



APRIL-JUNE, 2024

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2

# SWIMMING RADIO

## GRAND RAPIDS AQUATICS

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### DATES TO REMEMBER

- **Jul. 19-21:** MAGS Long Course State Championships (*Ypsilanti*)
- **Jul. 24-25:** JAWS State Games (*Jenison*)
- **Jul. 26-28:** ULTRA Long Course State Championships (*Holland*)
- **Jul. 29-Aug. 17:** Fall Hiatus
- **Aug. 17:** Long Course Season-Team Banquet (*Garfield Park*)
- **Aug. 19:** 1st Day of Season I (*Don't forget to Register*)
- **Aug. 24:** Freestyle Stroke Clinic (*Ottawa Hills*)
- **Sept. 14:** Breaststroke Clinic (*Ottawa Hills*)
- **Sept. 21:** Backstroke Starts Clinic (*Ottawa Hills*)

## CHAMPIONSHIP & "SEASON ENDING" MEETS



*Cormac Jacques, Jackson Roman, Caileb Austin, Matias Rizkalla, Gabriel Van, Ewan Jacques, & Wyatt Jacques at the 2024 West Michigan Classic.*

As we emerge from the very quick summer long course season, it is important to reflect on the various championship meets we compete as a team and to look ahead to future seasons:

### WMSSL "A" & "B" MEETS

In addition to being a member team of USA Swimming, we are also members of the local league (Ottawa, Kent, & Muskegon Counties) known as "WMSSL" or the "*West Michigan Swim League*." These meets are free and are our club conference level meet for all athletes. There are typically two "A" Meet sites & one for the "B" Meet. We encourage 100% team participation, as these are one of our best chances to get as many athletes into relays as. They occur in mid February and mid July.

### STATE MEETS

These are the "LSC" or "*Local Swim Committee*" Championship Meets, which in Michigan, are divided into what has become known as "MAGS" or "*Michigan Age Group State*" Championships and "ULTRAS" or the "*Senior State*" Championships. These meets happen at the end of both the Long Course Season (April-August) and the Short Course Season (September-March). **Michigan Swimming** (our LSC) sets these qualifying times based on the overall strength of our LSC. These meets take place in mid March and late July.

### SECTIONAL LEVEL MEETS

Above the LSC level, USA Swimming divides the country into four Zones (Eastern, Central, Southern, & Western). Each Zone organizes the 60 LSCs nationwide several three "Sections" composed of between four and six LSCs - Michigan has typically been in "Section 3" with several of our surrounding states. This is a very high level meet that bridges the gap between LSCs and the national level meets (Junior Nationals, USA Open, Olympic Trials, etc...). These meets occur in late March and mid July.

In addition, there are a few meets that we only race in once per year:

### REGIONALS

This level of meet only takes place in early March at the end of the Short Course (SCY) Season. To race in an event in this meet requires that an athlete be faster than the National Age Group Motivational "B" times, but slower than the MAGS or ULTRAS time for their age group. State qualified athletes should still attend to swim any races that they do not have a state cut in.

### JAWS STATE GAMES

One of our neighboring teams took it upon itself to run a "Regional" level meet at Jenison each summer. This meet, which takes place in late July, has been a great addition to our calendar for our athletes to finish out the Long Course (LCM) Season with one more opportunity to race main events at the end of the year that they do not yet have state cuts in.

### THE ZONE MEET

One additional "*Icing on the Cake*" meet is the Central States Zone Championships, which always takes place on the last weekend of July. This is an "All-Star" meet, where athletes compete as a "Team Michigan" and represent our LSC. They are required to achieve National Age Group Motivational "AAA" times in order to qualify.

