

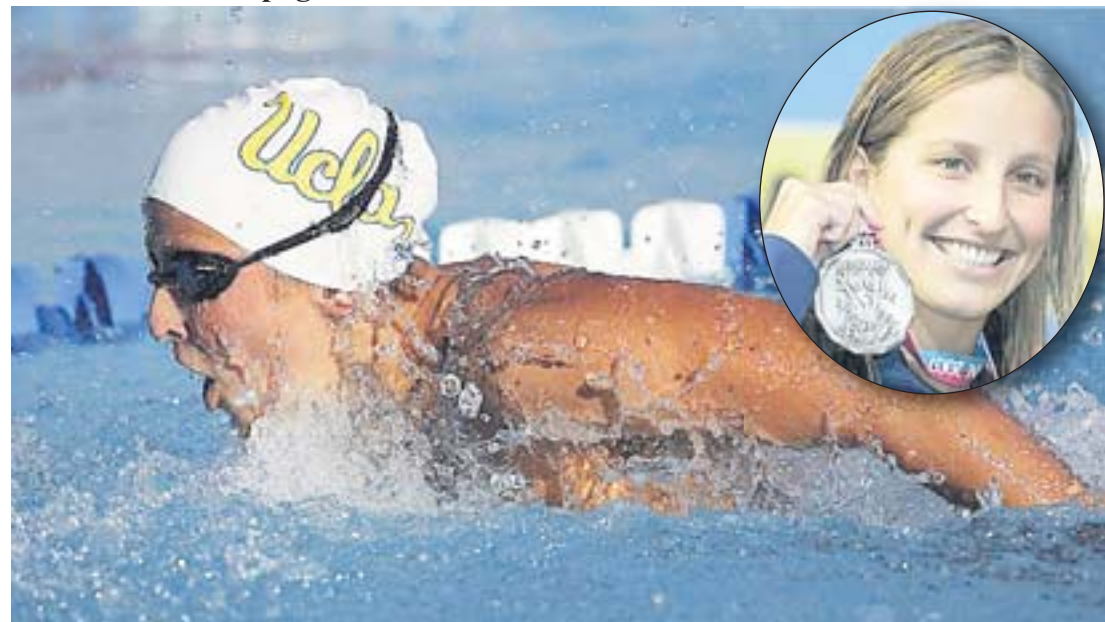


SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

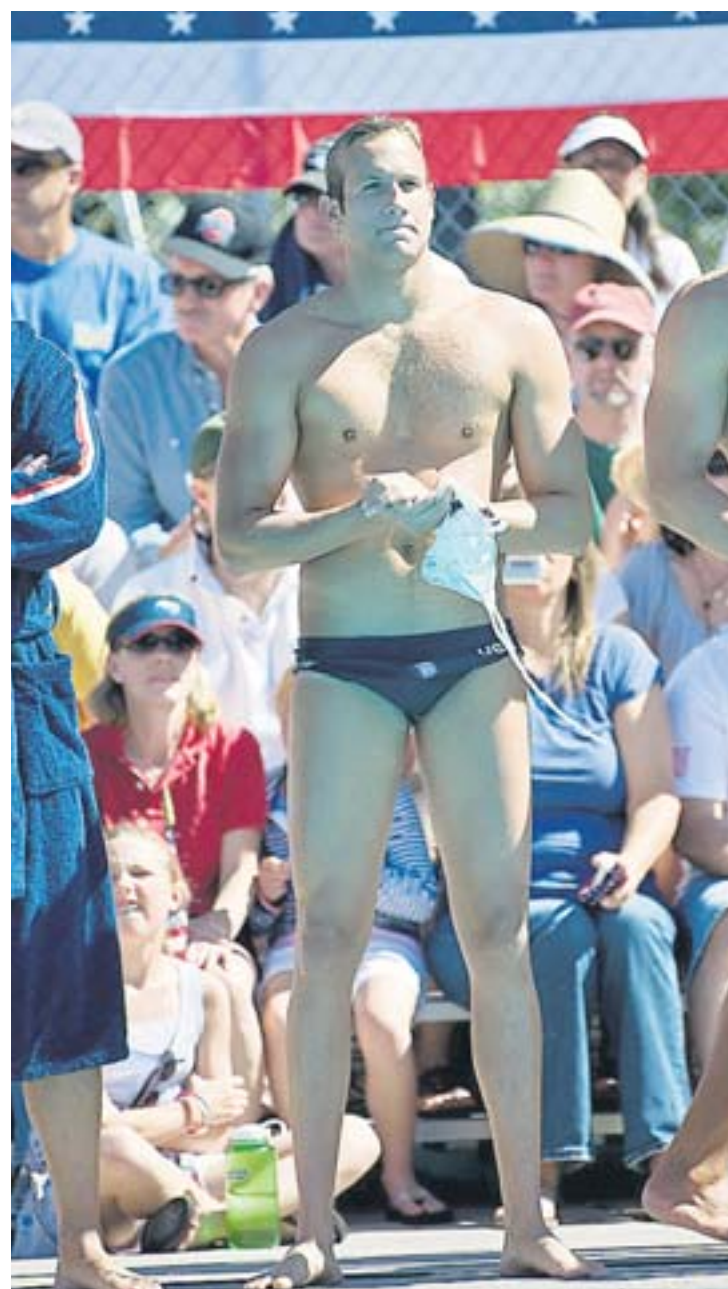
Making a Splash in Beijing

... continued from page 1



Kim Vandenberg

Photo provided



Peter Varellas

Photo Robert Johnson

And after an impressive career both at Campolindo and UCLA, Vandenberg placed fifth in the 200-meter freestyle event at the Olympic Trials. She didn't make the team in her first event, butterfly, but made it as a member of the

women's 4x200 meter freestyle relay team.

Her dad said he's excited to see her swim as a part of the US Olympic team. "It's encouraging as a parent to see your child achieve his or her goals," he said.

For Varellas, swimming at MTSC was just a warm-up for his real passion – water polo. He began playing when he started high school at Campolindo, and by the end of his sophomore year, he "kind of knew that's what I wanted to do," he said.

After graduating from Campolindo in 2002, he went on to play water polo at Stanford for four years. During his senior year at Stanford, he started playing for the U.S. National team, and has been a part of the team since.

When he graduated from Stanford, he traveled to Europe to play for a professional team in Italy during his months off from the U.S. national team. He just finished his second year with that team.

Varellas' mom, Robyn, said it's still a bit unreal to know that her son is going to the Olympics. "I think it will really hit us when we stand there and see him march out at the first game with the team," she said. "We are so proud and so appreciative of all the support our friends, family, his coaches, and the community have given him."

Varellas is excited to represent the United States in the Olympics, but said making it is only the first step – now, he and his team have to prove themselves in Beijing.

"Making it was a goal of mine, but the true goal for the team has yet to be accomplished," he said.

LMYA 5TH-6TH Grade Boys

Summer Basketball League Champions

