



Upper Valley Aquatic Club OFFICIAL TEAM NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2020

Upcoming Events:

Feb 21-23 10 & Under Championships, UNH

Feb 22 Vera Rivard swims at Allen Pools and Spa 11am-1pm Lebanon, NH

Feb 27-March 1 New England Age Group Championships, WPI

March 6-8 15-18 Age Group Championships, WPI

March 13-15 New England Silvers, UVAC

March 20-22 New Hampshire Swim Association Championships, UVAC

March 26-29 EZ Sectionals, Buffalo , NY

April 4 Swim-A-Thon 2:30-4:30, UVAC

April 4 Team Banquet 5pm Hartford High School, Hartford, VT



Connecticut Valley Invitational Swim Meet

On Sunday January 26, UVAC hosted the annual Connecticut Valley Invitational Swim Meet. This meet has become a favorite with the athletes over the years. In fact, the meet has a long tradition in the Upper Valley, spanning over the last 22 years. With over 400 swimmers from 19 different teams attending, the energy in the pool was high! The UVAC swimmers had an exceptional day with 42 first place finishes and 32 second place finishes. In addition, 8 meet records were broken throughout the day. Some of these records went back as far as 2002! Congratulations to all our swimmers.

2020 CVI Individual Records:

Isak Tell - Boys 9-10 100 Individual Medley

Andrew Berndsen - Boys 9-10 500 Freestyle

Kate Bartlett - Girls 11-12 50 Butterfly

Rosie Keith - Girls 13-14 100 Butterfly, 100 Freestyle, and 500 Freestyle

Maggie Wenger - Girls Open 200 Freestyle

2020 CVI Relay Record

Ian Kiefer, Alex Chen, Nate Holt, Isak Tell - Boys 9-10 200 Freestyle



COLLEGE SWIMMING: **An interview with alumna, Georgia Houde**

UVAC alumna, Georgia Houde, has been a member of the Middlebury College Swim team for the last 4 years. She was a member of the UVAC team since its inception. She is presently preparing for her last college championship meet. Georgia has been a competitive swimmer since she was reluctantly placed on a relay team when she was 6. She was watching her sister swim in the summer championship meet and the team needed another swimmer for the 8 & Under relay. With no swim team experience and with minutes to spare, she was tossed a team suit and told to swim 25 yards freestyle for the team. This auspicious start to her swimming career may have

shaped her into the swimmer she is today!

As Georgia reflected on her swimming career, she spoke about how swimming has impacted every part of her life. Learning time management skills was the biggest and best lesson she gained as a swimmer. She feels she has a type of diligence that she wouldn't have learned without the structure of swimming. The diligence it takes to be part of a team and also being in school is unique to swimmers and their schedules. Starting when she was in middle school, she had to manage school work, swimming, social life and also getting enough sleep. She says, these things remain a challenge in college but that her experience prior to college made the transition to more work and more time in the pool, while at Middlebury, easier.

Georgia has loved her experience on the Middlebury Swim Team. For her, college swimming was so rewarding and fun because it was

more team oriented. The meets are exciting with the emphasis on team scores rather than individual times. Even though there is more time spent at the pool and the weight room, the bond with the team and the joy of working hard together towards a unifying goal, far outweighs the extra hours.

As Georgia heads to her final NESCAC championship, she finds herself reflecting on swimming and the impact it's had on her life even more. She says that there is nothing in the world that's quite like the experience and the bond you create with people doing similar things for a common goal. Even though everyone on the team has their personal goals, they all ultimately work as a team. It has been incredibly rewarding to push hard towards a goal, regardless of the outcome. She can't imagine what it's going to be like to be a swimmer, but she says, she will not miss getting wet!