## IMX CHALLENGE SUPERSTARS

This season, our team created the "Pink Cap Challenge" as a means to encourage athletes to pursue racing all of the events on the IMX Lineup. So far, the following athletes have completed all the events and earned their Pink Cap:

### 10 & UNDER

*Elliott Austin  
August Le*

### 11-12

*Cormac Jacques  
Stefanie Merida Robles  
Isaiah Moss  
Suriaya Moss  
Ana Smith  
Braeden Truax  
Charlie Woodin*

### 13 & OVER

*Caileb Austin  
Lilianna Austin  
Ruby DeBlaay  
Shane Fandrich  
Eleanor Gloege  
Lily Klein  
Anne Le  
Amelia McCann  
Adwika Nadgauda  
Rutaja Nadgauda  
Jackson Roman  
Danica Sadowski  
Cora Sawyer  
Gabriel Van  
Ava Vohs  
Teague Westra*

There is still time for swimmers to finish any final events on the IMX Event list at the upcoming **JAWS State Games Meet** on *Jul. 24th-25th*. Keep learning to do the hard thing, GR!

**SWIMMING...IT'S THE JOURNEY...NOT THE DESTINATION.**

## TEAM EVENTS

This past spring, we held our first "Flick-N-Float" in the past couple years - a tradition that we will be continuing this fall, including a Halloween-themed movie night at the East Kent-



**GR Aquatics athletes enjoying a well-earned movie night.**

wood pool. This was an opportunity for our athletes to take the night off from the usual workout and do some team bonding across the different

training groups. The night included Disney's Atlantis on the big screen, as well as pizza, snacks, and a lot of inflatable collisions.

We cannot thank all of the parents enough who helped make the event a success. A strong parent base is the key to success at every level of club swimming. When it comes to hosting meets, coordinating events, and making the team into a true community outside the gutter's edge, it truly does take a village in our sport.

## TEAM BANQUET

Mark your calendars. We will be holding an awards ceremony on August 17th at Garfield



**Gabriel Van about to give up on bailing out the water.**

Park from 1:00-4:00 p.m. We will be recognizing the accomplishments of all of our hard working athletes over the course of this past long course season. In addition to championship meet awards, IMX Certificates will be handed out to all swimmers who participated in the "Pink Cap Challenge" this summer. We hope to see you all there!

## GR AQUATICS AT THE U.S. PARALYMPIC TRIALS

From Jun. 27th to June 29th, the national spotlight shifted from the U.S. Olympic Team Trials in Indianapolis to the U.S. Paralympic Team Trials in Minneapolis. Among the competitors from around the country was Grand Rapids Aquatics' very own Piper Sadowski, who competed in the S14 category.

Piper raced in the 100 Back, 200 Free, 100 Fly, & 200 I.M. at the meet. She represented Grand Rapids Aquatics in style, winning all four races among S14 Women. With a hard cap of only 12 Men and 21 Women being eligible to qualify to represent Team USA in Paris this summer, athletes not only had to finish high up in their respective events, their times had to rank high internationally. In her very first appearance at the most competitive international team trials for Para Athletes, Piper was able to finish near the middle of the pack across all the para categories!

Piper first got involved in Para Swimming in 2023. In addition to various mid season para meets, she has raced in two U.S. Para Nationals Meets (Charlotte & Orlando), two Citi Para World Series Meets (Minneapolis & Indianapolis), a Parapan

Championships (Chile), and now at the U.S. Paralympic Trials. Balancing training with racing at both regular USA Swimming competitions and



**Piper Sadowski dives in for the 200 Free Finals on Night 2 of the U.S. Paralympic Team Trials.**

para meets, Piper has had a packed swimming schedule. But through it all, she has made some great friends in the para community and has gotten to know the world of U.S. Para Swimming quite well in a very short amount of time.

Grand Rapids Aquatics is incredibly proud of all of Piper's accomplishments in and out of the pool, and we are excited to see where her swimming takes her from here!



