

# Chatty Cats

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## Coaches' Corner: The Power of Positive Attitude

*Coach Erin tells it like it is. We can all learn from this whether we swim or not!*

I was at swim practice on a Tuesday afternoon and decided to hop in and splash around. Our Senior level swimmers were preparing for a swim meet over the coming weekend on the west side of the mountains, which would be their last shave and taper meet for the year before buckling down through the hardest training weeks of the year - Christmas Training.

Seeing that they are tapering - I was a pretty happy camper. Whenever I get the chance to hop in the pool and swim I secretly pray for a nice long active recovery set...which isn't always the case.

The moment of truth - the main set popped up on the board. The set was: 5x100 (1:25), 4x100 (1:20), 3x100 (1:15), 2x100 (1:10) and 1x100 (1:05). Eh, not easy, but not impossible either. This is just a lot of 100s. Immediately after Coach Todd wrote the set on the board you could just hear the pool erupt with the moans and groans of how he's "Ruining their taper," and "I can't make those send offs" and "I'm going to die" (yes I really did hear this one).

Every lane seemed to believe the world might possibly be ending soon....all but one lane.



## Coaches Corner Cont.

The two girls leading the lane were calm, collected, and suited with a sense of determination. Feeling their sense of calm, I found my place in the lane over from them and started the set. Within the first 2x100s the girl in front of me was already complaining about her shoulder, her tiredness and her general nerves for the weekend. I all of a sudden started feeling pain in my shoulder, my eyes got super heavy, along with my arms, legs, and all around attitude....oh wait....I'm a coach...I'm not swimming at the meet!!! (not to mention I took a short nap before I came....there's NO WAY).

I immediately moved lanes behind the two girls who were nailing the set...and what do you know - the water just seemed to be easier to move through.

One of the best things I learned when I was swimming at University of Maryland was that your attitude and energy is EVERYTHING. While competing at meets, we were told that if we had a bad swim to seclude ourselves from the team until we had our emotions under control. I took this to apply to practice as well. The second you start doubting yourself, the feelings spread like wildfire through everyone's brain thinking "Hmm....maybe I didn't train hard enough....or maybe I can't do this?"

The energy you put out transfers to all of those around you. When you aren't feeling great or are struggling it doesn't help you or those around you to share that sentiment.

Instead, try the "Fake it till you make it" approach--smile, encourage the person next to you--whatever it takes. You will be surprised how quickly you may just forget how cruddy you were feeling--and those around you will be energized as well.

Swim on Channel Cats!

## Junior Swimmer Spotlight

*Emma Hagner has some very mature and motivational words for such a young swimmer. Read and see for yourself!*

My name is Emma Hagner I'm 11 years old and I swim in Bronze for the Channel Cats at the Tri City Court Club. I don't really know why I swim; it's hard to remember a time when I wasn't swimming. It seems like the reason changes every day. Sometimes I feel like I swim just to swim and other times it feels like I swim because it challenges me. I like to say I swim because it's the hardest sport there is, but that's not the real reason. The truth is I swim because I love it. It's hard to explain.

Before I was a Channel Cat I was a Catfish at the Tri City Court Club. Even though I loved being a Catfish it just felt like it was too easy. The sets and times were just too easy to make. One of the reasons for me becoming a Channel Cat was because I wanted to be challenged. But the biggest reason was because my best friend Chloe was trying out. I tried out for the team a little later than most kids but I'm glad I did. I like to think that if I came on to the team early I wouldn't be as good as I am.

To me being a Channel Cat isn't just about the meets, or the times, or the places. It's about meeting new people and being competitive with your friends. It really bugs me but I have to admit if it weren't for Hilary constantly touching my toes in Freestyle sets I think I would be way slower.

## President's Pen

*When it comes to our practice facilities, gratitude comes first!*

Well...our short course season is winding down. There are some who will be going to Senior Sectionals, some to Age Group Regionals, and then there's the NASA Jr. National Cup, all in March. Those are some high quality meets, and I wish those attending the best. The rest of us are done until our own Tri City Open in Pasco at the end of May. That means the swimmers get a full-on break for 10 days, followed soon after by our move to the outdoor 50M pool in Pasco! It's always fun to get the whole team and all the coaches together over there. Practices will be after school until summer vacation, then we go to the dawn-busting practices at wee-early o'clock!

