

# Taos Swim Club Inc. Newsletter

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## *February Newsletter*

Welcome to the Taos Swim Club Inc. Our Mega Swim fundraiser is here and it's critical to maintain activities and operations of the club. The TEAM relies on this revenue to fund swimming scholarships to the kids in need in the community, offset the cost of pool rental fees, equipment and other expenses. We are excited to be able to use our TaosTigerSharks.com website during this fundraiser which will make it easier for swim families to promote this event. Like our swimmers, we aim to our "Personal Best," and hope that you can help us reach our goal.

**"I wouldn't say anything is impossible. I think that everything is possible as long as you put your mind to it and put the work and time into it"**

Michael Phelps

### ***Five mental tricks for competing at your best.***

There's no doubt that the time and energy spent training will go far in preparing you for race day. But repeats and long swims aren't the only tools that will give you an edge on the starting block. There are also a number of simple mental tricks and psychological tools that are proven to be effective and can help you get a head start on the competition.

## *Our Commitment*



The Taos Swim Club Inc. is committed to providing an enjoyable swimming experience for swimmers of all ages and abilities, while also providing a challenging and positive teaching and training environment in which swimmers can develop a sense of self-esteem and pride through individual and team achievement.

## **MANTRAS**

A mantra is a simple sentence or combination of words that are personally meaningful, help keep you focused and distract you from discomfort. A mantra can be anything and doesn't need to make sense. Generally, they're short, positive and instructional. Most importantly, it should mean something to you. Mantras are useful both in training and during a race — particularly when things start to get tough — and can be repeated as often as necessary, internally or externally

### **Here are a few to consider:**

I've come so far. What's a few more?

Each stroke is one stroke closer.

It's still faster than stopping.

It hurts to continue but will hurt much more to stop.

This is what I trained for.

Be tall. Be light. Float forward.

Finish strong.

## **MEDITATION**

Meditation doesn't need to mean sitting in a dark room with your legs crossed. It can just be a few minutes of quiet time dedicated to focused thinking about your race or workout. Find a quiet place and time and commit to spending five minutes or more just focused on your swim. Relax your muscles and concentrate on your breathing. You should feel your heart begin to slow down. Try to think about how the sport improves your health, fitness, productivity or any and every other benefit it provides. Recall that health is a combination of physical, mental and social components and that swimming can be beneficial to every aspect of your life.

## **VISUALIZATION**

This is a more specific type of meditation and requires you to focus and

concentrate on a particular topic, in this case your upcoming race. Picture yourself on the starting line, feeling relaxed and confident. Imagine the early part of the race as you settle into your goal pace feeling comfortable and in control. Picture key points and landmarks along the course — the halfway mark, the crowds of supporters, perhaps your family and friends cheering you on — and how good it will feel racing to a good performance. Anticipate that things will get tough in the final part of the race but that you'll be fine. Finally, visualize yourself finishing the race as you hope to, fast and strong. Imagine yourself touching the wall in your goal time and how happy you are to have achieved your goal. Picture the medal being hung around your neck and the smile on your face that you just can't control.

## **REFLECTION**

Taking time to look back on past races and training can help you gain confidence in your preparation as well as suggest what areas you may need to improve upon. Look back on your best swim and try to recreate the feelings of satisfaction and exhilaration you felt. Take stock of all the mileage you swam in training and which has prepared you for success. Think about the improvements you've already made and how far you've come. If you do have an area of weakness, think about what you've done to work on them and be better than you were before. Be sure to also take on a relative view and be grateful for being able to swim and how swimming has enhanced your

life. Think about why you started and how far you've come. Where swimming has taken you and where you want it to go.

### **CHECKING IN**

Also called introspection, this refers to looking within and gauging how you feel in various situations. It's a subjective assessment of how much effort you're giving or how much discomfort you feel. Being able to detect when you're working hard or in pain allows you to make adjustments to your pace and not exceed your limits. Making a conscious effort to gauge how you feel at various paces and points of a swim will enable you to better adjust to changing circumstances and adapt quickly. It also helps to do

this at various points of a race such as early on when you should be feeling comfortable; at the midway point when you can start to focus on the finish and in the final stages when you're tired but know the end is near. Some people count their breathing rate, the number of stroke they take to help distract them from discomfort while keeping focused on the task at hand.

What do you think? Have these mental tricks worked for you? What else do you do to gain a mental edge when competing?

