

Mesa Aquatics Club

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2023

DISCIPLINE OF A CHAMPION! HONOR



Upcoming Events

October 30: Joint practice at Skyline for a fun team building - Halloween Party!

November 17-19: IMX/IMR Meet (hosted by MAC).

November (Date TBD): Turkey-Palooza!!!

January 12-14: Team travel to Lake Havasu.

February 9-11: Last chance meet hosted by MAC.

February 29-March 3: Senior State at Skyline (hosted by MAC).

March 7-10: Age Group State in Oro Valley.

March 22-25: Southwest Age Group Regional (SWAGR) meet in Clovis, CA.

- This will be a family travel meet for all age group swimmers who qualify. Time standards for this meet are attached to this email. This travel meet will be open to all swimmers ages 14 and younger who have qualifying times.

March 20-24: We will be attending 4 Corner Sectionals in Phoenix.

In the Spring we are looking to introduce our athletes to open water swimming. This will include some weekend swims at local lakes as well as open water practice in the pool. One of our Master swimmers, Kent Nicholas, coordinates a series of lake swims in Saguaro, Canyon, Apache and Roosevelt Lake at the end of April. He has offered to scholarship some of our swimmers who are interested in swimming the Roosevelt Lake portion of the event, as an individual or as a relay team. Kent has extensive experience in both swimming and training for open water events. If you are interested in exploring this opportunity please send me an email to meg@mesaswims.com. There will be a series of parent meetings and training sessions to prepare for this event and other open water events in the next year. We are excited to help our swimmers and families explore one of the fastest growing sports in the world!



USA Swimming has asked MAC to host an elite 18 and under meet, May 2-5. We are excited to host some of the best 18 and under swimmers in the country as they try to make their Olympic Trial standards. This meet will be hosted at Skyline and we are excited to share this experience with our families.

Chris and Meg

ARE YOU A SWIM PARENT WHO WANTS TO KNOW WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT YOUR ATHLETE WITHOUT BECOMING A “STAGE MOM OR DAD”?

Taken from Fitter Faster Article

We asked several parents of Olympians – and a few Olympians who are now parents to share their “swim parenting philosophies” to maintain harmony at home and at the pool. How can you help your swimmer establish goals and achieve them, while still enabling them to have a life beyond the pool?

Remember that you are the parent, not the coach.

Bernadette and Eric Jaeger, parents to 2012 Olympian Connor, were never swimmers themselves, so they made a point of not volunteering technical or strategic advice. “We never tried to swim a race for Connor,” say Bernadette. “We never told him how many strokes to take or how to out-swim his opponents or critiqued him afterward. We left that to him and his coach. Even now, when Connor swims, our advice is limited to ‘Go in this end, come out at the other end and have fun while you’re in there.’”

Don’t compete unless you’re the one wearing the suit and goggles.

The Jaegers recall being alarmed by stage parents when Connor and his sister Dana got involved in club swimming. “They were hyping the sense of competition to the point where the child was crying if they didn’t swim some magical time,” Eric says. “We are examples of the extreme opposite of that. We never kept track of Connor’s times at all.”

Bernadette chimes in: “We met parents along the way who knew what Connor’s times were and everybody else’s. It blew my mind that they were following someone else’s kids. It seemed as though the parent was in competition with the other swimmers!”

If you are your child’s coach, leave the swimming talk on the pool deck.

Like several FFT clinicians, National Team member Michael Weiss is the child of swim coaches, but praises his folks for doing “a really good job of separating the parent from the coach.” Rule Number One? “We weren’t allowed to talk about swimming at home. If we were going to talk about my swimming, we handled it at the pool. As soon as we got in the car, they were my parents again.”

Don’t set Olympic-level expectations for your kid, even if you’re an Olympian.

“Initially, my parents just wanted me to be involved in some sport and to make a commitment for an entire season,” says second-generation swimming Olympian Gary Hall Jr., of his initial foray into year-round swimming. “Once I started developing friends on the team and didn’t dread going to practice every day, then their message became “have fun.” And that message stayed the same from high school meets, when I wasn’t very good, right up to the finals at the Olympic Games.”

