

Carroll Swimmer Jack LeVant Making Mark In and Out of Pool

By **NICK WALTERS** - Mar 22, 2018

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Southlake Carroll Senior Swimming Captain Jack LeVant (Photo: Dallas Morning News)

Jack LeVant's success started with the character that was instilled in him at a young age by parents who had a passion for whatever their son wanted to be involved in.

"They've never lacked in showing support and having my back," LeVant said. "Just making sure that whatever I was doing, that it was something I was passionate about and that I should always bring my best effort."





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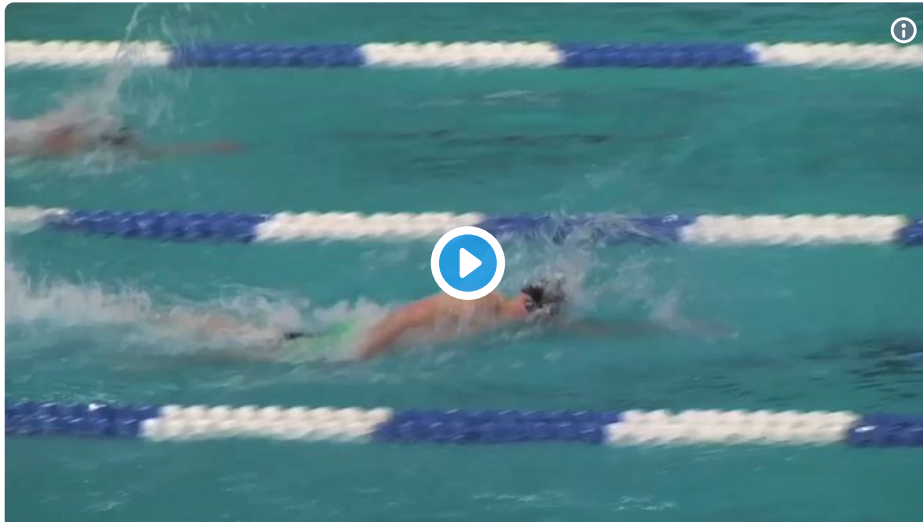


LeVent got into competitive swimming at just five years of age. He believes that he was born with a natural affinity for the water and he just really loved the sport right from the moment he touched the water.

Because of his father's job, Jack, his parents and his younger brother Lucas moved to Southlake right before Jack started his seventh grade year.

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He considers it a blessing to have gotten to move to Southlake and be around people that positively influenced his life.



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“I’m so grateful that we did end up moving to Southlake and it just worked out so perfectly because there’s nowhere else I would have wanted to be for high school,” LeVant said. “Coach

Murphy has been an outstanding influence on my life. He's really helped me develop my character, and then I've had some teammates who have always been there for me through the years. That's something that I don't think everyone is as fortunate as me to have on their journey, so I'm definitely really thankful for my teammates. It's just such a great environment."



Swimming for Carroll has taught Jack that relationships are everything in this world and teamwork is how units succeed.

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“I think the biggest thing it has taught me is the importance of loving and supporting one another,” LeVant said. “Nothing great in this world can be done alone, and I feel like it’s really taught me the importance of just having your teammates’ backs and always supporting them and making sure they’re being the best they can be.”

Ever since moving up into the high school ranks, Jack has always been the first to follow the rules and the most eager to learn new lessons and improve in whatever way possible, whether as a swimmer or as an individual.

“Whatever you give him to do, he’s going to execute it. If you teach him something, he implements it. He does everything he’s asked to do,” Coach Kevin Murphy said. “If you are lending him some wisdom or you’re guiding him, he absorbs the information and actually goes forward to implement it.”

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LeVent will be the first one to tell you that buying in to what Coach Murphy has to teach will improve not only an athlete's swimming, but also develop their character.

“He's been a phenomenal coach, so obviously that's helped me a lot in the swim pool, but as far as me personally, I think the biggest thing he has helped me with is remembering to stay humble and be grateful for the gifts that I've been given,” LeVent said. “I'm really lucky and I've gotten some amazing opportunities handed to me, and the most important thing he always tried to reiterate to me was just the importance of humility.”

As LeVent has gone through high school, he has become a very fine athlete, winning both the 50-yard freestyle and the 100-yard butterfly at the Texas 6A State Championships as a sophomore.

Because swimmers are only allowed two individual events at the high school level, Jack and Carroll Head Coach Kevin Murphy decided that his best events offered at high school meets were the longer 200- and 500-yard freestyles.

After three years of swimming the sprint 50 free and the 100 fly at the state meet, LeVent swam the 200 free and the 500 free as a senior.

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These were definitely the right events for Jack, as he demolished the state record of 1:36.27 set by former Carroll Dragon Alex Zettle in the 200 free with a time of 1:33.57 in the first individual

event of the 2018 State Championships in Austin, Texas. This really inspired the boys' team after a bumpy first day.



