

The SOCAL Spotlight

Winter 2016-2017

**SOCAL
WATER POLO**

What's New in the Pool?

Welcome to Spring!

After more rainy days than usual, we welcome the sunshine, heck it's almost like my land that you Americans call Oz.

Hats off to our high school girls who just finished their seasons with many outstanding performances and improvements. It's wonderful to have so many high school girls back and competing to improve themselves and the team. On the boys' side, Coaches Klatt, Flesher, and Mitchell press the high school boys to improve. SOCAL has assembled one of the best water polo coaching staffs in the USA. The youth are on a roll too, having accelerated from Winter swimming to a higher pitched level of water polo.

A big thank you to Coach Jason Lynch who continues to develop and communicate SOCAL's tactical coaching philosophy to our nearly 50 coaches by meeting with, evaluating, observing, and teaching our entire Coaching staff. Coach Jason has organized "mentoring days" so that older players can connect with younger players and both can learn more about the sport. Mentoring days not only enhances the water polo experience, but also is great for learning. Coach John Kessel of USA Volleyball has a blog spot called "Growing the Game Together" that Coach Lynch has provided to the Coaching staff. Check out Kessel's Blog at <http://www.teamusa.org/usa-volleyball/grassroots/grow-the-game-blog>. In it Kessel writes, "Your child will be a better player if she coaches younger players." I believe that too and value how it fosters Club as family.

I'm proud to be leading SOCAL. All of you have a different water polo journey, but we love the water and our SOCAL family. Don't forget on June 10th we will have our Annual Picnic and Awards Festival. Plan to spend an afternoon at Peppertree Park with us.

I know SOCAL's dedicated student athletes will continue to focus on doing well as school comes to a close and will be ready for another jam packed, rapid fire Summer culminating with JO's at the end of July.

Say hello to me on the pool deck.

-Andrew Rowe, President and General Manager



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SAVE THE DATE- SATURDAY, JUNE 10TH SOCAL WATER POLO ANNUAL SUMMER KICK-OFF PICNIC

This fun event is for all SOCAL- Splash Ball, Polo-Lite, 10 Unders, Youth Boys and Girls and High School Athletes and Parents- Come help us celebrate the accomplishments of all our athletes.

This festive event will include a delicious catered lunch, games, bounce houses, team competitions and more.

Bring your lawn chairs and sunscreen and join the fun!

More details to come



Splash Ball and Polo Lite are Back for Spring Session 2017

Our youngest players took a break for the winter. Now with the return of warmer weather, Splash Ball and Polo Lite are back for Spring and Summer!

See socalwaterpolo.org for details
Tell your friends!!



Meet the Coach- Anke Huijsmans Swim Conditioning

Coach Anke with Noelle, Robert, May and Celeste enjoying family time in the Sierras

Anke grew up in a water polo family and has been on a pool deck since she was a small child in the Netherlands. Her mother and father both played and coached water polo and swimming and Anke spent many hours in the water first swimming and then transitioning to water polo when she was 12 years old. As a fast swimmer with sharp ball awareness, Anke was a skilled attacker who embraced the water polo lifestyle and treasures many happy memories of her time in the pool including playing on the same club team as her mother.

It was only natural that Anke would encourage her own children to embrace an aquatics lifestyle. Five years ago, when Anke's daughters Noelle and Celeste began to participate in swim conditioning as part of their water polo training, Anke recognized a need to refine the program and stepped up to take the helm. Putting her excellent experience in swimming to use, Anke implemented some important changes such as refining stroke technique, splitting the swimmers into different skill level, encouraging the kids to strive to move up to the next group as well as leading dry land exercises and injury prevention work. Anke found that a big swimming challenge for water polo players is that polo freestyle is a different stroke than regular freestyle. There is a need to get polo players to perform a classic swim meet stroke because it can help the polo athletes to move faster and remain injury free. The results of the swim conditioning program under Anke's guidance have brought incredible results in the improvement of SOCAL athletes ability to be competitive in the pool. Anke tells us "Once kids become better swimmers, they will swim faster and therefore will be better polo players, I often hear "Those SOCAL kids are fast" and "very well-conditioned". SOCAL polo players can go long and strong, strong enough to go four quarters, or on the third day of a tournament they are still strong- if they are not conditioned they could not do that." Anke is proud of the results she sees in the SOCAL athletes.