Submitted Colleen Monasevitch



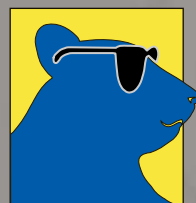
Bottom row : Nathan Edwards, Nathaniel Sauerberg, Jack Brahney, Eric Monasevitch
Back row: Grant Smith, Coach Edwards, Sterling Strothers

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Local Beijing Bound Athletes Prepare for Olympics

By Jack Fernbacher
Jeff Stevens

Nicole Branagh

Joining Varellas and Vandenberg, Stevens is one of three graduates of Campolindo from the class of 2002. Stevens, a right handed pitcher from Berkeley, is a part of the historic USA baseball team. Currently, baseball is not scheduled for the 2012 Olympics so Stevens could be a part of the last Olympic USA baseball team. Stevens has been playing Triple-A ball in Buffalo for the Cleveland Indians this season.

Branagh, a Miramonte graduate from the class of 1997, finished strong at the end of the Beach Volleyball qualifying to capture her first Olympic bid. Joined by her partner Youngs, the number-five ranked duo in the World are aiming for a medal.

Heather Petri

Petri is competing in her third Olympics with the Women's Water Polo team. Graduating from the class of 1996 from Miramonte, she has helped the US receive the World's number one ranking. She is aiming for her first gold medal in Olympic competition.

Grace Upshaw

Upshaw is the lone Acalanes graduate competing in Beijing. She qualified for the long jump competition at the Olympic trials in Oregon. Jumping 6.88 m, Upshaw placed second in the trials to make it to her second Olympics. Upshaw went to the 2004 Olympic Games where she placed 10th. Upshaw graduated from Acalanes in 1993 and Cal-Berkeley in 1979.

Natalie Coughlin

World record holder (100 yard backstroke) Natalie Coughlin grew up in Lafayette and graduated from Carondelet High in Concord in 2000. This will be the Cal grad's second Olympic appearance. Coughlin came home from Athens in 2004 with two Gold medals, two Silver and one Bronze.

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