So, as we look ahead to being outdoors, let's be reminded of how fortunate we are to have a place to practice during the indoor season. I personally know of a club struggling to hang on to the one pool they have even though they have a relatively small team. The swim team is "in the way" and therefore the relationship is difficult. What if they lose that pool? The team probably dissolves, that's what.

We have a huge team and are fortunate that two health clubs in town are willing to share their space with us. At CBRC and TCCC we are not "in the way" at all. In fact, did you know that the bubble at CBRC was put in place because of the owner's dedication to Channel Cats swimming? He used to coach the team in the early days at TCCC. Later, as the owner of CBRC, seeing the Channel Cats numbers on the rise, he decided to put the bubble up to allow a second practice location. That bubble cost upwards of \$100,000 and is not a money maker for the health club at all.

Think about that for just a second. We simply could not support a team this size, not even close. We don't struggle to hang on to a single facility. Instead, we enjoy great relationships with two facilities. So if you're a swimmer and the health club asks you to shower before swimming, think about making that little sacrifice. If you're a parent, heartily thank the aquatics directors and the owners the next time you see them and remember their sacrifice that allows us some practice time, something that is very easy to take for granted.



## Jr. Champs Recap

*Coach Jen is always attentive to the performances of our Channel Cat swimmers. Here's her recap of the Jr. Champs meet in Ellensburg.*

The Tri City Channel Cats made big waves at the 14 & Under Championships in Ellensburg February 16, 2014. We had 38 swimmers attending and no team scores were given but Channel Cats were all over the finals and a couple swimmers brought home high point honors. Congratulations to Linnea Haan and Austin Beierle-Miller for their great swimming and high point victories!

Austin also broke a couple of meet records and was a part of two meet record setting relays: His individual meet records were in the 500yd freestyle and the 200yd IM. The 2 relays that broke meet records included the following swimmers: Kyle, Aidan, Austin and Ben nabbed the 200yd Medley relay record from 2013, and Kyle, Ethan F, Austin and Ben took the 200yd free relay record from 2013 as well. Way to go Cats...out there making names for yourselves!

23 new IES cuts were made, 32 swimmers made finals (or earned a top six award for those not swimming finals- 10 & Under ages) and Jessica Zuleta did a fantastic job singing the National Anthem on Sunday! Also, welcome first time competitor Nicole Porcaro. Nicole had a great first meet as a Channel Cat!

Thanks also to Nathanael Jo who stood out as a leader and cheer squad for our team. He had a great weekend of swimming and impressed the coaches with his leadership. Kyle, Ben, Taylor and Carrie followed suit showing off team pride and cheering on our teammates. Well done Channel Cats.

Finally, big time kudos to those kids who swam and competed while being less healthy than we'd like. Addison, Aidan, Hope, Kodi, Samantha and Taylor all proved their toughness sticking it out for both prelims AND finals while fighting off ear infections, exhaustion and illnesses. Quite the leaders through their actions...no excuses from these folks. They just went out and got the job done! Wowza kids, that's awesome!

The coaches were exhausted from all the excitement. We had wonderful swimming all the way around. Channel Cats ruled the pool! Then it was on to IES Short Course Champs!! Wait till you see what happened there!! Read on...



## Short Course Champs Recap

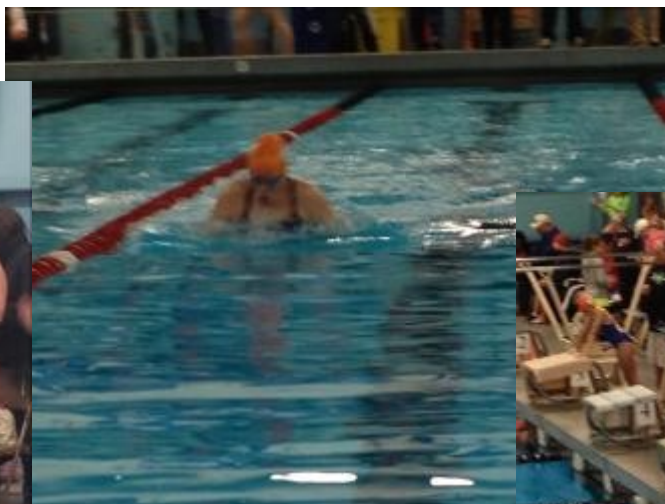
*From Jr. Champs to the main Champs meet, Coach Jen doesn't miss a detail.*

