

## Hotchkiss, Stack represent Malibu Seawolves in Junior Olympics

Logan Hotchkiss and Farah Stack turn in impressive performances at summer's biggest swim event.

By Dick Dornan  
Special to The Malibu Times

More than 800 swimmers from 30 different club teams descended upon California Lutheran University last week for the 2014 Southern California Swimming Junior Olympic Championships.

Before capacity crowds at the Samuelson Aquatics Center in Thousand Oaks, Malibu High's Logan Hotchkiss and Farah Stack made the Malibu Seawolves Swim Club proud.

Hotchkiss, 17, placed second in three different events and fifth in his other race for the boys' 15-and-over age group. Stack took 12th and 18th overall in her respective races in the girls' 15-and-over division.

"They are both talented swimmers. Logan did great. He has been putting in consistent work and I've seen him improve quite a bit. Logan gave it his best and he had nothing left at the end," Malibu coach Mike Alexandrov said. "Farah has a lot of potential too. If she sticks with consistency, she will see a lot of great results. She's a steady swimmer."

With many of the area's best swimmers participating during the five-day "splashathon," Hotchkiss continued to excel at the highest level. He began the meet competing in rare back-to-back championship heats after qualifying in prelims.

In the 100-yard freestyle, Hotchkiss swam a time of 53.78 seconds, finishing second (.07 seconds behind the winner). The finish also marked a 2-second improvement from his previous best mark. Ten minutes later, he remarkably



Farah Stack had a strong showing in the 50 freestyle.



Logan Hotchkiss finished in second place in three events.

swam the 800-yard freestyle in a time of 8:47.00, placing second again.

Despite swimming in consecutive races, Hotchkiss was able to improve his personal best by more than 5 seconds in the 800.

"Logan showed a lot of character," Alexandrov said. "I was really impressed that he was able to mentally stay in it. It takes a lot of power and mental energy to do back-to-back."

Hotchkiss' success continued with a time of 1:57.50 in the 200-yard freestyle final, taking second place for a third time in less than 24 hours. He improved by more than 3 seconds.

Fatigue finally caught up with Hotchkiss as he finished fifth in the 400-yard freestyle, despite dropping a second off his best time (4:13.23).

"He's been dropping so much time

since I've been working with him," Alexandrov said. "Each year he has been dropping 3 to 5 seconds per event."

After three days of intense competition in four different finals, Hotchkiss went home having earned four well-deserved medals.

"My first two days were my best," Hotchkiss said. "I did really well in the 100 free and 200 free. I was really happy with those."

It concluded a sensational year for the senior phenom. In addition to doing so well at the Junior Olympics, Hotchkiss won four CIF titles in May as part of the Malibu High swim team.

"It was a really good year. CIF really summed up my year for me. I dropped my times and the relays were a lot of fun," Hotchkiss said. "I tapered back into this summer meet and dropped

more time in that. I'm pretty happy with everything."

Hotchkiss is considering UC Santa Barbara, UC San Diego, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and Pacific as possible colleges.

"He's got tons of potential," Alexandrov said. "If he keeps dropping, he will be one of the top recruits in the country."

Stack, a sophomore at MHS, placed fourth in the consolation finals and 12th overall in the 100-yard backstroke with a time of 1:11.17, an improvement of 1.22 seconds on her entry time.

In the 50-yard freestyle, Stack achieved a personal best of 29.03 to take first in her heat. However, in a very fast field that resulted in an 18th place finish in prelims, Stack finished outside of the top 16, just missing the consol-

ation finals.

She also participated in the 200-yard backstroke (20th place), 200-yard freestyle (22nd) and 100-yard freestyle (28th).

"I just wanted to make sure I went all out and that I went really strong," Stack, 15, said about her five races. "I was focusing on keeping my head down and working on my technique and all things I work on in practice."

Two up-and-coming stars, 13-year-olds Kennan Hotchkiss and Amy Perna, performed admirably in their events. Kennan swam the 400-yard freestyle and 800-yard freestyle and dropped close to six seconds in the 400 (4:42.75). Perna competed in the 50-yard freestyle and 100-yard freestyle and improved in the 50 with a time of 31.45.