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“We were a little bit in the mud on the first day and he went out there and just swam super well,” Carroll Senior Logan Henry said. “He just got us all pumped up after that and that was huge because all our best swims were fueled by that same kind of energy.”

Then Jack went out there and broke Carroll legend and multi-time NCAA All-American Jonathan Roberts' four-year-old school and state record of 4:16.90 in the 500 free with a blistering time of 4:16.78. LeVent considered this a true honor.





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“To be able to go after a benchmark that [Jonathan Roberts] set and lower it is something that I think is really cool,” LeVant said. “Hopefully it will inspire the next generation of Dragons and maybe the next generation of Texas swimmers to keep striving for greatness.”

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You will never find Jack telling people all about his great swimming or talking about all that he has done for his teams.

“I think it was really cool because he’s humble,” Henry said. “He’s always looking out for other people, he never gets caught up in his own race. It’s not ever about him or him not swimming well. He’s always looking to the team; he’s always looking to better the guys around him.”

And better the people around him he has, letting his work ethic and his humility do the talking. This has set a phenomenal example for the people around him.

“He embodies three aspects that you need to be successful. He has talent, he has work ethic, and he maintains his humility throughout the process, no matter how fast he gets,” Murphy said. “A lot of the kids on the team have a yard sign that they put out in front of the pool and his yard sign says, ‘stay humble.’ So as he’s improved and become such a great swimmer, he has maintained his humility and his character. Everybody looks up to him and he takes that mantle and wears it well without being overly confident. His self-confidence is there and he performs for the team. You can’t ask for more as a coach.”

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What Jack has done in the water does not even begin to describe what he has meant to the people around him. He has treated people with a regard and a consideration that is hard to find in people blessed with such great talent in today's world.

“He's respectful to the people around him. I think that's evident with how people treat him when they're up on the podium with him,” Henry said. “Everyone is kind of honored to talk to him. He just goes about business the right way, he's not showy about it, just very humble. I think he's respected by a lot of his peers, all of the kids that are fast below him look to be like him.”

LeVant goes to practice, outworks everybody, stays humble and leads by example, things that have surely contributed to his great deal of success in the swimming pool.



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Another important lesson that Jack has learned in his time swimming would be to always be thankful for what you have and the opportunities you are given.

“I think humility is the most important thing because however good you may think you are and however good you may get, there’s probably always going to be someone better,” LeVant said. “You just have to be grateful for what you get because you can lose it in a second. So you’ve got to enjoy it while you have it and never take it for granted.”

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Then what he has meant to Carroll swimming and what he has meant to his friends speaks volumes to what kind of a kid and what kind of a friend and what kind of a leader he is.

He has used how good he is and how he carries himself to influence and inspire the people around him and teach them lessons about life. Logan Henry, who happens to have known Jack through club and high school swimming and become very close with him since he moved to Southlake in 2012, admits that Jack has taught him some of the most important lessons about life.

“I think I’ve also learned that as far as you can get in some sport, as good as you can be at swimming, just always be humble,” Henry said. “Always shake other peoples’ hands, be there for your teammates and be the biggest fan of the guys around you. Just to kind of use your position to be humble and to help others.”

To Jack, life is really all about the influence you have on those around you and how you can touch those people.

His parents clearly raised him the right way, supporting whatever he wanted to excel in and instilling in him just how important relationships are.

“I feel the most important part of life is developing those relationships with other people, and I hope to impact them,” LeVant said. “I hope that they remember me as someone who was always really friendly and caring, because I try to put the needs of others first as much as I can and help others find the best within themselves.”

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Now that his high school career is over, LeVant plans to attend Stanford University in the fall to study and swim and hopefully impact more lives along the way.

“Swimming at Stanford is a dream come true for me,” LeVant said. “It’s something that I’ve strived for my entire life and I just want to make the most out of the opportunity.”

*I am honored to announce my verbal commitment to swim and study at Stanford University!
pic.twitter.com/5JnysffaT*

— Jack LeVant (@jacklevant10399) June 16, 2017

You could even look to the future and it would seem like a pretty safe bet to predict that he will make the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo, Japan.

His coaches and many of his teammates hope to get to see him compete in Tokyo. Coach Murphy hopes that future Carroll swimmers can follow the example that Jack set in his time at Carroll and lead by example in the same way LeVant did, even if they may not be quite as fast as him.

“I think if he has a good training year at Stanford, I think it’s very possible,” Henry said. “I think he’s one of the most special talents out there, in the way that he’s built and the mind that has to go with it and his work ethic.”

