | 14 | Masters | 22 |
| White | 8 | College | 0 |
| Red | 7 | Medical | 2 |
| Blue | 9 | | |
| Bronze | 8 | | |
| Silver | 14 | | |
| Gold | 12 | | |

Telephone FAST 817-874-5655 (mobile)
Treasurer Kay Mucher 817-800-7871 (mobile)
treasurer@fastswimming.org
Our website: <http://www.fastswimming.org/>
Team email: fastswim@fastswimming.org

* WELCOME TO FAST *

Please welcome our new and returning swimmers.

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Marlins | Brandon Baron | Jake Baron |
| | Cameron Cramer | Shelby Hobohm |
| | Drake Kraf | Kaci Wright |
| | Lucy Xin | |
| Barracudas | Rachel Fernandez | |
| Makos | Zane Donald | Libertad Heredia |
| | Taylor Warmann | |
| Blue | Nikkolas Wolf | |
| Bronze | Mallory Kleinman | Carli Petri |
| Gold | Ethan Goldfarb | |
| Senior I | Daniel Naherny | Walter Rumans |
| | Dylan Smith | |
| Masters | Ben Schmitt | Gail Schmitt |

* NEW CHEVRONS *

In our Chevrons lists for this summer and earlier, our swimmers that scored Top 16 National Reportable Times missed the "AAAA" chevrons that they earned during the same swims. These swimmers deserve special recognition:

"AAAA" Chevrons

| | | |
|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| Free | Madeleine Marcos | |
| Breast | Joseph Daniels | Richelle Daniels |
| | David Funderburk | Remy Neville |
| IM | David Funderburk | Richelle Daniels |

* UPCOMING EVENTS *

BRING A FRIEND NIGHT

We will have a "Bring A Friend" night for swimmers who have friends who can enjoy participating in a swim workout including some games. The event will be on Tuesday October 16 during your swimmer's regular practice; we will require a Hold Harmless waiver signed by the guest's parent to be turned in by Monday October 15. We hope that you will have fun!

SWIM-A-THON 2007

During our Team Parent meeting on September 20 we reviewed our upcoming Swim-A-Thon fundraiser. This is a required fundraiser and we will be distributing packets for swimmers to solicit funds. Parents interested in helping organize this event should contact our President Steve Plamondon or talk to our Pool Parent liason Mary Richey. There will be more information on our pool bulletin board soon and our August/September newsletter had additional information about the fundraiser structure. We are planning it for Friday 2 November 2007.

HALLOWEEN PARTY

Our coaches are planning a Halloween Party for Wednesday 31 October in place of the usual practice. More details will come soon.

STROKE CLINIC NIGHT

We will be having an evening once a month to focus on stroke technique. It is going to be on Wednesday and the Seniors group will be helping the younger swimmers 5-7 pm (sorry, no Masters). We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity. Our first opportunity is September 26 and we'll continue on October 24.

*** OTHER FAST BUSINESS ***

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Let me first say "Welcome" to all of our new FAST Parents (and swimmers). We are excited to have so many new families join the team. We had over 20 new swimmers join in August and September, and several of the swimmers from our Summer Program decided to stay active as year-round athletes as well.

Next, I want say "Thank You" to all of the parents who volunteered at our recent Black vs Blue Meet. For several of the swimmers (and parents), it was their first swim meet ever. It looked like everyone was having a lot of fun, and the new swimmers learned how to participate in a swim meet. It made a big difference to have the parents time the events. It helped our new kids better understand what it is like to swim in a real meet. Plus, we saw some very fast swims -- great job, swimmers.

Please mark your calendars with some upcoming events. You can get more information by visiting our website at www.fastswimming.org or on our bulletin board at the pool.

| | |
|-----------|------------------------|
| Oct 16 | Bring A Friend Night |
| Nov 2 | Swim-A-Thon Fundraiser |
| Nov 10-11 | FAST BB/B/C Meet |
| Dec 3 | Holiday Party at WGAC |

The Swim-A-Thon, the FAST Hosted Swim Meet and the FAST Holiday Party will be opportunities to earn volunteer hours. We will be posting volunteer sign-ups for the events on the

bulletin board at WGAC throughout the months of October and November, so please continue to watch the bulletin board for more information.