## Malibu girls basketball enjoys summer in stride



Photo courtesy Andy Meyer

Guest speaker Leroy Smith (center) visited with the Lady Sharks.

Coach Andy Meyer hosts basketball academy welcoming two special guests.

By Dick Dornan  
Special to The Malibu Times

While many families go on vacation throughout the summer, Coach Andy Meyer maximizes his time with the Malibu High girls basketball team.

For the first time in his eight years as coach, Meyer entered the Sharks into a Wednesday night summer league at Viewpoint High School. Malibu played six games against tough competition, giving the players the opportunity to play basketball again while reconnecting and developing valuable team cohesion.

"It's been nice. We had enough kids to participate in a summer league," Meyer said. "They worked on their skills and got to play against some real tough competition. I think they have become better because of it."

Meyer doesn't require his team to play 30 games in a six-week span as other programs might, but the Sharks convene once a week for games along with practices throughout the offseason.

Coming off a season where Malibu went 7-16 overall and 2-10 in the Frontier League, Meyer returns a core of players with plenty of game experience. Karen Sanchez is the lone senior with juniors Nina Hungerland, Kendall Jordan, Sara Joshi, Gianna Chaisson, Ana Cervantes, Alana Baer, Ari Ross and Hannah Hunter rounding out the roster.

With the exception of Hunter, who recently transferred in from Palisades Charter High School, each girl played on the varsity team last season. In fact, many of the players have been on the varsity since their freshman year.

"When I started basketball, most of us were freshmen. Since then, we have grown as a team together," Hungerland said. "We have definitely become better and I am really excited for this year. We have kind of figured out what everyone's strengths are and how to play well together. It's going to be a strong season for us."

"It's been really fun getting back together and finding our groove," Chaisson said. "Even if there is no practice, it's cool to just call each other up and meet at MHS to shoot around at the gym. This was our first time being in this league so it was a good experience for us."

One of the highlights of the summer was the second annual Malibu High School Girls Basketball Academy run by Meyer. The team spends one weekend together in early June sleeping in the gym to improve strong friendships on and off the court.

The parents catered breakfast and lunch and hosted a tasty barbecue dinner one night, with the other evening set aside for pizza and bowling.

"It's a great team bonding experience. They get to know each other better and they have fun," said Meyer. "We also work on basketball skills and they've become better basketball players. They enjoy it and it's kind of a nice way to start the summer."

Meyer also invited a special guest speaker each day. The first day featured motivational speaker Leroy Smith,

who shared his story as the player who "beat out Michael Jordan for the last spot on our varsity basketball team." Smith said "it ignited a fire which inspired [Jordan] to greatness."

In 1978, Smith was the final player chosen to play varsity at Laney High School in North Carolina. Jordan played junior varsity instead as a sophomore and, well, the rest is history.

"[Leroy] told our girls to always have a good attitude. You never know how things are going to turn out," Meyer said. "Work hard and you can succeed one way or the other. If you don't succeed in basketball, work hard and you can succeed at anything."

The following day, the Sharks welcomed the Pepperdine Waves women's basketball team. The Waves worked with the girls on technique and fundamentals.

"They had a great time. The Pepperdine girls shared some motivational stuff and did some drills with our girls," Meyer said. "It was nice for my players to see college players up close. We are hoping to have a relationship with their program to watch a practice or two and go to their games."



Dick Dornan / TMT

Malibu's Nina Hungerland dribbles up court against a Louisville defender in a recent summer game.

### Excellent equestrian



Photo courtesy Mark Ball

Juliana Ball, a local equestrian, earns an award at a competition in Argentina.

Malibu equestrian Juliana Ball completed a successful competition season in Argentina, culminating with her receiving the Reserve Champion award last weekend in

Buenos Aires. She received the award after placing second overall with her horse, Columbia, in the young horse (seven to eight years old) championships.

Ball was one of two riders out of 63 to make the finals after a series of competitions at 1.30 meter over the past several months at Club Aleman de Equitation.