#Swimming: Jack LeVant Claims Two Wins at 2017 Speedo Sectionals in College Station
<https://t.co/OLC6vdTSSr> pic.twitter.com/14RkXk7aZW

— Supperrb* (@supperrb) February 25, 2017

But Jack has bigger plans for his swimming than competing at the Olympic Games.

“Ultimately, the end goal for me in swimming is not necessarily to make the Olympic Team, as great as that would be,” LeVant said. “Rather it’s to be able to look back one day on my time as a swimmer and realize that all the blood, sweat and tears that I’ve put into the sport were worth it in helping me become a better person.”

Written by Sean Murphy - Former Carroll Swimmer, Son of SLC Swim Coach Kevin Murphy

Edited by Nick Walters

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Tate Martell could break college football's transfer system

By **CHRIS HUMMER** - Mon Feb 11 2019

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College football's shifted with the aggressiveness of the new-age transfer market. No player more profoundly represents that than **Tate Martell**.

The former Ohio State and current Miami signal caller was once a recruiting trailblazer of the modern age. Now, the third-year QB is pushing the boundaries of a transfer guideline that's long held firm against immediate eligibility.

Justin Fields is a notable example of this trend. Georgia's freshman backup a season ago, Fields bolted for Columbus this offseason and submitted an appeal the NCAA approved last week for immediate eligibility. Playing time played a role in Fields' desire to depart – **Jake Fromm** wasn't budging off Georgia's starting job – but his appeal centered around an off-field incident at Georgia.

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Martell is a different sort of case.

The former Top247 quarterback loudly proclaimed his intention to compete with Fields before the five-star arrived in Columbus. Yet Martell left Ohio State shortly after Fields' announcement. Martell's transfer reasoning seems simple: He wanted to play and thought he had a better opportunity to do so elsewhere.

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It's what makes Martell's waiver so intriguing. A long-standing NCAA rule states football undergraduate transfers must sit out a year in residence transferring to another FBS program. Fair or unfair – and that's not the question for today – non-graduate athletes can't transfer without penalty on the grounds of playing time. Martell's case could open the floodgates for NCAA policy change and create a precedent that would shake the college football world if approved.

Not that Martell's waiver is simple.

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Publicly, it's presumed Martell will challenge for immediate eligibility citing Ohio State's sudden coaching change from **Urban Meyer** to **Ryan Day**. Martell's lawyer, Travis Leach, has said as much. But Martell's waiver will have more layers than that. You should fully expect Martell to cite a number of previous precedents in his appeal, including potential "egregious behavior" by Ohio State or the more recent modification to the waiver guidelines that allows an athlete to cite "documented mitigating circumstances that are outside the student-athlete's control and directly impact the health, safety and well-being of the student-athlete." Fifty-one of 64 NCAA players who appealed for immediate eligibility since that modification saw their waivers approved, per the most recent NCAA data.

One does not need much mental exercise to connect potential "mitigating circumstances" for Martell to Ohio State's offseason issues with **Urban Meyer** and **Zach Smith**. CBS Sports previously reported Martell considered using those program transgressions as a reasoning for *transfer prior to the season*; one might surmise that was a leak by Martell's camp to show Martell considered transferring before Fields arrived.

"There were some things that happened at Ohio State that we can potentially get some relief from the NCAA, and we're going to try it that way," Leach told the Toledo Blade. "The coaching staff turnover is an issue. There are a few things. There's no real bright-line test that tells you 100 percent how you can get a waiver. This is a tough one, but there are some good facts on his side.

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"You try to throw as much against the way as you can."



(Photo: Joe Scarnici, Getty)

That leads to something many miss with Martell's case. His is not a cut and dry appeal – nobody's is. The NCAA's process is convoluted, so much so a mini-industry's popped up around waivers to help athletes parse the hundred of pages of documents needed to deal with the waiver process.

“People know publicly about certain factors that go into cases, but they don't know everything,” said Tim Nevius, a New York lawyer who operates a practice that centers around advocating for college athletes. “The public doesn't know all the facts and circumstances an athlete is dealing with in his or her life that would give the NCAA a basis to grant a waiver.”

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Thus, whatever the result of Martell's waiver, it's important to remember his situation is unique. Nobody will have the same set of circumstances as Martell in the future, which makes speculation about any future results hazardous.

That's why athletes are hiring representation.

“The system is stacked against the athletes,” Nevius said.

Martell isn't the last notable waiver the college football world will follow this offseason. His is, however, the most important. Martell's case could serve as a spark for significant legislative change. No matter the circumstances Martell cites in his documentation, the reasoning for his appeal is transparent. He wants to play now. His desire to do so could expose flaws in an entire system. If Martell's waiver is granted, it'll inspire a flood of similar cases that could lead to the elimination of the year-in-resident requirement, bringing college football one step closer to quasi-free agency.

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