



Starting Block

TAC TITANS Newsletter



January 2018

TITANS Mission:

To Prepare every Swimmer for Optimal Performance and Leadership - Both In and Out of the Water.

TITANS Code:

- ▶ Show up
- ▶ Pay attention to details.
- ▶ Be honest
- ▶ Honor your teammates by your effort

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Coaches Corner

It is an exciting part of the year!

We are just coming off an outstanding winter break training phase, we took advantage of the opportunity to race at the Polar Plunge and now we turn our attention to the championship meet portion of our season. We have five big meets that different groups will be targeting: NC Age Group Champs, NC Senior Champs, Age Group Sectionals, ISCA Junior National Championships and Tar Heel States. Each coach has a plan in place for their group(s) to have optimum performances at these championship meets. Attendance at this time of the year is extremely important because preparation to swim fast is designed through progressions over the next four to eight weeks.

I think it is important for all of us to remind each other that great teams can support one another at the highest level. Part of that support is that we all share in the successes of our program and celebrate when one of the TITANS in our group does well. We are all a part of something bigger than ourselves (THE TAC TITANS) and know that we all play a key role when someone else does great things. Remember that our strength is in numbers; together we conquer, divided we fall. Together is how we win championship meets. At this time of the season, our coaching staff is trying to strengthen our "Swimmer Engagement Model" where our main goal is to give each swimmer a reason to WANT to come back every day. I ask each coach a simple question: Would YOU want to swim in YOUR group in YOUR practice? I want each swimmer to leave each practice happier than when

they arrived, get them thinking positively about the next practice. Just think if we as a staff can come close to the goals of our "Swimmer Engagement Model" what we can accomplish together. A few things that we all can do to help set ourselves up for a great championship season:

- **REST:** Take advantage of the weekends coming up to get sleep and recover. Rest, nap, take some time off your feet. Go to bed on a regular weekday schedule.
- **DWELL ON THE POSITIVES:** Get in the habit of believing in yourself by dwelling on the positives. Think of the things you do well and your capabilities.
- **THINK YOU WILL DO IT.** Affirmations boost confidence.
- **REPLAY PAST SUCCESSES:** Remind yourself of past successes. Success yields success.
- **BELIEVE:** How many times have you swum a personal best time since you started swimming? "Hundreds of times". And, you know what? On each of those occasions you swam faster than you ever swum in your life. And every one of those times you had no reason to believe you could do it. You had no proof, no evidence that you could go fast. You also had NO reason to believe you could not. The same is true now. You have no proof that you can swim any faster than your present best time, BUT, you have NO reason to believe that you cannot. **BELIEVE!**

LET'S GET READY TO BE A TITAN!

Upcoming Important Dates

WHEN	WHAT	MORE INFO
Feb 11	Deadline to Register for NC Senior Champs	Meets Tab on TITANS Webpage
Feb 11	Deadline to Register for NC Age Group Champs	Meets Tab on TITANS Webpage
Feb 15-18	NC SCY Senior Championships	Meets Tab on TITANS Webpage
Feb 19	Deadline to Register for Senior Sectionals	Meets Tab on TITANS Webpage
Feb 19	Champs Dinner: NC Age Group Champs TITANS	Coming Soon via Email

TITANS Rank 10th in the Country—USA Swimming Virtual Club Championship

CONGRATULATION TO THE TAC TITANS—10TH IN THE COUNTRY!



The purpose of the Virtual Club Championship (VCC) program is to recognize and highlight clubs that are developing athletes and achieving success at multiple levels in the club swimming continuum emphasizing the team element in club swimming. This program serves as a key part of the Athlete Development & Performance component of the Club Recognition Program.

