

Taos Swim Club Inc. Newsletter

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March Newsletter

Welcome to the Taos Swim Club Inc. THANK YOU to all of the officials, parents and volunteers who attended the first NMS B State Championships. We had 257 swimmers in the Meet. Everyone had good swims and a ton of fun. This meet was very exciting, our team was awarded the 2017 New Mexico Swimming Spirit Award banner by NMS. NICELY DONE TEAM!!! The banner will be up in our pool! Awesome job from our swimmers, our coaching staff is very proud of their performance. Also a big THANK YOU to all of our sponsors for their support and for coming together not just for our team but for our community who also benefited from this event.

Good luck to all of our swimmers participating at State Championship this weekend! SWIM FAST!!!

"The best time to start was yesterday. The next best time is now. Tomorrow you will wish you had started today"

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.

“MEGA SWIM”

On Monday March 27th, the Taos Swim Team will hold its Mega Swim. On that day, every member of our TEAM, will swim as many laps possible for 1 hour to support our program. With your help, we hope to raise a total of **\$7 000.00** this year. The Mega Swim fundraiser is 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 need your help! Please encourage your swimmer to reach out to family and friends to sponsor their 1 hour swim challenge.

Consider becoming an event sponsor at any level; and check with your employer about becoming an event sponsor.

[Any corporate funds raised by a swimmer or their family will be allocated to their total]. Your support is essential to the continued success of the TEAM. Like our swimmers, we aim to our “Personal Best,” and hope that you can help us reach our goal.

“THE SECRET TO SWIMMING FASTER IS LEARNING TO RELAX”

Unlike many sports, swimming is almost solely technique-based. Simply trying harder won't make you faster. At the risk of overgeneralizing, if you want to run faster you simply pick up the turnover of your feet. Similarly, if we take away a bike's gears, the secret to speed is pedaling faster. Want to hit a baseball or golf ball farther? Increase club head or bat speed.

But swimming is different in that subtle changes make a difference. How subtle? Finding easy speed is a matter of relaxing the parts of your body that aren't helping you swim and

preventing them from robbing you of energy. Another way of looking at it: Muscles that are working (contracted or stiff) when they don't need to be are using up valuable oxygenated blood that should be going to the muscles that are propelling you forward.

How Do They Do It?

Male or female, short or tall, young or more seasoned—the fast folks make it look so easy, even effortless. But swimming at that level is anything but easy or effortless. The secret is that elite swimmers aren't wasting any movements or

doing anything that isn't related to swimming faster. Many of us will chalk that ability up to pure talent, but there's more to it than that. Anyone can learn how to do this in any stroke, but it takes patience and a concerted mental effort. Here are some suggestions for what to do to find your easy speed.

Harness the power of counting:

This is a new twist on a drill you might have used before, the 20 for 20 drill. Take 20 strokes of any stroke. For freestyle and backstroke, each time you move an arm, that's a single stroke. For

breaststroke and butterfly, count each stroke cycle. Go through each of the four strokes, five times. The goal is to be aware of where the tension is in your body. As you're swimming, carefully monitor your entire body and make note of which muscles are flexed and which are relaxed.

Feel where you slip:

You've no doubt seen the elites with their pre-race rituals—slapping their muscles or rubbing their palms across the starting block. There are several reasons for this, but the one to focus on here is that they're trying to stimulate the nervous system. They're waking up the body and signaling to the parts where the water may slip, to feel what's happening in the water. Maintaining a feel for the water is critical for all strokes. Roughing up the hands or other body surfaces can make them more sensitive to where the water slips off those surfaces. This heightened sensation can help you make micro adjustments as you're swimming, adding velocity and intensity to your swims.

Breathe:

When putting in a big effort, many people unconsciously take a deep breath and then hold it. This is problematic in swimming, where oxygen is fuel. What's more, holding your breath requires effort, and flexes a bunch of muscles in the core that aren't helping you swim. Depriving yourself of oxygen is always a bad idea. Rather, strive for rhythmic and relaxed breathing that provides resources to the muscles. Avoid holding your breath or hyperventilating to avoid engaging muscles that can't help you swim faster.

