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THE PATRIOT PRESS



False Start - Lane 2, Lane 3, Lane 4 . . .

PATRIOTS FAIL TO LAND MARLIN Strong Effort Falls Short

On one of those extremely hot, humid and uncomfortable June day for which Houston is known for, the Huntwick Patriots fell to the Memorial Northwest Marlin in a close contest, **347-305**.

From the start, the sweltering crowd on hand knew it would be a long, hard-fought battle, with the Marlin taking both 13-14 100 Free events, followed by **Stephen Conrad**, in the last home meet of his career, breaking his own team and pool record set two years ago in Mens 15-18 100 Free and **Kristen Flint**, returning from a short hiatus, capturing the Womens event, with teammate **Caroline Chojnacki** in a close second. Entering the relays, it was a dead heat: **Huntwick 18, Memorial NW 18**.

The Patriot younger age relays did not fair well, with the Marlin taking the blue ribbon in 7 of the first 10 relays. The Boys 7-8 Medley team of **John Dickson, Kyle Wilkerson, Blake Newell** and **Scott Williams** was the first Huntwick relay to claim victory, with the Girls 7-8 Medley (**Sarah Traynor, Kelly Fahy, Reagan Ralston, Hannah Flinn**) nearly pulling off the upset, falling by a slim 0.19 seconds. Fine performances by **Natalie Holley, Hannah Nelson, Kelly Flint** and **Madison Bourg**, in Girls 9-10 Medley knocked off a heavily favored Marlin quartet, winning by just under a half-second, and the team of **Tyler Morland, Matt Hite, Brian Gravesmill** and **Griffin Warner** provided the third win for the Patriot tally. The older Patriot swimmers then showed their dominance, with **Kevin Gravesmill, Tyler Darwin, Stephen Conrad** and **Colton Chojnacki** crushing the Marlin in 15-18 Boys, and 15-18 Girls swimming unopposed, the Patriots were only down 4, **61-57**.

Freestyle, always a strong portion of the meet for Huntwick, provided a bonanza of winning Patriot performances. **Jake Purdes** came all the way from a 6th seed to take 1st in 6 and under Boys, knocking 6 seconds off his personal best and qualifying for All Stars. **Stephen Russell** dropped 10 seconds and **Jacob Stivers** cut 12 seconds as each climbed far above their seeds in the final tally. **Abby Hite**, finishing a close 2nd in 6 and under Girls, cut almost a second off her already strong Ponderosa best, with **Katie Koehler** showing continued improvement,

finishing 4th. **Kyle Wilkerson** and **John Dickson** took 2nd and 3rd in Boys 7-8 as they improved on their personal bests, while **Hannah Flinn** nearly matched her best with a stirring 0.03 second victory in Girls 7-8, with teammate **Kelly Fahy** cutting 4 seconds from her last freestyle swim taking 3rd and **Grace Russell** improving over 8 seconds. **J.P. Hite** and **William Sklenka** also managed a 2-3 finish in Boys 9-10, with **Sklenka** qualifying for All Stars. **Kelly Flint**, seeded 3rd in Girls 9-10, passed two Marlin at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mark and knocked almost a half-second off her personal best, with **Madison Bourg** dropping over a second, qualifying for All Stars and nearly taking 3rd place, while **Grace Merkel, Sarah Woodward** and **Ally Flinn** also showed tremendous improvement. **Trey Nelson** came from a 4th seed to pick up 3rd place in Boys 11-12, and **Mattie Bunkers** fared even better, moving from 4th seed to finish 2nd in Girls 11-12. From that point, it was all Patriots. **Matt Hite, Griffin Warner** and **Mason Adams** swept the Boys 13-14, and **Samantha Buck, Abby Buck** and **Kathryn Flint** nearly did the same for the Girls, finishing 1st, 2nd and 4th. **Kevin Gravesmill, Colton Chojnacki** and **Tyler Darwin** matched the 1-2-4 finish in 15-18 Men, and **Caroline Chojnacki** finished the Patriot run with the blue ribbon in 15-18 Women. Combined, Huntwick scored 30 of 36 possible points in the last 4 Freestyle events, and had pushed out to a 10-point lead, **118-108**.