RANK	VCC TEAM SCORE	CLUB NAME	LOC	CITY
1	280846	Nation's Capital Swim Club	PV	Bethesda
2	283340	Rockstar Montgomery Swim Club	PV	Rockville
3	281338	NASA of Virginia Aquatics, Inc	VA	Richmond
4	281848	Yosemite Honeysuckles	CA	Yreka
5	284807	SwimMAC Carolina	NC	Charlotte
6	284880	SwimAtlanta	GA	Laniercrest
7	283000	King Aquatics Club	PA	Seattle
8	283008	Dynasty Swim Club	GA	Atlanta
9	287598	Nova Swimming	ST	Austin
10	288887	TAC Titans	NC	Cary

You can find complete rankings and more information about VCC at:

<https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/times/virtual-club-championship-search>.

This accomplishment is due to all the hard work done by our coaches, swimmers, administration and parents. It takes support in all areas for a team to be successful. Together we conquer and divided we fall.

THE RISE OF THE TITANS! Are we where we want to be? NO, but, we are moving in a very positive direction. **NICE JOB TEAM!**

Tapering for the Championships

By TITANS Head Coach Bruce Marchionda

As you all know, swimming taper has generally meant a reduction in the training load and “pointing” toward the championship meet. In order to have a successful taper a swimmer must have done the necessary training during the season and enough good sense to know that the time has come to swim fast in a championship meet through a taper. The swimmer must understand that there is a time to train, do it (and you certainly have done that – still some work to go) and a time to rest, use it! There are physiological advantages in a taper. Energy levels are at a high level as glycogen levels peak, and the body has super adapted to the high training stress levels that are reduced during taper. This physical high through less stress and more rest will result in peak performances. The mental aspects of the taper are just as important, if not more important. Stay focused; try not to focus on the uncontrollable. Remember the only thing you can control is

BELIEVE – ACHIEVE – SUCCEED

POSITIVE SELF TALK
RELAXATION
MENTAL REHERSAL
SLEEP
STAY HYDRATED
DON'T ROLLERSKATE IN TRAFFIC
PAY ATTENTION TO DETAILS

yourself. Concentrate on what you are going to do – no one else. There is no doubt in my mind that you are set-up for a great taper and you will swim fast! The little things can and will make a difference. A couple of 100ths might make the difference in making the finals, making a cut or doing a personal best. During the final stages of taper, have one goal, to be super on a race day!!! We do not have to be super every day leading into our championship meet and we haven't been. We don't have to feel great every day, the only thing that counts is that we do it on the race day. Our team has just about completed the hard training, very well I must add, now it is time to believe. Believe it and achieve it! Mentally prepare: every race thought is a positive one, a successful one. Confidently practice your races for a short time each day. See yourself swimming fast and easy. Mentally practice a fast but relaxed start, a super turn, a great finish to the touch pad. See yourself accelerating into each wall. You can visualize a race each night before you fall asleep.

7 TITANS to represent NC at the Open Water Zones Meet

Seven TITANS athletes have been invited to represent North Carolina Swimming on the 2018 Open Water Zone Team. The team will compete at the Open Water Zone meet in Chattanooga on June 1-3, 2018.



Congratulations to the following TITANS on making the team:

- **11/12 Girls: Keelan Cotter**
- **11/12 Boys: Brian Farrell**
- **13/14 Girls: Brooke Zettel, Lauren Grimsrud**
- **13/14 Boys: Michael Cotter**
- **15/16 Girls: Mia Nordstrom**
- **15/16 Boys: Connor Hughes**



Swim Meet Nutrition

By Dr. Rachel Sorg, D.C.

