

## LIAC Shines at Juniors

Seventeen LIAC swimmers went down to Orlando, FL this past week for the NCSA Junior National Championships. After five fast days of competition LIAC was 6<sup>th</sup> in the overall team competition and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the men's competition. Oh, and did I mention that it was "**FAST**". Six Gold medals, Four Metropolitan records, Nine new team records and a High Point Win for Jack Wagner. It was a great week. Race after race watching LIAC swimmers compete against the best in the country and really getting at it. We are proud of what you have accomplished.

### Day 1

The meet started out with strong 1000 freestyles. Sarah Schlichte, Ashley Smith, Megan Zarriello, and Michael Lennon all went personal best times. Emily Kelly scored seventh, and Megan was sixteenth. It was Megan's first score at Juniors. Great swim. Thirteen year old Molly Treble time trialed the event for a 10:12.4 which currently ranks her 4<sup>th</sup> in her age group in the country. The men got on the board with a ninth place 200 medley relay. The quartet of Nick Spinella, Sean Sullivan, Oliver Lee and Jack Wagner set a new team record 1:34.34.

### Day 2

SPRINT LIAC showed up on the second day. In the premier event of the meet Jack Wagner took home his first Junior National Gold with a Metro and Team record 44.32 100 Free. Oliver Lee joined in with a 13<sup>th</sup> place finish and personal best time of 45.63. Thirty minutes later Jack was back up on the blocks for the 200 Backstroke where he finished 3<sup>rd</sup> with a team record 1:46.37. The boys relay of Mike Lennon, Nick Spinella, Jonathon Derlath and Jack Wagner capped off the night with a 10<sup>th</sup> place finish in the 800 Free relay.

### Day 3

Day 3 started out with Oliver Lee placing 4<sup>th</sup> in the 50 Fly with a team record 22.15. Emily Kelly was back with a 16<sup>th</sup> place finish in the 200 Free. Jack swam an incredibly tough double for a guy who sees himself as a sprinter. He placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 200 Free with a team record 1:37.87 and 4<sup>th</sup> in the 400 IM with a 3:56.27. Then he anchors the LIAC 400 Free relay with a come from behind 44.52 to win and set a new team record. The relay of Oliver Lee, (45.54), Nick Spinella (45.65), Austin Kowalsky (46.99) and Jack was an exciting win and great way to end the evening.

### Day 4

Wagner got right back to his winning ways on Friday night with gold in the 100 Backstroke. His time of 49.25 broke the Metro record of Olympian and former world record holder Rick Carey. Emily Kelly placed 13<sup>th</sup> in the 500 free with a season best 4:52.26. Jack was back on the blocks for his only consol swim, a 13<sup>th</sup> place in the 100 Fly. Then the highlight of the meet. SPRINT LIAC wins the Men's 200 Free Relay in a new Meet, Team and Metro record of 1:22.10 the second fastest time ever by a group of 18 and under boys. Oliver Lee, Nick Spinella, Austin

Kowalsky, and Jack Wagner put on an unbelievable show dominating from the beginning. Nick Spinella once again showed that he is one of the finest relay swimmers in LIAC history with his 20.57 split. Great job boys I will always remember that one.

## Day 5

Oliver Lee defends his 50 Free title from last year with a Metro and Team record 20.36. Oliver continues to show up BIG at the premier events. Jack is back with 3 events, the 50 Back, sixth with a team record 23.26. A win in the 200 IM with a fine time of 1:49.92 and a sixth place finish in the 50 Free 20.63. Emily Kelly takes 9<sup>th</sup> in the 1650 with a 16:38.75. Michael Lennon in his first Juniors gets on the scoreboard with a 16<sup>th</sup> place 15:47.53 personal best. Great swim. The final event of the evening the boys 400 medley relay placed 8<sup>th</sup> with a 3:26.37.

At the junior level in meets like this all the swimmers are at different levels in their development. A few are ready to score big, and it's special when they do. Most are trying to give their best performances in the biggest meet of their lives. LIAC had a great deal of athletes that swam at their personal best times in the biggest meet of the season. This is what I believe separates LIAC from the others. The great coach of UCLA basketball John Wooden called it "competitive excellence". To the LIAC members who swam their best times, Ashley Smith, Molly Treble, Sarah Schlichte, Megan Zarriello, Erik Heinemann, Michael Lennon, Austin Kowalsky, Nick Spinella, Michael Mayer, Sean Sullivan, Gabbie Toback, and of course Oliver and Jack you displayed competitive greatness. Thanks for the experience.