NYAC Wins 2012 US Open Crown  
  
From July 20th through July  22nd, the NYAC women's water polo team  
competed in one of the biggest tournaments of the year - the US Open  
National Championships held in Irvine, California.  The 12 team  
national championships included some of the best collegiate  
competition the US and abroad has to offer, including collegiate teams  
from UC Berkley and UCLA.  Entering as the reigning 2011 US Open of  
Water Polo champions, coaches Mike Judge and Peter Felvegi had only  
winning expectations for this incredibly dynamic team.  
  
The NYAC A team, spearheaded by US national team veterans Lauren  
Silver, Tanya Gandy, Anne Belden and Juliet Moss, cruised through the  
first game of the round robin bracket with a resounding win against  
Diablo B 20-1.  Feeling confident with their driving offense, NYAC A  
team continued their strategy to out-pace opposing teams.  With the  
help of 2011 World University Games silver medalist Leah Robertson and  
UCLA standout KK Clark, NYAC A team continued their offensive assault  
with impressive wins against SOCAL Gold, 8-3, and American River 20-5.  
  
The final game of the round robin bracket, against Diablo A, would  
decide what seed NYAC A had heading into the elimination portion of  
the tournament.  Although national team veteran Forel Davies and 2011  
World University Games medalist Stephanie Schnugg unleashed every  
defensive tactic in the book, NYAC A team could not shut down the  
Diablo A offense, loosing a hard fought game 10-12.  
  
Undeterred, NYAC A team knew they still had a chance to defend their  
2011 title - they just had to win their semi-final game against SOCAL  
Black. Refocused, NYAC A team honed in on their defensive press with  
the help of Olympic silver medalist Coralie Simmons and Stanford  
standout Kelly Eaton leading the way with steals. Leaving little to  
the imagination, NYAC A team beat SOCAL Black 11-6 to earn a spot in  
the championship final.  
  
The championship game was a rematch of titans: NYAC A team verses  
Diablo A, one the reigning champions and the other with a perfect  
record this tournament.  
NYAC A team came out swinging with UC Berkeley  
standout Melissa Wheeler converting fast breakaways into goals early  
in the first quarters. Not to be outdone, NYAC goalie Cassie Wyckoff  
reminded spectators why defense is just as important in water polo  
with multiple blocks on Diablo A's offensive strikes.  Battling back and  
forth for the entire game, NYAC A team put one final goal away in the  
remaining minute to take the championship 8-7.  
  
With the championship title safely back in the New York Athletic Club's  
possession, the accolades kept pouring in with Lauren Silver winning  
MVP of the tournament as well as Tanya Gandy and Juliet Moss garnering  
first team recognition.  
  
Coaches Mike Judge and Peter Felvegi were on double duty that weekend  
as they also coached NYAC B team in this year's tournament. Playing  
extremely aggressively throughout the weekend, NYAC B team also took  
in wins against OMBAC 9-6 and Aztec 10-7.  Led by Junior National team  
member Taylor Dunstan and UCLA veteran Molly Cahill, NYAC B team  
displayed a solid offense throughout the tournament.  Also showing off  
their defensive skills were whole-set Stacy Werner and goalie Marissa  
Gaynor who worked diligently to keep the ball in NYAC B team's  
possession. With hard fought losses against SOCAL Gold, 11-5, UC  
Berkley, 12-6 and SOCAL Black, 12-4, the B team finished in a solid 6th  
place - four places higher than last year.  
  
With the US Open of Water Polo championship trophy resting in its  
rightful home at the New York Athletic Club, the 2013 season is poised  
to be an exciting one as the women's water polo team prepares to  
defend their two-time national title.