

The SOCAL Spotlight

May 2018

SOCAL WATER POLO

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SOCAL Spotlight
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Lisa Gorlinski- Editor
Lana Gorlinski- Assistant Editor
Michele Scott, Ed Reynolds, Robin Baia
Contributing Editors

What's New in the Pool?

Welcome to the beginning of Summer and good luck to all our Qualifying Teams! On Saturday, May 19th SOCAL collected the Champions Cup for best club in the USA. If you saw the pictures, you would know that we sent a contingent of women who have tremendously impacted our club. We shout out to the Coaches, Administrators and Volunteers -- most of them women -- who have helped your Club sustain excellence and informed how SOCAL does things.

In this vein that I want tip my hat and thank one tireless volunteer. Many parents have their opinions and feelings about water polo. In my experience, at the end of the day, most parents' opinions and feelings when stripped to the core are about their own children's well-being not our community's. Few volunteers believe the old adage "when the tide rises, all the boats should float."

One exception is Lisa Gorlinski. Lisa steps down after our upcoming picnic having headed our Community Development Program for the past few years. Lisa has unselfishly organized "bring a friend evenings", managed SOCAL's Dinosaur Dash booth, placed signs around Tustin, sent letters to our local public officials, drafted this newsletter, planned our Coaches meetings, placed our advertising banners in key locations, set up free middle school leagues and spearheaded our annual picnic.

Lisa has two children who passed through the program -- Lana and Campbell. Both of them started as little 10s and did not always make the Black Team. Lana is now at Harvard and Campbell (an Eagle Scout) is thriving at Santa Clara. Lisa has given so much to our club beyond the narrow interests of her children. And they've turned out to be remarkable student-athletes with awesome life potential ahead. Please thank Lisa when you see her as she carried on with her work after her children left SOCAL, an act of extraordinary generosity. Thank you Lisa!! (and Charlie -- Lisa's husband -- too!) We had many memorable years together from 10U's through high school laughing, being frustrated, and now enjoying the fruits of hard work. Thank you.

Lisa is one example of a selfless volunteer who sought the good of our community first and saw her children thrive when the tide rose. Thank you to all of those who quietly chip in for the good of our club. Your children are better off.

Have a good summer. Go SOCAL!



Andrew Rowe, President and General Manager



BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!!

SATURDAY, JUNE 9TH

SOCAL WATER POLO ANNUAL SUMMER KICK-OFF PICNIC

This fun event is for all SOCAL including Splash Ball, Polo-Lite, 10Unders, Youth Boys and Girls and High School Athletes, Parents and Coaches

Come help us celebrate the accomplishments of all our athletes.

Includes barbeque lunch, games, bounce houses, team competitions and more.

Bring your lawn chairs and sunscreen and join the fun!!

Tickets available online at socalwaterpolo.org

Fun Photos-SOCAL Teams Enjoy Team Bonding at Grommet Cup



10U Girls



12U Boys



12U and 14U Girls

SOCAL Water Polo Players Chosen for USA Water Polo National Training Teams

Girl's Development Team

Lauren Schneider
Alexandra Love

Girl's Cadet Team

Laine Hourigan
Anna Pearson
Emily Ausmus

Girl's Youth Team

Malia Allen
Maryn Dempsey
Tea Poljak
Julia Janov
Valerie Ayala

Boy's Development Team

Zachary Cwiertnia

Boy's Cadet Team

Jackson Matos

Boy's Youth Team

Garret Griggs
Guillermo Andre Ocasio

SOCAL High School Girls Make an Impact on Their High School Teams

Congratulations to the following SOCAL High School girls who were named to the Orange County Register All County team for their strong performances with their High School Teams.

