



The Blazer Newsletter

KANSAS CITY BLAZERS SWIM TEAM

COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE



Eternal Loyalty

Passion Education

Discipline Dedication

Commitment Leadership

Excellence

January/February 2010 Edition

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A HUGE LOSS TO THE BLAZERS AND THE COMMUNITY

Jeff Branton, father of Cassidy and Lindsay (Olathe site swimmers) passed away on January 21st. Jeff was the Director of Triathlons for the Kansas City Blazers Swim Team Board of Directors and the Santa Fe Trail Blazers Parents Association. He was recently awarded Volunteer of the Quarter for Johnson County Park and Recreation District recognizing his outstanding work organizing the Blazer families to run their Triathlons. Jeff also served as Chairman for the past two years on the Wellness Advisory Board for Johnson County Park and Recreation District. He led this group to create wellness opportunities for youth and adults over the years addressing obesity issues and diabetes. Jeff was also active in Habitat for Humanity and Ronald McDonald House fundraising activities. Jeff was known to be a "get it done guy". We will all miss him.

Hall of Fame Set- 100x100

Every year during Christmas training, the Elite group does a set of 100x100. The first 10 were on 2:00, allowing the swimmers to warmup. For the next 90, the swimmers could choose an interval of either 1:20, 1:15, 1:10, or 1:05. Swimmers who are able to complete the 100s on the 1:05 interval are enshrined in the Blazer Hall of Fame. This year, there were nine swimmers who were able to accomplish this (5 high school and 4 college swimmers). This was the most who ever made in one year. Those swimmers were Ben Bravence, Michael Glenn, Nathan Hoisington, Seth Musser, Ben Scheffer, Bobby Bollier (Stanford), Eric Bonicelli (Utah), Brett Henehan (Wyoming), and Keven Webster (Seton Hall).

Congratulations to all swimmers who completed the set! It takes loads of mental toughness and determination to be able to finish it. You are on the path to excellence.

Ultimate Game

At Division I, Blazer swimmers ages 13&up will be participating in the Ultimate Game. The rules for the game are below:

1. Power rankings will be given for all 13 & up women and men for their performances at Division I. This ranking will be determined by the number of seconds dropped or added from their best time. A negative score is time dropped and a positive score is time added.
2. Swimmers must swim in at least six events to be eligible. Their top six races will be used to determine their power ranking for the game.
3. The top ten finishers will be awarded gift cards as recognition for their outstanding meet performance.

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A Speedo Sponsored Team



MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMERS

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH SHAWNEE MISSION NORTH/ROELAND PARK – BLUE DECEMBER 2009 – AIDAN HOLBROOK



Aidan Holbrook
Blue Group
10 years old

Aidan Holbrook, our Blue group “Swimmer of the Month”, has just recently joined our Blazer team and in that short time has made major improvement in all of his strokes. He comes to practice as much as possible, is always smiling, listens to the coaches, and works hard. While his practices have been really good, we have yet to see the results of his work at the meets.

Aidan seems to be driven to be the best he can be and it is going to be fun to watch him grow and develop in the sport of swimming. I am very pleased to see that Aidan has decided to pursue the sport of swimming. Now if we can get about 20 more boys just like him at our sites, we will be set.

Sincerely,
Coach Henry

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH BLUE VALLEY NORTH – BLUE DECEMBER 2009 – DAVID KHALIF



David Khalif
Blue Group
12 years old

David is a new swimmer this year, starting out in the Novice group and quickly progressing up to the Blue group. He shows a great deal of desire to improve and is willing to do the work in order to achieve better results. He now regularly leads his lane and is putting himself in a strong position to continue his ascent to the next level. He is rapidly improving because of his willingness to pay attention to the coaches, listen to the information, and apply it to his own swimming. He has an incredibly positive attitude and responds well when given instructions by the coaches. He does not make excuses, but instead tries to make the necessary adjustments. He also does a fine job during the dryland portion of practice. In turn, his improved skills have led to big improvements in speed and performance.

Additionally, David is kind to his teammates and is always polite to the coaches. His obvious enthusiasm for the sport is inspiring to the coaches, and he has a positive effect on others around him. He is a pleasure to have on the team, and we look forward to great things from David.

Congratulations!
Coach Marjorie

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
BLUE VALLEY NORTH – GOLD
DECEMBER 2009 – P J MUSSER



PJ MUSSER
Gold Group
12 years old

PJ has done a fantastic job this season, working diligently to achieve new “A” times and qualify for more events for the Level I and Plano swim meets. He has been extremely focused in practice, pushing himself to go faster and compete with himself in order to achieve success. I have been impressed with his ability to lead his lane and race against others on a daily basis. He has been relentless in his pursuit of faster swimming.

Outside of the pool, PJ has been exceptionally kind to his younger teammates. At a recent practice where the Gold swimmers had an opportunity to pair up with a Novice swimmer for dryland exercises, PJ thoroughly impressed me with his sincere desire and ability to be kind, helpful, and fun with his younger teammate. At another practice, I asked PJ to watch out for a younger swimmer, and PJ showed exceptional sensitivity in making sure this “little guy” (his quote, not mine) was taken care of. PJ demonstrated that he not only cares about his own swimming, but he will go out of his way to help others on his team.

PJ is additionally very receptive to coaching, and he treats coaches with respect. I love his zest for life, and I thoroughly enjoy having him at practice each and every day.