UVAC PRE TEAM @ COLBY SAWYER

Coach Signe is striving to build the UVAC swim team at our Colby Sawyer site. Her goal is to build the swimming community in the New London area and to foster happy fast swimmers. Our pre team is a level 5/6 which is designed to improve swimmers in freestyle and backstroke and when ready adding breaststroke and butterfly. Swimmers will work on perfecting technique, endurance and if desired, readiness for swim team. Presently Signe has 12 children in her group of emerging swimmers with 3 ready to join the team for the spring session!

Hubert W Hawkins IV, Junior Swimmer

Hugh took some time out of his schedule of racing during the Regionals meet to share some information about himself. Hugh has an interesting story about how he discovered his love for swimming. He says that he had tried 5 other sports and it wasn't until his dad taught him how to swim butterfly in their pool that he discovered the joy of swimming. He thought that this could be a sport where he could excel and enjoy himself.



The challenge at that point was to find a team! There was a team close by to where he lives but he wanted a bigger team. His family (including brother Michael) travel 70 minutes each day to get to practice! Hugh says that he doesn't mind the drive because on the way to practice he does his homework and naps and on the way home he does the same. He is motivated to take that drive each day because he wants to

get better and likes to stay in good shape as he plans on doing his first triathlon this summer! He also loves seeing his good friend Aidan and loves the opportunity to talk to coach Erin about her purple hair.

Hugh loves a good challenging set at practice. He especially loves the set when the team swims 50 freestyle on :40 seconds. The goal is to make as many 50s as possible and when you don't make the time, you sit out and rest for :40 seconds and then get back in and go after the challenge again. He hopes his training and this challenging set can help him reach his goal to go :26 seconds in the 50 free this season. He also wants to improve his backstroke technique so he can get faster!

Hugh also loves music and he plays the piano and would also like to learn to play the guitar. **Good luck reaching your goals this season**

Hugh!

Featured Coach



Meghan O'Connell

Meghan is an assistant coach with UVAC's Colby Sawyer site. She works with Signe Linville and Signe was also her college coach when she attended Colby Sawyer College! This will be Meghan's third year coaching and 4th year involved with swimming. She was a multi sport athlete at Mascoma High School in Enfield NH where she was born and raised. She participated in soccer, basketball, field hockey, volleyball, and baseball. She did not discover the joys of the pool until she went to college. Before she matriculated to Colby Sawyer she took a gap year after high school and worked as a paraprofessional in the 4th grade at The Ray School in Hanover, NH. Meghan graduated from Colby Sawyer in 2019 with a BFA with a focus on photography and painting. She prefers abstract forms of art and she enjoys painting portraits as well as taking nature photos. Her goal is to become a middle school art teacher and continue to coach. Meghan is engaged to be married this summer and she and her fiancé plan to compete in their first triathlon!

Meghan enjoys her role as coach and mentor to the swimmers in her squad. She loves the challenge and satisfaction of teaching a novice swimmer techniques to help them perfect their strokes. She particularly enjoys those moments when she is talking with and listening to her middle schoolers as they catch up before and after practice. Thank you to Meghan for all she contributes to our team.

UVAC Parent Council Activities 2018/19 Season

This year's Parent Council (PC) has been busy! Our primary mission is to enhance competitive swimming at UVAC through fundraising, volunteering and growing our team culture.

The Parent's Council's major fundraising event, the Swim-a-Thon, raises the bulk of the operating budget for the Parent Council. The funds raised support the team in many ways.

Team Identity

Each year the PC provides one item for team identity to the entire swim team each year. This year, we provided joggers and last year team jackets. The PC also provides the swim caps every year for each swimmer with their name on them. All provided at no additional cost to the parents.

The goal is to rotate the clothing item each year so that over time each swimmer will have a nice kit of UVAC team gear to wear to meets and practice (growth spurts notwithstanding!)

Financial Support for Swim Meets

Many parents may not be aware that the PC budget pays for a portion of the home meet fees for swimmers, fees that would otherwise be charged to swim families for each competitor.

The PC also provides stipends for elite meets to help defray travel and lodging costs for families of swimmers who compete in these important events.

