



# January 2026 Newsletter

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Hello from the Coaches  
Volunteer Info  
Swimmer of the Month  
January Birthday's

**Thank you to our official team sponsor  
Arena**

Shop online at **SwimOutlet** to support the team! Select "David Douglas Aquatics Club" as your team and every purchase gives back to DDAC with a 10% kickback! <https://www.swimoutlet.com/collections/ddac>

## RESOURCES:

[Volunteer Hours](#) / [Event Sign Up](#) / [OSI Time Standards](#) / [USA Swimming](#) / [DDAC Facebook](#)

**Translated versions:** [RUSSIAN](#) [SPANISH](#) [VIETNAMESE](#)

## SAVE THE DATE

**January 12th** - New Parent Orientation @ 6:35 pm (all new families encouraged to attend)  
**January 16** - Washington SR Open  
**January 17-19** - THSC Winter Showcase  
**January 23** - DD Block Party  
**February 7-8** - LA February Qualifier  
**February 15** - LA Last Chance  
**February 21-22** - 10U State Championships  
**February 28** - LA 11 Over Last Chance  
**March 5-8** - 11-14 State Championships  
**May 8th** - Swim-A-Thon  
**May 16th and 17th** - Sextathlon Swim Meet @ DD  
**June 12th to 15th** - Ted Walker Swim Meet @ The Dalles and Annual Swim Family Camp Out @ The Deschutes River State Recreation Area

# FROM THE COACHES

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## COACH JIM

### Racing to Improve Not Just to Qualify

After attending many high school meets and a few age group meets this last month I wanted to find information about the mindset that allows for continuous growth for the long haul and not just getting qualifying times, best times and winning the race. I came across a blog post from Julio Zarate that I thought summed up my thoughts on how we approach swim meet performance.



Qualifying for bigger, faster meets is a reality of our sport. Swimmers must learn to deal with the stress of trying to “qualify” for the next level. However, making qualifying times, winning the event or even getting best times should not be the sole focus of attending meets. In fact making those factors a priority creates a lot of pressure on the swimmer. It also only gives the athlete one avenue for success at the meet. If you don’t qualify, win or go to a best time that equals failure.

The article encourages us to look at swimming at swim meets with a process oriented mind set, instead of result driven mind set. Instead of looking at meets as a pass/fail check point look at meets with these priorities in mind.

1. A chance to swim your best at this point in the season
2. An opportunity to execute the skills practiced in training.
3. A way to measure progress, not just results

Success does not live solely in whether you qualify, win or go swim a faster time. Success can be defined in:

- Honest effort (Did you try to win your heat, use proper race strategy, and/or execute skills worked on all week?)
- Skill execution under pressure (Did you do your flip turns?)
- Being present and connected at that moment (Were you focused on racing?)
- Learning how to manage nerves, expectations, and energy. (Did you handle the pressure of the swim meet?)

These traits will build great swimmers over time.

Have a great end of the season and realize success is built over time.

## COACH BOBBY

### Stronger Together: The Power of Teammates in Swimming

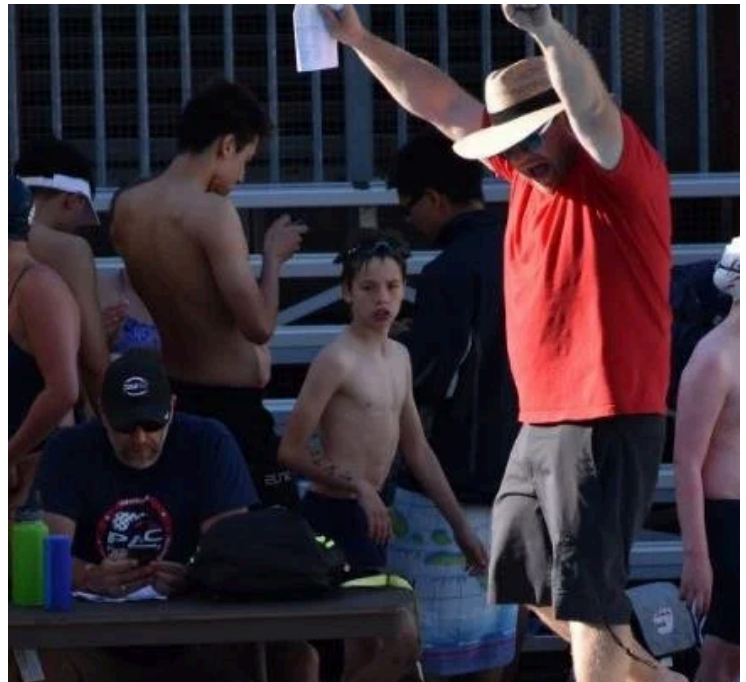
Swimming may look like an individual sport, but anyone on a swim team knows the truth—it's a team effort. Behind every best time, tough practice, and breakthrough race is a group of teammates pushing, encouraging, and inspiring one another.

Encouragement from teammates can make the hardest sets feel manageable. A quick “you’ve got this,” a high-five at the wall, or cheering from the deck can be the difference between giving up and digging deeper. When swimmers know their teammates believe in them, confidence grows—and so does performance.

Teammates also inspire by example. Showing up on time, working hard through challenging sets, and maintaining a positive attitude sets a standard for everyone. Younger or newer swimmers often look to their teammates for cues on how to train, race, and handle adversity. Leadership isn't about being the fastest swimmer; it's about modeling effort, respect, and perseverance.