Congratulations!
Coach Marjorie

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
BLUE VALLEY WEST – BLUE
DECEMBER 2009 – ALEX PRETTYMAN



Alex Prettyman
Blue Group
11 years old

As 2009 ended and we started our transition into a new year and a new decade, Alex Prettyman was making his own transitions. While it says above that he is eleven years old and in the Blue group, that is where he started the month. Where he finished was ahead of where he started in many ways.

The most important advancement occurred in practice. Alex attended more practices in December than in any previous month since starting with the Blazers in September. Aside from increasing his practice attendance, Alex turned up the volume on his practice performance and started to lead the lane at most practices. This earned him a spot in the Advanced Blue group by the end of the month.

Alex was outstanding at meets as well. At the Level II meet he got five-out-of-five best times and got his first two Division II qualifying times. At the Holiday Hope meet (his last meet as age eleven), he dropped time in two more events and swam his first 100 butterfly.

Alex finished 2009 in an impressive fashion. Let’s look for more big things in 2010!

Coach Derek, Rodney, Pat and Josh

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
KCB EAST – BLUE
DECEMBER 2009 – CHLOE METHENY-MORRIS



Chloe Metheny-Morris
Blue Group
10 years old

Chloe Metheny-Morris spent the month of December chasing her goals. Every practice was dedicated to getting better. She followed every instruction her coaches gave her to improve her technique, and she executed every drill with exact precision. If her coaches wanted her kicking, or gliding, or changing her body position, she made sure she understood what they were asking, and then made it obvious she was following their instruction. If only more Blue swimmers (or Advanced Blue, or Gold, or anyone) would put that kind of focus and precision into their practices.

So far, since December 1, Chloe has almost doubled her number of Division 2 times. All of her strokes are getting faster. She has even added a Division 2 time in butterfly! It isn't just her strokes that have improved, though. Chloe's turns and streamlines are night and day from what they were a year ago, or even a few months ago. At the last couple meets, they have just been beautiful. She is using the same precision she uses on her drills in practice, to hit the wall with great body position and a tight streamline, and it is something wonderful to see. We are all so proud of all the progress she has made. Congratulations Chloe! Thanks for the inspiration.

Coach Ann
Coach Brandi
Coach Skyler
Coach Joy
Coach Mike

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
KCB EAST – ELITE
DECEMBER 2009 – DREW ADAMS



Drew Adams
Elite Group
16 years old

There is a common phrase that talks about a political system slowly winning by taking two steps forward and one step back. That is the phrase that came to mind in choosing this month's most inspirational swimmer. Drew Adams, like so many others, has days where he does not live up to his expectations and he has streaks where he is just as tenacious as can be.

During the month of December, Drew took many steps forward. He dropped several test sets and spent more days at the front of his lane than we can remember. Along with the increase in work and effort, Drew has really taken his technique work to heart. While he is not blessed with great flexibility, he continues to work towards longer strokes and better balance.

Drew has become one of the faster kickers in the pool. During the Christmas training schedule, he seemed to explode during the 3 hour practices. He walked into practice with a positive and eager sense of anticipation.

His eagerness to train hard was evident and his increase in expectations brought great results. The effect of this improvement is that Drew has taken serious steps towards reaching his potential and he has set himself on the path to a successful championship phase and successful championship meets.

Drew, thanks for the inspiration,

Coach Mike Lewellyn
Coach Ann Gibler
Coach Brandi Ertle
Coach Skyler Lennan
Coach Joy Beseth

**MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
SHAWNEE MISSION NORTH/ROELAND PARK –GOLD
DECEMBER 2009 – SARAH FRESHNOCK**



Sarah Freshnock
Gold Group
14 years old

Sarah Freshnock has been chosen as SMN/Roeland Park Gold group “Swimmer of the Month” for January. There were several other strong contenders for the honor, but Sarah edged them out with the good leadership qualities she has shown for the last couple of months.

Sarah has developed as both an athlete and a person this year with her commitment level growing significantly. Since September Sarah’s attendance has been excellent and her capacity to work has positively improved. I can always count on Sarah to help in setting a positive tone in practice whether it is dryland or swim training. She has become not only a lane leader but has influenced the whole group’s level of interest and drive in the pool. Sarah rallies the swimmers when needed and will hold them accountable when necessary. I consider her support of the program a real blessing to both me and the team. Both Sarah and I share the anticipation of how successful the end results will be at our Division I Championships. Unfortunately, Sarah will be leaving us after DI’s to participate with the Shawnee Mission East High School team where I’m sure she will continue her road to success.

Sincerely,
Coach Henry

**MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
SHAWNEE MISSION EAST HIGH SCHOOL – ELITE
DECEMBER 2009 – MARSTON FRIES**



Marston Fries
Elite Group
16 years old

Marston has entered her second year in the Elite group. She has really taken advantage of all she has experienced and learned in her first full year in this group. At this time last year, I would have considered her as highly competitive but tentative to what her path should be. Marston entered this year with increased focus, determination, and an extremely elevated passion for preparation for her goals. This culminated with her being

one of the top female performers at Level I. She took the lessons learned from both last year and during Phase I, and made a step forward. Congratulations Marston! Let 2010 be special.

Peter D. Malone
Scott Bliss
Maggie Kroemer

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
BLUE VALLEY WEST – SENIOR GROUP
DECEMBER 2009 – BETH HOUGHTON



Beth Houghton
Senior Group
15 years old

December is a busy month for many people. There is so much going on with meets and holidays and final exams that it's tough to fit it all in and do it well. That's why it is inspirational when you see someone do it. Beth Houghton has already been a most inspirational swimmer of the month and of the year, but in December 2009, she made another great step forward.