Team Building

The PC funds the end of year celebration, pizza parties and other events to support and recognize the terrific work our swimmers, coaches and parents are putting in each season.

This year the PC also worked with the coaches to introduce the "Dorsey Reynolds Zest Awards". The Zest Award is presented monthly to a swimmer from each age group that has shown particular effort and/or team spirit. The prize is a gorgeous towel that the swimmers can proudly use during meets and at practice.

The PC also helps fund year end gifts for the coaches.

In addition to the above, the PC also recognizes the extraordinary efforts of our parents and supporters who have dedicated their time to becoming swim officials by paying the cost for their official's shirts to be embroidered with their names.

Lastly, this year's PC voted to pay for half of the new state-of-the-art starting blocks that will be installed later this season. The PC's contribution made the starting blocks possible and will be a tremendous benefit to the team, allowing our swimmers to train on the latest technology while also attracting the best and brightest competitors to our teams and the meets hosted at UVAC.

Your help is needed (...many hands make light work)! If you are interested in supporting the PC's important efforts, either as a member of the council or by volunteering in whatever capacity you are able, please contact the coaches or a PC member. **Meetings are typically at 4:30pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at UVAC.**

We hope to see you at our next meeting!

Message from Head Coach Scott Ellis:

The motto of UVAC Swimming, "Character First", is preached and lived daily by coaches and swimmers alike. The overriding philosophy is that participation in youth sports can and should be a life-enhancing experience and not an activity in and of itself. This program emphasizes structure, teamwork, integrity and discipline - the better the person, the better the athlete, the better the swimmer, the better the team AND culture. It is the program's and the coach's objective that the benefits of swimming, and of UVAC Swimming, go *far beyond* the pool.

As time passes, we become more convinced that what can and should be gained from sports is truly invaluable and can be life-changing. For the countless hours committed, the physical, emotional, and financial commitment, and the sacrifices made, there has to be more than a time at the end of this process. Too often in swimming, we see careers stray for the wrong reasons: overzealous parents, coaches with a single-minded focus on winning, kids obsessed with times or ego, and poor role models. Athletes become concerned more about who they beat in practice rather than whom they helped, and seem to care more about their time and place rather than their effort and attitude (life skills). Energy and effort can flow into areas that actually break down a career rather than support its health and longevity. An environment driven by ethics can significantly mitigate this.

Coaches' Objective

In a broader sense, coaching is much more of a life and people process than an athletic pursuit. Not only are kids wrapping their lives around a team, training, a process, and a coach, but in many ways, their emotional development, college decision, and the person they become will be shaped by this experience as well. Our mission is to be more than a coach, but rather a partner with our swimmers on their athletic journey, and to a greater extent, partners on their life journey. Our ultimate goal is that four or eight years from now they are swimming at their very best, loving the sport, are leaders on their teams, and are better people.

Training

Our philosophy with regard to training is that training should support a career and not a season, or a resume. Athletes should embrace training and not become slaves to it. The best career is a long, healthy, and positive one with continued development in terms of performance, efficiency, and training ability. UVAC Swimming's training philosophy can be characterized as "efficient" training, i.e., every stroke matters, with an emphasis on technique, balance, distance-per-stroke, race strategy, and "walls." As such we have virtually no "burn-out" at UVAC Swimming and nearly every swimmer looks to compete at the collegiate level.

Academics

A diligent student represents a great deal more than his or her academics. We have seen academics and athletics work hand in hand and support and complement each other. The more an individual commits to either, the more the other is strengthened. Athletes that do not *embrace* academics are generally not leaders (in the student-athlete sense) and can become one-dimensional. Their lack of academic focus can open the door to less productive alternatives. Our objective is to foster and support student-athletes at the highest level. Our team *must* commit to both. As mentioned, our Senior Group has an average GPA of near 4.0 in a very demanding academic environment.

For some general team and personal concepts we employ, look for our next newsletter!



