

## A Play-By-Play of the Illinois Age Group Championships

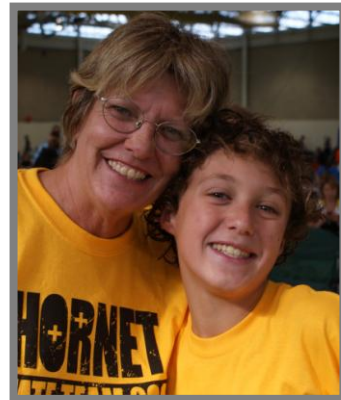
The 2009 Summer ISI Age Group State Championships are now history, but not before the Hornet Swim Club gave notice that we are a team to be dealt with. Our club showed strength in all age groups, qualifying 22 swimmers in 95 individual races and eleven relays. Numbers like these are usually only posted by much larger teams of 200 swimmers or more – an indication of the high motivation, hard work, and devotion that our swimmers continue to show year after year.

Going into the meet the coaches felt we were ready to swim some good times. Three weeks of training in the Hinsdale 50 meter outdoor pool, several workouts at the Hillside 50 meter pool, and our regular training at the Darien Swim and Racquet Club and Hinsdale South High School, served to prepare us for the difficult long course events ahead. Over the three days of competition our swimmers showed they were mentally ready, well rested, and in great shape, performing “at the top of their game” for the entire three days, and turning in personal best times in just about every race.



### DAY ONE

The first day of competition included all three age groups, and began with the morning session of the 11-12 and 13-14 groups. Qualifying for the finals in this session were Brooke Leader in the 100 breaststroke (1:27.67), and both Ryan Clancy (1:21.59) and Brian Portland (1:24.79) in the 100 breaststroke for men. Brooke snuck into the 16<sup>th</sup> spot, while Ryan and Brian both made “the podium” heat (top 8). Kedrick Shin qualified in the 200 free (2:26.20) and Brian Portland the 100 fly in 1:13.57. Also swimming the first session were Dan Ciciora (1:18.54 100 breaststroke, 22<sup>nd</sup> place, and 5:27.02 400 IM, 22<sup>nd</sup> place), Bryan Bu (1:20.66 100 breaststroke 32<sup>nd</sup> place), Rachel Hawken (2:29.52 200 freestyle, 47<sup>th</sup> place), and Camila Horowicz (2:30.45 200 free, 50<sup>th</sup> place). In the men’s 11-12 200 free Ryan Clancy was 26<sup>th</sup> (2:29.37). In the 13-14 100 fly, Bryan Bu finished 27<sup>th</sup> with a nice 1:07.88 and Ciciora was 41<sup>st</sup> with a 1:09.83. The men’s 13-14 800 free relay (Dan Ciciora, Steve Dietrich, Banistre Lienhart, and Bryan Bu) placed 26<sup>th</sup> with a time of 9:27.63.





Next up on Friday, for session two, was the 10 and under group. This session is all timed finals, so points were now scored, and our nine swimmers came to the Stevenson High School pool ready to score big. The first Hornet points of the meet were scored by the girls 200 medley relay of Jen Ayers, Peyton Lienhart, Ava Stukas, and Emma Balinski, who finished



14<sup>th</sup> place with a time of 2:42.40. Shortly after this the boys relay of Michael Su, Billy Leader, Cooper Lienhart, and William Bowater brought the crowd to their feet with a stunning come-from-behind effort by Bowater to finish in second place with a time of 2:32.52, missing first by only .86 seconds.