Well the Channel Cats are victorious once again! Our team had a VERY close match up against Velocity (Wenatchee) at the 2014 IES Short Course Championships in Moscow, Idaho. Coach Todd was confident that if we held a strong lead going into Sunday we would be ok, but illness took a few of our swimmers out of the mix and the final scores were closer than we'd like. We finished less than 100 points in the lead over Velocity with third place going to the Waves (Spokane) not all that far behind us either (178 points).

Paying tribute to our graduating seniors Sunday night showed us we have work to do if we hope to be in the running next year. There's your challenge Channel Cats!! We have a very talented senior squad leaving us, (sadly but proudly). Are all you remaining Cats willing to step up your game?

Congrats to our MANY finalists including some from a successful 14 & under Jr. Champs meet. Special thanks go to our high school boys who made finals and swam well after pushing through a tough week after an emotional and successful State meet. If you thought they were tired, you have no idea. These boys stepped up and what leadership they displayed!

A few swims worth mentioning were Nathanael J's 50 second time drop in his 500 free. He had 6 out of 7 best times as well! Luc J had a 30 second time drop as well as a 28 and 16 second drop as he fired up the water. Nice job boys! Chloe S had a phenomenal meet with almost all best times as well. 10 out of 12. Woo hoo girl! You rock! Kjerstyn and Ryan M hung in there while recovering from and having the flu. Ryan stayed to swim the relay so the boys could compete. What a trooper, and what determination on both their parts. Not always will we have ideal conditions to race, but these two hung in there, swam just fine, and learned something about themselves!! Kudos!



## Short Course Champs Recap cont.

Parker had a tremendous meet nabbing almost all best times and learning he really can do what he puts his mind to. People, if you think you CANNOT, you never will...if you think you CAN you might, or you might come close. But the result will always be better if you believe! DO not give up before the race even starts. Congrats to Parker for going for it and coming out on the successful side!

Special recognition goes to our milestone achievers: breaking 30 in the 50yd race was Austin B, Ben D, Chloe S and Marcia K. Breaking 2:00 in a 200yd race was Claire S and Ryan S, and breaking 1:00 in a 100yd race were Maddie and Conor. Congrats to you all. And wow, we have one more swimmer to recognize who really rocked the pool...Skyler.

Skyler, also mending from sickness recently that compromised his training, had a tremendous meet breaking 4 meet records and 2 team records (50 fly and 100 fly). One from 1995 and one from 1996!

The coaches were very pleased at how well our kids stepped up and RACED! We look forward to the end of the short course season. Finish strong Cats!

## Treasurer's Tidbits #2

*Bob has some quick tips on paying down your Dues Offset.*

I have received some questions on Fundraising. Fundraising is not mandatory; it is just a way for the team to keep its dues low. All families' fundraising proceeds credit their Dues Offset which is billed in June. Currently our team has some great fundraising possibilities and is looking to offer more. About once a month you receive an e-mail from our co-treasurer, Russ Chrisman, regarding our scrip program. For the families that participate in that it does add up over the year.

Our Spring Plant sale is in full bloom until April 4th. You may find more information regarding that on our team web site under the "Spring Plant Sale!" button. We have received many compliments on the quality of these plants in the past.