Swim meets present a nutritional challenge for all swimmers. Swimming multiple events over multiple days is taxing on the body and can seriously dehydrate and deplete muscle glycogen stores, thereby inhibiting performance. **The key to remaining properly hydrated and fueled during a swim meet is preparation. Know your race schedule in advance, plan your snacks and meals, and pack accordingly. Failing to plan = planning to fail!**

During the swim meet, the timing and amount of exactly when and what you eat is really up to each individual swimmer. This will require some experimentation. Ideally, you should try to eat as soon as possible after you have finished warming down in order to give yourself time to digest and recover before your next race. As a general rule of thumb, swimmers will want to stick with easily digestible complex carbohydrates such as vegetables, berries, dried fruit (no sugar added), Granny smith apples, and/or minimally processed whole or sprouted grain crackers. However, don't forget that healthy fats are required by the body, are a great source of energy, and help lower inflammation so they do not need to be avoided! These include raw nuts and seeds, grass-fed yogurt, sugar-free peanut or nut butters, and coconut oil.

At the end of each meet session, swimmers will want to properly re-fuel with carbohydrates and protein. The ideal ratio of carbohydrates to protein is anywhere from 1:1 to 4:1. This ratio has been shown to help replenish muscle glycogen stores that are depleted during racing. One example would be a smoothie made with almond or coconut milk, frozen berries, and one serving of high quality grass-fed or plant protein. Another example would be one serving of free range chicken, grass-fed beef, or wild-caught fish, with mixed vegetables and a small sweet potato.

Besides food, it is extremely important to always stay hydrated! If you feel dizzy, light-headed, or extremely tired, re-hydrate with coconut water or electrolyte water. Avoid "sports drinks" and "energy drinks" as these are typically highly processed and contain high amounts of sugar and additives.

Lastly, while it's tempting to "pig out" at the end of the meet, try to avoid the junk food binge! Remember, at the end of the day a swimmer should be eating a balanced whole foods diet consisting of complex carbohydrates, healthy fats, and quality proteins while avoiding sugar and processed foods. **In other words, the main thing to always remember is eat real food.**

Get Mentally Ready to Swim Fast

By Nori Pennisi, Mental Skills Specialist

It is that time of year. Championship season is upon us. Bigger meets. Race day. Wanting to do really well? Feeling nervous? It can be both a scary and awesome time of the year! It is the time of the year you have been working towards all season. All those practices. The dryland training. The early morning training sessions. Being nervous and having butterflies in your stomach is very normal for some of us. It shows you care about how you swim. As someone once said, "The key is to have your butterflies flying in formation and not all crazy inside of you." Recognizing that nerves are normal and can be good will allow you to swim your best. Here are a few additional tips on swimming fast and using those nerves to your advantage!

Focus on the controllables – Who is swimming next to you, how fast somebody else goes or is going, what your coach or parents might say are all factors out of your control and won't help you swim fast in that moment. So focus on what you can control like exploding off the blocks or not breathing into and out of the wall. Paying attention to those controllable details will help you swim your best.

Be positive and use cue words – You have a better chance of being successful if you think more positively than negatively. Be your own best friend and encourage and cheer yourself on. Don't just let your mind wander. Be purposeful in telling yourself positive things. Have a few cue words, such as "fast," "easy speed," "I am strong," and "I can do it." Simple, short, and to the point. Repeat them to yourself, especially when you get a little nervous.

Be confident or at least fake it – Although you may not feel confident, you can always act like it. Fake it until you make it. You may not always believe in yourself, but you can always act like you do. Nobody needs to know the difference, and you can often trick yourself into believing in yourself. Stand tall and big and pretend you are an Olympian, such as Michael Phelps or Claire Donahue!

Visualize, visualize, and visualize – Imagine yourself being successful. Use all your senses when you visualize: sight, sound, taste, smell, touch, as well as your kinesthetic sense (how your body and muscles feel as they move). Add emotion to your visualization. Put details in your image, especially looking up at the scoreboard and seeing the time you want. Maybe visualize as you relax right before you go to bed. Repeat over and over, starting now.

Follow your routine – Do what you normally do before and after a race. Eat well, warm up, talk to your coaches, do your stretches, and go. Following a routine helps keep you focused. It helps you so that you do not have to think too much about what you should be doing since, if you have a routine, you already know what you need to be doing. It doesn't matter the meet or the race, just do what you know helps you and what you normally do. No need to psyche up any differently than you have all season long when you swam well.