Having aged up in August, Beth is still between Level II and Level I, so she went to both meets. Beth proved she was a strong finisher at both meets. In each meet her last event was the biggest time drop. At Level II, she dropped nearly nine seconds in the 200 fly. At the Level I Championships, she wrapped up the meet by dropping nearly 50 seconds in the 1650 freestyle. By the end of the two meets, she had achieved her first three Division I cuts in the Senior age group and dropped over a minute and a half of total time.

Her meet performances alone, are not what made Beth's month so special. People who swim well in early December are usually showing that they have prepared well in the months leading up to December. Beth did that, but after two great meets, she made sure to keep the momentum going into 2010 by keeping her grades and attendance percentage up during the second half of December and pushing herself to work harder heading into the new year.

With determination like that, she should start off 2010 without missing a step.

Coach Derek, Christie and Pat

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
KCB EAST – BLUE
JANUARY 2010 – MEGAN BLACK



Megan Black
Blue Group
12 years old

It is hard to move up to a new training group and it takes a while getting used to. Megan Black has spent all fall getting used to her move to Advanced Blue. She was ready for it, but it's still hard to come to practice and chase the swimmers that have been training at this level for months longer than she has. But, that's what she did, she chased them. And, every month she got a little stronger, until she wasn't chasing them anymore, she was swimming with them, passing them, and, in the month of January, leading them.

It doesn't happen every day, but still, it is so nice to see the other swimmers turn to Megan to lead their lane, when at the beginning of the season she was the one just starting out. And, they aren't just looking to her to lead them because they think she is faster. It is because they have identified her as the one that is the best listener, is the best at keeping track of her own intervals, is the one that is going to stay in the water for the whole set without stopping, and is the one that isn't going to let someone else stopping get in her way. Even on the days when she isn't at the front of the whole lane, I can see her leading the swimmers. Sometimes it isn't fair that they all expect her to figure out the interval, or to keep swimming while they're fixing their goggles, but she is the one that is getting stronger, faster, and more responsible for her own swimming every day. We are so proud of her for taking responsibility for her own training. Congratulations Megan! Thanks for the inspiration.

Coach Ann
Coach Brandi
Coach Skyler
Coach Joy
Coach Mike

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
BLUE VALLEY NORTH – ADVANCED BLUE
JANUARY 2010 – SURUCHI RAMANUJAN



Suruchi Ramanujan
Advanced Blue Group
11 years old

Suruchi is a swimmer who works very hard without complaining. She listens intently to all instructions and does her best to apply the information to her own swimming. She lets her actions speak for her rather than being the loudest person at practice. Her improvements in the pool have been steady, culminating with outstanding performances at the recent COOL meet in January, where she swam 7 out of 7 new best times. Even with all this success, she handles herself with modesty and class, never bragging to others about how well she performs. A quiet smile that spreads across her face is the tell-tale sign that she is pleased with her swims, and then she is off to prepare for the next race.

Suruchi has had consistent attendance all year, and she has been working to go faster in practice and lead the lanes. She is always kind to her teammates and coaches and respectful of others. She works hard at dryland and is one of the swimmers that regularly completes this portion of practice. She has earned every bit of her success with steady work.

Congratulations!
Coach Marjorie

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
BLUE VALLEY NORTH – EXTREME BLUE
JANUARY 2010 – SAM BOYD



Sam Boyd
Extreme Blue Group
12 years old

Sam decided that it was an important goal of his to qualify for and attend the prestigious Plano swim meet in early February. To make this meet, Sam needed 3 “A” times. Sam is a talented swimmer, but to make this goal would require additional work and determination, which Sam then demonstrated in abundance.

Sam started leading his lane, which is no small feat when looking at his lanemates. He pushed himself harder and never lost focus, even when aches and pains popped up. At meets, Sam handled the pressure extremely well, whether or not he swam as fast as he wanted in every race, as evidenced at the Polar Bear meet. When Sam made an “A” cut, he briefly celebrated his success and then quickly settled down to focusing on the next race at hand. Even after Sam made the 3 qualifying times to go to Plano, he kept working hard in order to swim well at the meet, not just be there. His ability and willingness to reset his goals was a major factor in his selection as swimmer of the month.

Sam has been a consistent performer all year, which helped him accomplish his goal. He has a positive attitude, is always respectful to his coaches, and he is easy to work with.

Congratulations, Sam!
Coach Marjorie

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
BLUE VALLEY WEST – BLUE
JANUARY 2010 – RACHEL BROCK



Rachel Brock
Advanced Blue Group
10 years old

If you watched Rachel Brock in a race January 2009, you’d wonder when she would get the idea that she’s in a race. In January 2010, Rachel got the idea and raced to all best times and more.

Rachel is now a Division I qualifier. In December she came close, but in January, she made it definitive – qualifying in not just one, but three events – 50 Free, 100 Breast and 50 Fly. By qualifying in three different strokes, Rachel is showing that she has worked hard in practice and could qualify in any event. She’s headed that way. She got a best time in every event she swam in January.

How did this happen? It didn’t happen without practice. Rachel has been a very consistent fixture at practice in the Advanced Blue group and has been working harder and harder each month. January was the month the inevitable happened – Rachel put her hard work to use in swim meets. In addition to her Division I cuts, Rachel achieved her first ever “A” time in the 50 Fly. We can’t wait to see what she does in Wichita in March!

