

## Sebastopol Sea Serpents Championship Short Course Season Recap

The Sebastopol Sea Serpents wrapped up an impressive championship season, competing across **five major meets from late February through April**, showcasing athlete development, record-breaking performances, and strong representation across multiple levels of competition.

### California/Nevada Sectionals (Feb 26–March 1 | Roseville, CA)

The season began at the highly competitive California/Nevada Sectionals, where **Orion Monroe** represented the Sea Serpents as the team's sole qualifier. Orion delivered outstanding swims across all three breaststroke events, significantly outperforming his seed positions:



- **100 Breaststroke** — 59th (seeded 76th), *1:00.68 (new team record)*
- **50 Breaststroke** — 48th (seeded 66th), *28.01*
- **200 Breaststroke** — 34th (seeded 60th), *2:08.70 (new team record)*

---

### Pacific Age Group Championships (March 20–22 | Pleasanton, CA)

At the 14 & Under championship meet, the Sea Serpents were represented by **Orion Monroe** and **Parker Warner**, both delivering standout performances.

#### Parker Warner:

- 7th — 1650 Free (*18:11.29*)
- 6th — 50 Breast (*29.00*)
- 12th — 100 Breast
- 20th — 200 Free
- 36th — 50 Free

#### Orion Monroe:

- 2nd — 50 Breast
- 3rd — 200 Breast
- 4th — 100 Breast
- 8th — 400 IM
- 10th — 200 Fly (*2:06.73 — new team record*)
- 10th — 200 IM (*2:04.44 prelim — new team record*)
- 19th — 100 Fly



The **200 Medley Relay** team of **Johnny Donecker, Parker Warner, Orion Monroe, and Theo Wood** placed **23rd (1:58.17)**, narrowly missing a team record.

---

## Far Western Championships (April 9–12 | Morgan Hill, CA)

At the Pacific Swimming Far Western Championships (18 & Under), both swimmers continued to perform at a high level:

### Parker Warner:

- 21st — 50 Breast, 100 Breast
- 37th — 200 Breast

### Orion Monroe:

- 3rd — 100 Breast
- 4th — 50 Breast, 200 Breast
- 8th — 400 IM
- 16th — 200 IM
- 27th — 100 Fly



Notably, the meet presented unusual challenges, as the **warm-up pool malfunctioned and became unusable due to extremely cold temperatures** on the final day.

---

## North Bay League High School Championships (April 24–25 | Santa Rosa Junior College)

Nine Sea Serpents athletes competed representing their high schools, with multiple top finishes and personal bests:

- **Sidney Ross** — 1st 100 Fly (1:03.50), 4th 50 Free (*first individual school win in ~20 years*)
- **Ella Worthington (Sr.)** — 2nd 50 Free (26.97), 9th 100 Back
- **Jackson Donecker** — 3rd 200 Free (1:58.36), 5th 500 Free
- **Orion Monroe** — 3rd 100 Breast (1:00.15), 5th 200 IM (*potential NCS qualifier*)
- **Lily Johnson** — 6th 500 Free (6:10.65), 8th 100 Fly (1:16.71)
- **Karter Cherney** — 6th 200 Free, 9th 100 Free
- **Rory Cosgrove** — 9th 200 & 500 Free (won consolation heats)
- **Verena Huppi** — 14th 500 Free (consolations)
- **Luciano Tantarelli (Sr.)** — 7th 100 Back (1:04.60), 9th 100 Fly (1:01.97 PB)



## Zone All-Star Meet (April 26 | Morgan Hill, CA)

The championship season concluded with the **Zone All-Star Meet**, a selective age-group competitions in Pacific Swimming. Unlike traditional meets where swimmers qualify individually, this event is structured as a **regional all-star competition**, where swimmers are **selected to represent their geographic zone**.

