

The SOCAL Spotlight

July 2017

SOCAL WATER POLO

Inside This Issue

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| What's New in the Pool | 1 |
| College Athletes Picnic Awards | 2 |
| PCA Players | 3 |
| Oh the Places You'll Go! | 4 |

WHAT'S NEW IN THE POOL?

As I write this in the heat of the summer, SOCAL is being awarded the President's Cup once again for being the best Club in the United States by its performances and medals. We are being chased by a whole lot of other clubs who emulate our software, our organization, and our calendar. I strongly feel that what sets us apart is our families, coaches, and administrators who tirelessly and selflessly give their treasures of time and talents to improve our non-profit club. How can we continue to improve? I am reminded of the Japanese management principle of Kaizen which aims to seek tiny improvements by building on what is already good. Kaizen speaks to setting measurable goals and outcomes like SOCAL sets for our "marker" tournaments and our standards of coaching. Kaizen asks that we focus on the larger picture which for SOCAL is teaching the life lessons of youth sport. Lastly, Kaizen operates under the principle of "not judging" or "blaming" as we seek to improve. This third principle, given the boiling cauldron that youth sports can be, calls us to take a deep breath before reacting to our children, other parents, the refs, and our Coaches. Kaizen is the principle SOCAL uses to improve on what is already good and stay ahead of the competition. We strive through little improvements to remain at the tip top of our sport, and we have succeeded. We are always looking for ways to improve. Let us know your thoughts and suggestions. The Summer Holidays before school starts are always a good time to recommit, restore, and refresh ourselves for the new water polo year that begins September 1. We can bring a little Kaizen to our own lives.

Have a great Summer Holiday and good luck with school!

Andrew Rowe
SOCAL General
Manager



Coach Alex Farraro Named SOCAL Coach of the Year



Coach Alex was recognized at the recent Summer Kick-Off Picnic and Awards event for her hard work, dedication and wholehearted dedication to her 12U Team. Coach Alex has an infectious enthusiastic attitude and guides her team to improve every day while also making sure they have fun too!

Congrats Coach Alex on your well-deserved recognition!



All Participating SOCAL Water Polo Teams Qualify for Junior Olympics

SOCAL qualified a record 18 boy's and girl's teams for JOs across all age levels spanning from 10U to 18U. Teams competed in anywhere from 5 to 7 games over 2 weekends in June in order to qualify for the National Junior Olympics that will be held at the end of July at more than 25 Orange County high school and college pools with the championship finals held at Woollett Aquatics Center in Irvine. Several teams finished exceptionally well including 1st place finishes for the 16 U Boys Black and 14 U Girls Black teams and 2nd place finishes for 10 U Co-ed, 14 U Boys Black, 16 U Girls Black and the 18 U Girls Black teams.

SOCAL will join over 840 teams from across the country for the competition that will take place from July 22 to July 25 for youth boys, high school boys and 10U girls and on July 27 - 30 for youth girls, high school girls and 10U mixed teams.

Congratulations to all of the SOCAL teams that qualified and good luck in the Junior Olympics!!



SOCAL Athletes Make College Decisions

Congratulations to the following athletes who recently committed to play NCAA Water Polo this Fall

Michael Swieka- UC Irvine

Nolan Ortega- UC San Diego

Campbell Gorkinski- Santa Clara University

Arash Izadmanesh- UC Irvine

They join previously announced players:

Dani Ayala – UC Irvine

Hannah Bradley - Azusa Pacific

Sara Dempsey - Cal State Northridge

Megan Falcon – UC Irvine

Erin Gordon - Long Beach State

Morgan Jones - UC Irvine

Vicky Ochoa - Cal Baptist

Lindsay Peterson - San Diego State University

Grace-Ann Pevehouse – UCSD

Randi Reinhardt - USC

Christina Reyes - UC Irvine

Joe Shaw -Loyola Marymount University

Cole Stohson-La Salle University

Calysa Toledo - UC Irvine

Sophie Traversi – USC

SOCAL is proud of all these athletes for their continued hard work and leadership in the classroom, their communities and in the pool.