Coach Derek, Rodney and Pat

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
BLUE VALLEY WEST – SENIOR GROUP
JANUARY 2010 – HEATH MAGINN



Heath Maginn
Senior Group
14 years old

This could have been a very short write-up. I thought about just saying 2:05 in the 200 fly....'nuff said. And that could've been the end of it. That would have only described one of Heath Maginn's accomplishments in January. But it would be the one that most separated January 2010 from Heath's past months that rank just in the "very good" category

Heath has been swimming backstroke for a long time. Ever since he was 9 it's been his best stroke. However, Heath has been working very hard in the practice pool, and in January, he showed that he had taken his game to a new level. While attendance was up for the whole Senior group this month, nobody attended more practices than Heath. And January was mostly about practice for Heath. The only meet he competed in was the All Star meet, but what a meet it was for him.

To say that we "focused" on the All Star meet in practice would be an overstatement. In fact, I was not even aware that Heath had been entered in the 200 fly. At a time of 2:13, I did not realize that he would be in consideration for the event. However, Heath was at the All Star meet to compete and showed that his effort in practice was helping him to be competitive in more than just one stroke. Heath swam six events and placed in the top four in all of them, including a first place finish in the 200 Back. But the "breakout" swim of the meet was his 8-second drop in the 200 fly resulting in a 2nd place finish for Heath. If you had seen Heath practicing in January, it was a breakout, but not a surprise. Don't be surprised to see him swim even better in March!
Coach Derek, Christie and Pat

MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
CALIFORNIA TRAIL – ADVANCED BLUE/GOLD
JANUARY 2010 – TYLER LAFLIN



Tyler Laflin
Advanced Blue Group
12 years old

From the very first day of the 2009-2010 short course season, Tyler Laflin has continually demonstrated that he possesses the vision and determination necessary to take him far in the swimming world. His practice and meet composure is positive and focused, and in everything he does, Tyler maintains focus on his short-term and long-term goals. As indicated by his steady and ongoing improvement from meet to meet, Tyler's hard work has paid off well throughout the season.

What really sets Tyler apart is his true internal motivation. In a manner that reveals wisdom far beyond his actual years in the pool, Tyler understands the direct correlation between presence and improvement. In the month of January, the Advanced Blue squad had 16 practice opportunities. Tyler – in a remarkable feat of perseverance – attended 100% of these practices.

Daily, Tyler displays careful listening and great understanding. He also serves as a team leader in ensuring his lane mates and teammates fully grasp the instructions and purpose of training sets. Tyler always sees

things in a positive light, and when practice gets tough, he pushes himself and his teammates to work harder and never give up. In addition, Tyler's adherence to excellence reaches beyond the pool walls. He displays outstanding self-discipline in dryland, committing to proper execution in all of our exercises, and displays an intensity that has produced demonstrable results in terms of his overall strength and fitness.

Tyler's steadfast belief that the process of achievement is an ongoing experience, his desire to make each practice and meet opportunity a worthwhile experience, and his determination to hold himself accountable for 110% effort in all that he does have led to his selection as Swimmer of the Month. Tyler is an inspiration for the entire California Trail site.

Keep up the great job!
Coach Megan

**MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
SHAWNEE MISSION EAST HIGH SCHOOL – ELITE
JANUARY 2010 – LEXI BERGERON**



Lexi Bergeron
Elite Group
16 years old

Lexi is in the 2nd year in the Elite group. In both years, she has demonstrated outstanding commitment to her progress. In the month of January, Lexi really showed major steps forward in her willingness to follow through to improving many aspects of her training. This, coupled with a key solid Polar Bear meet, earned her this honor. Lexi is preparing herself for a great swim year.

Peter D. Malone
Scott Bliss
Maggie Kroemer

**MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
SHAWNEE MISSION NORTH/ROELAND PARK – GOLD
JANUARY 2010 – BRODY ARVESEN**



Brody Arvesen
Gold Group
14 years old

My man Brody stepped up in both December and January working extremely hard with near perfect attendance. He went from having no "A" times to achieving the three times necessary to qualify for the Plano Bus trip. Brody qualified for the Plano trip at the 11th hour at the Polar Bear swim meet by establishing "A" times in the 50 free, 100 free, and the 100 breast. He told me before the meet he was going to make the Plano cuts and I must say I did have my doubts. However, Brody set his goals and followed the path needed to achieve his goals. Brody is a shining example of what one can achieve when they put their mind, body, and spirit into the goal setting process. It is my hope now that Brody has seen what can be done with the right mindset, he will continue on his quest for excellence.

I would also like to express my general overall enjoyment of working with and coaching Brody. He is most always pleasant, positive, and fun to work with and offers an inspiring attitude for the whole Gold group. I do

consider Brody one of our positive team leaders and we will miss him when he moves on to the Senior group-- or maybe we will be saying the Elite group.

Best of luck, Brody, and thanks for being a Blazer.

Sincerely,
Coach Henry

**MOST INSPIRATIONAL SWIMMER OF THE MONTH
SHAWNEE MISSION NORTH/ROELAND PARK – BLUE
JANUARY 2010 – MAX GOEKE**



Max Goeke
Blue Group
9 years old

Max Goeke has been chosen as this month's SMN/Roeland Park "Swimmer of the Month" for a multitude of reasons. While we would like to see Max at practice a little more, he has been awesome when in attendance. Max has realized one way to achieve success is through plain old everyday hard work. Not being the biggest in the group has not kept Max from consistently leading the lanes in practice and setting the standard for the group. Max listens to the directions given to him by the coaches and he focuses on and masters the task he is assigned. His enthusiasm to learn and the energy he puts into practice is what is needed to become a great success in swimming. In short, Max not only embraces the challenge of the practice, but he does it with a smile on his face.