The Swim-a-Thon and FAST Hosted Swim Meet are both fundraisers for FAST. We are a non-profit swim team, and we need these fundraisers to help with the over-and-above expenses that the team incurs throughout the year, such as coach travel to swim meets, extra pool space during summer months, etc. We are currently generating our 2007-08 budget that will be reviewed and approved at our next Board meeting on October 15th. We will also establish our Swim-a-Thon fundraiser goal as well. For those of you who might not know, due to a backwash issue that caused the WGAC pool water to get cloudy at our April meet, we chose to provide refunds to the teams for the events that were cancelled which caused us to have an income shortfall in the 2006-07 year. We hope to make up for that shortfall at this year's fundraiser events. We will need your support. Please note that if anyone is interested in details about our team's finances, please feel free to contact me any time.

I am looking forward to a very successful year at FAST in the 2007-08 season. I've heard rumors that we have one of the strongest FAST teams in several years... a lot of potential... and I can't wait to see all of that potential turn into excellent results at the swim meets throughout the year.

-- Steve Plamondon, FAST President

CHANGES IN MEET ENTRIES

Swimmers and parents, please note: some changes are underway for USA Swimming meets. The meets for the past few years have had delays in results being published up to a week following a meet just to track down one or two swimmers. There are also issues with swimmers entering in incorrect classifications -- ie, "A" swimmers winning the "BB" events. The late entries also make the meet much more difficult to run using a talent pool of highly-experienced volunteers that is unfortunately diminishing rapidly. The planned changes are to address these situations.

If you plan to enter events **at the meet** [changes to FAST's team entries] you must note these rules:

- If you are not registered as a USA Swimming athlete, you will not be able to deck-register or

participate. [Normally this does not apply for FAST athletes as we register our new swimmers immediately upon joining our team]. If you are very new to FAST we will need to expedite your registration -- contact your coach.

- If you were entered into the meet by FAST but wish to add/delete events, you will need to provide a recent printout of your USA Swimming Times from their website.
- If you did not enter the meet at all, we discourage you from entering as a late entry. In order for your entry to be accepted you need to present a copy of your USA Swimming athlete registration card AND present a list of your current best times from USA Swimming's website.
- If you were not sure if your schedule would allow you to swim at a meet, you may need to sign up "just in case" rather than planning on late entering and paying late fees.

Your USA Swimming ID is mailed to you with your FAST monthly bill. It is very important that this does not get thrown away as there will be a replacement cost.

In order to print your Best Times from USA Swimming, please follow these steps just before the meet. The database is updated within a few days after each North Texas competition.

1. Go to the USA Swimming website at www.usaswimming.org
2. Under "usa swimming tools", click on "Times/Time Standards" to bring up the "Find A Time" webpage
3. Click on "Individual Times" to search the SWIMS database
4. Fill in the search form:
Last name, first name; fill in a date range spanning your child's career; "All Events"; all age ranges; show the fastest time by event.
5. Allow sorting to be by event [default]
6. Click "Search"
7. If more than one swimmer comes back, select your athlete

8. Scroll down the webpage to see that the expected results come back. Print the webpage and take it with you.

The USA Swimming website also has a wealth of other information for our swimmers and for parents. We strongly encourage you to take some time and look around.

MEET VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Please mark your calendar for the weekend of November 10-11 and plan to help at our "BB/B/C" meet at Wilkerson-Greines. There are over 400 hours of volunteer help needed in addition to all the hours that our Meet Director Graham Ayers puts in. We will need help from the entire team, not just the parents of the swimmers at the meet. There are positions that a new helper can fill as well as positions that require experienced, certified people.

If you have questions about what the various positions are about, our Meet Director can also help you with that or you can ask one of our other board members.

We will be placing a signup sheet on the pool bulletin board in mid-October. While we appreciate the help of anyone who decides to show up without advance notice, it is much too frantic if most people do not sign up in advance so we are assured that positions are filled. Thanks for your support.

MORE VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Parents, we also need to have some volunteers lined up to help with these annual "dry" events:

Holiday dinner -- organizers will determine a location, make reservations, pick a menu, and help distribute information to the team. You will need to work with the FAST Board. Our planned evening is Monday December 3 and you will want to make arrangements soon as holiday schedules get crazy.

