

Express swimmers fare well at NJ JOs

Eastern Express Swimming recently competed at the New Jersey Junior Olympics at Rutgers University. Junior Olympics brings together the top swimmers in central and northern New Jersey, and marks the end of the spring/summer long course (50 meters Olympic pool) season.

At the meet, medals are awarded to the swimmers who place in the Top 8 for each individual event based on age group and gender, and in the Top 3 for team relays. In addition, points are awarded to swimmers who place in the Top 16 for each individual event, and for team relays that also place in the Top 16. Points are then totaled as part of overall individual and team high point competitions.

Eastern Express sent a squad of approximately 25 swimmers who participated in the three-day event. Significantly, upon completion of the competition, Express had eight different swimmers who had placed in the Top 10 in the individual high point competition.

Express swimmers who achieved Top 10 individual high point places included Peter Kalibat (fifth, boys 10 & under), Jillian Liwacz (fifth, girls 11-12), Julia Anderson (sixth, girls 11-12), Victoria Cassidy (third,

girls 13-14), Kristiana Kalibat (seventh, girls 13-14), Matthew Kietlinski (sixth, boys 13-14), Alex Field (eighth, boys 13-14), and Samantha Kietlinski (10th, girls 15 and over).

Medal winners who achieved Top 8 finishes included Peter Kalibat (seventh, 50 free; fourth, 100 free; fifth, 200 free; second, 400 free; second, 100 fly; second, 200 IM) in the boys' 10-and-under age group.

In the girls' 11-12 division, Express swimmers Julia Anderson (fifth, 100 free; third, 200 free; second, 400 free; second, 800 free; second, 1500 free), Jillian Liwacz (third, 50 fly; first, 100 fly; third, 200 fly; third, 50 free; third, 100 free), and Laura Poss (third, 50 breast; sixth, 100 breast; eighth, 200 breast; eighth, 50 free; eighth, 100 free; sixth, 200 free) each achieved Top 3 finishes and delivered strong performances in multiple events.

In the girls' 13-14 age group, impressive results were provided by Victoria Cassidy (fourth, 400 free; fourth, 1500 free; eighth, 100 fly; fourth, 200 fly; second, 200 back; third 200 breast; fourth 200 IM; third, 400 IM), Kristiana Kalibat (sixth, 100 back; fifth, 200 back; sixth, 400 free; seventh, 800 free; seventh, 1500 free), and Emily Logan

(fourth, 800 free; fifth, 1500 free; seventh, 400 IM).

In the boys' 13-14 division, Top 8 swims were achieved by Alex Field (sixth, 200 back; first, 100 breast; first, 200 breast; third, 200 IM; third, 400 IM), Matthew Kietlinski (fourth, 100 fly; first, 200 fly; third, 400 free; fifth, 1500 free; sixth, 200 IM; fifth, 400 IM), and Mike Leddy (fourth, 200 breast; eighth, 400 free).

Similarly, in the girls' 15-and-over division, Samantha Kietlinski (eighth, 200 fly; eighth, 100 free; sixth, 800 free; third, 400 IM) and Kate Winters (eighth, 200 back) delivered notable results, and in the boys' 15-and-over division, Sean Mackenzie (sixth, 400 free; fourth, 1500 free; sixth, 400 IM) captured medals in several distance events.

Other Eastern Express swimmers who placed in the Top 16, and garnered points included Martha Ferguson (13th, 100 breast), Hannah Matheson (ninth, 50 fly; 16th, 100 fly; 12th, 200 fly), Kathleen Morrison (14th, 200 free; 16th, 400 free; ninth, 1500 free), and Anshu Sinha (15th, 50 breast).

In team relay competition, the Eastern Express 11-12 girls' squad of Julia Anderson, Jillian

Liwacz, Hannah Matheson, and Laura Poss swam to a first-place finish in the 200 medley relay, and to a second-place finish in the 200 free relay. Both events culminated with truly exciting finishes with four different teams charging to the wall for the final touch, and all four finishing with a total difference of less than 0.4 seconds. The 13-14 boys' squad of Alex Field, Nathan Hirshbein, Matthew Kietlinski, and Mike Leddy placed second in the 400 medley relay, and third in the 400 free relay. Likewise, the 15-and-over girls' squad consisting of Brittany Iacouzze, Samantha Kietlinski, Emily Logan, and Kathleen Morrison placed third in the 800 free relay.

Although Junior Olympics marks the final competition of the regional long course season, several Express swimmers competed at the Eastern Zones competition in Buffalo, N.Y. The Eastern Zones competition brings together top swimmers in the northeast from Maine through Virginia. In addition, a select group of Express swimmers will be competing at the ConocoPhillips National Championships held in Irvine, Calif.

More information regarding Eastern Express can be obtained from their Web site at www.ExpressSwimming.com.