Now Hall has inherited the same laid-back approach to his own son and daughter’s participation in sports. “As a parent, I’m just here to be a cheerleader,” he explains. “I’m going to give them the option to participate in every single sport. I want them to try everything. Later on, they can specialize. Ultimately, I’d love to see them choose swimming, but I can’t make that choice for them. I’ll just be supportive.”

Let your kid have a life outside of the pool.

Three-time Olympian Matt Biondi, who is now a coach and a swimming parent, allows his athletes the freedom to pursue their other passions, even if it means missing a day of practice. “I have one swimmer who’s played the violin since she was five and another who dances. Just come up with a schedule and keep their coach in the loop.”

Lisa Adams, mom to 2012 Olympian Cammile and her twin sister (and her Texas A&M teammate) Ashley, did her best to make sure her daughters had a balanced life.

“They have to take a day off. Especially after a hard meet, they need that downtime to just go out and be a kid.”

She cites this philosophy as the reason Cammile and Ashley didn’t burn out. “The less stressed kids are, the better they perform,” she says.

You can’t want success more than your kid does.

“If you have more invested in the race than your child, then every race is going to be torture,” says Bernadette Jaeger. “Believe me, if your kid is a distance swimmer, it’s already a torturous 15-minute mile without wondering if it’s a personal best time.”

The Jaegers recall watching Connor struggle during his freshman year at Michigan, but they didn’t interject. “At the Big 10 conference meet, he felt like he let the team down and he never wanted to feel like that again,” Eric says. “By his own admission, he didn’t

perform to the standards he set for himself. The Michigan coaching staff has a saying: 'Don't live in the problem. Live in the solution.' So he stayed in Ann Arbor the following summer and that made all the difference. What came out of that poor performance freshman year was a very dedicated and driven young man."

Bernadette adds, "After sophomore year, he went to Trials and then to the Olympics. It all comes down to how much the swimmer wants it."

Learn how to diffuse swimming sibling rivalries.

"Parents have to realize that each child is different and where one is better at something, the other is better at another skill," Adams says. "Both their dad and I tried to put their strengths in front of them first. We always encouraged the girls to be happy for each other and to cheer for each other and want the best for their teammates."

Appreciate the fringe benefits of being a swim parent.

"We had no idea how wonderful swimming could be for young kids," recalls Bernadette Jaeger. "We didn't realize what value the sport would add to their lives, in terms of discipline and a sense of responsibility. Because swimming required them to be at practice early on Saturdays, it removed certain pitfalls they might have gotten into on Friday nights. It gave Connor and his sister, who was four years older, a common language and a way to bond. It gave them friends outside of their own high school and it taught them how to be around people of the opposite sex. Swimming expanded their world before they even realized it."

Fall League



As September comes to a close we now have hit all 4 strokes!! We will now start adding in specific skills to help each stroke; “shoulder to chin” to lengthen out freestyle and backstroke, “body line” for all 4 strokes, the glide for breaststroke, and the proper time to breathe for butterfly. So many new things!

There have been two fun meets, which have been fantastic!! We will work on getting swimmers to race using their strokes they are learning in practice. It takes time, it’s all a process, but it does come together. We hope all fall league swimmers will sign up for the final fun meet on Oct. 25th. What a great way to end the session!



As we are now 2 months into fall league we are having a blast hanging out with your swimmers! They make us laugh, keep us on our toes, and there is never a dull moment. 😊 If your swimmer(s) is interested in trying out a MAC group please talk with the coaches.

Thank you for bringing your swimmers to the pool each practice! We know there are many things that require your time and attention, thank you for letting us be a part of your swimmers swimming journey!

Pre-Team Base Camp / Narwhal (Skyline)

By Coach Shawna

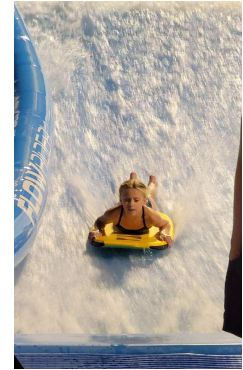


As we enter into October we have now gone over the 4 strokes, 5 if you include streamline underwater kickouts (which your swimmers do daily and are getting so much better). Everyone has come a long way, whether that be in their stroke mechanics, their attitude while at practice and towards their teammates, their work ethic, and/or their ability to put their mind to the skill and execute it! Way to go!