The individual events were no less impressive, with William Bowater starting it off with a third place finish in the 100 free (1:09.79), followed shortly after with an impressive fifth place finish by Billy Leader in the 50 breaststroke (43.61) – not bad for a nine-year-old! Also scoring in the 50 breast was Cooper Lienhart, who took 15<sup>th</sup> with a time of 46.11. The Hornets again scored a double, this time in the 200 IM, with Cooper taking 12<sup>th</sup> (3:08.28) and Leader coming in 15<sup>th</sup> (3:08.94). In the next event, the 50 fly, no less than THREE Hornets scored! Our point-getters in this event were Cooper (10<sup>th</sup> with a 36.46), William (15<sup>th</sup> with a 37.76), and Billy (16<sup>th</sup> with a 38.23). Also performing very well in this session for the Hornets were Jen Ayers (36<sup>th</sup> in the 100 free, 1:18.01, 27<sup>th</sup> in the 200 IM, 3:14.50, and 33<sup>rd</sup> in the 100 back, 1:31.75), Peyton Lienhart (17<sup>th</sup> in the 50 breaststroke (just barely missed scoring!) in 44.62), Jay Drassler (30<sup>th</sup> in the 100 free, 1:18.16), Ava Stukas (31<sup>st</sup> 200 IM, 3:15.79, 42<sup>nd</sup> 50 fly, 41.78, and 37<sup>th</sup> 100 back, 1:33.53), Bowater (20<sup>th</sup> 200 IM, 3:09.78), and Michael Su (25<sup>th</sup> 50 fly, 40.05, and 19<sup>th</sup> 100 back, 1:28.27).

In the Friday finals, the Hornets concluded a great day when Brooke took 16<sup>th</sup> in the 100 breast with a 1:28.38, and Ryan Clancy and Brian Portland added big points with their 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> place finishes (1:22.38 and 1:25.95 respectively) in the 100 breast for men. Kedrick Shin added valuable points with a 16<sup>th</sup> place finish in the 200 free (2:26.20), and Brian Portland finished off the Friday night scoring with a 13<sup>th</sup> place finish in the 100 fly (1:13.63) We were happy with the performances on day one, but were even happier when we checked the team scores and saw that we were in 12<sup>th</sup> place overall! The big question: can we hold on to it??



## DAY TWO

Saturday morning started off with another round of relays for the older age-groups. The Lady Hornets' 11-12 400 Medley of Rachel Hawken (1:17.1), Brooke Leader (1:27.5), Andrea Gurke (1:17.5), and Camila Horowicz (1:07.9) swam a time that was fast enough to hold up later for a very respectable 9<sup>th</sup> place finish, narrowly missing the top 8 medal round. Inspired by this performance, the 13-14 men's 400 medley relay of Ryan O'Toole (1:15.3), Danny Ciciora (1:17.4), Bryan Bu (1:08.7), and Steve Dietrich (1:02.1) finished in 17<sup>th</sup> place, short of scoring by a mere .02 seconds.

In the individual events, the qualifiers for evening finals were Kedrick Shin in the 200 IM (2:41.43) and the 100 back (1:15.12), Brian Portland in the 200 IM (2:44.24) and the 50 breast (38.23), Brooke Leader in the 50 breast (40.07), Ryan Clancy in the 50 breast (37.61), and Danny Ciciora in the 200 breast (2:50.46). Other finishers in the morning session were: 11-12 200 IM: Rachel Hawken ( 2:49.00; 31<sup>st</sup> place), Andrea Gurke (2:49.79; 35<sup>th</sup> place), and Brooke Leader (2:52.78; 41<sup>st</sup> place) for the women, and Ryan Clancy (2:52.59; 29<sup>th</sup> place) in the men's 200 IM. Bryan Bu finished 36<sup>th</sup> in the 13-14 200 IM with a time of 2:33.64. In the women's 11-12 50 free Andrea finished 54<sup>th</sup> with a time of 31.80 while Danny Ciciora took 48<sup>th</sup> place in the 13-14 50 free with his 28.45 swim. In the 100 back Rachel Hawken took 39<sup>th</sup> with a 1:18.65 and Gurke was 51<sup>st</sup> with a 1:19.86. Ciciora finished the 400 free in 4:49.61 for a 44<sup>th</sup> place finish.