## ***"5 Breakfasts Food that Athletes Should Avoid"***

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. How many times have you heard that? Probably more times than you can remember. But it's true. The type of food you choose for breakfast

impacts your exercise performance, training goals and even your energy levels. However, choosing athlete-friendly breakfast foods isn't always easy.

What you may perceive as a good breakfast food can actually be just the opposite. Here are five foods that are better left on the shelf.

## **Fruit Juices**

Pouring a big glass of orange juice in the morning is routine for many. But it's not a wise choice for athletes. Fruit juice, though refreshing, is stripped of important antioxidants and fiber during processing, and it more closely resembles sugary water. Stick with whole fruits instead. Whole fruit contains more of the nutrients and fiber your body demands.

## **Breakfast Bars**

Breakfast bars are convenient when you hit the snooze button one too many times, but most of them lack the nutrients to start your day off right. Most breakfast bars provide ample carbs but little protein. Protein is important for muscle recovery and rebuilding. A hearty whole-wheat slice of bread spread with a generous amount of natural peanut butter and a glass of low-fat milk are much better choices.

## **Yogurt Cups**

For the average American, a serving of yogurt in the

morning is a healthy choice. Athletes, however, require more calories and nutrients than are found in a small cup of yogurt. Yogurt contains plenty of sugar but not enough calories to power you through your workout. Choose Greek yogurt instead. Greek yogurt is regular yogurt's lean and mean sibling. It contains double the protein of regular yogurt and similar amounts of carbohydrates. Top with granola or fruit for a calorie boost.

## **Sugary Cereals**

Cereal is delicious and cheap. That's probably why it's a staple breakfast food for many. But for athletes, cereal should not be your go-to choice. Most breakfast cereals are nothing but sugar and calories, meaning your energy levels will get a quick boost but plummet shortly thereafter. Go with oatmeal instead. Mix plain oats with water or milk, top with cinnamon and fresh berries and you have a power-packed meal that will keep you going hard for hours.

## **Bacon**

The sounds and smells of sizzling bacon in the morning are enough to make anyone's mouth water. Although it's tasty, bacon is high in nitrates, which may be [linked](#) to cancer. Bacon also lacks the vitamins and minerals athletes need. Crack an egg instead. Eggs are protein-packed and contain 13 essential nutrients. But don't fear the yolk. That's where all the nutrition is. Complement your eggs with toast and a piece of fruit for a complete and balanced meal.

Your nutrition, especially breakfast, is as important as your training. While it may be convenient to quickly grab something for breakfast in the morning, taking the time to prepare and eat a balanced breakfast is best. Remember, what you put in your body is what you get out.

# February Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Practice	2 Practice	3 Practice <b>HS MEET</b>	4 Practice	5 Practice <b>HS MEET</b>	6 <b>HS MEET</b>
7	8 Practice	9 Practice	10 Practice	11 Practice	12 Practice	13 <b>Last Chance Meet</b>
14 <b>Last Chance Meet</b>	15 Practice	16 Practice	17 Practice	18 Practice	19 Practice	20 <b>HS STATE MEET</b>
21	22 Practice	23 Practice	24 Practice	25 Practice	26 Practice	27 <b>10 &amp; Under State Meet</b>
28 <b>10 &amp; Under State Meet</b>	29 Practice	1 Practice	2 Practice	3 Practice <b>11 &amp; Over State Meet</b>	4 Practice <b>11 &amp; Over State Meet</b>	5 <b>11 &amp; Over State Meet</b>
6 <b>11 &amp; Over State Meet</b>						

# **10 REASONS SWIMMERS ARE THANKFUL FOR SWIMMING**

Oh, we swimmers love to [sometimes] loathe swimming. Like any love-hate relationship, swimming is like the vegetables you consume but only-because-you-should, or like that long history textbook that takes a year to finish but makes an impact on you forever. It is good for you. It is cold. It gives you self-esteem. It is cold. It improves your goal setting and time management abilities. It is cold.

As we approach the annual Time of Thanks, and beyond that Time, the Time of Never-Ending Pain and Doom [otherwise known as holiday training], it may be necessary to step back and reflect on all swimming offers. Because, really, we swimmers love to complain about the daily agonies and time commitments and chlorine stench that accompany this sport, but deep down, we love it. And we are thankful. (Otherwise, why are you doing it?)

Here are 10 Reasons Why Swimmers Are Thankful For Swimming...