The Patriot lead was short-lived, however, as the Breaststroke events, a continuing problem for our swimmers this year, reared its ugly head. Memorial NW took 8 of the 10 events, twice in a sweep (**Ouch!**). Only **Mattie Bunkers** (Girls 11-12) and **Caroline Chojnacki** (Womens 15-18) were victorious, although **Hannah Flinn** (7-8 Girls, improved 2 seconds, seeded 6th, finished 2nd), **Hannah Nelson** (9-10 Girls, finished 2nd), brother **Trey Nelson** (11-12 Boys, finished 2nd), **Matt Hite** and **Mason Adams** (13-14 Boys, 2nd & 3rd), **Julia Brewer** (13-14 Girls, 3rd), **Tyler Darwin** (Mens 15-18, 2nd), and **Chojnacki, Vicki Burman** and **Taylor Nevins** (sweep in Womens 15-18) gave the Huntwick faithful something to shout about. Nevertheless, the Huntwick lead had evaporated, and the Marlin were now out to a hefty lead, **166-150**.

In 6 and Under Backstroke, **Stephen Russell** (19 sec.) and **Wyatt Crawford** (24 sec.) improved dramatically, while on the Girls' side, **Abby Hite**, facing a favored Marlin, the same Marlin that narrowly defeated her in Freestyle earlier in the day, rebounded to take 1st, with **Vivian Slagle** dropping a whopping 43 seconds. Huntwick managed 3 wins in the 8 IM events, with sisters **Kelly** (9-10 Girls) and **Kristen** (15-18 Girls) **Flint** each taking their second individual event of the day, and **Stephen Conrad** (15-18 Boys) keeping his season long string of wins intact. Other notable Patriot performances included **J.P Hite** (2nd in 9-10 Boys, cutting 5 sec.), **Ally Flinn** (3rd in 9-10 Girls), **Travis Morland** and **Austin Fahy** (11-12 Boys, 5 and 6 sec. improvement), **Sarah Darwin** (11-12 Girls, 2nd place), **Griffin Warner** (13-14 Boys, dropped 6 sec., placed 2nd), and **Samantha Buck** (2nd in 13-14 Girls). Unfortunately, the lights were beginning to dim on Patriot hopes, as the Marlin lead ballooned to 26, **216-190**.

The gains made by Memorial NW in breaststroke and IM were dwarfed by their dominance in Backstroke, as the Marlin took 8 of 10 events (**ouch again!**). At the younger ages, only **Matt Strickland** (2nd in 9-10 Boys) and **Brian Gravesmill** (2nd in 13-14 Boys) managed to finish higher than 3rd, and it was not until the eighth backstroke event, 13-14 Girls, that Patriot **Samantha Buck** (closely followed by **Kathryn Flint**) took the blue ribbon. Swimming unopposed, **Kevin Gravesmill**, **Colton Chojnacki** and **Jeffrey Bell** swept 15-18 Boys (with 15-year old **Gravesmill** now less than 0.40 seconds off the pool record – **watch out next year!**), **Vicki Burman** added 3 points for the Patriots with a 2nd in Girls 15-18, but **BOOM Goes the Dynamite: Marlin 314, Patriots 274**.

Fighters to the end, Huntwick rebounded to take a majority of the Butterfly events. **J.P Hite** and **Kelly Flint** combined to take both 9-10 events, **Travis Morland** and **Sarah Darwin** duplicated the feat in 11-12, with **Rachael Bell** and **Ellen Dickson** both qualifying for All Stars and completing the Girls sweep, and **Stephen Conrad** and **Kristen Flint** triplicated it in 15-18's. Other top Patriot swims were provided by **Scott Williams** (2nd in 7-8 Boys), **Hannah Nelson** (3rd in 9-10 Girls), **Madison Bourg** (qualified for Girls 9-10 All Stars), **Brian Gravesmill** and **Abby Buck** (each 2nd in 13-14 events) and **Kevin Gravesmill** (2nd in Boys 15-18). Nevertheless, these performances only cut slightly into the Marlin lead, with the Patriots still down **314-270**.

Needing a sweep of all 10 afternoon Freestyle Relays to keep the meet close, 7 of 10 Huntwick foursomes improved on their seed times, but it wasn't enough.

Memorial NW took 4 of the first 5 relays, with **William Sklenka**, **Hayden Wilkerson**, **Matt Strickland** and **J.P Hite** the lone bright spot in 9-10 Boys. However, beginning with 11-12 Girls, the Patriots took 4 of the final 5 relays, including a big upset win by **Ellen Dickson**, **Mattie Bunkers**, **Sarah Darwin** and **Aidan Sklenka** in 11-12 Girls, and the other teams (**Kathryn Flint**, **Laynie Hardisty**, **Abby Buck** and **Samantha Buck** in 13-14 Girls; **Jeffrey Bell**, **Kevin Gravesmill**, **Colton Chojnacki** and **Stephen Conrad** in 15-18 Boys; and the 15-18 Girls **Vicki Burman**, **Elizabeth Fauser**, **Kristen Flint** and **Caroline Chojnacki** swimming unopposed).