SOCAL 4th Annual Summer Kick-Off Picnic a Success

The SOCAL Water Polo Family came together on June 10th for an afternoon of awards, games, food, and fun. The picnic kicked off with a barbecue lunch. Players then competed in games such as a water balloon toss, hoola hoop team event and a bubble gum blowing contest. The afternoon concluded with a ceremony in which standout players were awarded for their commitment to bettering the game and exemplifying the SOCAL spirit.

Congratulations to the award winners:

Most Improved

10UGirls-Saige Strickland

10U Boys- Edric Scott

12U Girls- Kaitlyn Kong

12U Boys Black-Riley Clansen

12U Boys Gold- Madox Greene

14UGirls Black-Bailey Barlow

14U Girls Gold-Kaitlyn Ortiz

14U Boys Black-Bradley Clansen

14U Boys Gold- Colin Morgan

Spirit of Black and Gold

10U Girls- Madilyn Ekstrom

10U Boys- Bobby Wright

12U Girls-Andria Burgess

12U Boys Black- Jack Wright

12U Boys Gold- Brody Haney

14U Girls Black- Kelly Hungerford

14U Girls Gold-Aaliyah Burns

14u Boys Black- Noah Rowe

Players Player

10U Girls- Rachell Hemmila

10U Boys- Taylor Bell

12U Girls- Madeleine Poissonnier

12U Boys Black- Garrett Doelman

12U Boys Gold-Logan Colman

14U Girls Black- Claire Poissonnier

14U Girls Gold-Madison Love

14U Boys Black-Jakob Tallman

14U Boys Gold- Ethan Pranaiava

Swim Conditioning

Most Improved Boy- Ian Staniford

Most Improved Girl- Addison Spoonhower

Streamline Boys-Jace Rodriguez

Streamline Girls- Kamryn McCord



PCA Players of the Quarter

Congratulations to our SOCAL PCA Players of the Spring Quarter

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

12U Girls- Julia Reid

Julia is an exceptionally determined and hard-working individual. It has truly been amazing to watch Julia become the athlete and teammate she is at the age of 11! She trains with our elite group at aquatics and has numerous JO qualifying times lined up for this summer- on top of vying for another gold medal match with her 12u girls team.



What stands out about Julia is her willingness to help her teammates. She attacked the goal keeper position last year and has played a crucial role in both the field and the cage this year. With her leg strength, quick reactions and an impressive aquatic base- she is an all-around threat.

No matter what we ask of her, she is always in the game. Whether on the bench, in the goal, on defense or to win a sprint we can count on her to bring her best all the time. She challenges everyone to give their best during practice and in games. These are only a few of the attributes that make her an awesome teammate and PCA player of the quarter!

-Coach Alex Farraro

14 U Girls Gold - Aaliyah Burns-

14U Girls Black- **Madison Love-** is a player that has improved immensely over the past 2 years. She has grown into a hard worker and a great teammate. She is always asking her coaches if she can have more responsibility and what she can do to help her team improve, as well as how she can improve herself. She always works hard in the pool even if she's played every minute of every game. She sets a great example of how to act inside the pool and out. Our coaching staff is so proud of how far she has come and can't wait to see what the future holds for her! -Coach Emily Donohoe



14U Girls PCA Winners Past and Present
Bailey Barlow, Erin Kim, Kelly Hungerford, Aaliyah Burns, Madison Love

10U Girls- Delanney Ewing

Delanney is a leader in her actions! She works hard every day in practice to better herself and her team. She is committed in everything she does. She is dedicated to the game and I can always rely on her to stay focused and work hard in the game. Delanney is a friend to all and would do anything for her team.