First Team: Val Ayala, Foothill HS; Bella Baia, Mater Dei HS

Second Team: Jessica Lynch, Newport Harbor HS; Erin Tharp, Corona del Mar HS; Grace Thawley, Mater Dei HS; Noelle Wijnbelt, Foothill HS

Third Team: Nicole Kresich, Mater Dei HS

Fourth Team: Tea Poljak, Mater Dei HS; Kili Skibby, Newport Harbor HS

Congratulations to Maddie Stamen for being recognized as the HS Game Time Girls Water Polo Player of the Year for Riverside

SOCAL finishes strong at the Cal Cup State Finals 2018

With special recognition going to our medal winning teams:

Gold Medals- 14U Boys Black Team, 16U Boys Black Team, 18U Girls Black Team

Silver Medal- 10U Mixed Team

Bronze Medal- 16U Girls Black Team

10U Mixed Team 2nd
12 Girls Black Team 4th
12 Girls Gold Team 15th
12 Boys Black Team 5th
12 Boys Gold Team 12th
14 Girls Black Team 4th
14 Boys Black Team 1st
14 Boys Gold Team 8th

16 Girls Black Team 3rd
16 Girls Gold Team 14th
16 Boys Black Team 1st
16 Boys Gold Team 7th
18 Girls Black Team 1st
18 Girls Gold Team 17th
18 Boys Black Team 12th



SOCAL in the Community

SOCAL Water Polo Named Top Polo Club in USA for 2017

Congratulation to all of the SOCAL athletes and coaches who work hard in the pool day in and day out to play their best polo possible. This strong work ethic and dedication to teamwork and athletic excellence has once again set SOCAL apart as the club with the best overall record of winning at national level tournaments.

Robin Baia named as USA Water Polo Zone Award Winner

USA Water Polo recently announced their annual winners for distinguished volunteer and coaching accomplishments. Volunteers representing zones from across the country were chosen for their commitment and willingness to assist their clubs and the water polo community.

Congratulations to SOCAL's Robin Baia for being named as the Barbara Kalbus Distinguished Volunteer for the Southern Pacific Zone.



Coaches Anke, Keri, Beatriz, Alex, Melissa and Lyric represented SOCAL well at the USA Water Polo Awards Banquet

PCA Players of the Quarter

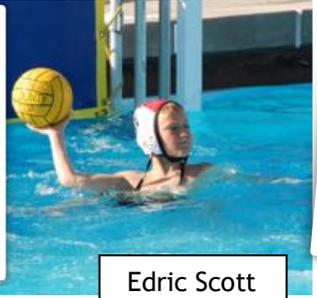
Congratulations to our SOCAL PCA Players of the Winter and Spring Quarters
 These athletes were chosen by their coaches for demonstrating excellent sportsmanship, teamwork and dedication.



Alex Love



Luke Bennett



Edric Scott



Alexandra Ortiz



Madilyn Ekstrom

Very willing to help his teammates!

Youth Boys

10U Black

Winter -Noah Dufrene
 Spring-Luke Bennet

12U Black

Winter -Taylor Bell
 Spring -William Griswold

12U Gold

Winter - Edric Scott
 Spring - Brody Metz

14U Black

Winter - Noah Rowe
 Spring - Carson Hoyt

14U Gold

Winter - William Bennett
 Spring - Colin Morgan

14U White

Winter - Gavin Nelson
 Spring - Nathan Jones



Noah Rowe

Youth Girls

12 U Black

Winter: Madison Jacklin
 Spring: Bridget Bevan

12 U Gold

Winter: Alexandra Ortiz
 Spring: Madilyn Ekstrom

14U Black

Winter- Aaliyah Burns
 Spring - Alex Love

14U Gold

Winter - Marley Webster
 Spring - Milena Novakovic

Wonderful, hard-working teammate in and out of the pool.

Her focus is contagious!



Carson Hoyt



Madison Jacklin



William Bennett

Very coachable.

Stepped up to the plate and played awesome!



Gavin Nelson



Aaliyah Burns with Coach Jamie Neushul and Coach Melissa Seidemann



Colin Morgan



Taylor Bell

Willing to do whatever is best for the team!

He does everything you ask, with a smile on his face!

She is everyone's friend and teammate!



Brody Metz



Bridget Bevan



Noah Dufrene



Nathan Jones



Milena Novakovic



“Water Polo ~ Oh, the Places You’ll Go!”

Coach Edition

Meet the Coach- Melissa Seidemann

To say that the sport of water polo has created international travel opportunities for Coach Melissa Seidemann would be a serious understatement. As an elite water polo athlete and two-time Olympian, Coach Melissa has stamped her U.S. Passport in some amazing places such as Shanghai, Kunshan, Beijing, Changshu and Tianjin, China; Auckland and Christchurch, New Zealand; Toronto and Gatineau, Canada; Budapest, Hungary; Rio De Janeiro, Brazil; Gouda, Netherlands; Kazan and Mansiyk, Russia; Barcelona, Spain; London, England and Guadalajara, Mexico. Coach Melissa has come a long way since she first stepped foot on the pool deck 15 years ago in Northern California.