Silent Auction -- we have done this to help combine a fun shopping episode along with team fundraising. We would like to conduct this at the same location and time as the Holiday dinner. Organizers will need to help collect, tag, and help with the auction.

*** THE COACHES WATCH ***

HEAD COACH RON

Senior I, Senior II

Welcome to October and we are officially heading into the fall. This month, before the season gets too far along, I thought I would take this opportunity to do a little grousing about a pet peeve that I have had for a very long time with regard to Senior I and II and why my pet peeve needs and must be improved upon.

What is it you ask? If you are a swimmer in one of my two groups, I am willing to bet that you can guess if you have heard my voice raise during practice, since it lately has been the one thing that constantly frustrates me.

Yes, you guessed it, the swimmer's LACK of being able to read a PACE CLOCK! If you count yourselves as one of this group, please pay attention. We are about to embark upon Pace Clock Reading 101. If you are not in one of my groups, but still find yourself not really up to speed regarding pace clocks, then please feel free to continue reading this article. It would be great if we can get our whole team being better pace clock readers even from an early age. The earlier you learn, the better off you will be in swimming. Parents, you may think that this month's article would be rather silly and that "all kids learn to tell time in Grade 2", but unfortunately the number of swimmers who either can't use a pace clock or simply won't in both the Senior I and II groups is quite alarming actually and I would like this to be a priority to improve for some swimmers.

Here are some points for better pace clock reading which I hope will get some of you on your way.

Q: Why do I need to read the Pace Clock?

A: Quite simply there is a ceiling on how much you can improve in swimming if you have no idea how fast you are going or what pace time you are supposed to hold. If you don't know how fast you trained last month, how are you going to know how fast you have to train this month to be faster? If I send you on a certain pace time to train your body at a certain level based from your best time and you can't read the clock to know when you are supposed to leave or how fast you went, how are you going to

train effectively? Too often swimmers who don't read the pace clock end up just "taking" rest. This means that for some sets that are on fast pace times, swimmers come in and take what I call their 'mandatory' rest between repeats (meaning some swimmers always take 3-4 seconds rest between regardless if they swam fast enough to warrant it or not). And at other times, swimmers take too little rest at points when I actually want you to have a certain amount of recovery rest. Both situations take away from maximal training ability.

#2) The :30 Principle. This is a very simple idea to help you read the pace clock better. This is the idea that you can read the pace clock more easily if you cut use the principle that you cut the clock into sections and then go from there (this can also be the :5/ :10 and :15 second principle too). For example, if you are having trouble figuring out what a pace time is that is across the clock from where you left, then using a :30 second clock is easier. If you are going 100's on 1:35, just cut the clock in half from when you left (let's say that's the :20), so you go straight across the clock (which is :30 seconds) to the :50 and then it's a simple case of just adding :5 seconds and leaving on the :55 (the same goes for :25 -- it would be :30 across and then minus :5 or :45). For tighter pace times with less rest, then you can compress this idea down to a smaller number. Let's say it's 100's on 1:12.5 (a little more difficult on the fly) and you are going fast and not getting much rest. Losing the set and the pace because you couldn't read the clock in time is not good for improvement. Instead, use a :10 second clock and then you have 100 to figure out when you left, what :10 seconds later than this is and then add 2.5 seconds. I know that everyone can do this over a period of 100 meters or yards (example, you leave on the 1:37.5-- you have 100 to figure out :10 seconds later is 47.5 and then just add 2.5 which gets you to 1:50). EVERYONE can do this.

#3) KNOW WHEN YOU LEFT! This is a very simple idea and it is "key" to being able to read a pace clock. If you never look at the pace clock, then you are leaving out one of the most important parts of your training and there is no way the rest of pace clock work can happen if you don't actually look at the clock.

#4) Look Before/ Look After. Looking at the pace clock should be the last thing you do when you leave the wall, and the very first thing you do when you arrive back after a repeat. NO exceptions. It only takes a moment, but it is tremendously important. Some may be tired, but as long as your vision is still working, then you can take a look at the clock. If you come in and stare at the gutter for a minute while catching your breath, you are not helping yourself. Also, some swimmers seem to have swimming become an inconvenience between their social conversations. If the last thing you do when leaving the wall is talking to your friend and the first thing you do when you come back is go immediately back into that conversation, not only are you probably not working hard enough in workout, nor focused on what you are supposed to be doing, but there is no way getting any sort of time or being able to hold any sort of pace is going to be possible. So look before and look after.