After the meet, coach **Cindy Walker** set her sights on this week's big Divisional Championship: "It seemed like kids for both teams were off from their seasonal bests. Maybe it was the heat, maybe it was just the cumulative effect of a long season . . . I was really proud of our 15-18 kids . . . Most teams don't have the kind of commitment these kids have shown this year, and without them today the score could have been much worse. Divisionals will be at Klein Forest, known as a "fast" pool, and I know our swimmers will be ready. **GO PATRIOTS!**"

Points Points Points

Boys:

Stephen Conrad 15 (+10 relay)
 Kevin Gravesmill 13 (+10 relay)
 J.P. Hite 11 (+7 relay)
 Colton Chojnacki 9 (+10 relay)
 Brian Gravesmill 9 (+7 relay)
 Matt Hite 9 (+5 relay)

Girls:

Kristen Flint 15 (+10 relay)
Kelly Flint 15 (+7 relay)
 Caroline Chojnacki 13 (+10 relay)
 Samantha Buck 13 (+7 relay)
 Mattie Bunkers 9 (+7 relay)

Memorial Northwest Tale of the tape (points/possible points):

	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
6 and under	8/23	10/23
7-8	14/46	15/46
9-10	23/55	28/55
11-12	16/55	28/55
13-14	35/64	31/64
15-18	51/64	46/64
Total	147	158

MEET SCHEDULE

- May 10 **Home Practice Meet** ✓
- May 17 **VICTORY over Prestonwood 359.5-269.5**
- May 24 **Spring Creek Oaks 370, Huntwick 280**
- May 31 **VICTORY over Kleinwood 329.5-315.5**
- June 7 **Lakewood Forest 353, Huntwick 297**
- June 14 **Memorial Northwest 347, Huntwick 305**
- June 21 Central Region, Division 2 Championship:
at Klein Forest High School
- June 22 Swim Team Annual Awards Banquet
5:00 p.m. **SHARP!!**

INVITATIONALS

Registration for **All-Stars** and **Ponderosa** is due this Sunday. **Bob Bell** is once again in charge, so he checked out early and won't be at Divisionals, preferring to attend tennis in Austin with **Jeffrey**. Way to go, **Bob!** In **Bob's** highly noticed absence, **Barnes Darwin** will be taking down lists of participants for both meets, then promptly forwarding them to Bob for further mishandling. The lists of qualified swimmers in the Press is not necessarily complete. Divisional times do count!! If a swimmer qualifies for Ponderosa, they cannot swim that event at All Stars (but may swim others), so they can try (logistically it is not easy) to swim both.

Major Movers

Improvement over Seed Time:

- Byron Barthelemy 100 IM 3 sec.
- Holly Bobo 25 Back 4 sec.
- Forest Brown 100 IM 3 sec.
- Wyatt Crawford 25 Free 4 sec., 25 Back 24 sec.**
- Austin Fahy 100 IM 6 sec.
- Kelly Fahy 25 Free 4 sec.
- Zach Golchin 100 IM 5 sec.
- Garrett Hardisty 25 Free 6 sec.
- J.P. Hite 100 IM 5 sec.
- Travis Morland 100 IM 5 sec.
- Jake Purdes 25 Free 6 sec.
- Grace Russell 25 Free 8 sec.
- Stephen Russell 25 Free 10 sec., 25 Back 19 sec.**
- Vivian Slagle 25 Back 43 sec.**
- Jacob Stivers 25 Free 12 sec.
- Griffin Warner 100 IM 6 sec.
- Chase Williams 50 Free 4 sec., 50 Breast 3 sec.

DIVISIONALS!!