2020 UVAC Swim-A-Thon

The Swim

The Swim-A-Thon will be on Saturday April 4 from 2:30-4:30 PM. Laps can be swum at any time in that 2-hour period. Most swims will take less than an hour. Some of our athletes are hoping to swim a target number of laps suggested by their coach. If any swimmer is not able to participate during that time frame, laps may be completed at another time of your choice on the honor system. Each swimmer (or two) should plan on bringing a person to count laps for them.

Swim-A-Thon Fundraising

This is a great opportunity to raise funds for our team and for those in need. We will donate 5% to the USA Swimming Foundation charity.

FUNdraising is FUN... O.K. and a little challenging at times...Here are some tips...

Every swimmer has been given a Swim-a-thon fundraising packet. There are more available in the coach's office. Use the pamphlets and pictures to help you with your presentation and ultimately your request for \$\$\$\$. Sample questions and possible answers related to asking for pledges.

How much should I ask for? Most donors would like to know how much the total goal will be. You might say "Well, people are giving \$25, \$50 or \$100 dollars...which level would be best for you?" By the lap, .25, .50 or \$1.00 per lap can work well. Be sure to be prepared to let the giver know how many laps you intend to swim and what their total goal is likely to be. (Some of our younger athletes have been given some total lap estimates from their coach and they are written on their packets).

What do I say when people ask how/when do I give the money?

Most folks give the money on the spot by check (which they can use as a receipt) or they will give cash. Always offer a receipt though many will consider a check proof for tax purposes. We are a non-profit organization and donations are tax deductible. Some will ask you to return when you have completed your laps.

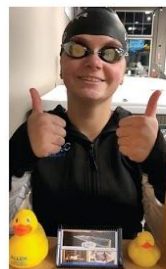
For more help with any hints, tips or other Swim-A-Thon items please contact Steve Hiller at steve@thehillergroup.com

The Celebration!!!

The UVAC Swim Team Annual Celebration will be held **Saturday April 4 from 5-7 PM at Hartford High School**. There will be Food (with vegetarian options), Fun, Music, Dancing, Photography, Awards for all (including the infamous Paper-Plate Awards). There is a sign-up option on the website, so be sure to declare your attendance. Please submit an accurate number of attendees to help us in provisioning food and supplies.



Rivard to Swim English Channel
But First Swims an Endless Pool at Allen Pools & Spas



Saturday, February 22 @ 11am-1pm

16-year-old Vera Rivard, will promote her upcoming English Channel swim attempt at Allen Pools & Spas in Lebanon, NH.

Come cheer her on and donate to her next amazing swimming adventure!

If you are inspired by Vera and would like to donate to her English Channel attempt go here:
<https://fundly.com/team-rivard-swimming>



Questions? Contact Lisa:
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2019-2020 UVAC ZEST Awards
Dedicated to the memory of Dorsi Raynolds

Zest is a word that the team came to recognize as the embodiment of Dorsi Raynolds and her coaching style and way of life. Dorsi lived her life with a sense of excitement, anticipation, and energy. Her life's work was to impart her passion for swimming into her swimmers and into the sport. It is with this in mind that the UVAC Zest award was created. Each month a swimmer from each training group will receive a towel which is embroidered with the UVAC logo as well as the word Zest. Thank you to the Parent Council for providing the team with these beautiful towels.

The following athletes have received the **UVAC ZEST award**. These athletes exemplify the meaning of the word zest as well as showing kindness and giving support to their teammates, being dedicated to the sport and to improving their skills, and possessing great enthusiasm for swimming!

	<u>Devo</u>	<u>Junior</u>	<u>Pre-Senior</u>	<u>Senior</u>
October	Allison Hale	Jordan Roosevelt	Rosie Keith	Molly Hackett
November	Hailey Belardo	Lila Gunnerson	Hunter Harris	Maggie Wenger
December	Jacob St. Peter	Ava Bidlack	Kelly Jackson	Zethan Moss
January	Alex McNee	Aiden Caulfield	Klarey Black	Issy Hiller