

London Calling: Lamorinda Olympians Headed to the Summer Games

By Marissa Harnett

The 2012 London Olympics kick off in a little more than a week. Five Lamorinda athletes will have the honor of competing in these Games of the XXX Olympiad. Three are Olympic veterans while the other two are experiencing the dream for the first time.

One first time Olympian, Lafayette native Anthony Fahden, will compete in men's rowing. He

and the rest of his four-man team eeked out the qualification in a borrowed boat after a violent storm rendered their brand new boat unusable.

Compared to many other competitive athletes, Fahden got a late start to rowing. Chronic injuries in ice hockey forced him to abandon the sport as an Acalanes sophomore in 2001. Because of his "lanky"

build, Fahden decided to try rowing and found the sport suited him. He went on to row for Dartmouth and has been rowing ever since.

At this time, Fahden feels relaxed going into the Olympics. The heavy training allows for little time and energy to think beyond the present. "My fatigue has me thinking more about tomorrow's training than our competition in London,"

he said.

He admits that will surely change as the Olympics get closer.

Because stress can be overwhelming on race days, Fahden's goal is to keep things simple. "I've learned from a lot of racing that over-thinking diminishes performance, so on race day I take it easy, focus on the present, and have a good time competing," he ex-

plained. "In line with this approach, I don't spend much time or energy anticipating my results."

Fahden's Olympic expectations are understated. "For London, I'm just hoping to put together a few, well-executed races."

Athletes from Lamorinda to watch (compiled from available information):

First-time Olympians



Photo: US Rowing

Anthony Fahden (Lafayette)
Rowing - lightweight men's 4



Photo: U.S. Olympic Committee

Doris Willette (Lafayette)
Fencing - Foil

From Lafayette, Willette is a 2011 Penn State graduate where she was an All-American fencer in 2007. She is also a two-time National champion. Although this is her Olympic debut, she has earned five medals in the Pan American games, NCAA Championships, and the Division I USA Fencing National Championships. She was red-shirted for the 2008 Olympics. She will go to London as a replacement athlete.

Returning Olympians



Photo: USA Swimming

Natalie Coughlin (Lafayette)
Swimming

Previous Olympics - Beijing 2008; Athens 2004
Total medals - 11 (3 gold, 4 silver, 4 bronze) - the most of any female athlete. Coughlin is the first person in Olympic history to win back-to-back gold medals in the 100m Backstroke and is also the first woman to break 59 seconds in that event. She will have a chance to add one more medal to her total in London in the 4x100m freestyle relay.



Photo: USA Water Polo

Heather Petri (Orinda)
Water polo - attacker

Previous Olympics - Beijing 2008; Athens 2004; Sydney 2000
Total medals - 3 (2 silver, 1 bronze)
Competing in her fourth Olympic games, Petri is one of the most experienced players on her team. After a disappointing 8-9 loss to the Netherlands in the 2008 Championship game, they hope to bring back the gold from London. Petri graduated from Miramonte in 1996 where she was a founding member of the girls' water polo team.



Photo: USA Water Polo

Peter Varellas (Moraga)
Water polo - attacker

Previous Olympics - Beijing 2008
Total medals - 1 silver - defeated by Hungary in championship game
Varellas, a Campolindo alum, graduated from Stanford in 2006. At Stanford, he was awarded the Pac-10 Stanford Male Athlete of the Year. He was a top scorer.

Swimmers Go "Bottoms Up"

Submitted by Randy DeVecchi



MVP's Bottoms Up high point winners

Photo provided

The Orinda Moraga Pool Association played host to a fun day of competitive swimming, putting on the 37th Annual Moraga Valley Pool's (MVP) Bottoms Up swim meet at

the Soda Center at Campolindo High School on Sunday, July 8. More than 750 swimmers participated in the event.

Unlike all other swim meets where age

group swimmers are placed together every other year, MVP's Bottoms Up features only the bottom of each age group swimming against the same.

"This meet is always very special because during the regular season, the bottom of each age group is overshadowed by the older swimmers, but in this meet, this is their chance to shine," said Sleepy Hollow senior assistant coach Anthony Estrada.

Orinda Country Club's (OCC) Sophia Kosturos set new Bottoms Up records in three events. She now holds records in the IM, freestyle, and butterfly for 11 year old girls. Her 100 IM time is 1:07:14, almost two seconds faster than the previous record.

Other individual records fell on the same morning. Tyler Abramson of OCC broke the 50 yard freestyle in a time of 24.33 for 13 year old boys. Natalie Stryker of OCC became the youngest swimmer to be a record holder. At five years old, Stryker owns the record in 25 yard breaststroke, finishing at 24.75.

Less than 75 points separated first to third

place: Orinda Country Club took home the championship with a total of 824.50 points, Meadow Swim & Tennis Club followed with 761.50, and third place went to Sleepy Hollow Legends (SHL) with 755.50.

Following are the high point winners:

5 year old girls, Natalie Stryker, OCC
5 year old boys, Bronsen Trunzo, Miramonte Swim Club (MSC)
7 year old girls, Lindsey Lucas, SHL
7 year old boys, Jordan Kumar, SHL
9 year old girls Channing Hanley, Meadow
9 year old boys Brock Zamanian, Meadow
11 year old girls, Sophia Kosturos, OCC
11 year old boys, Narayan Sharma, SHL
13 year old girls, Amy Larsen, OCC
13 year old boys, Tyler Abramson
15 year old girls, Marie-Claire Schillinger
15 year old boys, Dylan Fara, MSC

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