Anke tells us that she loves kids, and loves to be able to make a difference in their lives. It brings her joy to guide them to master skills they can use later in life such as time management, perseverance, handling drama and making friends.

Whether it is coaching SOCAL polo players to be better swimmers or swimming every morning in warm weather in her new pool at home, or sitting on a pool deck somewhere with her husband Robert watching Noelle and Celeste play with their High School, SOCAL or USA Water Polo teams, chances are, if you want to catch up with Anke, you better check out the nearest pool deck!

SOCAL Athletes Find Success at ODP Regional Championships

Congratulations to the following SOCAL athletes who were selected to move on to the ODP National Team Selection Camps

Additional kudos to Noah Hodge who was named as the SoPac recipient of the Nick Johnson Inspiration Award.



This award recognizes athletes that embody the vision and values of the Olympic Development Program for having the utmost respect for their opponents, officials, and the game of water polo. **Congratulations Noah!**

Youth National Team

Noah Hodge
Joseph Molina
Guillermo Ocasio

Isabella Barajas
Tea Poljak
Jamie Hutton
Valerie Ayala



Cadette National Team

Garret Griggs
Riley Pittman
Alec Isaacman

Kennedy East
Maryn Dempsey
Anna Pearson
Katherine Wrightsman

Development National Team

Zachary Cwiertnia Laine Hourigan

SOCAL SCHOLAR ATHLETES MAKE COLLEGE COMMITMENTS

Congratulations to these SOCAL athletes who recently committed to play water polo in college-

Cole Stohson-La Salle University
Sara Dempsey -Cal State University Northridge
Joe Shaw -Loyola Marymount University
Lindsay Peterson - San Diego State University

These athletes join our previously announced players-

Dani Ayala - UCI
Hannah Bradley - Azusa Pacific
Sara Dempsey - Cal State Northridge
Megan Falcon - UCI
Erin Gordon - Long Beach State
Morgan Jones - UC Irvine
Vicky Ochoa - Cal Baptist
Grace-Ann Pevehouse - UCSD
Randi Reinhardt - USC
Christina Reyes - UC Irvine
Calysa Toledo - UC Irvine
Sophie Traversi - USC

Good Luck to All!!

PCA Players of the Quarter

Congratulations to our SOCAL PCA Players of the Winter Quarter

These athletes were chosen by their coaches for demonstrating excellent sportsmanship, teamwork and dedication.



10U- Kamryn McCord

Coach Lyric Soto tells us "Kamryn is my go to girl if I have any one new at practice. She stays with them and helps them understand the drills we are working on. She is also extremely dedicated as she goes to swimming 3-4 times a week and attends every 10 and 12s practice. She shows up to every game early or in one case 2 hours early! Kamryn is everyone's friend and teammate. As she continues her career in water polo I hope she never loses the ability to work hard, stay dedicated, and be kind to everyone." Well done Kamryn!

12U Girls- Emma Sosa

Emma Sosa has dedicated herself to becoming competitive in every aspect of the game. She attacks all drills whole heartedly, always showing us game speed with resolve to do better each repetition. Her effort is always 100% and this motivates those around her- truly a great attribute for a teammate to have. Emma has also taken a huge step in competitive swimming, challenging herself at swim meets and practices. Her hard work is paying off by the goals, steals, and awesome shot blocking we have all seen this quarter! Her potential is exponential, because she works so hard. -Coach Alex Farraro



14U Girls- Madi Love



Madi is a dedicated water polo player whose improvements the last few months have been exceptional. Her high attendance rate and ability to better focus to compete in practice have led to her fundamental improvements. Madi just returned home from her first international trip to Canada where she was an outstanding contributor to the team as player and as traveling teammate. Her hustle in practice is evident in games. She always has a cheery disposition and takes coaching input seriously. Madi lets mistakes roll off her and always intends to do better the next time. As Madi grows she will learn to influence her group (i.e. lead) with words and example,

14U Girls-Kelly Hungerford

Kelly is a special type of teammate, she has a great balance of so many different skills that are necessary to be a great athlete. She is both a logistical and inspirational leader, qualities that are often hard to combine. As a staff, we can turn to her to keep her teammates in line, and utilize her passion as inspiration for the other girls. Additionally, she is a true competitor, a quality that is hard to teach but so highly valued. As we have worked this past year to teach our girls, improvements are made when the team is making mistakes at 100%, and we can always count on Kelly to be giving 100%. Even when she is doing an individual skill she is competitive with herself, working hard to make improvements, which can be seen in her commitment to SoCal aquatics. Thank you to Kelly for working so hard for our team!!- Coach Melissa Seidemann