Any questions please contact me at [tricitychannelcats@gmail.com](mailto:tricitychannelcats@gmail.com), regular mail- TCCC PO Box 1668



## Activities

*Melissa knows how to put together a good time. Her enthusiasm is spreading. Pass it on!*

Happy spring, Channel Cats! I am so looking forward to the warm weather and being able to have some activities in the great outdoors! Before I share the events in our future, I wanted to introduce myself. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Melissa Moore, and my daughter has been on the team a year and a half. I am the Channel Cats activities lead, which means I set up activities for the Channel Cats to get together outside of practice and meets. I have loved getting to know some of you through the events that we have already done together and look forward to meeting more of you.

In February, for our team event we went to a Tri-City Americans hockey game. This was a two-for activity, as it also served as a fundraiser for our team sweat jackets. Be on the lookout for more activities/fundraisers. This was such a fun event even though the Americans lost in a shoot-out.

Our March activity will be roller-skating at the Rollerena in Richland: March 22 from 12-2pm. Admission is \$6 (In-Line & Speed Skates additional \$2). You may also bring your own skates. In April, weather permitting, I would like to do a team bike ride. Stay tuned for further details.

May brings us our Team Banquet! It will be at Columbia Community Church on May 16 from 6-8pm. It's sure to be a great evening of celebrating our AWESOME SWIMMERS!!

## Note from the Editor

For those who are new, my name is Cheyenne Griffith and I have been the Chatty Cat Newsletter editor for the past three years. This is my senior year in high school. With the changing of the board in the fall, our president Chance Younkin has requested me to change up the newsletter to have a more business format. You are still more than welcome to send photos. Unfortunately I didn't receive any in the last few months so that's why this issue is not as photo intensive as you all would like to see. I encourage you to e-mail me at [chatty.cats@charter.net](mailto:chatty.cats@charter.net) if you have any photos, article topics, letters to the editor, that you would like to see, or any other questions, concerns or comments about this publication.

Thank you, Cheyenne Griffith



## Senior Swimmer Spotlight

*Ashton Pollick shares the value of being a Channel Cat. We can all learn from him and be better people! We'll miss you and all you senior swimmers.*

I have been swimming with the Channel Cats for roughly ten years now. It has been a very important part of my life and has helped shape who I have become as a person. When I was younger, I played many different sports such as baseball and basketball, but none of them interested me like swimming did. Swimming also has given me many great friendships and has taught me many things.

I first started swimming when I was 8 years old. At that time, there were about 70 swimmers on the team and I started in what was known as the Orange group (the beginning level). My parents thought I was going to drown because I was so bad. After a while, though, I got better and started improving my technique and times. At about age 12 or 13, I got moved up to Bronze and my mind towards swimming switched and I became more focused and dedicated. I remember going to one Short Course Champs meet and I got an Age Group Sectional cut in every one of my swims. My next goal was to get a Zone time (my dad told me he'd buy me my first tech suit when I got one). I started dropping time in everything. In the 100 Back, I went from a 1:01 to 56 seconds in the course of one season. Now, after years of hard work and lots of dedication, I get the privilege to swim at national meets like NCSA & NASA Junior Nationals in Florida.

One thing that hasn't been easy to deal with while being a swimmer is bullying. I experienced it in middle school and my freshman year of high school. I hated it. Kids made fun of me for wearing speedos and shaving my legs. Being made fun of was not fun and it really hurt. Swimming was the only way that I could let out the pain I was feeling. When I had been hurt by being bullied, I swam my heart out at practice and worked as hard as I could. Letting it out at practice made me feel so much better and it showed that I could work through it and that it wouldn't stop me from doing something I was passionate about. Swimming also helps me relieve any stress I have in life whether it's at school or at home. Swimming helps me get my stress out and feel much, much better.

Now, the next step in my future is going off to college. I will attend Eastern Illinois University to major in physical therapy and will be swimming on their Men's Swim Team. I remember when I was ten years old, former Channel Cat swimmer Carl Jones got a scholarship to swim in college and I told my mom that when I got older I wanted to get one too. My dream is now coming true. I've received an academic scholarship AND a swimming scholarship! I'm sure college will be very different but I am very excited for this next step.

It has been a real honor to swim with such a great team. This team has been like a family to me over the past 10 years and it's going to be hard not seeing my coach and teammates every day when I am off at college. Swimming with the Channel Cats has been an amazing experience and I don't know where I would be without it.