Max recently reaped the benefits of his hard work and earned five new best times at the "Cool Rock the Blocks" meet. I am firmly convinced we can look forward to many more new times at the upcoming DII championships. And, who knows, maybe even some DI qualifying times.

Sincerely,
Coach Henry

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH JANUARY 2010



Nancy & Troy Laflin

Troy and Nancy are truly a KCB “Power Couple.” With son, Tyler, and daughter, Samantha, both in the program, it would seem like they’d be busy enough. Those two, however, work countless hours to help not just their swimmers, but everybody’s. Nancy is a role model to all of the Blazer Mom’s. She knows every swimmers name at her kids’ home pools, as well as, the names of just about everybody else too. Additionally, she truly enjoys the success of all offering congratulations at each personal best or motivational time achieved. These personal qualities are impressive but beyond that she is a worker. Her work as the Site Chair for Swim-a-Thon over the years has been stellar. The effort she puts in to making each swimmer feel important is to be admired.

Likewise Troy is the antithesis of the word “slacker.” As our KCB Meet Director the last two years his Volunteer Hours look like a mistake on the spreadsheet! It’s because of these hours of preparation, organization and planning, however, that the Blue/Golds, Intrasquad, Future Stars and Summer D1’s seem to happen so easily. Troy’s ability to see the big picture while attending to details has benefitted all swimmers and coaches. Additionally, his good nature, easy smile and fun sense of humor helps others relax and enjoy working for the kids.

We are all truly lucky that Tyler and Sam chose to swim for KCB. The Laflin Family is a great asset to us all. Thanks, Nancy and Troy.

VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH FEBRUARY 2010



We would like to award Annette Rohde as Volunteer of the Month for February. Annette is our Volunteer Coordinator. She can be found at every meet making sure that each job is fully staffed so that our athletes can have the opportunity to compete. She works tirelessly behind the scenes recruiting families to get the job done. Annette creates the job list, gets it posted on our website, attends the events and gets the volunteers in their places, fills in the blank spots, when the event is complete she records the hours worked. She does all of this for 400 families and smiles! Thank you Annette for many jobs very well done.

HOLIDAY HOPE MEET WRITE UP
DECEMBER 19, 2009



The Blazers finished off Phase I with a fun Holiday Hope meet at the Roeland Park pool on December 19. Besides fast swimming, all Blazer swimmers and families were encouraged to support Harvesters with a food drive and Soldiers' Angels with a collection of items for USA service members serving abroad. We donated 316 pounds of food to Harvesters, and we also sent a huge collection of items to Soldiers' Angels! It is heartwarming to see our families remember others at this time of year, so thanks to all who participated.

At the meet, we offered relays at the beginning and end of the meet, allowing the swimmers to experience the importance of team events at meets. The crescendo relay at the conclusion of the meet was especially fun, as swimmers of different ages were able to swim in a relay together, doing different distances. Also, the swimmers earned candy canes for best times and for winning heats. It was a great way to celebrate swimming together and still remember others at the same time.

Congratulations to the following swimmers who achieved all best times or established successful first-time swims in their events:

Claire Anderson, Nicky Belvedere, Ashley Brull, Miranda Burgoon, Mallory Butler, Alex Chitaia, Cameron Clark, Caroline Cleland, Kathleen Deedy, Ted Deselich, Ty Deselich, Cameron Faseymyer, Gretchen Gleason, Lexis Goforth, Andrew Goode, Delaney Green, Joe Green, Sayan Grover, Emma Hanners, Morgan Harlow, JP Hynes, Zair Khan, Abby Kierst, Kadisyn Kircher, Grace Kirkland, Sadie Klein, Ashley Knese, Amanda Li, Malerie Moore, Alyssa Nixon, Liam O'Leary, Dennis Peterson, Sam Peterson, Tess Poterbin, Alex Prettyman, Nicholas Schmidt, Michael Sheldon, Megan Smith, Kelsey Southard, Allison Stewart, Jonathan Thomas, Aidan Tittle, Olivia Tittle, Hannah Wastler, Sarah Watson, Aggie Williams, and Lizzy Young.

MIDWEST ALL-STARS
JANUARY 16-17, 2010



The 26th annual Midwest All-Star meet was held in Lawrence, Kansas on January 16-17th, 2010. Congratulations to the 25 Blazer athletes who were selected for this year's Missouri Valley team! The meet, on whole, was an incredibly fast event – the best swimmers from five LSCs, Colorado, Iowa, Midwestern, Missouri Valley and South Dakota, combined to produce 15 new meet records and one National Age Group record. Our Blazer swimmers showed up in fine form, producing dozens of new best times and multiple sectional and zone cuts.