Pacific Swimming — one of the largest Local Swimming Committees in USA Swimming — is divided into **five geographic zones** spanning Northern California and parts of Nevada to better organize competition across a large region. Each zone (including **Zone 3, made up of San Francisco city and County, Marin County, Sonoma County, Napa County, Western Solano County, Mendocino County, Lake County, Humboldt County and Del Norte County**) selects 8 athletes per age group and gender to form a **Zone Team**.

Our Short Course season concluded with the **Zone All-Star Meet**, where the Sebastopol Sea Serpents had **7 athletes selected**:

### 8 & Under Athletes:

- **Kora Kleinschmidt** — 7th 25 Free, 9th 25 Breast, 10th 25 Fly
- **Diego Watts** — 9th 25 Fly & 100 IM, 10th 25 Breast
- **James Cronin** — 9th 25 Back, 12th 50 Free, 14th 25 Free
- **Saoirse Bair** — 13th 25 Back, 15th 25 Fly, 16th 100 IM
- **Plum Serra** — 10th 25 Breast, 15th 25 Free
- **Lorenzo Watts** — 14th 100 IM, 16th 25 Free

### 13–14:

- **Antonia Cerniglio** — 17th 100 Breast, 18th 200 IM & 200 Free (*all personal bests*)



---

## Season Takeaways

Across five championship meets, the Sebastopol Sea Serpents demonstrated:

- **Multiple team records broken**
- **Strong individual and relay performances**
- **Athletes competing successfully from age-group to senior sectional levels**
- **Growing depth across all age groups**

From record-setting swims at Sectionals to All-Star selections at Zones, this championship season highlights the continued growth and competitive strength of the Sea Serpents program.

---

## Looking Ahead: Long Course Season & the Importance of Training Time

With the conclusion of the Short Course Yards (SCY) championship season, the Sebastopol Sea Serpents now transition into **Long Course Meters (LCM)** — the summer competition format used at championship meets across the United States and internationally.

The difference is significant:

- **Short Course (SCY):** 25-yard pool with frequent turns and push-offs
- **Long Course (LCM):** 50-meter pool with **half as many turns and significantly more swimming between walls**

This change has a significant impact on **racing**:

- **Race strategy shifts** — pacing plays a bigger role, especially in middle- and long-distance events.
- **Times do not directly compare** — due to mathematical and structural differences in the pools — not changes in performance. **A meter is longer than a yard**, so the total race distance is different even when the event name is the same (e.g., “100 Free”)

Training also adjusts to meet these demands, with a greater emphasis on **aerobic conditioning, stroke length, and sustained speed**. For many swimmers, long course season is an opportunity to build strength and technical skills that translate into faster performances when returning to short course in the fall. This shift places a much greater demand on athletes and makes **consistent water time and training hours critical**.

### Why Pool Time Matters Even More in Long Course

- **Endurance becomes more important:** Swimmers must sustain speed for longer distances without the benefit of walls and push-offs.
- **Technique and efficiency are critical:** With fewer turns, efficiency and stroke mechanics become the deciding factor in performance as technique must hold up during fatigue.
- **Training volume directly impacts results:** Success in long course is strongly tied to **consistent attendance** and the **amount of practice time** in the water, not just intensity.
- **Race readiness depends on repetition:** Athletes need regular access to train in the pool to adapt to pacing, timing, and feel for the water in a long course environment.

### Impact on Athlete Development

The performances highlighted this championship season — including **team records, top finishes, and All-Star selections** — are a direct result of **consistent training access and athlete commitment**. Reductions in available training hours limit not only immediate performance, but also long-term athlete development and retention.

As the team enters Long Course season, **maintaining adequate and consistent pool time is essential** to:

- Support continued athlete progression
- Prepare swimmers for championship-level competition
- Ensure safety and proper conditioning in a more demanding training phase

For athletes and families, this also means that **attendance becomes even more important**. The swimmers who see the most improvement in long course are those who are consistently in the water, building endurance, refining technique, and adapting to the longer format.

---