Melissa was born in Chicago Illinois and moved with her family to Walnut Creek, California as a young girl where she was introduced to the sport through swimming. She started with the Devil Mountain Water Polo Club and then played for Lamorinda Water Polo Club as well as a few other East Bay CA clubs. At the time Melissa was starting in water polo, there were limited club options, so she often played up at the 18U level even though she was quite a bit younger than the other girls on the team. Melissa went on to play water polo in high school at College Park High where she was on the same team as her older sister Lauren for 2 years. You see, water polo definitely runs in her family as her sister Lauren went on to play at UC Davis and has stayed involved in water polo by coaching at her alma mater high school, 680 Club and a variety of clinics, teams and ODP camps. Melissa’s youngest sister Natalie followed her big sisters into the sport, and is finishing her fourth year at UC Irvine, where Melissa part of her journey for the last two years as an assistant coach. Melissa’s dad is also actively involved with the sport, refereeing at club, high school and community college levels in the East Bay, in addition to joining a masters team about two years ago!

After high school Melissa played for Stanford University where she helped her team capture the NCAA title in 2011. Melissa recalls this awesome experience with fondness and pride.

As a two-time Olympian, Melissa has competed at the highest level and recalls that the path to Olympic Gold was one of hard work, commitment and sacrifice. Her road to the London games in 2012 required to her to take a year off from Stanford without certainty that she would be named to the Olympic roster. The journey was definitely challenging but culminated in the most euphoric feeling that Melissa says she will remember forever. Melissa recalls that London was a fabulous place to play water polo. There was a venue dedicated specifically to water polo and everything in the Olympic Village was so well organized that the athletes could concentrate on their training. Her second Olympic experience was filled with very different challenges than the first. Graduating from college in 2013 left her with two full years to fill before the Olympic team came together for full time training. She spent time playing in Spain and working with the young girls coming up the USA Water Polo pipeline who would eventually make the 2016 roster. The team’s experience in Rio was filled with many hardships, but the team had incredible chemistry that helped them push through the obstacles. Melissa expressed that the unconditional love, trust and respect that the women on the team had for each other, coupled with an intense focus on being the best in the world, helped to forge an unstoppable team.

Melissa has been the 14U Girls coach since the Fall of 2016. Melissa’s favorite thing about coaching at SOCAL is the community that has been created among the families, athletes and the coaches. Melissa appreciates the intense pride for BLACK and GOLD that runs deep in the families involved and she loved being welcomed into that environment. Melissa also loves the community of coaches at SOCAL and finds that the environment is collaborative and transcends age groups, allowing her to feel supported and able to grow as a coach.

In her spare time, which is very limited, her favorite thing to do away from the pool is spend time with her four-year-old Vizsla puppy, Houston. Melissa says, “I love that girl!” Would it surprise you to know that Vizsla’s are very high energy, gentlemanly, loyal and are excellent swimmers?! Melissa also enjoys playing board games and doing puzzles!

When asked about her future goals, Melissa expressed that goal setting is hugely important to having success in what you want to do. Her professional goals are to work towards earning a teaching credential by the end of next year and to pursue a master’s degree. She is also committed to learning and growing as a coach, thus staying involved with SOCAL is definitely a priority. As an athlete she would like to be a 2019 World Champion and a 2020 Olympian, which means dedicating two more years to her athletic career.

Coach Melissa looks forward to traveling this month to China for the 12th time when she competes with the USA Women’s Team in the upcoming 2018 FINA World League Super Final. Melissa has traveled the world playing water polo and as much as she has enjoyed the adventures, she says “There is no place like America! Home holds a special spot in my heart anyways, but we are really truly blessed here living in California, USA!”

Good luck to Coach Melissa and Team USA! The SOCAL community will be cheering you on!!

Send It In!

Student of the Month? Accepted to College? Helped your community?
We love to share the accomplishments of our athletes outside the pool.
Send you news to Lisa Gorklinski: lisagorklinski@socalwaterpolo.org

GOT PICS? SOCAL is on Facebook and Instagram!

Send photos to:

socialmedia@socalwaterpolo.org