Congratulations to the following Blazer All Star 2010 Champions:

Swimmer	Division	Events		
Chris Hearl	13-14 boys	200 free	400 IM	100 free
Tiffany Liu	13-14 girls	50 free	100 free	
Heath Maginn	13-14 boys	200 back		

Congratulations to the following Blazers attaining new AAAA time standards:

Swimmer	Division	Events			
Chris Hearl	13-14 boys	200 free	200 back	400 IM	100 free

Congratulations to the following Blazers attaining new AAA time standards:

Swimmer	Division	Events		
Spencer Banwart	11-12 boys	200 free	100 back	100 free
Liam Bresette	10U boys	200 free	50 fly	
Zach Holbrook	13-14 boys	50 free		
Heath Maginn	13-14 boys	100 fly	200 fly	
Hannah Musser	13-14 girls	200 breast		
Hannah Palmeter	11-12 girls	100 fly		
Jack Pluenneke	13-14 girls	400 IM		

Congratulations to the following Blazers for attaining new AA time standards:

Swimmer	Division	Events
Ethan Bresette	13-14 boys	200 breast
Logan Johnsen	10U girls	100 breast
Jack Pluenneke	13-14 boys	200 breast
Isaac Powell	13-14 boys	200 breast
Colin Strickland	11-12 boys	50 free

In addition to the numerous outstanding age group performances, the Elite group was well represented by Chris Hearl and Amy Davis. Chris took home the High Point award for 13-14 boys, and Amy had break out swims in several events.

Thank you to all the parents who came and cheered for our swimmers, and thank you to all the athletes who raced so hard for their teammates and the LSC. An extra-special thank you goes out to Mrs. Karen Maginn for all her efforts in organizing our team dinner on Friday evening prior to the meet, and additionally, to all the parents who contributed to the meal and/or volunteer their time. Overall, it was an amazing weekend, and congratulations to everyone who contributed to Blazer and Missouri Valley success!

Megan Pittman
Head Coach, 2010 MVS All-Star Team

POLAR POP BLUE/GOLD MEET WRITE UP
JANUARY 18, 2010



The Polar Pop is supposed to be the first Blue/Gold meet of the year, and it was. It was supposed to be on January 16th, but it wasn't. Due to re-scheduling of the Polar Bear meet, the Polar Pop meet was moved to the MLK holiday and became the first Monday evening meet in recent memory. As many of our swimmers are accustomed to swimming on Monday evening, the times were actually pretty good. The meet was also well attended by our normal Blue/Gold swimmers, but also swimmers who were chasing their last "A" times for the Plano bus trip.

Just as we were getting ready to start the meet, we had a minor malfunction at the computer table, but once we started the meet we ran straight through with minimal hold-ups and lots of best times. While we had many swimmers simply eliminate some “no time” events by swimming them for the very first time at the Polar Pop, the following swimmers stepped up and made new qualifying times for our upcoming championship meets:

New Division II times

Quinn Bonge – 100 Free, Caroline Carter – 100 Free, Carolina Cleland – 100 Free, Tyler Cunningham – 50 Fly, Katie Dean – 50 Fly, Isabelle Finzen – 200 Free, Kadisyn Kircher – 50 Fly, Tessa Poterbin – 50 Back, Steven Rohde – 100 I.M., Gillian Schwartz – 100 I.M., Emma Wormington – 50 Back

New Division I times

Sam Boyd – 100 I.M., Grace Brimacombe – 200 Free, Hailey Brull – 200 Free, Abigail Johnstone – 100 I.M., Pige McClelland – 100 I.M., Lauren Peterson – 200 Free, Michael Semidubersky – 200 Free, Katya Vakshteyn – 500 Free, Michael Zhou – 400 I.M.

POLAR BEAR ELITE GROUP MEET WRITE UP
JANUARY 18, 2010



The opening for Phase II of the 2010 swim year was met with great racing by the Musser boys’ rivalry (Seth and Jesse). They demonstrated what can be done when you embrace challenge, rivalry, and the thrill of competing.

We had trained hard from the December meets, and most everyone was dedicated to the training schedule. We unfortunately forgot that we were doing all of this to race and play the game. Preparation and dedication must be done with well-centered purpose. Never lose sight that all of the meets are about practicing and playing the game.

The East Side had many challenges in hosting this event this year. Congratulations on keeping your eye on the prize- job well done.

COOL ROCK THE BLOCKS MEET WRITE UP
JANUARY 22-23, 2010



The COOL Rock the Blocks meet was exactly as advertised—great music in the background while the athletes raced their hearts out. The music helped pump up the swimmers and coaches, and Blazers were even dancing! (If you didn’t get a chance to see Coach Henry doing his best disco dancing, you missed something special!) The music helped provide a fun atmosphere at a competitive event. To go along with the music, the team cheers at each session were a highlight too. It is important for our older Blazers to pass along the traditions of cheering and leading, and lead they did. Our younger swimmers enjoyed learning new cheers and the fun that comes with banding together at the beginning of each session to remind ourselves that we are truly one team.

This meet afforded our younger swimmers a chance to swim in one of their first full weekend meets, which is a step up from our Blue/Gold meets. The swimmers handled the adjustment to a longer weekend and harder events with class and grace. The meet hosts did an excellent job of running an efficient meet, and the crash area was spacious and comfortable. In turn, the Blazers swam fast,

achieving new cuts for Division I and Division II meets. We also had several swimmers who achieved 100% best times in their events, including the following:

Rachel Brock (4/4), Carolina Cleland (4/4), Amy Dusselier (3/3), Maddie Fenley (3/3), Garrison Galley (4/4), Madeleine Hossick (8/8), Eric Kim (8/8), Robert Kim (8/8), Carter Kirkland (8/8), Gracie Kirkland (8/8), Nick Massa (4/4), Kevin Massey (4/4), Muriira Mbogori (4/4), Jack McConathy (3/3), Zach McConnell (8/8), Madison Moore (8/8), Malerie Moore (8/8), Kaden Morash (8/8), Sage Murphy (8/8), Tanner Myers (8/8), Srivats Narayanan (4/4), Hannah Phillips (3/3), Suruchi Ramanujan (7/7), Aditi Rastogi (4/4), Hannah Wastler (4/4), Alex Wilson (4/4), Kaitlin Yu (4/4).

