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Heads Up, Lamorinda Players, Coaches, and Fans We want your game scores, highlights, and photos. Please send your game reports, including player names and digital photos to sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com.

Lamorinda Swimmers Take Gold

Submitted by Teresa Sumiyoshi

Haley Barnes and Alex Sominsky, both recent graduates of Stanley Middle School, teamed with Heidi Homma, an Orinda Intermediate School student, to win first place in their trio at the 2007 Esynchro U.S. Age Group National Championships for Synchronized Swimming. Over 1,000 synchronized swimmers from across the nation competed in this competition which was held in Oxford, Ohio from June 23 through June 30. Qualifying to swim in the U.S. Age Group National Championships is an honor for many young competitive synchronized swimmers.

Barnes, Sominsky and Homma are members of the Walnut Creek Aquanats and swim in the 13-15 age group. In the 13-15 team competi-

tion, the three athletes, along with Lafayette teammate Samantha Golomb, and four others took the bronze while Sominsky got silver in the duet competition.

The Aquanats were also impressive in the 11-12 age group competitions, earning first in team, solo and trio. They came in second in the duet competition by a mere three-tenths of a point. The 11-12 team is comprised of three Lamorinda residents, Marisa Tashima of Lafayette, and Grace Moran and Tori Yee of Orinda. In addition to their team gold medal, both Marisa and Grace earned other routine awards. Marisa, a seventh grader at Stanley,



received a gold medal in trio and placed fourth in duet. Grace, in her first national competition, placed seventh in solo and second duet.

The public can watch these swimmers perform along with older and younger Aquanut swimmers in the annual swim show on August 30 through September 2 at the Clarke Memorial Swim Center at Heather Farms in Walnut Creek. The theme of this year's show will be "A Trip Down the Strip", with shows at 8 p.m. nightly.

The Aquanats also run a summer trainee program for girls ages 6 to 11 who are interested in trying out the sport. Practices are Monday, Tuesday and Thursdays from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Heather Farms, and swimmers get to participate in the annual swim show at the end of summer.

For more information on the swim show, the trainee program and other Aquanats events, check out the website at www.aquanats.org.



Lafayette Angels Win District Four AAA Championship

By Kevin D. Shallat

The city of Lafayette has had its share of baseball championships this year. The Acalanes Dons won the North Coast Section championships in baseball, and now we have another winner from Lafayette in the Little League age group. The Lafayette Angels beat the Albany White Sox in the AAA district four championships Saturday, June 30, at Concord American Field.

The White Sox would strike first in this game, scoring two runs in the first inning. The Angels answered right back in the bottom of the first inning by scoring four runs, and never looked back as they went on to win the game, 10-6. Although the Angels only won by four runs, they were ahead by eight runs for much of the game.

Adam Remotto, who plays pitcher and shortstop positions, got his team going by hitting a double to start off

the day for the Angels. First baseman Jack Burford then hit a key triple to bring two players home, recording two RBIs on the play. Both of these players would go on to have several hits in this game.

Lafayette received good contributions all year from their combo of four pitchers, Jonathan Lee, Max Flower, Adam Remotto, and Thomas Henderson. Max Flower pitched four innings and had four hits at the plate. When asked what was working well for him on the mound, Flower replied, "I was trying to keep the ball down in the zone early in the count, then later in the counts I would try and keep the ball a little up in the zone."

The story of the day was not just the pitching. The Angels had timely hitting in almost every inning. This allowed the Angels to pad the bases with runners throughout the day. "Every batter reached base in almost every

playoff game, which was big," said Head Coach Mark Flower. The key to putting the game out of reach was the aggressive base running. The Angels took advantage of almost every miscue or passed ball by the White Sox. In the bottom of the third inning we saw Burford steal second base, allowing teammate Jonathan Lee to score from third base on the errant throw to second.

There is an old saying in baseball that the hottest team at the end of the season has the best shot at winning the championship. "We averaged almost ten runs a game in the playoffs," said Flower. Flower also mentioned how much of a contributing factor right fielder Jack Fink was to the team this year. Fink was injured at the beginning of the season, yet managed to come to almost every game and help cheer his team on. "This was a huge motivator for us," Flower said.



Summer Youth Basketball in Full Swing

By Chris Lavin

Summer does not mean time for lazy days for more than 350 young basketball players in the Lafayette Moraga Youth Association's basketball league, because 40 teams have been fielded to play weekly at school gyms throughout the area. Their season is now well under way.

Director Judy McNeil has lived in Lafayette for 36 years, and spends much of her summer coordinating the league.

"It gives some structure to the summer for the kids," McNeil said. While swimming is a popular sport in the area, "not all kids swim," McNeil said, and basketball offers an alternative. Weekly practices and games are scheduled so they do not conflict with local swim teams, as well.