Central Region Division 2 Divisional Meet is tomorrow, Saturday June 21st at **Klein Forest High School** an indoor natatorium, 8-lane 25-yard pool. All teams will set up inside gym, so no tents (but bring those chairs, comforters, pillows, sleeping bags, etc. Warm-ups begin at 7:15, so be on time, and be sure to check in with Coach Cindy or one of the assistant coaches. **THERE IS NO HOST TEAM, SO ALL TEAMS MUST PITCH IN IN ALL AREAS.** There will be 3 shifts (roughly 8:30-10:30, 10:30-12:30 and 12:30-2:30. Huntwick will provide 4 timers and 2 scribes for each shift, 1 ribbon person, 1 computer person, 1 clerk of course/runner and 2 ready bench helpers. Huntwick will be helping sell concessions throughout the day, so in addition to regular concession ladies, grill guys and ticket guys working, we will need other volunteers, including people who don't usually do concessions. We also need to provide help for takedown Saturday afternoon. Don't be a **Bob Bell!** Volunteer to help!

AWARDS BARBECUE!

The annual Awards Barbecue is this Sunday beginning promptly at 5:00 p.m. (don't be late!!) at the Clubhouse. Come early to get a good seat. The pool will be open afterward until 9:30 p.m. Come help celebrate an outstanding year for our swimmers and congratulate **Chris Conrad** on no longer being involved with the team! To show your appreciation for all that he and **Ginny** have done through the years, bring him a really cheap 6-pack of beer (Keystone Light would be a good choice). Want to help with the awards? Call **Patty Bunkers today!!**



INVITATIONAL PRACTICE TIMES



10:00-11:00 All Ages
(I made this up, so don't hold anyone to it)
**Check with the Coaches
after Divisionals**



PONDEROSA QUALIFIERS:

***ABBY HITE 25 FREE, 25 BACK
J.P. HITE 25 FREE
KELLY FAHY 25 BREAST
TREY NELSON 50 BREAST
MATTIE BUNKERS 50 BREAST
SAMANTHA BUCK 50 FLY, FREE, BACK
BLAIR DEWING 50 FLY, 50 BREAST
BRIAN GRAVESMILL 50 FREE, 50 FLY
WOODY DEWING 50 FLY
TYLER DARWIN 50 BREAST
KRISTEN FLINT 100 FREE, IM, 50 FLY
KEVIN GRAVESMILL 50 BACK, FLY,
50 100 FREE, IM
COLTON CHOJNACKI 50 FREE, 50 BACK
STEPHEN CONRAD 50 100 FREE, IM, 50 FLY
*NEW QUALIFIER***

All Star Qualifiers: *New Qualifier

**Nate Martin 25 Free, 25 Back
Jake Purdes *25 Free, 25 Back
*Evan Newell 25 Back
Emelia Buckalew 25 Back, 25 Free
Charlotte Foster 25 Free
Katie Koehler 25 Back, 25 Free
Emily Traynor 25 Free
Kyle Wilkerson 25 Free, 25 Fly, 25 Breast
John Dickson 25 Free, 25 Back, 25 Breast
Scott Williams *25 Free, 25 Back, 25 Fly
Kelly Fahy *25 Free, 25 Back, 25 Fly
Reagan Ralston 25 Back, 25 Fly
Kristen Russell 25 Fly
Hannah Flinn 25 Free, 25 Breast
Brooke Brown *25 Free, 25 Breast
Rachel Brewer *25 Free, 25 Breast
J.P. Hite 25 Fly, 100 IM
Matt Strickland 25 Free, 25 Breast, 25 Back
William Sklenka *25 Free, 25 Breast
Blake Newell 25 Fly, 25 Free
Josh Prim 25 Back
Hayden Wilkerson 25 Breast
Amy Rose Barthelemy 25 Fly
Hannah Nelson 25 Breast, 25 Fly, 25 Free
Madison Bourg *25 Free, 25 Back, *25 Fly**



