

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Lafayette Swim Conference's First Championship

... continued from page A1



2012 Lafayette Swim Conference Individual & Relay record Breakers.

Photos Kevin Nguyen

Springbrook also won the most improved times, with 70 percent of their performances earning personal records for their athletes. Rancho Colorados finished a close second with 67 percent.

Outstanding awards were awarded to Rancho Colorados Boys 6 & Under 100 Medley Relay featuring Sammy Lee, Paul Kuhner, Jon Mendelssohn and Jacob Boseli as well as LMYA's Girls 11-12 Medley Relay team of Goldie Zhu, Becca Buck, Sydney Smith and Sophia Cavalli.

The first day of the LSC opened with a parade around the pool, not unlike the Olympic opening ceremony, which began the Conference with two emphases: community and excellence.

To celebrate, the coaching staff of Sun Valley Swim team was dressed in monochrome full-body suits to represent, as athlete-parent Leah MacKay explained, the color of the Olympic rings.

MacKay commented that the newly formed league has been exciting. "Everyone has had 'pop' [personal best] times," MacKay said. "The younger kids and older ones-- they swim together and support each other."

The founding of the LSC has brought what is already a strong swimming community even closer. Sun Valley swim coach Warren Wallace said that his athletes have more fun competing against those they know from school.

When LMYA's Becca Buck, age 12, broke the record for the 50 yard breaststroke, she bettered a record from 2000 set by Lauren Beaudreau who is now a coach at Springbrook.

"That just shows that swimmers stick around," said Jon Wheeler, meet director at Rancho Colorados.

The last event of the LSC was the 200 Free Relay for Boys 15-18. The previous record was set in 1982. Luke Inserra, Ryan Connolly, Jake Seroy and Nick Inserra of Springbrook bettered the record by seconds.

The quartet has been swimming together since they were five. "We all started together. We wanted to go out with a bang," said Luke.

LSC Championship Meet

Combined Team Scores

1. Springbrook Swim Team..... 5,310.50 points
2. Rancho Colorados Swim Team..... 2,938.50 points
3. Sun Valley Rays Swim Team..... 2,936.5 points
4. LMYA... 2,725.5 points
5. Oakwood AC.... 622

Top Finishers:

- Olivia Williams (6 & Under): Springbrook.... 72 points
- Joey Bettencourt (6 & Under): Springbrook....72 points
- Caitlin Smith (age 8) LYMA... 72
- Jack Wood (age 8) Springbrook...72
- Jewel Roemer (age 10) Sun Valley Rays Swim Team.... 72
- Jack Larsen (age 10) Springbrook...69
- Murphy Baker (age 10) Rancho Colorados Swim Team... 69
- Becca Buck (age 12) LMYA... 72
- Jacob Parker (age 12) Rancho Colorados ... 69
- Jane Wood (age 14) Springbrook... 69
- Eric Strand (age 14) Sun Valley Rays... 69
- Brady Aiello (age 14) Springbrook...69
- Meghan Hill (age 17) Springbrook ... 67
- Ryan Connolly (age 18) Springbrook...69

Improved/Pop Times:

- Springbrook: 70%
- Rancho Colorados: 67%
- LMYA: 64%
- Sun Valley Rays: 61%
- Oakwood: 60%



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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