All basketball coaches are volunteer parents whose boys and girls play in the league. Organizers have no way of lowering the baskets, so the second grade league uses smaller balls, and is co-ed. Starting in the third grade and all the way up to ninth, teams are gender-specific and use age-specific balls.

Besides second graders, divisions include third and fourth, fifth and sixth, and seventh to ninth graders.

"We go for balance and parity," McNeil said. "We still have competitive games on the floor, but we try to create teams that strike a balance with player ability."

And indeed, the players work hard. All foreheads are sweaty by halftime, and water bottles are well used. Statistics are painstakingly kept to ensure that all players get equal time on the floor, and the players work hard to make sure all players score at least a few points.

As in all youth sports, there is an occasional coach who can take



Coach Rob Middleton of Lafayette debriefs the Jaguars after their recent game

things "too far," McNeil said, and focus on winning instead of fair play and equal time. Some coaches will also try to play better players consistently to raise their scores. McNeil has ways of keeping those coaches in check, however. In a list of game rules and regulations she sends out each season, McNeil includes the following Rule No. 18, "The Have Fun Rule...It is in the interest of all players, coaches and spectators to see that all players on the court are having fun and are not discouraged or embarrassed by a blow-out.

Unfortunately almost every year we must impose a slaughter rule on coaches that either don't, or don't know how, to control a game. If your team takes a significant lead over the opposing team please take



A Jaguar player in the third- to fourth-grade LMVA basketball division attempts to block Ben Fish of the Warriors as he tries to take a shot

Photos by Chris Lavin

Gaels' Cattoni named All-Senior All-American

By Zack Farmer

Eric Cattoni, senior outfielder for Saint Mary's College, was selected to Lowe's All-Senior All-American first team. The announcement came at the College World Series in Omaha, Nebraska two weeks ago.

Lowe's has sponsored the award since 2001 and has given the award to the complete student athlete. This includes his on-the-field performance, classroom performance, and his character in the community. In his senior season, Cattoni batted .303 with three home runs and 15 RBIs, led the West Coast Conference (WCC) in runs scored with 54, and placed

second in stolen bases with 28.

Lowe's Senior Vice President of Marketing and Advertising Bob Gfeller explained what this award meant. "These ten players are not only among the nation's best college baseball players, they are remarkable students and community members who have worked hard to accomplish great things both on and off the field," said Gfeller. "Lowe's is proud of its affiliation with the NCAA and college athletics, and we are pleased to help honor these individuals who have displayed a commitment to excellence as true student-athletes."

On top of his on-the-field

success, Cattoni was elected to the All-WCC Academic Team and ESPN The Magazine Academic All-America Second Team. This is brought upon by his 4.0 grade point average while taking pre-med courses at Saint Mary's. Cattoni also received the CRC Press Chemistry Achievement Award, an award presented for more than 50 years.

He is also a resident advisor for freshmen on campus and provides his residents with activities and guidance for college life.

Lowe's selected 10 student athletes for the award, five for the first team and five for the second team. Cattoni was the only player on the first team selected from a west coast university.

Joining Cattoni on the first team are Bryan Henry of Florida State University, Austin Adams of Texas Christian University, and Andy DeLaGarza of Coastal Carolina University. The second team consists of Eric Rose of the University of Michigan, Ryan Gryskevich of Bucknell University, Brad Mills of the University of Arizona, Keanon Simon of Oklahoma State University and Aaron Ivey of Oklahoma University.

Cattoni has one year remaining at Saint Mary's but is out of eligibility in the NCAA.



Eric Cattoni

Meadow Mini Meet

37th Annual Meadow Mini Meet July 15

Submitted by Carrie Daughters

Approximately 1,500 people will descend upon the Meadow Swim and Tennis Club for the 37th Annual Meadow Mini Meet to be held here Sunday, July 15. More than 600 swimmers from 11 teams are signed up to compete in this daylong fundraising event. The meet is unique in that participation is limited to swimmers aged eight and younger. Each

swims only against children their own age, giving them opportunities for healthy competition not often available to younger swimmers. For many of the children, this will be the first time ever competing at a swim meet.

Among those who began their careers at the Meadow Mini Meet were Olympic swimmers Matt Biondi, Peter Rocca

and three members of the U.S. National Water Polo team, Kirk Everest, Colin Keely, and Rick McNair.

This year's chairpersons are Kaye Jacuzzi and Joy Braitberg. The youngest swimmers (6 years and under) will begin swimming at 9 a.m.; the 7-8 year olds will swim at 1 p.m. The meet will end around 4 p.m.