

Amarillo Swim Team
Work Hard, Work Smart, Swim Fast

LaneLines

April 2008

AST Announcements and Information:

The Amarillo Swim Team WILL NOT attend the Suntan Classic at Las Cruces, New Mexico as originally planned during the first weekend in May. This is the week of TAKS for the Amarillo school district. This is a long way to travel on a date that we will be busy conducting and taking the tests. Instead we will be focusing on doing a team trip to a meet during the summer as our “big trip”.

AST will be attending a meet in Abilene on April 26, 2008. This is the Moon Pie Madness Sprint meet that you will find the information on as attached to this newsletter. Please consider having your child swim this meet as it was placed on the calendar for situations like our LSC finds itself in. We as coaches have recognized that we often go too long without a competition, and that practicing day in and day out for weeks on end without a chance to see what progress is being made can sometimes be tedious. Therefore we have put this meet at this time of year to gauge that progress. Meet information is available at www.amarilloswimteam.com. I'm no longer sure we will be attending this meet unless everyone is wanting to drive down EARLY Saturday morning... The hotels in Abilene are all booked, and those that aren't are going for \$200+ per night... Some UIL thing is going on...

Please take time to check out the new format of the team website at www.amarilloswimteam.com. Check out all of the pages and email me if you see anything that is out of place, missing, or has incorrect information. Feedback is very important as it lets us know 1) who is actually visiting our site (and everyone needs to on a regular basis) and 2) what changes or information that you would like to see, or need to see presented.

Senior & Juniors

Swimmers of the Month Senior: Mark Solis

Swimmers of the Month Junior: Elizabeth Humphrey and Jean Dai

Blue Team:

Kaytlin Lee: klee1@go.wtamu.edu

Swimmers of the Month: Megan Murphy and Taylor Hanson.

Red & White

Luke Thomason: luke.thomason@amaisd.org

Swimmers of the month: No report received.

High School News

The most exciting news is that the High School Teams are practicing at the Amarillo Town Club this year.

High school practice times: REMINDER – *These starting times are times you ENTER the water, not the time you show up, then get ready, talk to your friends, stretch, etc...*

Morning Team Practice:
0600 to 0730 at ATC

This practice requires coaches' approval for swimmer to attend.

Afternoon Team Practice:

1500 to 1700 (3-5pm)

All swimmers that are not swimming in the morning.

Amarillo High: Brad Douglass: brad.douglass@amaisd.org

The morning swim team will start back on Monday the 31st of March. We will workout from 6:30 to 7:15 on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

The team will continue this schedule for all of April. No practices will be held in May.

"Be the change you want to see in the world" -Gandhi

Tascosa : Amy Seitz: amy.seitz@amaisd.org

Life guarding to start March 31st for high school swimmers. We will hold class each day from 3:30-4:30. if you are interested contact Coach Seitz. I will be hiring guards for the summer time at Amarillo Country Club. If you are interested in a summer job let me know. I would love to have lots of swimmers out there from all four high schools and any one else that is interested. This is a good time to get started in club swimming for the summer season and also a good time to start looking for swim camps.

Caprock/Palo Duro: Eric O. DeMar: eric.demar@amaisd.org

Caprock High School Swimming held their annual Swim Banquet in conjunction with the Palo Duro Swim Banquet on April 1, 2008 and it was a good time. It was held at the Big Texan and this was a new experience for all. The night went very smooth with nearly all the swimmers in attendance. The following awards were presented:

Caprock & Palo Duro Swimming Awards 2007-2008

Coaches' Award (Female)	Corissa Rodriguez & Danae Gray
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Coaches' Award (Male)	Cody Johnson & Nathan Tarrant
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Breakout (Female)	Audry Martinez
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Breakout (Male)	Anthony DeHoyos
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Most Determined (Female)	Ashley Bullard
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Most Determined (Male)	Johnny Moore
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Most Dedicated (Female)	Allyson Funderberg
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Most Dedicated (Male)	Michael Coots (PD)
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Most Improved (Female)	Sonia Lopez
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Most Improved (Male)	Bruce Winburn & Vanse Aguilar
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Rookie of the Year (Female)	Audry Martinez
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Rookie of the Year (Male)	Matthew Cepeda & Michael Coots (PD)
Female Athlete of the Year	Audry Martinez
Male Athlete of the Year	David Matlock

How's Your Head Game?

The Olympic Trials are the last stop before the Games, and once again, the meet will mark the place where some dreams begin and others end. Anything can happen. Up-and-comers fight with amazing guts to earn an Olympic berth, while even seasoned veterans, displaying unshakable confidence, can be plagued by cruel fate and devastating failure.

If there was ever a swim meet more demanding of mental stamina, the Olympic Trials has got to be it. The brutal process allows a zero margin for error. One-hundredth of a second can separate an Olympian from a swimmer going home. So how do Olympic hopefuls keep it together when everything is on the line? What is it that gives the go-to guy strength he didn't know he had? And how will these talented athletes stay mentally charged during this seven-day pressure cooker?

Whether you're an elite swimmer facing Olympic Trial demons or you're out for your very first swim meet, follow this advice for improving your mental strategies for peak performance.