Congratulations to all our athletes!

NLU LAST CHANCE MEET WRITE UP
JANUARY 30-31, 2010



The North Land United team graciously hosted the “Last Chance” Meet the last week in January. Only small contingents of Blazers were represented. The meet was open to only the Blazer swimmers who were between the levels of those attending the Plano meet in Texas, and those who had not competed in the Cool “Off the Blocks” meet. The meet was called the “Last Chance” because for many of the swimmers it was their final opportunity to qualify for the Division II meet and even for DI’s for several of the swimmers. This circumstance created some urgency and incentive for our swimmers to achieve their year-end goals. Though there were not many Blazers in attendance they went there to compete and they did not disappoint. The spirit of the swimmers was high as was the level of competition. Blazer swimmers established eight new DI times and 16 DII times.

Blazer swimmers achieving new DI times were as followed Colten Becker 100 free; Tannner Emerson 100 free; Andrew B Goode 100 Back, 11-12 IM; Hannah McPhail 50 Fly; Kylie Miller 200 Free; Lauren Peterson 500 free; Hannah Spoolstra 100 free. Swimmers achieving new DII cuts were Logan Ashe 100 fly; Hunter Bravance 200 free; Alexandra Freeman 200 IM, 100 IM; Kate Hartman 50 free; Andrew B Goode 500 free; Madison Moore 500 free; Danny Pankratz 100 breast; Alex Prettyman 50 free; Sarah Raymond 100 breast; Claire Ridgeway 100 fly; Elly Sharemet 200 IM, Brandon Spliter 50 free; Julia Woelbel 100 breast.

Seven Blazers combined for winning a total of 11 gold medals. Individual winners were Kara Bartnett (15 over) 400 IM; Allison Boyd (15 over) 200 IM; Brody Arvesen (13-14) 100 breast; Lisa Elsener 200 fly; Kevin Nelson (15 over) 400 IM; Hannah Palmeter (11-12) 200 IM, 100 fly, 100 free, 200 free, 50 free, 100 IM.

The Blazers are now preparing to swim on to even greater heights as they enter the short course championship season. They have prepared long and hard all season and now they will reap the benefits of all their efforts.

Blazers let’s go for the gold and end our season with our best results ever!

GREATER SOUTHWEST INVITATIONAL MEET WRITE UP
(PLANO, TX)
FEBRUARY 5-7, 2010

Blazers Win! That's the headline from Texas. The Kansas City Blazers ended a five-year drought in the winner's circle of the Greater Southwest Invitational and drove home victorious with the Silver Boot. The meet was a total team effort. It took 84 swimmers, seven coaches, eight chaperones and a lot of support back in Kansas City to make the trip work as well as it did. Thanks goes out to everyone who participated in this team victory.

For those of you who have not been to the meet in Plano, this meet is one of the biggest age group meets in the country each winter. There were 767 swimmers from 39 teams and eight different LSC's represented at the meet. The Blazers had the second largest contingent behind the host team and just ahead of the third largest team – Lakeside Aquatic Club. Because this meet is so competitive in every age group, this is a meet we use as sort of a measuring stick to see how close we are to our claim that we are the "best swimming in the Midwest". It is also a meet where we have a yearly "grudge match" with the host team that involves the traveling trophy called "the Silver Boot".

After each day, we got printouts of the team scores and while we led the combined team scoring from start to finish, we had some close races for the girls and boys team scores. In the end, the Girls outdistanced (literally) Lakeside Aquatic Club by a margin of 1759.5 to 1582. However the boys finished in third behind City of Plano Swimmers and the North Texas Nadadores scoring just 1225 points. The combined total of 2984.50 points was enough to keep us ahead of COPS's 2757 and earn us the Silver Boot trophy for the first time since 2005!

One of the ingredients that went into our team win was the great team spirit. As it became evident that we were headed to win the meet, there was talk about who would get the coveted spirit award. While the Blazers abstained from voting for themselves, it was evident to all the other teams that we had the best team spirit in the meet and again arrived in Kansas City with an outrageously large trophy to prove it. Of course, fast swimming was the main ingredient in our success at the meet and the following swimmers were first in their events at the meet:

11-12 Girls

Haley Hynes – 50 Back

13-14 Boys

Heath Maginn – 200 Back

13-14 Girls

Amy Davis – 500 Free, 1000 Free
400 I.M.

200 Free Relay – T. Liu, A. Wooden
H. Musser, A. Davis

200 Medley Relay – H. Musser,
A. Wooden, H. Angell, T. Liu

Senior Girls

Mackenna Rife – 1000 Free

Shannon Vreeland – 500 Free, 200 I.M., 400 I.M.

Bryce Hinde – 100 Breast, 200 Breast

Senior Boys

Seth Musser – 100 Back, 200 Back, 200 I.M.

Three of the above swimmers were also the high point winners for their age group – Haley Hynes – 11-12 Girls; Shannon Vreeland – Senior Girls; Seth Musser – Senior Boys.