## COACH'S THOUGHT

*"And the swim only hurt once—from the beginning to the end."*

—Doc Counsilman

## SUMMER READING LIST

**"Chasing Water: Elegy of an Olympian"**

(Anthony Ervin, Constantine Markides)

**"The Anxious Generation"**

(Jonathan Haidt)

**"The Talent Code: Greatness isn't born. It's grown. Here's How."**

(Daniel Coyle)

## STATE QUALIFIERS

Caileb Austin (17)  
 Elliott Austin (9)  
 Lilianna Austin (14)  
 Mitch Dickey (22)  
 Alivia Ellis (11)  
 Aliyah Garcia (16)  
 Cormac Jacques (11)  
 Ewan Jacques (13)  
 August Le (10)  
 Amelia McCann (14)  
 Stefanie Merida Robles (12)  
 Judah Moss (8)  
 Suriaya Moss (12)  
 Adwika Nadgauda (14)  
 Rutaja Nadgauda (17)  
 Eric Perczak (20)  
 Jackson Roman (14)  
 Hadleigh Robyns (17)  
 Danica Sadowski (17)  
 Piper Sadowski (18)  
 Grant Sandstedt (20)  
 Cora Sawyer (13)  
 Ana Smith (11)  
 Gabriel Van (14)  
 Theodore Werner (10)  
 Teague Westra (17)  
 Kalin Wiltrout (19)

## WHITE NOISE

Welcome back to the age group development channel of Swimming Radio. Coach Alex on the air here to remind everyone to nerd out over swimming a little extra this August!

We just watched athletes compete at the U.S. Team Trials in front of the largest live audience of any swim meet ever in history, and it has not only led to a strong U.S. Team, it has set us up to see one of the most exciting Olympic Swimming competitions ever! Be sure to

tune in, not only to the NBC coverage of the games themselves, but also to some of the



**Alivia Ellis, Ana Smith, Suriaya Moss, & Stefanie Merida Robles at the 2024 MAGS Championships.**

great coverage in the lead up. There are many great podcasts, YouTube channels, and sources of swim news out there. Many

of these cover a wide mix of swimming history, technique discussions, and athlete bios and backstories. Some of my favorite are:

### Channels

[The SwimSwam Podcast](#)

[Inside with Brett Hawk](#)

[The Swimsuit Guy](#)

### News Sites

[SwimSwam](#)

[Swimming World](#)

Happy swim news browsing!

- Coach Alex

## GR ATHLETES SWIM IN COLLEGE

Among the highest and most prestigious titles a swimmer can hold is that of "collegiate student-athlete." It is a label that many "swimmers" who have competed at this level proudly identify themselves with for the rest of their lives.

Every March, age group, club, and high school level athletes tune in to watch the fastest



**Caileb Austin commits to swim for Aquinas College.**

short course swimming in the world happen at the D1 NCAA Championships - a meet often held to be among the most ex-

citing "team events" in the sport. But this meet rests just on top of the excitement that takes place in February at the dozens of college conference meets all over the country. One thing that athletes racing for NCAA, NAIA, & NJCAA member schools all share in common is the rigorous life of a student-athlete.

Competing as a college athlete in any sport is not for the faint of heart, but for swimmers, in particular, it takes a great deal of commitment, time management, and personal sacrifice. Athletes swimming for colleges at all levels can relate to early morning alarm clocks, long hours at the pool, study tables, and return bus rides after away meets that extend late into the night. It is important to do your homework and know what journey you are about to embark on. But once the search is over and the recruitment visits have been made, few things are as exciting as signing that



**Lucia Jacques shows off her Letter of Intent to compete for Mount Holyoke College.**

letter in front of your friends and family, knowing your teammates and school await you.

In addition to several athletes who will be swimming for various USA Swimming & college club teams around the country, we have four graduating seniors who have signed letters of intent to continue their swimming careers on the following college team rosters:

**Caileb Austin (Aquinas college)**

**Lucia Jacques (Mount Holyoke)**

**Claire Kuiper (George Fox University)**

**Piper Sadowski (Calvin College)**

Good luck next year!