#5) Know your approximate pace. Some of these other ideas for some need to come first, but once you become good at reading the pace clock, you should be able to do longer sets (say repeat 500's) and actually take splits during your swim without having to slow down to look at the clock and the best part is you don't get lost or lose count (generally). The premise here is that if you know how fast you are swimming, then you are actually not spending time to "read" the clock as you turn through but you are looking for a place on the clock that the second hand should be in relation to your pace. So for example, if you are doing a 500 Free and you know you are holding 58's, you are going to look for 58 at the first turn. If the red hand is there, you know you are on pace, if it's farther up, then you know you are slower and if it's farther down, then you know you are going slightly faster. After that, if you know you are going to be holding just under sub 1-minute swims, you are going to be looking for the next spot on the clock where the hand should be in relation to your pace. (58 goes to 56 then down to 54 and so on). You can even do this down to 50 splits once you become proficient. This way you are not wasting time and looking for a moving hand, but looking for a spot on the clock and expect to see the hand there waiting.

#6) Concentrate! Swimming requires concentration

on many different fronts. Reading the pace clock is just one area which requires concentration on what you are doing. People who are thinking about pace times are also the ones I see concentrating on stroke details and the "little" things which affect how fast you swim. In a way you could say that it all boils down to how much you concentrate in practice.

I am continually surprised at how many swimmers this issue applies to and continually frustrated with how many swimmers go "blindly" through practice without having a good handle on what they are doing.

So in the future, let's all make an effort to PRACTICE SMART!

The Senior I "Swimmer of the Month" goes to *Weston Walker*. Weston had a great summer and is really emerging as a swimmer to watch in North Texas. He is a hard worker and has shown great dedication to his improvement. His comedy routine needs work, but thank goodness that doesn't stop him from raising the bar in training to become a better swimmer. Way to go Weston, keep up the great work!

Kay Frano is the Senior II "Swimmer of the Month". Kay has been working very hard and I have seen improvements in her swimming in just the last month. She is being attentive to details and this will help also to make her a better swimmer. Way to go Kay, keep up the good work!

COACH DAVE

Barracudas

I'm glad to see some new swimmers and some returning swimmers and happy to see some swimmers moving up. I would really like to see more swimmers going to meets. The Black and Blue meet is/was a great opportunity to see how meets run. I think a lot of Barracudas will be surprised at how well they do and how much fun Meets can be. I'm looking forward to seeing the progress you can achieve this season.

Gold

This season we are going to try something new. We are going to break the Short Course Season into 2 seasons. The first one will end with either the COR Winter Classic or Kerr-McGee (Chesapeake). The goal is to have as many swimmers final at COR

and have cuts for Kerr-McGee. We are going to try to get a Bus Trip to Oklahoma. This is a great Meet for all swimmers especially those of you who haven't been to an elite meet such as Kerr-McGee. We will then take about a week off and rest during Christmas.

This should allow you to remain focused through out the Short Course Season. The second season will of course end with TAGS. We had a lot of swimmers make it to Austin but we can always have more. It takes dedication and a good work ethic. The dedication is there for the group, but some of you can and need to work harder if you want to obtain your swimming goals. You need to make sure that you are putting everything you can into your practices. What you put in is what you get out. Make sure you set some good goals and then make sure you are working as hard as you can to reach those goals.

Ethan Martchenke is the Barracudas "Swimmer of the Month" and **Caleb Dena** is "Swimmer of the Month" for the Gold group. Keep up the great work.

COACH JANET

White, Silver

The beginning of short course will find us working on technique and conditioning. Silver group should be sure to bring dryland clothes every day.

"Swimmer of the Month" for White group is **Karen Scherer**. Karen has great attendance and a great attitude. Thank you Karen for your contribution to White Group.

Silver group's "Swimmer of the Month" is **Armando Dehesa**. Armando comes in with a great attitude ready to participate. Thank you Armando for bringing your positive outlook.

COACH CATHY

Bronze, Blue

Here we are at the fresh start of a new short course season. It is time to set new goals and focus on the months ahead of us. You should all be working on those goal sheets and setting up your swimming notebooks. Let's all strive for that 90% attendance or above so that come championship meet time we know we have done all the necessary preparations to swim our very best! So bring enthusiasm and excitement to the pool deck and let's

work as a team to accomplish great things. Be sure to get your entries in for our first meets!

