

NCA October Newsletter: Senior I, II, and III

DeckPast: Recap and Highlights from September

We participated in our first meet of the season September 24 at La Mirada competing against Irvine NOVA, and NCA came away with the victory! This was the first in a 3 meet series of dual meets against the best teams in Southern California, and they are a great way to building team spirit early in the season. They also help us as coaches to evaluate common themes within the group, finding swimmers' strengths and identifying areas where work is needed. Coach Mickey and I both saw improvements being made with the our Senior swimmers, even this early in the season! There are still plenty of things the swimmers are striving toward as we look to future meets, and we're excited to see how each swimmer tackles the challenges we present. We are less concerned with times at this point in the season and more focused on watching swimmers apply the technical changes we are implementing in practices to racing.

Practice reports: Views from the Deck

The most exciting announcement for the deck is an introduction to the newest member of the NCA Senior staff. Please join us welcoming Dylan Crooks, who will lead Senior III at Alga Norte as well as assistant with Senior II.

Coach Dylan was born and raised in Shoreline, WA. He began his lifelong affiliation with aquatics as an 8U on the Innis Arden Swim Team — a summer league team that competes against other clubs in the North Seattle area. During high school, Dylan swam and competed for Cascade Swim Club and Shorewood High School as a varsity athlete and *WIAA State Meet* participant his sophomore, junior, and senior years. After his freshman year swimming at Linfield College, Dylan transferred to Western Washington University (WWU) where he walked on the Track and Field team. In 2011, Dylan received his BA in Psychology with an emphasis in Neuroscience.

Dylan began coaching in 2010 for Klayaha Swim and Tennis Club, a summer league team in the North Seattle Area. During his senior year at WWU, he began coaching for Bellingham Bay Swim Team. In April of 2012, Dylan was offered the position as Head Age Group Coach for the South Snohomish County Dolphins (SSCD) — a position he held until August 2017. During his time at SSCD, Dylan coached *National Top 200* age-group athletes, *Northwest Age-Group Regional* champions, and *Pacific Northwest Swimming Age-Group Championships* champions. Between 2014 and 2017, Dylan also coached athletes competing in the *Washington State Special Olympics*.

Away from the pool, Dylan enjoys skiing, backpacking, bodysurfing, attending concerts, and spending time with friends and family.

Senior I

Senior I began the new short course season with a week of beach swims in mid-August. The week was a awesome way to bring new and old NCA members together in a laid back setting after spending the break away from the pool. During the break, several swimmers traveled abroad, visited colleges, and most importantly, stayed away from chlorine! The first 5-6 weeks back in the pool were dedicated to learning correct and/or new technical skills needed as we build the intensity and yardage in early October. I have been pleased with the effort and focus of the entire group and have no doubt that as the training picks up these technical changes will become habit.

Another objective in the early season is to bring the group closer together. Typically, we have new faces in the group: some swimmers are new to the area, come from other clubs, or are NCA veterans moving up in the program. We focus on team building activities, and we started this year competing in the Oceanside Labor Day Pier Swim and traveling to Big Bear Lake for our inaugural senior retreat. The retreat weekend was a great way for Senior I and II swimmers to come together and get to know each other outside of the pool. We also announced team captains for the first time: Kalie Novosedliak, Mia Thomas, Tegan Preston, Justin Lee, Ian Molloy, and Brady Rawers will be representing NCA as our 2017-2018 Senior Captains.

As we move into October, the intensity of training will start to build. Early morning workouts (4:45 am) started last week, and there will be a training shift towards more specificity based on each swimmer's primary events. We are excited to see the direction this group is taking early on, and we look forward to our second dual meet against Mission Viejo Nadadores Oct 8!

Senior II

Practice this past month primarily focused on stroke technique and getting the basics down early on so swimmers can make correct technical changes and apply them throughout the rest of the season. As we continue to progress through the season, our goal is to have swimmers apply proper technique, which will translate into faster swimming. This is important not only to become a faster and more efficient swimmer, but also for injury prevention.

We implemented our new dryland training program with Rise Physical Therapy, working with them to build swimmers' strength while focusing on injury prevention, mobility/flexibility, and balance. All of this will help swimmers both in

and out of the pool. We're looking forward to seeing how the group progresses and what they learn.

I would also like to welcome a three swimmers who moved into Senior II from our Senior III group: Kaylee Dennis, Ethan Bruemmer, and Dylan Howard. It takes a lot of hard work, commitment, and perseverance to make that jump, and I am proud to welcome them to the group.

Senior III

This group grew quite a bit last season and into the summer, and the focus at the start of this season is to get the swimmers to know each other better in and out of the pool. Coaches Hailee and Dylan have been proactive, meeting each swimmer one-on-one to learn what brings them to the pool and what interests them away from the deck. They are also structuring the group around goals, focusing on technical improvements in an effort to teach good habits from the start. Coach Hailee is particularly proud of the swimmers who moved into Senior II, and both coaches look forward to seeing more swimmers reach that goal.

#goNCA: *The Magic of the Green Cap*

We hosted our Senior I and Senior II swimmers at a retreat in Big Bear in late August to allow the swimmers to really get to know one another and build our team bond right from the start of the season. Colleges do trips like this in the beginning of each season, and we decided to start this tradition at NCA. Everyone had a lot of fun!

Here are a few highlights from the trip:

- The senior captains put together games each night for the swimmers to really connect in a fun (and funny) way. We played charades the first night and jeopardy the second night.
- We participated on a ropes course, climbed a rock wall, and shot archery. Not only were the swimmers encouraging of each other, but they also remembered their competitive spirit, racing to see who could get up the rock wall fastest!
- The ropes course consisted of walking across wooden planks, walking along a tight rope, and jumping off a platform to hit a bell a few feet away. Before you think this would be too easy, all of this was in the pine trees about 50 feet up in the air!
- We had a bonfire and s'mores the last night while Greta Fanta stood up in front of everyone and got the group to do a sing along camp song.
- One of the best things we saw out of the trip was during free time; most of the swimmers got together to play games they made up on

their own such as "Gaga" and "Mafia". It was awesome seeing the swimmers really bond with one another on their own terms.

We are all looking forward to a great season ahead, and we can't wait to see what this year delivers!

Go Green!

ALGA NORTE

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