10U Boys- Edric Scott



Despite Edric's young age, he has a mature work ethic. He is both dedicated and hardworking. Every practice he continually tries to improve. Watching him get better throughout the season is a very fulfilling part of my job and I look forward to seeing his progress as his coach. -Coach Cesar Altamirano



12U Boys - Jack Wright

Jack is eleven years old and has been a part of SOCAL Water Polo since he was 3 and Ed Reynolds coached him in Splash Ball. He has excelled in water polo in part due to his participation and dedication with SOCAL Aquatics Swim Club. Jack has evolved into a team leader for the 12U Boys Group. He is a hard worker and competitor. He is learning that for the team to be successful all need to contribute and Jack does his part to help in that area. He is very enthusiastic and loves the game of water polo.



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14U Boys- Tona Zinn.

Coach Jeff Rach tells us "The growth Tona has made through maturity and the way he has gone about managing swim and polo is awesome. He has exemplified what it is to be a well-rounded aquatics athlete." Well done Tona!

SOCAL IN THE COMMUNITY

Coaches Andrew Rowe and Jessy Cardy Named USA Water Polo Zone Award Winners

USA Water Polo recently announced their annual winners for distinguished coaching accomplishments. Coaches representing zones from across the country were chosen for their dedication and ability to guide their teams at a high level. Congratulations to SOCAL's Coach Andrew Rowe and Coach Jessy Cardy who were named as 2016 USA Water Polo Zone Award Winners.

Andrew Rowe was honored with the Sandy Nitta Distinguished Coaching Award
Jessy Cardey was honored with the Brent Bohlender Distinguished Coaching Award.

Congratulations to Andrew and Jessy for your well-deserved recognition!

“Water Polo-“Oh, the Places You'll Go!”

YOUTH GIRLS TRAVEL TO CANADA

Nine Youth Girls returned from the 20th Annual Valentine's Day International tournament in Victoria, British Columbia with silver medals around their necks. The international competition was new to all of them. When they were not playing water polo, the girls were able to zip around in a Zodiac boat in the Strait of Juan de Fuca wearing survival suits, use the Canadian currency of looneys and twoneys, go inside Emily Carr's house (a first), tour Craigdorrach Castle, enjoy a real British tea, walk the Capillano Suspension Bridge, and then discover a wonderful First Nations artist Susan Point.

Coach Ed is taking reservations for Florida in February 2018.



For a full photo album, visit twitter feed @YouthGirlsSOCAL

Val Ayala Plays Polo on an International Stage

SOCAL's very own Val Ayala, a member of the USA Women's Youth National Team competed in the FINA World Women's Youth Water Polo Championships held in December at the Sir Owen Glenn National Aquatic Centre in Auckland, New Zealand.

Val and Team USA started their 18-day trip in Australia where they acclimated to the time change and trained over several days at the Australian Institute of Sport training facility in Canberra. Val and Team USA got a hint of what to expect in the upcoming tournament when they scrimmaged with teams from Hungary, Australia and Germany who were also training at the AIS. At the FINA Championships in New Zealand, Team USA played well with wins over Japan, Germany, Greece and China twice, with only one loss to Russia in the quarter finals to finish in 5th place over all.

Val says it was a great experience full of hard work and excitement playing against the international teams. Team USA was very busy with training and game prep and there was little time to sightsee, however the girls did manage to sneak in a few trips to the beach in New Zealand that they enjoyed. Though there was intense training to prepare for the very high level of competition, Val who is no stranger to hard work said overall the trip was a great experience. She especially enjoyed getting to know the other athletes on Team USA and some of her favorite memories were the bonding the girls shared during their rest time. Val expressed her pride at the awesome opportunity to be able to represent the USA on an international stage.

Congrats Val- SOCAL Water Polo is proud of you!!



Send It In!
Student of the Month? Accepted to College? Helped your Community?
We want to know! We'd love to share the accomplishments of our athletes outside the pool.
Send your news to Lisa Gorlinski @ lisagorlinski@socalwaterpolo.org
While we can't promise we'll print it, we'll sure try!

SOCAL Spotlight
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