Thanks to all who attended my meeting Tuesday, September 18th. If you ever have any other questions please feel free to call or email.

A big welcome to all of the new swimmers in my groups! In Bronze we are thrilled to add **April, Adam, Carli** and **Mallory**. In Blue we welcome **Nick** and **Santiago**.

My choices for "Swimmers of the Month" for September are **Adam Tapper** for Bronze and **Aubree McBrayer** for Blue. They are both working very hard to excel and are pushing themselves toward new horizons. I have no doubt their effort will lead to achieving their desired goals. Keep swimming FAST!!

I'll leave you with this quote by Richard M. Devos, "The only thing that stands between a man and what he wants from life is often merely the will to try it and the faith to believe that it is possible."

COACH CASEY

Makos

I hope all is going well for the start of the school year and our short course season. I am very excited for the upcoming season. Our swimmers are working very hard and seem to have a lot more energy coming into the pool. It is a wonderful feeling to be working with such awesome athletes. Our motivation toward this short course season is to increase our amount of fun while improving ourselves. The swimmers thus far have been extremely excited to get in the water and get started!! After break much of them could not quit talking about how they were ready to get back in the water. I am excited to see so many swimmers starting to develop and progress at such a rapid pace.

We will continue to have fun through different swim techniques and games. I am ready to see our swimmers perform at the FAST Black and Blue Meet. Please welcome all the new faces to our family!

Red

As we begin another season, I am impressed with how much our swimmers missed workouts over the break. Yes, you heard that right!! I had many of our swimmers come up to me and say they were ready for workouts. I am pumped and ready to go for

our short course season. Our workouts thus far have been amazing!

This season will be a very exciting season to watch. I can see many of our swimmers being to progress into great athletes. We will continue to work on our techniques while incorporating more dry-land exercises. We recently finished a couple of workouts on teaching the swimmers how to increase their feel for the water. It seemed to allow the swimmers to experiment with their own stroke and power.

Most of these swimmers will be displaying their speed and power at the FAST Black and Blue Meet. Please come out to support all of our swimming family. We hope to see you there along with all the new faces.

THE MASTERS LANE

The Masters have begun another short course season. Most of our swimmers are glad to see the pool configured into 17 lanes rather than 9 or 10. More elbow room, don't you know.

This month I'd like to focus on attendance. I am always pleased to see regular attendance by any of our swimmers. Regular attendance seems to be compatible with accomplishing goals. And whether or not you identify your goals on paper, you are expecting SOME result for getting in the water or you would not make the effort.

When a less experienced swimmer attends regularly they (without exception) become more comfortable in the water and gain confidence. This of course leads to a willingness to try longer and harder sets ... which in turn gives them more confidence and before you know it they think they can go to Nationals and medal; or swim in a triathlon; or lose weight, gain energy and mental alertness and feel 10 years younger.

When an experienced swimmer comes regularly they quickly regain much of their previous speed and endurance depending on how willing they are to push themselves.

In case no one has mentioned to you lately: Accomplishments through out life are gained through hard, consistent effort which brings to mind my favorite Cavett Robert quote which he styled in the form of an old Chinese proverb: "Man must sit in chair long time with mouth open before roast duck will fly in."

Swim FAST! Swim regularly! Be coachable!
-- *Masters Coach Ric Nesbit*

*** MEET SCHEDULES ***

USA Swimming Meets:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Oct 6-7 | Meets at COPS-Loos: 10&Under "Little Splashers" meet 11&Over "A" meet |
| Oct 19-21 | "BB/B/C" meet at MARS-Trinity HS |
| Oct 26-28 | "A" meet at DM-Loos |
| Nov 10-11 | TSA LSC All*Star Challenge |
| Nov 10-11 | "BB/B/C" meet at FAST-WGAC |
| Nov 29-Dec 1 | National Short Course Champs at Georgia |
| Dec 1-2 | "A" Winter Classic at COR-Loos |
| Dec 8-9 | "BB/B/C" meet at NTN-Southlake |
| Dec 13-16 | Chesapeake Elite Meet at Oklahoma |

The 2008 meet calendar will be determined in November.