Ditch the Outcome Mindset

Going into a big meet such as the Trials, the obvious goal is to make the Olympic Team. But the fact of the matter is, you can't bring those goals to Trials with you, says sports psychologist Alan Goldberg, PhD. Thinking to yourself, 'I want to qualify,' is a huge mistake because you can't control the outcome. And the moment you concentrate on the wrong thing, you'll raise stress levels, lower your confidence and tighten up.

"Don't see it as 'tomorrow is the big-man competition that separates the men from the boys,' or you'll just increase the pressure. The outcome is a mental mistake that can cost you dearly," says Goldberg. Instead, focus on what you can control, such as race strategy, and staying calm and relaxed.

Getting psyched out by heavy-hitters is another common mistake. Intimidating opponents are irrelevant, says Goldberg. The real competition is in between your two lane lines.

"You're going to go faster focusing on your own race than you will if you try to beat someone," he said.

Relax!

It sounds basic, but staying calm and focused is not easy for everyone. Goldberg suggests using a pre-race ritual to relax. Rituals are important because they're familiar and comforting. Do what is normal – eat the same foods, stretch the same way, swim the same warm-up, etc.

Another tip is to control what your eyes see and ears hear. Don't look around at the competition, or think negatively while stretching. You'll tighten up, defeating the purpose. Try a popular stretching technique – progressive muscle relaxation – concentrating on each muscle group from head to toe. Stretch each group, hold for 10 seconds, and then slowly release.

And don't forget to breathe. "If you can control your breathing, you can control anything," says Goldberg. He suggests inhaling slowly for four seconds, holding for two, and then slowly exhaling for four. When you master

this technique, incorporate mental imagery into your breathing pattern. Imagine the crowd, TV cameras, noise, even the chlorine smell. Picture your self staying calm and swimming a perfect race.

Whether your techniques include personal rituals, stretching and breathing patterns, mental imagery, or divine intervention and prayer, start practicing now. Don't wait until a big meet to try something new. Remember, familiarity tames anxiety.

Break it Down

With any race, many swimmers will create unnecessary work, stress and self-induced pressure. "Simply do what needs to be done, and no more," says sports psychologist Jim Bauman, PhD. He breaks down the mental process into four simple steps: simplify, believe to win, execute and know your engine, and stay healthy.

First, simplify your life in and out of swimming. Every week should become easier as you approach the big meet. Bauman suggests using a training calendar to help you say no to things that take away from pool time. Plan your training, as well as your recovery and travel days, so that your calendar becomes your secretary and lets you focus on the task at hand.

Second, you must believe. Develop a genuine expectation of success. How closely can you match your goal time to what you can do on any given day? Define what needs to be done to connect those points, and do it. It's not about hoping, but about expecting it from yourself and believing it will happen.

Next, execute a plan. If you swim multiple events at your upcoming meet, have a pre-race, race and post-race plan in order to stay focused for each event. Build in a warm-up, warm-down, rest and recovery. Refuel and regroup your mental state. Execute your plan and think of it as, 'Event 1 is Job 1. My job is to swim the 50 free as fast as I can.'

Also, be in tune with your engine. Bauman suggests comparing your body to a car. What is your tachometer reading before, during and after a race? Recognize when your engine is idling too low or when the needle is in the red, burning up too much energy. Know how many RPMs your engine will run most efficiently. The grade in your fuel tank can also make or break a performance. Is it topped off with proper nutrition, hydration and rest? More importantly, what's in your reserve tank? When warning lights start to flash, and you go into oxygen debt, how will your engine respond? Knowing this can make the difference between you going into overdrive, and your competitor looking for a gas station.

Finally, stay healthy. Limit your exposure to crowds and new environments. Save the extra energy that you get from a good taper. You've heard the mott "If you can walk, don't run. If you can drive, don't walk. If you can sit, don't drive. If you can sleep, don't sit. Above all, rest when it's time to rest, and go fast when it's time to go fast!"

Keep Quiet

How many times have you heard that the race is 90 percent mental? Not true, says Bauman. Your race should really be 80 to 90 percent physical, technical and tactical, and only 10 to 20 percent mental. "Anything more, you'll be in trouble," says Bauman. "It should be a physical effort, while mentally going along for the ride."

Think back to a disappointing race. You can probably recall what you were thinking and can describe it using lots of "feeling" words (felt good, strong and loose).

Now recall your best race. What were you thinking about? Possibly nothing, if you were on auto-pilot. You stopped thinking and just let it happen. Bauman suggests that the best race swum is mentally quiet because all

the effort goes into being technically and tactically proficient. You can think – which can make you nervous and steal precious energy from the body – or you can perform. Stay mentally quiet and just let it happen automatically. Says Bauman, “Don’t try to do it - Just do it.”

Taming the Butterflies

If you’ve tried everything and just can’t control your nervous energy, sports psychologist Jim Bauman suggests switching gears. Dig deep and face what you fear. Many athletes have a fear of failure, but they don’t fight it. Instead, they embrace the incredible experience of racing and enjoy doing what it takes for them to compete. If anxiety is welcomed, it can be a positive and addictive tool. Most champions do anything to feel it. Veterans overcome obstacles and train all over again because they can’t get enough of it. The thrill of the race is why swimmers compete and why Olympic heroes come back begging for more.

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If you would prefer to receive your newsletter by e-mail, please let me know. Candy Stegall – stegall@suddenlink.net

AST is collecting for a **building fund**. *We have **\$2650.00** in the building fund as of 3-26-2008.*

We are on the web at www.amarilloswimteam.com.