



## Rancho Colorado Swims Hard Against Livorna

By Steven Johns

In its first meet of the year, the Rancho Colorados Wahoos were out swam by the Livorna Dolphins. On June 18 the Wahoos lost to the Dolphins with a final score of 414 to 372.

The Livorna women beat out the Ran-

cho women never relinquished their lead. Livorna kept their lead throughout the individual races and the freestyle relays to win the meet.

More importantly than the outcome of the event was the enjoyment the kids had during

Lafayette City Meet and County, but also to practice good sportsmanship in the process." This statement by O'Hara shows that the Rancho Colorados Wahoos want to win, but more importantly are working on having fun and demon-



cho women by a score of 219-162, but the Rancho men beat the Livorna men by a score of 186-171.

The Wahoos got off to a quick start with wins in six of the first seven events. The one event that Livorna won was the girls 9-11 200 yard Medley Relay. Livorna came back with wins in the girls 13-14 200 yard Medley Relay, the boys 13-14 200 yard Medley Relay, and the Women's and mixed 15-18 200 yard Medley Relays. After the relays the Wahoos took a slight lead over the Dolphins.

The Dolphins came back in the individual medley and

the meet. Rancho Colorados coach Brian O'Hara commented on the attitude of the team: "The meet showed me that Rancho is a team of heart and that the children have so much fun getting out there and swimming." The swimmers all enjoyed their races and the time with their friends as they cheered on their fellow teammates.

O'Hara and the other coaches hope that the team continues to have fun and to maybe win some meets: "My hopes are that Rancho does well at

strating sportsmanship.

The Wahoos' next meet comes against Las Trampas. In order to win, according to O'Hara, the team needs "to work on the fundamentals. Its better that all the kids know the basics of every stroke."

Rancho Colorados looks like they will have a fun summer and will win a few meets with their promising roster. From the 6 and unders to the 15-18 year olds, the team looks solid and looks like they will rebound from this loss to have a solid swim season.

## Summer Leagues Boost Skills, Open Doors

By Garrett Ley



Junior Andrew Kjar

Photo Jordan Fong

For most high school baseball players, the conclusion of the spring sports season in May marks the end of practices, games and team gatherings until next February when it all starts up again. Generally speaking, the players have had enough. They're tired of batting practice, their arms are sore, and they are ready to move on to better things.

That's not the case for the slew of players who look to accelerate their game to the next level and get a step ahead of the competition during the summer. Summer baseball teams ranging from Central California to Sacramento boast players who dedicate their summers to playing baseball. These players, like Miramonte second baseman Joey Epperson, put the poolside barbecues on hold and head out onto the baseball diamond every day in the summer to showcase their skill and better prepare themselves for next spring.

"We're playing all the time,"

says Epperson. "We probably play 60 games over the summer, and maybe more depending on how we do in tournaments. A likely schedule is four games during the week, and then double headers on the weekend."

Epperson's team, the Head First Gamers from Castro Valley, is coached by several former big-league players such as Mario and Michael Inglesias, and Caleb Cooper.

"Every game you feel yourself getting better because of all the great instruction," says Epperson, who was a first-team all-DFAL selection last spring.

Epperson wrapped up his junior year at Miramonte in which he hit .462 with 12 doubles, four triples, a home run, 14 stolen bases and 30 RBI. He took the Matadors into the second round of the NCS playoffs, and then was flooded with letters and phone calls from coaches at Stanford and Santa Barbara, among other top baseball

schools.

Scouting is a big part of summer baseball, according to Epperson, as college scouts look for the top talent.

"Signing period is usually the end of summer, so how you play over the summer matters," Epperson says. "Coaches and scouts will still come to watch high school games, but summer is a better time for them. During the big summer tournaments, all the big-time players are in the same place, so it's an opportunity for scouts to see all the talent at once."

A few days ago, Epperson got a call from a Kansas City Royals scout. Yes, the Kansas City Royals of Major League Baseball. Epperson has his hard work and dedication that he has put into summer baseball to thank for his success.

"Working at it every day—whether it's playing in games, going to Game Speed, or taking batting practice—you're going to improve. It makes a big, big difference," Epperson said.

Epperson is not the only player from Miramonte playing in a summer league. Juniors Mike Reuecamp, Andrew Kjar and Matt Lloyd play for the Danville Hoots; Tommy Miers and Kevin Paulsen play for the Danville Black Sox; and John Vaccaro is on the Nor-Cal team. Of those players, Reuecamp, Kjar, Lloyd and Vaccaro earned all-league honors.

Campolindo players Anthony Fadelli, Jeff Gold, Matt Robinson, Scott Hogland, Guy Stevens and Michael Kathan each participate in summer leagues. Acalanes players Max Weintraub, Michael Avery, Daniel Camporeli and Jack Carson also play into the summer.

"I would say summer baseball makes a big difference in preparing for the high school season," Epperson says. "You have more game-time experience and are more skilled."

While some players have trouble dealing with the time commitment associated with summer baseball, Epperson has found it enjoyable and rewarding.

"The best part is being able to play all the time," he says. "You feel yourself getting better everyday. A lot of your friends are doing it, so you run into them once in a while. The chances to play are unlimited."

