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Newly Hairless Springbrook Coach Hogs Spotlight

By Kaaren Brickman as told to Cathy Dausman



Joe Natina is proud of his luxurious head of hair, but he willingly sacrificed it Sunday night. The Springbrook Swim Club head coach announced that he would let his team give him a buzz cut if eight of his swimmers qualified to compete in the upcoming Contra Costa County Swim meet August 11 and 12. The Springbrook "Hogs" posted their "countdown to the buzz cut" each time a swimmer qualified during last weekend's Lafayette Swim Conference Championships at the Heaston Aquatic Center at Acalanes High School. In the end, Springbrook had 15 new County Qualifiers after the LSC Championship.

Natina is no stranger to swimming. He grew up in a swimming family and has been competing since age four. He was ranked the fastest 10-year-old in the United States. Natina was an All American throughout high school and competed in the Junior and Senior Nationals. He later swam for Diablo Valley College, and became 200 freestyle and 200 IM state champion. Natina also swam two years at UC Santa Barbara.

Natina's coaching career began at age 14, when he worked with his younger teammates. He coached several years at Alamo's Round Hill Country Club and was Assistant Coach at Meadow Swim & Tennis. Natina became Springbrook's Head Coach two years ago.

For 13 years, Natina has taught learn-to-swim programs. Last fall, he started a Fall Swim Program at Springbrook called the Razorbacks. "He has been an incredible asset to the Springbrook Swim Team, leading swimmers to countless personal as well as team victories," said Kaaren Brickman, board member for Springbrook Pool. Brickman says the haircut ceremony "was hilarious" to watch.

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