As swimmers have now been introduced to the basics of each stroke we will now move into more specific skills. Your swimmers will hear a lot of “shoulder to chin” to help lengthen out their strokes, “stack the hands” to remind them to streamline, and “body line” to remind them to focus on what their body is actually doing. They will also learn what sculling is, how to feel the water, and how to apply that to each stroke. It is such a fun process to see where they started, how they are progressing, and the “ah-ha” moment when it clicks.

On land they do a few minutes of the dynamic warm up, and we talk about the disciplines of a Champion. “C” was coachable, where Soren Haas did an exemplary job demonstrating the characteristics of being coachable! ! He asks questions when he does not understand something, he tries his best and knows each skill will help him get better, he consistently asks for feedback on ways he can improve! Congratulations Soren!!

In September we talked about “H”-Honor: Honor the Process, Honor the Team, Honor Yourself. Ideas the Base Camp and Narwhal swimmers came up with were; help your teammates when they do not understand, remind teammates to keep their ears above the water, eat food that will give you energy, don’t be so hard on yourself if things are not going great, and cheer for MAC swimmers! Next we move on to “A”-Attitude!



Thank you for your commitment to bring your kids to the pool! You have amazing kids!!

Narwhal (Kino)

By Coach Trey

The Narwhal group has been busy this month! With the weather cooling down we have started doing dryland on the field outback. This consists of lots of running, exercises and games- this has been a great and fun way to help swimmers build their endurance. The Narwhal group has also been working hard on the short axis strokes (Butterfly and breaststroke) and have made lots of progress with legality and the timing of each of these strokes.



White (Kino)

By Coach Nichol

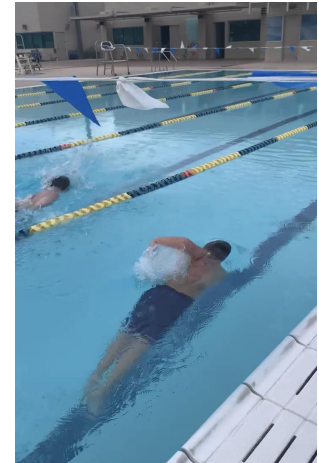


HONOR is something we talk about frequently since it is part of our MAC motto. HONOR YOURSELF, HONOR THE TEAM, HONOR THE PROCESS.

So much of how a coach feels about a swimmer is NOT based on the natural athleticism of the swimmer. Of course it's fun to watch swimmers swim fast... but the heart of the coach is truly rooting for a swimmer that helps a new teammate understand circle swimming, cheerfully shows up and loves to work hard, cheers and pushes teammates, and generously gives teammates the benefit of the doubt. Because the process of becoming a great swimmer is

cumulative year after year, so is the experience with each swimmer. Nothing discourages a group faster than a whiner. Nothing exhausts a coach or a team more than someone who just doesn't want to be there or doesn't want to work hard, or doesn't like their teammates. All those moments of complaining or ignoring truly change the atmosphere and the feeling in the lane. Someone who brings honor to the team changes the whole group. Here are a few examples.

Jesse Baker is so excited to belong to MAC. He walks onto the pool with friendship and a smile every single day. He often wears his MAC clothes and has a MAC drawing to share with someone. He smiles when the set is hard and he feels proud of himself for doing it. He knows when someone else needs to lead, even though he is an awesome leader. He is excited when a coach can work one on one with him because he truly wants to be better. He talks to every single person in his group with an open and helpful heart. He HONORS every aspect of being a swimmer, teammate and progressing. His lanemates are honored to swim with him and I'm honored to coach him.



Here is another example. Ace literally never stops smiling. It's his demeanor... it's who he is. When it's tense, he offers humor. When it's hard.. he puts his head down and just keeps going.. even if he misses the send off. When someone is new, he explains and shows them what to do. When he has another sport to be part of, he still honors every minute in the water and even tries to bridge our MAC way discussions to his football and family. He honors his friends, who adore him and want to work out with him. He honors his teammates who he sees the best in. He honors the process, by giving whatever he has to give. He is an honor to coach and someone I can lean into when the skill levels require leadership of the more experienced swimmers.