Conduct a head-to-toe body check:

Start with the hands: If your hands are very stiff, chances are the muscles in your arm that connect to the hand are, too. They should be relaxed, with some space between the fingers. Tightening or clenching your fingers together doesn't help you swim faster. The same thing is true of the feet. Rather than thinking about pointing your toes, which is forcing your foot muscles to work, focus on keeping your ankles loose when kicking. Relax those parts that are creating tension that aren't doing any work for your swimming.

- **Be thoughtful:**

- Many of our daily activities are goal-driven. But finding your easy speed when swimming is process-driven, so it's important to be mindful of the process rather than the goal. If you focus energy on your movements and not the other end of the pool or the yardage, you'll be more aware of many of the things your body is doing, which give you the opportunity to make adjustments.

At the end of the day, the two most important things to remember are: First, along with being great exercise, swimming is a cognitive activity—you're programming your brain to tell your body to perform a specific pattern of movements. Second, each time you look to acquire a new skill, it takes time to master it, so be patient with yourself.

March Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Practice	2 Practice NMS State Meet	3 Practice NMS State Meet	4 NMS State Meet
5 NMS State Meet	6 Practice	7 Practice	8 Practice	9 Practice	10 Practice	11
12	13 Practice	14 Practice	15 Practice	16 Practice FC Sectionals	17 Practice FC Sectionals	18 FC Sectionals
19 FC Sectionals	20 Practice	21 Practice	22 Practice	23 Practice	24 Practice	25
26	27 MEGA SWIM	28 Practice	29 Practice	30	31	

“Motivational Times”

Have you ever noticed there are some letters (e.g., BB, A, AAA) below swimmers’ times on Deck Pass or that establish the minimum (or maximum) requirement to qualify for a given meet? Do you know what they mean?



Every 4 years, USA Swimming (**USAS**) establishes time standards for swimmers of every age group that range from B to AAAA to give swimmers benchmarks for goal-setting and to track improvement. That is, these time standards are intended to motivate swimmers in each age group to work their way up from a B standard to a BB standard and then to an A standard, an AA standard, an AAA standard and finally to an AAAA standard.

Here are the 2017-2020 motivational time standards for each age group (e.g., 10 & under, 11-12, 13-14, etc.) in:

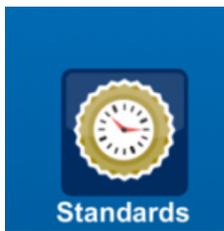
- “long course meter” (LCM) pools (i.e., the 50 meter

pools used during the summer “club” season);

- “short course yard” (SCY) pools (i.e., the 25 yard pools used during the winter “club” season); and
- “short course meter” (SCM) pools (i.e., the 25 meter pools generally used during the summer league season).

Conveniently, USAS also created 2017-2020 motivational time standards for each age (e.g., 10, 11, 12, 13, etc.) in all 3 sizes of pools.

You also can find the time standards on Deck Pass under the following icon:



To determine these time standards, USAS started by identifying the fastest 16th place time on the Top 16 list in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 in each event. Then USA multiplied that baseline time by:

- a certain factor (**generally 5%**) to determine the AAAA time (i.e., AAAA swimmers are more or less in the top 5% of national swimmers);

- (the same factor x 2) to determine the AAA time (i.e., the top 10% of national swimmers);

- (the same factor x 3) to determine the AA time (i.e., the top 15% of national swimmers);

- etc. Swim Nerd, you can see how USAS precisely calculates motivational times here.

The theory behind the motivational time standards is to allow swimmers to achieve success in an even, incremental manner and to show them that they are making progress at all times. Moving incrementally from a B time to a BB time to an A time over a span of several meets is more motivating to the swimmer than not recognizing such incremental improvement.