MISSOURI GRAND PRIX MEET WRITE UP
FEBRUARY 12-14, 2010



This meet represents the first long course meet of the year where the top athletes start racing and measuring for this summer. During this summer, the teams for the 2010 Pan Pacific Games in California, the 2010 Junior Pan Pacific Games in Hawaii, the 2011 World Championships, and the 2011 World University Games are being selected. This makes the summer National meet a high priority for the top athletes in the USA.

The Blazers had 14 swimmers attend this competition. We used this meet as the final preparation for the Sectional meet in March. The Grand Prix was also used to see what we need to be doing to be in peak form by August.

Here are the athletes who attended, and their top 24 results:

Amy Davis- 5th 800fr, 11th 400im, 20th 400 fr, 24th 200im

Monica Dudley- 7th 800fr, 15th 400fr

Bryce Hinde- 11th 100br, 18th 200br

Mackenna Rife- 8th 400im, 12th 400fr, 18th 800fr, 20th 200bk

Kat Sickle- 6th 800fr, 11th 200im, 15th 200bk, 20th 100bk

Shannon Vreeland- 4th 400im, 6th 200fr, 7th 200im, 7th 100fr, 8th 400fr, 12th 200fly, 19th 50fr, 22nd 100fly

Caroline Woody- 17th 200br, 19th 400im, 22nd 100br

Nick Foster- 16th 1500fr

Chris Hearl- 24th 200bk

Jesse Musser- 13th 200fly, 18th 200fr

Seth Musser- 10th 200bk, 12th 100bk, 13th 200im

Bobby Faulkenberry, Marston Fries, and Natalie Morris also attended this meet.

2009-2010 Fall Honor Roll

Adams, Kyle	Clausen, Morgan	Grant, Tracy	Lee, Justin	Nelson, JT	Snyder, Heather
Agarwal, Ritu	Cleland, Carolina	Gray, Katie	Lee, Ian	Nguyen, Francis	Snyder, Kate
Allen, Maggie	Cohen, Jamie	Grover, Sayan	Legge, Joshua	Novotny, Kirsten	Snyder, Jack
Anderson, Claire	Cohoon, Garrett	Gupta, Swapnil	Liu, Edward	Nugent, Kelly	Sorensen, Corbin
Anderson, Amy	Connelly, Emma	Harmon, Lexi	Liu, Elizabeth	Nugent, Nicholas	Spangler, Matthew
Anderson, Kyle	Cwach, Rachel	Harmon, Austin	Liu, Lucas	Nutter, Alexandra	Spencer, PJ
Angell, Hannah	Danisi, Nicole	Harohalli, Saurabu	Liu, Sihan	O'Flaherty, Jeanne	Spoolstra, Hannah
Angell, Sydney	Davis, Shelby	Hartman, Kate	Liu, Selina	O'Larte, Jeffrey	Stadnik, Sasha
Arteberry, Sam	Dean, Katie	Henderson, Brent	Lode, Elexyss	O'Larte, Phillip	Steffensmeier, Jade
Aruna, Ganesh	Dunn, Kendall	Hoisington, Nathan	Lombardo, Alex	O'Leary, Liam	Steutermann, Mickey
Arveson, Brody	Easley, Madeline	Holloway, Isabel	Lorino, Gabriella	Osbern, Carolyn	Stoup, Kaycee
Ashe, Logan	Easley, Gwyneth	Hosick, Madeleine	Lundy, Lewis	Palmeter, Hannah	Strickland, Colin
Asnicar, Jake	Ehrich, Caroline	Houghton, Adam	Lunsford, Cara	Panfil, Raymond	Sullivan, Kate
Bachar, Austin	Einspahr, Kristin	Houghton, Beth	Ma, Mykell	Pankratz, Danny	Sullivan, Kristine
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Bajracharya, Amira	Emerson, Kylee	Hutchison, Rose	Maginn, Heath	Paris, Kailey	Sweat, Ryan
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Bartnett, Kara	Engholm, Caitlynn	Hynes, Taylor	Manners, Ana	Paulk, Sophie	Torkelson, Aubrey
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Battaglioli, Isabel	Fast, Erin	Hynes, JP	Massa, Nick	Pedersen, Darby	Vakshetyn, Katya
Becker, Colten	Fast, Kelli	Johnsen, Logan	Massa, Oliver	Perry, Michael	Verekhman, Ilya
Beiter, Emily	Finzen, Isabelle	Johnson, Jackie	Massey, Kevin	Peterson, Kelly	Vreeland, Shannon
Belvedere, Nickie	Fisher, Jacob	Johnson, Jenny	Matthews, Emma	Peterson, Lauren	Wang, Henry
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Black, Megan	Flottman, Jenna	Johnstone, Abbey	McClelland, Claire	Pluenneke, Jack	Watson, Sarah
Blackburn, Cade	Foster, Nick	Johnstone, Jared	McClelland, Paige	Poterbin, Tessa	Weber, Charlie
Bolton, Jennifer	Foust, Alexandra	Kenney, Cole	McCollum, Ali	Powell, Isaac	Weber, Jack
Bond, Becca	Freeman, Alexandra	Kenny, Katie	McConathy, Jack	Prosser, Alexandria	Weber, Sam
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Butler, Sydney	Goforth, Lexie	Krause, Alex	Narasimhamurthy, Himadri	Shirling, Megan	Zink, Jack
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Chen, Michelle	Gorham, Thomas	Laflin,, Tyler	Narayanan, Shyam	Smith, Ryan	
Chen, Aaron	Govreau, Emma	Laflin, Sam	Narayanan, Srivats	Smith, Megan	
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