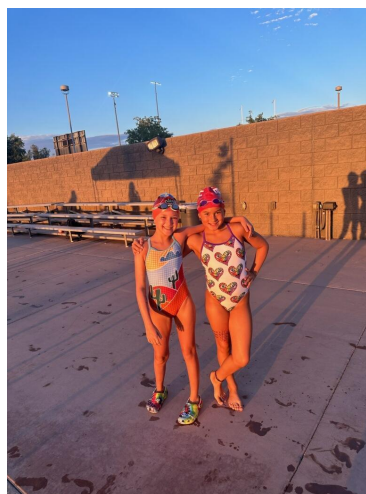
HONOR may in fact be the greatest take away that a MAC swimmer can attain in their time on the team. Honor gives us the ability to close our eyes at night and sleep like a baby, knowing we gave it our all.

White (Skyline)

By Coach Maggie

This month in the White group, we have focused on achieving our goals to Honor Yourself, Honor the Team and Honor the Process. These swimmers have truly embodied what it means to live the MAC Way. Each practice, the swimmers have their own sheets to mark off what they accomplished that day. How did they show Honor in all aspects of their practice? Before practice? They review these sheets during practice and pick 3 goals to work on. After practice, they make check marks next to these goals and by the end of the week, they receive STARS on their sheets.

This has kept them accountable for streamlines, dolphin kicks, helping other teammates, advocating for themselves and improving their swimming.



September was the first full month for the sheets and they did amazing! They have incorporated these goals into everyday life. During this month, we had a practice where all I heard was, “good job!,” “keep going,” “you can do it!” They also give high fives constantly during kick sets. They are a team and they support each other without me asking. They help each other. This is exactly what I was hoping to see from them, especially with the theme of Honor this month.

We can talk about Honor all day long, but truly doing it is where we improve, not just in our swimming, but our mindset, school work, and interacting with family and friends.

Red (Kino)

By Coach Trey

The Red group continues to improve daily! We have started "cross training" with dryland. The Red group runs up to half a mile and does exercises on the field out back. This has helped the Red group swimmers increase their stamina. The red group has also been working hard on stroke legality and swimming with good habits fast. They have made tons of progress that has shown at the fun meets and the Welcome to fall meet.



Red (Skyline)

By Coach Jonah

Skyline's Red group has been crushing it! Everyone has been improving like crazy! We've been focusing a lot on refining their strokes and perfecting the technique. We've introduced dryland workouts before Tuesday and Thursday practices focusing on strengthening the muscle groups most important to the sport as well as improving endurance. They've been doing absolutely fantastic at meets, showing that all their hard work as paid off!

Black & Gold (Kino)

By Coach Nichol

"MY SHOULDER HURTS"...the dreaded words every coach never loves to hear. But here's the deal.. WE CARE!! If it takes 10,000 hours to master something.. imagine how many freestyle strokes that is!!.. Repetition is our greatest strength builder, but we do it cautiously and gradually. We are so lucky to have Coach Bear around to help us with dynamic routines, stretches, and strength building habits so that we can prepare our muscles for the load we expect them to carry. Going through the motions may not be good enough if we want to develop strength and avoid injury... it means we have to consistently and honorably perform the routines ON PURPOSE and WITH PURPOSE. It's not just to kill time... it has PURPOSE!! Our attitude towards the PURPOSE will motivate us and those around us. As a group, we hope for an attitude of athletes that buy into the process and boy do we get that.

In October we will be focussing on ATTITUDE and here are a few people that absolutely inspire us with their great attitudes!!

Gold- Annika Larsen..., a young but true leader, loves training hard, loves to lift and help others around her to train hard, and truly wants everyone to belong. Her attitude about racing, teamwork, leadership, and even changing her stroke make her one of our greatest age group team assets. She trains cheerfully, encourages those around her, and when swims don't quite go her way, she prepares for the next time around. Her attitude puts her at the heart of age group swimming and all that it has to offer.



Black- Farah Zebian...with the perma smile. Everyone wants to be in Farah's lane. I often call it the lady bug lane because its' so cute. Her attitude from the time she walks on deck exudes confidence, a love and search for success and friendship. While she certainly is competitive with her friends.. It's never chippy or offensive.. rather it challenges and lifts everyone to a level of engagement that is thrilling and fun to participate in. It's the kind of attitude that breeds and multiplies and everyone is better because of it.

I could say even more about Emerson and Nelly and Jace and Caleb and Abby and Noa and Noah... truly inspiring to watch as this group buys in with great ATTITUDE.