Trust your training – You have put in the time. You have put in the effort. You have put in the work. You have done what you can to be better, whether it is working hard at circuit or yoga or going to morning practices. You have coaches who care about you. So trust the training that they have given you. Trust you put in the work and the results will come.

Just swim – Don't overthink things, just do it! Once you dive into that water, you do the same thing you have been doing for the past five months. Just swim and enjoy it.

Following these steps won't guarantee success but they will surely increase the probability of having a good swim. Remember that each race is another opportunity to improve and to learn.

So go out there, have fun, and swim fast!



Need Help? Have Questions? Ask Us!

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TITANS WEB PAGE:
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2017-18 TAC TITANS COACHING STAFF



Getting to Know Coach Claire Donahue

Home Town: Lenoir City, TN
Family: Mom & Dad (Connie & Chris), two brothers Zack & Dean, Sister Audrey, niece & nephew Evelyn & Everett. All live in east TN
Education: Western Kentucky University, Social Work Degree

Favorite countries I've visited: New Zealand & Croatia

Free Time Favorites: Reading, Swimming, & cooking

Fun Fact: I actually used to be a much better runner than I was a swimmer. When I got into high school I had to decide which one to focus on. I was enjoying swimming more than running so I picked swimming instead. Turned out to be a very good decision.



What did you learn from swimming?:

Swimming has taught me a lot, but the biggest thing I've learned is the value of failure. My worst swims and worst races taught me the most about my swimming. I figured out what I did wrong and learned from it. With anything I do, I know failure is an integral part of growing and improving.

Favorite thing about coaching: My favorite thing about coaching are the people/kids. Coaching is the highlight of my day. I always enjoy interacting with these swimmers.

Coaching philosophy: Technique is the driving force. There are so many things that produce a successful athlete, but the technique and attention to detail should be the common denominator in everything we do.

What do you like about being a TITAN?: My favorite thing about being a TITANS Coach is being around such amazing coaches. I'm constantly learning something new about technique, planning, and coaching.

Swimming background: I started swimming when I was 6 years old in East Tennessee for a summer league team and gradually increased my swimming commitment to year round a few days a week, to high school when I was swimming 9 times a week, running & lifting 3 days a week. Once I graduated from high school I went to swim for Coach Bruce Marchionda at Western Kentucky University.

Favorite stroke/event: 50 fly

The worst stroke: breaststroke

SAVE A DATE FOR YOUR CHAMPIONSHIP DINNER:

Monday 2/19: 14 & Under Attending NC Age Group Champs

Tuesday 3/13: All 15 & Over Elite & Challenge Swimmers

Monday 3/19: 14 & Under Attending Tar Heel States

Join the TITANS Masters !

In addition to all of our programs for kids, TITANS also offers an adult Masters swim program. Masters swimming is a nationally recognized group through the U.S. Masters organization and has teams throughout the country. Our TITANS Masters group began in September 2016 and has only continued to grow. We offer 10 practices a week. Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings run from 6:00-7:15am and Tuesday and Thursday mornings are from 6:30-7:45am. We also have mid-day practices Monday through Friday from 11:45-1:00pm. Coach JP leads the majority of the practices.

The group of Masters swimmers here at TAC have a wide variety of swimming experience, goals, and training levels. Some swim to stay healthy, others

train to compete in open water swims, and even some do it for the camaraderie of a team atmosphere. We would love to have you come join us!

All TITANS parents who swim with Masters get a discounted monthly rate of \$60, compared to the usual \$70. Being an active member of the Masters program also allows you to use the facility whenever lanes are available. Feel free to also drop-in and try a practice. It only costs \$10 for a drop-in.

For more information on the program please visit our website (<https://www.teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=mnctacm>) or email masters@tactitans.org.

We hope to see you in the pool!