

## LMYA Dolphins Swim into Summer

By Kevin D. Shallat



Photo by Jordan Fong

With only a few short weeks passing since the official start of swim season, the LMYA Dolphins have already shown a marked improvement. Walnut Creek Swim Club kicked off their summer by coming into town Thursday, June 28, to take on LMYA in Lafayette. It is in these mid-season meets where swimmers see their hard work and dedication pay off with results.

Alec Baker continues to outmatch the competition as he once again sailed to three different first place finishes, bettering his time in two of them. For the six-and-under age group Baker and his teammates won the 100-yard medley relay with a time of 2:07.72. They won this same event one week ago at the East County meet, but with a time of 2:35.63. This week they bettered their time by almost 30 seconds. Baker went on to win the 25-

yard freestyle, and the 25-yard breaststroke against Walnut Creek. At the East County meet he finished with a first place time of 25.07 in the breaststroke. This week he also finished in first place, bettering his time with a 23.87.

Alec Baker wasn't the only Baker who was "hot" Thursday. Eight-year-old Liv Baker made a big impression on the fans and coaches as she was able to garner a few top three finishes by drastically improving her times.

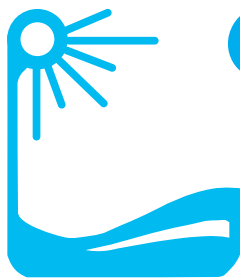
"Liv Baker has worked really hard to improve this year," said LMYA Head Coach Kristen Sissener. Soon after the meet started, Baker received her first blue ribbon for her participation in the 100-yard medley relay. The team finished with a time of 1:30.56. Perhaps Baker's most rewarding event was her first place finish in the 25-yard butterfly. She finished with a time of 22.61, more than three seconds better than her eighth place finish at the East County meet.

Seven year old Riley Smith garnered four blue ribbons Thursday. His most noteworthy finish came in the 100-yard individual medley where he posted a time of 1:47.94. Last week he finished second in this same event. This week he shaved around 15 seconds off of his time, and earned a first place finish for it.

Coach Sissener wanted to make sure that others could see the improvement of a few swimmers over the year thus far. Among those showing marked improvement are Evan Rios (age 6), Harrison Naton (age 12), and Makenzie Quinn (age 13). Rios has shaved off around ten seconds in the 25-yard freestyle. Quinn has taken off two seconds in the 50-yard freestyle. Naton has also continued to impress his coaches with his two second place finishes Thursday.

"The whole team has done a phenomenal job in trying to improve. They have been coming to practice ready to work hard," said Coach Sissener, whose philosophy on improving is simple: "They need to be aggressive from the start, from the moment they get into the water."

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