"IT'S OUR ATTITUDE, NOT OUR APTITUDE THAT DETERMINE OUR ALTITUDE!"

"Whether you think you can or think you can't.. YOU'RE RIGHT!" And we have a lot of little folks thinking they CAN!!

A quick note about our parents. Sometimes you see something that knocks your breath out and fills your heart all the way up.. and sometimes... that's our parents. You give up shade, comfort, and probably vacations for your kids and their development and we love you for it!! Thank you.. you have no idea what a great human you are building!

Black & Gold (Skyline)

By Coach Angela

September was Splendid!

We started out the month with our Herculean Invite. We had many swimmers complete the Herculean task of swimming 12 events over the weekend and earn themselves a trophy! We also had a handful of swimmers compete for their very first time in some more difficult and "scary" events like the 400IM, 200 butterfly, and 200 breaststroke. Our team and group spirit was great at this meet – we are really coming together!

We are fortunate to have amazing and supportive parents throughout the season! Black and Gold met up with the Kino side of Black and Gold for a Tie Dye party! How fun! We were



able to see different sides of our brain working while we tried to be artistic in our tie dying capabilities. The kids had a great time socializing, snacking, and playing.



One area that we have been working tirelessly in is dryland. Coach Bear does such a great job helping these kids strengthen their bodies and use their athleticism out of the water. It is amazing how we can see that work strengthen their swimming capabilities like when it comes to anything explosive: starts, turns, pull downs, etc. Thank you, Coach Bear! You may have also heard that we did our first massive kick set this month.... a whole 1500 kick for time! Everyone surprised themselves with doing better than they thought and I can't wait to see the improvement after the next time we do it.

We wrapped up our month with a team party the night before our swim meet in Moon Valley. Thank you to all of the families who came out! We had a great time getting to know each other while the kids tried their hand on the Flow Rider. In Moon Valley; once again, our best times were coming in hot after every event. This is a testament to all the hard work these kids have been putting in. This meet was unique in that it offered the "50 freestyle shoot outs". Our group featured four of the winners: Callie Price, Caden Baker, Blaine Aimonetti, and Riley Price. Way to represent our team! Let's go MAC!



Dryland (Kino/Skyline)

By Coach Bear

Senior athletes are working hard to become stronger and more athletic swimmers during this strength phase of the season. This is crucial for both sprinters and distance swimmers. The stronger you are the more “easy speed” you will be able to generate.

Age group athletes are focusing on a balance between increasing athleticism and strength, using exercises like the plank drags, tire drag, pull-ups, etc. to help improve their balance from the core in the water while they swim. These exercises involve bracing from the core and dragging a sandbag without rocking the hips, dragging a tire to generate that power from the hips and core, allowing them to improve their speed and agility.



HS Development Group (Kino)

By Coach Jack

The early morning HS group at Kino has completed about 80% of their scheduled sessions, all that is left is the fine tuning. We have spent the fall season working on stroke fundamentals and technique, and I know all the kids have a much better understanding of how they should be swimming to accomplish their season goals. Much of the work has been developing effective underwater and stroke efficiency through all 4 strokes. The attendance has been excellent and the kids seem motivated to learn, this makes it an easy group to work with.

Now we have two weeks left until the final state qualifying invites and about a month until the State Championships. We will be spending that time with an emphasis on their starts as well as holding their technique as they swim at top speed, this should be a fun time for them. Thanks to all the kids who set their alarms and got up early and helped each other become better swimmers and teammates.

Seniors (Kino/Skyline)

By Coach Eric

WOW!! We have had an amazing September. Our swimmers have been crushing it at Invitationals and other meets so far this high school season. We have had many best times and almost everyone is swimming faster at these meets than they ever have in the past. I is a great showing of all the hard work they put in during the summer and being of the short course season. Way to go MAC senior Group. We as a coaching staff are so impressed with your performances. That being said there is still work to be done. Continually thought on race strategy and skills is paramount to becoming better. Keep it up!

Our them for the month is HONOR. The first thing that I want you to think about when you hear this is honor your team, MAC. Speak highly of your teammates, your coaches and team. During the high school season we are spread all over the place. You can still encourage and be happy for your MAC teammates.

Let's continue to get better!! Stay positive and keep working smarter and harder!!