# SPORTS

## LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

### Orinda, Moraga Swim Teams Start Summer Season

### First Meets of Season Garner Medals, Prove Might

By Jack Fernbacher



After kids get out of school, they dive into swim season to cool off during this year's scorching hot summer. With temperatures in the hundreds already this summer, the cool pools are a nice place to be in.

"I like jumping into the swimming pool after playing tennis in the hot sun all day," said 8-year old Moraga-resident Jake O'Balle. "I can stay in the cool water all day and would if my parents didn't make me get out."

Though many kids just like to cool down in the pool during the summer, many others are competing in the recreational OMPA league that is comprised of swim teams from Orinda and Moraga. The teams compete against one another each week in head-to-head meets and then the teams race in

the OMPA meet at the end of the season.

In last year's final OMPA meet, Orinda Country Club came out on top to capture first place. Following close behind, Moraga Country Club took second and Sleepy Hollow Swim and Tennis got third place.

At one of their first meets against Moraga Ranch Swim Club (MRSC) on June 21, Orinda Country Club swim team men and women each took first place in 20 events, including younger swimmers Katie Klein, age 8, in the 100 meter IM (1:45.09), Ashley Abramson, 6, in the women's 25 free (20.69) and Scott Reugg, age 5, in the freestyle event with 24.70. Standouts included 12-year-old Andrew Zolintakis, who took first in the men's 100 IM and the men's

50 freestyle, and Stephen Schmidt, age 9, the men's 50 backstroke and the 50 breaststroke.

MRSC men and women had eight first place finishes respectively, with standout Nicky Erickson, age 10, taking first in the men's 100 IM (1:24.30) and the 50 fly at 33.74.

The swimmers will work to perfect their form and make a county time by the end of the season, so that they can go to the esteemed Contra Costa County Meet.

The County meet separates the teams into three divisions based on the size of the swim club. Last summer, Orinda Country Club got an impressive third place finish at the county meet in the first division.

## Oakland Strokes Medal in 2008

### USRowing Youth National Championships

Submitted by IRENE GESSLING



2008 Lightweight Men's 4+ bronze medal winners. Dan Migdale, coxswain, Garrett Bell, Andrew Ramos (Stroke), James Lenczowski, Will Provost, and Coach Ivan Smiljanic

Photo submitted

Four Oakland Strokes boats made it to the final day of competition at the 2008 USRowing Youth National Championships on Harsha Lake outside of Cincinnati, Ohio. Hosted by Cincinnati Junior Rowing Club, this weekend's regatta featured more than 1,300 participants.

Oakland Strokes men's lightweight four-plus took the bronze medal with a time of 6:46.63, just 0.49 seconds behind the silver medal winner, and four seconds behind first place. The Oakland Strokes crew consists of coxswain Daniel Migdale (Miramonte), stroke Andrew Ramos (Alameda), Garrett Bell (Las Lomas), James Lenczowski (Bentley), and Will Provost (Albany). San Diego Rowing Club took silver. Lake Union Crew crossed the finish line in a 6:42.60 to take the gold.

The Strokes men's four-plus took ninth place with a time of 6:49.24. The Strokes crew consists of coxswain Leila Pakawongse (Berkeley High), stroke Chad Swenson

(Skyline High School), Patrick Stolke (Berkeley High), Jack Howerton (Miramonte), and Cole Williams (Campolindo). Cincinnati Junior Rowing Club took the gold.

In the women's eight-plus, the Oakland Strokes boat, coxed by Leslie Chou (Miramonte) placed ninth overall. The crew includes stroke Kelly Bauer (Miramonte), Nikki Dahlberg-Seeth (Miramonte), Dana Walsh (Miramonte), Ally Weiland (Northgate), Dara Dickson (Acalanes), Claire Grover (Miramonte), Piper Akol (Miramonte), and Ali Mittelberger (Head-Royce). Marin Rowing Association defeated Los Gatos Rowing Club by a little more than three seconds to win the gold medal. Marin finished with a time of 6:33.66, while Los Gatos crossed the line in a 6:36.93. Phillips Exeter Academy won the bronze medal in a 6:37.39.

The Oakland Strokes women's lightweight eight-plus, with coxswain Molly Fehr (Miramonte), stroke Mary Sophia Motlow (Piedmont),

Rosie D'Orazio (Bishop O'Dowd), Anne Hofinga (Miramonte), Mollie Roark (Marin Academy), Erin Mullin (St. Joseph's), Sarah Goldman (Piedmont), Ayla Koenig (Berkeley High), and Sarah Coppock-Pector (Bishop O'Dowd) took 12th place overall. Los Gatos Rowing Club finished with a time of 6:53.45 to take the gold, with Community Rowing, Boston, taking the silver medal in a 6:57.66. West Side Rowing Club won the bronze medal with a time of 7:00.82.

Four members of the Strokes team have been invited to this year's Junior World Championships selection camp where they will compete for a spot on the U.S. National Team scheduled to race at the end of July in Austria. They are James Lenczowski (Bentley), Dana Walsh (Miramonte), Leslie Chou (Miramonte), and Dara Dickson (Acalanes).