The afternoon session once again featured our 10-and-unders, who returned from a great Friday performance with a vengeance, and once again the scoring began with our girls relay of Jen Ayers, Emma Balinski, Ava Stukas, and Peyton Lienhart, who finished 16<sup>th</sup> with a time of 2:24.83. The boys relay put on another show as Cooper, Billy, Jay, and William sped through for a second place with a time of 2:14.38, with William once again swimming a dazzling come-from-behind anchor, splitting a 30.5.

In the 50 free William made a National Reportable Time of 31.12 (which means his time is likely in the top 25 in the nation this year), taking third place. Our fliers came thru also, as Billy Leader scored 8<sup>th</sup> with his 1:26.47 100 fly, and Jay Drassler took 15<sup>th</sup> with a great swim of 1:31.75. We had a little scare as one of the refs tried to DQ Jay for an uneven kick. Fortunately, the call was overruled by the head referee, as this is a very difficult call to make. Coach Bay will be working on Jay's kick though just in case! In the 50 back, the Hornets got another score when Cooper took 13<sup>th</sup> with a 39.46. In the 200 free, Bowater came back with another fine swim as he took second place with a 2:35.04. In the last event of the session, the 100 breaststroke, we had three top-16 performances. The top Hornet finisher in this event was Billy Leader, with a 6<sup>th</sup> place finish (1:36.95), followed by Bowater in 11<sup>th</sup> (1:41.38) and Michael Su in 14<sup>th</sup> (1:43.68). In all, the 10-and-unders scored 108 points in this session – more points than most teams scored in the entire meet, and enough to move us up to 10<sup>th</sup> place over-all.

Not every swim will score points, and the Hornets had plenty of great performances that were just short of scoring. When you have the best of the best in the State of Illinois all competing together, it is important to realize that just being here places you at the very top of the thousands of

swimmers who didn't even qualify to swim in this meet. The coaches are proud of each and every swimmer who earned the right to be here. The other great swims in this session were Cooper's 24<sup>th</sup> place finish in the 50 free (34.11) and his 17<sup>th</sup> place finish in the 100 breast (1:44.16), just narrowly missing the score in that one. Also in the 50 free were Michael Su in 35<sup>th</sup> place (34.80), Jay in 40<sup>th</sup> (35.21), and Leader in 46<sup>th</sup> (36.00). In the 100 fly, Ava finished 31<sup>st</sup> (1:39.83), and in the 50 back she took 41<sup>st</sup> (42.44). Also swimming the 50 back were Jen Ayers (34<sup>th</sup>, 41.65) and Su (26<sup>th</sup>, 41.20). In the 200 free Jen took 22<sup>nd</sup> place (2:47.96), and in the final event, the 100 breast, Peyton took 28<sup>th</sup> (1:42.20).

Saturday finals began shortly after the finish of the afternoon session, and we had seven individual swims and one relay to go. Kedrick and Portland were first up for the 200 IM. They



both swam well, finishing in 13<sup>th</sup> (2:42.08) and 14<sup>th</sup> (2:43.66) respectively. In the 50 breast Brooke once again scored, taking 16<sup>th</sup> place (41.27). In the men's breaststroke, Clancy dropped his prelim time to 37.49 and took 7<sup>th</sup> place, while Portland won the consolation heat with a great time of 37.57, dropping almost a second off his morning time. In the men's 13-14 200 breast, Danny Ciciora moved up a spot to 14<sup>th</sup> place with his time of 2:50.03, a time fast enough to qualify him for State Senior Champs – congrats Danny! In the 100 back Kedrick continued

his list of impressive performances with a 15<sup>th</sup> place finish, moving up a spot from prelims, in a time of 1:15.31.