-Coach Lyric Soto

14U Boys- Tristan Gallardo-

He is hard working, shows up to all swim and polo workouts and willing to do whatever is best for the team. He has made huge improvements in his game over the last few months and has matured into a young man.

- Coach Jeff Rach



We Honor the Game Here



10U Boys- Connor Coleman -

12U Boys- Brody Haney-

12U Boys- Logan Colman-



12U Boys PCA Winners- Past and Present
Jack Wright, Riley Clansen, Brody Haney and Logan Colman

Water Polo- Oh the Places You'll Go!

Téa and Maryn Represent the USA In South America

For SOCAL's Téa Poljack and Maryn Dempsey, the 2017 UANA Youth Pan American Games were a clear success: the two helped their team to an undefeated tournament and a gold medal, and Téa was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player. But Téa and Maryn also found the trip worthwhile outside the pool as they had the chance to travel to Lima, Peru. Both were very excited to travel to South America for the games; though Téa had visited Uruguay with her fan previously, neither had been to Peru before nor traveled internationally for water polo. Getting there was a bit of a challenge, and the girls took two 6-hour flights on the way out. Téa said the travel rides went by quickly, though Maryn begged to differ. On the way back, the girls faced travel complications. After missing their connecting flight in Miami, 40 girls still needed flight back to LAX, and they were all split up among different flights.



Despite these mishaps, the girls loved the trip. Both found their hotel quite beautiful—according to Téa, each room offered a different view of Lima, a city that is beautiful in its own way. Because all the different teams stayed in the same hotel, the girls had ample time to interact with members of the other teams, and befriended girls from places as diverse as Brazil, Puerto Rico, and Canada. Playing against international teams was also eye-opening. Maryn mused upon how much she admired the gameplay style of the Brazilians, who the USA played in the championship game. Though not big in size, the Brazilian team was strong and fast.

Maryn praised the food, as well. Meals at the hotel consisted of French toast and bacon for breakfasts and pasta with chicken or steak for dinners, but the girls also had the chance to try some of the regional Peruvian cuisine, including many fish dishes and desserts. Téa embraced the chance to try new dishes and ventured outside of her comfort zone by not even asking what a dish was before she tried it. This strategy paid off when she tried beef heart for the first time—she says had she known what it was beforehand, she may not have enjoyed it as much.

The girls didn't have much time to explore, as their schedule was jam packed. Each day, they'd begin with breakfast at the hotel, then meet to discuss the game plan and review film. Games took place each morning against teams from all over North and South America. After competing, the girls would eat lunch, have down time, and stretch, before heading back to the pool for practice. After practice, the team would either cheer on the men if they were playing or head back to the hotel for dinner. Still, despite the rigidity of their schedule, Téa said the team found time to see bits of the city. In particular, driving places offered a chance to view different parts of the city and glimpse different types of architecture. After winning the gold, though, the girls finally had the chance to do some touring, and celebrated by getting dinner and touring Huaca, the adobe pyramids built by the Inca. The girls also saw a charming old church, beautiful beach, and authentic Peruvian market.

Both Téa and Maryn were surprised by how different Peru was from anything they'd experienced before. To ensure the girls' safety, USA Water Polo had arranged for police cars to escort the vans from the hotel to the pool and back each day. Still, both were left with a positive impression of the people of Lima. Remarked Téa, "The people were kind, the food was great, and the places we saw were stunning."

At the end of the day, both girls found it very rewarding to be able to represent the USA. Noted Maryn, "I felt that some of the teams looked up to us. I remember lining up for our game against Argentina. One of the girls looked up to me and said, in her best English, 'You guys are sooooo good!' That melted my heart. Other girls would ask to take pictures with us. After the gold medal game, even the police posed for a picture with us"



Téa, Maryn and Team USA

Congratulations to Téa and Maryn!

Article by Lana Gorlinski

SOCAL Spotlight
Published quarterly
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Printing courtesy of the
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