Just as important is celebrating each other's successes. Personal bests, improved technique, or simply finishing a tough practice deserve recognition. When teammates lift each other up, the entire team culture becomes stronger, more supportive, and more fun.

At its best, a swim team feels like a family—one that trains together, struggles together, and succeeds together. By encouraging and inspiring one another every day, swimmers don't just become better athletes; they become better teammates. And that's what truly makes a team fast.





## COACH BRAYDEN

Happy New Year DDAC Athletes and Families,

I hope everyone had a great break and is feeling refreshed coming into the new year. As we kick off January, I want to take a moment to reset our mindset and establish a clear focus moving forward.

This month, there are **two key things** I would like all swimmers to adapt into their training.

### 1. Everyone Is a Competitor

Everyone who walks onto the pool deck is a competitor. Practice should be treated like a competition every single day.

That does not mean tearing each other down—it means challenging each other, pushing limits, and being the kind of teammate who brings others with them. Whether you are training within your squad or in a combined practice with teams like Oregon City or Blue Crush, the mindset stays the same: **we compete.**

Ask yourself during sets:

- Who am I racing?
- If we are doing 10×100s, am I competing with someone?
- Did they beat me 6–4? How many am I planning on winning next time?
- Is this someone I've been racing for a while and are they making me better because of it?

These small competitive moments add up. When you support a teammate by saying, “Nice job, I was racing you on that set,” it raises awareness for both of you. Suddenly, that teammate shows up more locked in next practice, ready to race you back.

Practice is where you get **multiple chances** to recreate meet-like intensity. You get to prove over and over that you can push past your limits, race your friends, and still have fun doing it.

Competition does not always mean going all-out. Sometimes it means:

- Being the example for a drill done correctly
- Holding small details under fatigue
- Showing precision during a difficult set

How you choose to express your competitive nature is up to you—but when done right, it will only make you faster.

## 2. Set (and Hold) Your Standards

Over winter break, I came up with a quote I want everyone to think about:

**“You don’t rise to the occasion you fall to the standards you set at practice every day.”**

Look at how badly you want to get better. That should define your standard.

When you are tired, your standard becomes your bare minimum. Many of us talk about having high standards but how high do you truly want to strive in the competitive world?

Your standard might be:

- Holding your breath for 3 strokes before *and* after every turn
- Exploding off the wall every single time
- Maintaining precise stroke counts, even when fatigued

Set your goals clearly, then build in reflection time:

- How well did I hold my standards today?
- Where did I slip?
- Where did I improve?

Consistency matters—not just physically, but mentally as well. A positive and intentional mindset is just as important as the physical work you put in the pool.

January sets the tone for the rest of the season. Compete daily. Hold your standards. Trust the process.

Let’s go DDAC.

– **Coach Brayden**

# VOLUNTEER INFO

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As we welcome a brand new year, I wanted to extend my felt appreciation for your continued support. Our club continues to grow and thrives because of the time and energy you donate.

As we head into the last half of the short course season I want to remind families of their service hour commitment.

- The volunteer requirement is 10 hours per swimmer, per season and is capped at 15 hours per family per season.
- Members who do not meet their volunteer commitment by the end of the season will be assessed a \$15 per hour not completed.
  - Any unfulfilled hours will be billed to your account on March 1st.
- Hours can be completed by the athlete(s), family, or friends.

Volunteer hours do not get credited to your account unless you enter them. Please enter all completed hours by completing [this form](#).

To sign up to volunteer at the front desk in January, February or March, you can sign up [here](#).

If you still need volunteer hours for this season, I could use help with:

- **Stroke and Turn Officials** – We are in critical need of more swim officials to ensure our meets run smoothly and that we are able to attend away meets. Your participation is vital. Becoming an official is not only a key way to support our swimmers, but it also provides an excellent opportunity to earn volunteer hours on an ongoing basis and enjoy some great benefits. Read more [here](#).
- **Front Desk Volunteer Coordinator** – I need someone who is knowledgeable about the front desk who is willing to be the point person for managing sign ups, sending out monthly updates and providing training once a month to new volunteers.
- **Outreach for Donations** – Soliciting prize donations for Swim-A-Thon and food donations for Sextathlon.

Please email [andrea.guillet@ddacswim.org](mailto:andrea.guillet@ddacswim.org) with any questions. Thank you for being the heart of our community! Wishing you a happy, healthy, fun filled New Year!



# SWIMMER'S OF THE MONTH

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Senior – **Nathan Nguyen**

Gold – **Andrew Nguyen**

Silver 2 – **Emeline Bowe**

Silver 1 – **Zander Haney**

Bronze 2 – **Hanna Starr**

Bronze 1 – **Michelle Dinh**

## JANUARY BIRTHDAY'S

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01/01/2015 Charlie Spector-McGeachin  
Bronze

01/08/2015 Julian Arancibia-Simeonov  
Bronze

01/09/2013 Andrew Nguyen Gold

01/10/2018 Henson Price Pre-Comp

01/10/2017 Michelle Dinh Bronze

01/14/2015 Isabella Zhao Bronze II

01/20/2013 Ryelle Wilson Gold

01/20/2014 Aaron Stokamer Bronze II

01/21/2011 Emily Tippery Senior

01/26/2018 Ethan Nguyen Bronze

01/27/2012 Nathan Lindberg Gold

01/27/2018 Willa Lohrmann-Riggs Bronze

01/30/2014 Franklin Raskauskas Silver II

01/18/2014 Amy Hoang Silver II

01/20/2016 Eliana Robel Bronze

## BOARD MEMBERS

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