## **10. One training wardrobe.**

I went running the other day; after 25 minutes, my clothes were soaked in sweat, my shoes smelled, and I knew I'd have to do laundry to run tomorrow.

Swimming? Throw that training suit in your locker; let it dry, you're good to go. The clothing efficiency is brilliant and underappreciated. No laundry. No multiple training apparel outfits. Sure, you need a racing suit, but training suits? I had the same training suit in high school for years. It became full of holes, frayed, and ultimately disgusting, but it lasted for years, and I never washed it once.

## **9. The utter and complete domination of any pool/beach game against non-swimmer friends ... for the rest of your life.**

Non-swimmers cannot compete with any swimmer in any pool or beach game, ever. Doesn't matter what the game is. A non-swimmer competing against a swimmer in a game of Marco Polo is like an 8-year-old taking on LeBron James one-on-one.

## **8. The obligatory reason involving Copious Amounts of Food.**

When you hit adulthood, you eat a slice of pizza and you gain like 10 pounds that day alone. But when you're a swimmer, you can eat an entire pizza at lunch and still be like, "So what's lunch?"

## **7. It's a shower-and-workout-in-one.**

Didn't shower yesterday? No problem. Let those sweet, sweet chemicals wash away your imperfections.

## **6. The meditative escape of water.**

There are, right now in the country, special "blackout" resorts where people actually pay money to be in an internet-free zone, to get away from the daily grind of emails and screens. Thankfully, Google has not invented the Google Goggle, and we're still a few years away from the iKickboard. The pool remains a respite away from the onslaught of our over-digitized lives. For many swimmers, the open waters and lanes and weightless gravity is a welcomed meditative escape.

## **5. Confidence that comes from pushing one's limits.**

There are moments in my adult life where I literally tell myself, "If I can swim 10 400 IMs in practice, I can do this." It's good to be challenged, to be pushed to the brink of your limitations. Oftentimes, you will surpass them and set new limitations. Then, you aim to break those.

#### **4. It is not [fill in another sport here.]**

Every time I watch football and see some young kid smashing his head against another, I just think, "Man, I'm glad not all sports require a violent body sacrifice." Same thing with many other land sports that take a heavy physical toll long-term. Swimming is non-impact. You can swim until you're 100-years-old. I don't see many 100-year-old offensive linemen out there.

#### **3. Friends who also swim.**

Swimming is sort of like a cult. You swim together. You eat together. You hang out together at all waking minutes of every single weekday and weekend. Your group of friends is known amongst other circles as "the swimmers." Swimming, though isolated and immersed in water, is a social sport. As a swimmer, I spent so

much time around other swimmers, my teammates ultimately became my best friends for life... whether they wanted to be or not.

#### **2. Swim Parkas.**

The older I get, the more I wish oversized swim parkas were socially acceptable pieces of apparel in adulthood. You wear the parka. Dry off in the parka. Sleep in the parka. Wake up in the parka. A mobile tent made of an armor of nylon and fuzzy polyester, the swimmer's swim parka is the single greatest apparel item ever invented, and you only have a few very special, select years in your life when you can wear one. Otherwise people will stare at you. They probably already stare at you. But if you're a swimmer, you don't care.

#### **1. Swimming can change your life.**

I've seen swimming turn

unhealthy kids into healthy kids. I've seen swimming save kids from unhealthy homes, from violence, from depression, from suicide. I've seen swimming be the one guiding light for kids living in areas of high crime and poverty. I've seen swimming give kids hope. Swimming allows you the opportunity to defeat Old You — a concept, when you're young, which is a very important one to learn and understand. Swimming teaches you that you can be better than Old You, and with hard work and discipline, you can improve Old You. And that Old You can turn into New You — a New You that is better, stronger, healthier, and happier.

So, thanks swimming, for all you do. Though we love to complain, we are thankful. Keep on doing what you do. [But it would help if you could be, just during those few lengths of warm-up, a tad bit warmer, okay?

The Taos Swim Club Inc. would like to thank all of its sponsors for their support. If you would like to be a sponsor, or know of someone that would, please have them contact us at [taostigersharks@hotmail.com](mailto:taostigersharks@hotmail.com) or 985-709-6456. As always your donation is tax deductible!

Please visit our website for more Information: **TAOSTIGERSHARKS.COM** and Follow us on Facebook: **facebook.com/taos.tigersharks**

*Thank you for all your help and support. **GO TIGER SHARKS!***