USMS Swimming Meets:

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| Nov 16-17 | Short-Course Meters at Tom Landry |
| Dec TBA | Holiday Relays at SMU-Dallas |

*** TEAM POLICY NOTES ***

If you decide to leave FAST either permanently or temporarily, you **must inform the FAST Treasurer in advance and in writing or email**. If you do not inform the treasurer ahead of time in writing, you are responsible for all fees charged to your account. Verbal communication about your departure from FAST to a coach or to any other board member is not accepted. Also, please remember if your child is in the water just one day of a month you are responsible for training fees for that entire month.

Swimmers who leave FAST temporarily must re-activate through our Pool Parent on a "tryout" night. While an in-water tryout may not be needed if the absence has been relatively short, the parents still **MUST** complete new paperwork including paying training fees before the swimmer will be allowed back in the water.

It is part of the North Texas LSC rules that your account must be in good standing upon departing any USA Swimming team or your swimmers(s) may not be allowed to swim with any other team. If your account is not current within 30 days from the date on your last invoice, your account information may be released to the treasurers of another North Texas USA Swimming member team and to the officers of the North Texas LSC.

You may email our treasurer **Kay Mucher** at treasurer@fastswimming.org or leave a note in the "Treasurer" folder in the file cabinets at the pool.



Swimmers at the "Black vs Blue" Intersquad
Ready for the big relay!

* PARENT ARTICLES *

Provide Support for your Swimmer

Reprinted from usaswimming.org

One resounding theme coming from kids is that parents increase the fun in swimming by providing unconditional encouragement and support. A physical presence at meets and interest in what the child is doing both go a long way toward enhancing swimming enjoyment. Kids enjoy swimming when they feel their parents support them regardless of the performance outcome. Your main job is to feed, shelter and transport your swimmer while showing love and support!

You may be wondering what are some things to say to your child after practice or a meet that show support and interest without pressure?

Here is a partial list of appropriate questions to ask your child:

- Did you have fun?
- Did you swim better this week?
- What did you learn today?
- What do you need to work on in the future?
- Did you talk to the coach? What did she emphasize?
- Were you a good sport?
- What was your favorite part of the race/meet/practice?
- Were you nervous? If so, why?
- Was there anything that you didn't like?
- Is there anything I can do to help you?

Why Should My Child Be a Swimmer?

Reprinted from usaswimming.org

1. Swimming is an outstanding activity for young people.
2. Swimming promotes fitness and teaches a child to strive for physical achievement. Many super-stars in other sports started out as swimmers and gained strength and coordination that helped them to excel.
3. Swimming is an exciting individual and team sport.

4. Swimming is a technical and specialized activity involving extensive skill development.
5. Swimming is a healthy "lifetime" activity. Participants may be 1 or 101 years old.
6. Swimming is relatively injury free in comparison to other youth sports.
7. Swimming teaches the life lessons of sport and sportsmanship which include learning to deal with winning and losing, as well as working with officials, teammates and coaches.
8. Swimming motivates participants to strive for self-improvement and teaches goal orientation.
9. Swimming cultivates a positive mental attitude and high self-esteem.
10. Swimming can prevent drowning.

While winning is nice, while setting a record, getting a best time, or making a qualifying time feels good, we hope that our young athletes learn more than "it is great to swim fast". No where in human history or theology do we learn that the ability to swim fast holds a very high priority in the grand scheme of the universe. From a practical standpoint, over-emphasis on speed, times and achievements will eventually end in frustration. No matter how fast a young athlete swims, there will probably be another swimmer in the next town, state, or country, swimming faster, if not now, then next month. So as coaches and parents, ask yourselves:

- Did the child learn to swim with more skill this past season so he or she is both stronger and safer in the water?
- Did the child learn to exhibit initiative, wanting to come to the pool and do the practice without having to be constantly pushed or prodded by parents and coaches?
- Did the child learn something about unselfishness, sacrificing his or her personal wants for the good of others or the team?
- Did the child benefit from the competitive experience, learning how to handle winning and losing in our competitive society?
- Did the child learn more patience in overcoming obstacles, setbacks and problems?
- Did the child learn empathy?

In a few years, the medals and ribbons will be laid aside and best times will be a hazy memory. The friendships that will develop and the life skills learned will carry on for a lifetime.