The Saturday night grand finale was the 11-12 boys' 400 medley relay, which almost repeated the "miracle on water" finish from the 2007 State Champs when Kedrick Shin, Brian Portland, Ryan Clancy, and Banistre Lienhart won it as 10-unders. This time it was Kedrick, Brian, and Ryan once again, with Jason Yang as anchor. Kedrick swam a sharp 1:15.7 lead-off to put us in second place, and then Ryan Clancy took charge, splitting a 1:23.20 to put the Hornets solidly in first place. The Hornet parents were going crazy in the stands! Brian Portland swam a sizzling 1:13.1 fly leg, maintaining a solid lead. This put Jason Yang in a very difficult position, having just aged up, and swimming anchor against the fastest 12 year-old sprinters in the state. He did a valiant job holding them off, splitting a 1:11.0 (his personal best by almost 4 seconds!), as only two of the seven were able to catch him. The team finished in third place for a whopping 32 points. When the dust settled (well, not much dust in a swimming pool, but you know what we mean. . .) the Hornets had successfully held onto their 12<sup>th</sup> place spot from Day one!

## DAY THREE

Heading into the last day of competition, we had our work cut out for us if we were to hold onto our position. In past years the third day had been our toughest, as the 10 and unders had now finished (they swim all their events on the first two days), and this age group has traditionally been one of our stronger groups. Without these important points, we have had trouble keeping our position, falling back three or four positions on average.



The women's 11-12 400 free relay started off the day as Gurke (1:08.9), Leader (1:11.2), Hawken (1:10.6), and Horowicz (1:08.8) posted a respectable time of 4:39.55, good enough for 17<sup>th</sup> place, a mere .03 seconds from scoring. The 11-12 men's relay was seeded top 8, so didn't have to swim the morning heats, leaving only the 13-14 men's relay. The team of Dietrich (1:03.3), Bu (1:02.0), O'Toole (1:07.4), and Ciciora (1:01.4) all swam well, but not quite in the scoring range, missing 16<sup>th</sup> by just over a second. Our lone 400 freestyle for the day was Camila

Horowicz, who did a nice job with her 5:18.66 performance, finishing in 38<sup>th</sup> place. In the next event, the 50 back, Hawken finished 31<sup>st</sup> with a 36.37 and Gurke finished 39<sup>th</sup> with a 36.95 for the women. In the men's back, we had our first morning qualifier, as Kedrick Shin snuck into the podium heat in 8<sup>th</sup> place with a quick 34.10 swim in the men's 50 back. Portland finished in 29<sup>th</sup> with a 36.20. The 100 freestyle followed, with Camilla swimming a 1:08.86 for 42<sup>nd</sup> place, Kedrick swimming a 1:07.70 for a 26<sup>th</sup> place, and Ryan finishing in 1:08.06 for a 29<sup>th</sup> place. The only Hornet entry in the difficult 200 fly was Bryan Bu, who swam a very nicely paced 2:38.85, finishing in 31<sup>st</sup> place. The final event of the morning session was the 11-12 50 fly, and the Hornets desperately needed a qualifier if we were to have any hopes of holding our position. Brian Portland came thru big-time, as he made the championship heat with a time of 32.80, putting him in fifth place. Ryan Clancy swam a 33.38, which we thought might sneak into the top 16, but there were several swimmers in the low-33 range, so Ryan ended up second alternate (18<sup>th</sup> place).



The final session of the meet (a long weekend!) began with Kedrick's 50 backstroke, where he grabbed 11 valuable points with his 8<sup>th</sup> place finish in 34.86. Another 11 points were added to our team total when Brian Portland took 8<sup>th</sup> in the 50 fly with a 33.38. The last event of the meet for the Hornets was the men's 11-12 400 free relay of Portland, Yang, Clancy, and Shin. There were some fast morning swims in the relay, and all morning times count, so it was a swim against the clock as well as against seven other relays. Brian led off with a very quick 1:07.5, followed by Jason's 1:11.5. Ryan turned in a 1:08.0 split, and Kedrick brought it home with a 1:06.5. The final time of 4:33.51 was good enough for 7<sup>th</sup> place and 24 points. This gave us 46 points for the day. We anxiously awaited the final team scores, and when they were finally posted, there were the Hornets, sitting solidly in 12<sup>th</sup> place, with 366 points!



Submitted by the Hornet Coaching Staff