**Kelly Flint 25 Free, 100 IM, 25 Fly
Trey Nelson 50 Free, 50 Back
Travis Morland 50 Free, 50 Back, 50 Fly, 100 IM
Henry Hite 50 Free, 50 Breast
Wren Strickland 50 Back
Michael Bell 50 Breast, 50 Free
Austin Fahy 50 Back, 50 Fly
Chase Schlemeyer 50 Free, 100 IM, 50 Fly
Brett Dewing 50 Fly, 50 Free, 50 Back
Will Harrison 50 Free, 50 Back
Tommy Watson 50 Breast
Sarah Darwin 50 Free, 50 Breast, 50 Fly, 100 IM
Mattie Bunkers 50 Back, 50 Free
Aidan Sklenka 50 Back, 50 Free
Rachael Bell 50 Back, *50 Fly
*Ellen Dickson 50 Fly
Brian Gravesmill 100 Free, 50 Back
Woody Dewing 50 Free, 100 IM
Griffin Warner 50 Fly, 50 Free
Matt Hite 100 Free, 50 Free, 50 Breast, 100 IM
John Burman 50 Breast
Tyler Morland 50 Back
Mason Adams 50 Breast, 50 Back
John Henry Barthelemy 50 Back
Samantha Buck 100 Free, 100 IM
Abby Buck 50. 100 Free, 50 Fly, 100 IM
Kathryn Flint 50 Back
Blair Dewing 50 Free, 100 IM, 100 Free
Jeffrey Bell 100 Free, 50 Free, 50 Breast, 50 Back
Tyler Darwin 50 Fly
Kristen Flint 50 Back
Caroline Chojnacki 50, 100 Free, 50 Breast
Vicki Burman 50 Breast
Ben Alexander 50 Back
Jack Harrison 50 Free, 50 Back, 50 Fly
Colton Chojnacki 50 Breast, 100 IM
Will Gardiner 50 Breast, 50 Free**

Q&A

with . . . Giff Wilkerson

After a long search, the Patriots finally have a new NWAL representative to replace Ginny Stephens – **Giff Wilkerson!** The Press sat down with **Giff** to talk about his new role with the Patriot Swim Team.

Press: Congratulations **Giff**, this is a very important position with the team.

Giff: Thanks.

Press: So why did you decide to accept this new role?

Giff: Well, I've been a stroke and turn official now for several years, and have pretty much mastered the art of crushing young children's hopes and dreams with a well-timed DQ. I needed new challenges. And of course, I love toilets.



Press: What do toilets have to do with NWAL rep?

Giff: Well, I knew going in the rep does pretty much everything on meet day. Last week when we hosted Memorial NW, they had a problem with one of the toilets. Apparently someone had a few too many breakfast tacos at the grill, and there were repercussions. Anyway Memorial NW contacted their rep, who contacted me, and voila, Giff to the rescue and problem solved!

Press: What else does the NWAL rep do?



Giff: In addition to the toilets? Gosh, I don't know, I'm kind of in it for the toilets. I guess I probably have to do some stuff relating to the team and the meet, but that could be problematic.

Press: Why?

Giff: Well, one person can't do everything, and judging from last week, the whole toilet thing seems like it's a full-time job.

Press: Even at away meets?

Giff: I don't know, but I sure hope so. For the past few years at Divisionals, we've had porta-potties, so I'm expecting a very busy day on Saturday.

Press: Will you be able to continue being a stroke-and-turn official?

Giff: I don't know, didn't I already tell you I need to be available for the toilets?

Press: So, did **Ginny** mention the whole toilet side of the position?

Giff: Oddly enough, no. I guess she wanted it to be a surprise. Actually, it was **Paul Bunkers** who asked me if I would be NWAL rep. And come to think of it, it was **Paul** who first came to me about the toilets.

Press: We all know you are a big LSU fan . .



Giff: **Geaux Tigers!**

Press: What else can you tell us about yourself?

Giff: What would you like to know?

Press: You have a new baby, don't you?

Giff: Yes, beautiful baby girl, Lily. She'll be on the team in a few years, and **Julie** and I are now locked in through 2025.

Press: With 4 kids, one just a baby, that must be a lot of work.

Giff: Well, it is for **Julie**. I'm usually tied up with LSU sports and boiling crawfish to help out much. I do help out with the laundry though. With 6 people in the house, **Julie** and I spend a lot of time at the washing machine. Love the laundry!!



Press: What's your favorite saying?



Giff: "Feets don't Fail Me Now!" My personal philosophy, live it everyday.

Press: Anything else you'd like to add?

Giff: Well, as NWAL rep, I guess I'm the nearest thing to a President we've got, so I'd be happy to listen to anybody's complaints about swim team, anytime, anywhere. Feel free to call me at Home: **281-580-7136**. Or at the Office, especially during working hours: **713-655-7370**. Or my cell, anytime: **713-444-8723** (I've got unlimited minutes). Or e-mail me at gwilkerson@kaynecapital.com. Or text me at toiletman@yahoo.com.

Search Continues for Missing Girl

The search continues for one young 6 and under backstroke contestant lost in the outside lane at last week's meet. Witnesses said that as she approached the wall, the undertow of the pool jets caught her and began to drag her under. While she fought valiantly against the raging tide, struggling in vain to touch the wall, the force of the current was too much, and she disappeared beneath the crystal clear surface (good thing this didn't happen two years ago!)