

# Comal Independent School District

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Canyon Lake High coach, students ready to jump into new pool**

Canyon Lake High is a school where new things seem to catch on fast. Since the campus first officially opened its doors in the fall of 2007, a school that's now home to approximately 900 students can boast that more than half of them are involved in some sort of extracurricular activity.

So it shouldn't come as any big surprise that students are already fired up about the fact a brand new 25-yard long pool will be available on campus around the time the 2010-11 school year begins.

"When I signed up for swimming, there were only about 20 other names on the page," said senior Travis Brice. "When I went back to look two weeks later, there were four pages full of names signed up for swimming classes."

Doug Hammen will coach the swim teams at Canyon Lake High, which will be spread out over two class periods.

Hammen has spent a lifetime in the sport since he was introduced to it at a young age. He swam collegiately at the Air Force Academy, and after 21 years as an Air Force pilot, Hammen took a job as the swim team coach at San Antonio Roosevelt High School three years ago.

"I'm absolutely thrilled to be able to build a program from its foundation," said Hammen, who will also teach math at CLHS. "We have the support of the administration, the resources and the athletes in place. I couldn't ask for a better situation."

Canyon Lake High has already qualified for the playoffs in football, basketball, volleyball and baseball, and athletic coordinator Matt Monzingo said he thinks the swimming program will be equally successful.

"We feel fortunate to have hired someone with Doug's experience," Monzingo said. "He's very passionate about the sport."

Hammen said he hopes to have both a boys and girls varsity and junior varsity team. He added that he would like to take the team to about eight competitive meets during the swim season, which lasts from September until February.

“I believe once the program is in place, we will attract a lot of swimmers,” Hammen said. “I really look for it to take off. There aren’t a lot of pools like the one we’re going to have on campus in our area, and that’s one thrilling aspect that drew me to CLHS.”

Junior Kelly Annestrand was on the swim team at San Antonio Churchill High School as a freshman before she moved to CLHS last year.

“I was so excited when I found out we were getting a swim team at Canyon Lake High,” Annestrand said. “I heard about it last year, but I didn’t realize it would happen so quickly. I really feel lucky because there aren’t very many Class 3A schools around that have a pool right on their campus. It will be fun to be the first class of swimmers at the school.”

Canyon Lake High will more than likely participate in the Alamo Area High School Swim League, which holds its meets at the Palo Alto Natatorium in San Antonio. The Hawks should compete in the “D” Division, which groups smaller schools. Once the postseason begins, however, CLHS will have to move up to the Class 4A level for district, regional and state competition since the University Interscholastic League only holds state meets in Class 4A and Class 5A for swimming.

Both Canyon High and Smithson Valley High, which opened pools at the beginning of last school year, also compete in the Alamo Area High School Swim League.

“My ultimate goal for the program is to get Canyon Lake High representation at the regional and eventually the state level,” Hammen said. “Swimming is a very competitive sport, especially in Texas, but I like to set lofty goals.”

Hammen said whether a swimmer he coaches becomes a state champion or someone who enjoys the sport more as recreation, he hopes they catch the same bug he did when he was a youngster.

“I’ve been swimming competitively since I was six. I’m 45 now, and I plan on swimming until I’m 75,” Hammen said. “My number one objective for all of my swimmers is that they learn lessons they can use for a long time to come. I

want them to learn discipline and sportsmanship, and I want them to realize they are participating in a sport they can enjoy the rest of their lives.”

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