In many areas, meet eligibility is set by the motivational times (e.g., Meet X excludes swimmers with times faster than an A standard; Meet Y only includes swimmers with at least an AA time) and results are broken out by the motivational time achieved. In PVS, however, we don’t see many meets formatted this way.

“CORE TRAINING, LOOKING BEYOND THE SIX-PACK”

Core training is a common topic in locker rooms, but few swimmers fully understand the concept. The ripped “six-pack” that makes one the envy of teammates won't come from doing hundreds of sit-ups. A better quality diet and more yardage in the pool will reduce body fat so that toned muscle becomes more visible.

But, let's move beyond aesthetics. When it comes to the abdomen, the most important question to ask is whether it supports and stabilizes your body during movement, including swimming. Well-designed core training can improve posture and spinal health, reduce the potential for injury, and improve swimming performance.

The abdominal (transverse, rectus abdominals, and obliques) and spinal muscles (erector spinae and multifidus) are the primary muscles in the core. They partner up to stabilize the torso during activity. When conditioned properly, they provide a solid center for movement and can facilitate safe and optimal posture during activity. The spinal muscles protect the spine, keep it in proper alignment,

and work with the hip flexors to keep the pelvis level and minimize pressure on the lumbar spine.

Improving Core Strength and Conditioning.

If you want a stronger core, forget the ab crunch machine and sit-ups. Spinal flexion exercises can cause excessive wear and tear of the facet joints and vertebral disks, leading to spinal injury. Overloading the abs with heavy weights is even more dangerous. The following types of exercises are a better use of your time and tend to be more effective for most people.

Stability exercises.

Performing exercises that call on the key core muscles to *maintain proper alignment* is most effective. Examples of stability exercises include planks, side planks, boat pose (or V-sit), supine bicycles, and bird dog. Rotating planks, rock climbers, and inch-worms can be performed by more skilled exercisers.

Posture work.

Maintaining good posture is paramount to an effective core training program. When doing planks, focus on rolling the shoulders down and away from the ears so there

is minimal tension in the neck. Pull the belly up instead of letting the lower back sag. The shoulders should be perched over the hands and the head should be in alignment with the rest of the spine (think crown of the head “reaching” for the wall). Swimmers with wrist issues can do the plank while resting on the forearms.

Rotational and balance work.

Rotational throws or swings are ideal swimmer core training exercises to strengthen the internal and external obliques. Performing strength training activities such as bicep curls or lateral raises standing on a BOSU or other unstable surface can challenge core muscles, which work hard to keep the body balanced in unstable situations.

Pelvis- and spine-stabilizing exercises.

The core muscles work with the pelvic muscles to stabilize the lumbar spine. The bridge is an example of an exercise that calls upon the abdominal muscles while utilizing the hip flexors to reduce pressure on the lumbar spine. By learning to “tuck” or level the pelvis while activating abdominal muscles, swimmers can keep a neutral spine during

demanding core activities in the pool such as underwater dolphin kicking.

You can easily perform an effective core training workout in less than 15 minutes. This small time investment can yield big gains. Your shoulder muscles

won't be required to work as hard when your strokes are driven by a solid center. Swimming with a neutral spine means less lower back strain and a straighter, more efficient line moving through the water. Core training is guaranteed to deliver winning results. When

combined with a healthy diet and plenty of aerobic activity, it might even deliver the ever-coveted ripped abs.

"TOP TIPS FOR MEAL PLANNING"

When planning meals for swimmers it is important to consider many factors; to name a few...age (younger swimmers have higher calorie and nutrient needs than older swimmers), training intensity and duration, gender, and food preferences. I mention food preferences because if a swimmer doesn't like a food he or she just won't eat it!

Here is a sample meal plan for Ashley, a 16-year old high school student who trains 1 hour in the morning before school and 2 hours after school four days a week. She describes her training as moderately intense. Ashley is 5'6" and weighs 59 kg or 130 pounds. She tries to eat right to support her training but complains of being tired and stale in her training. Let's take a look at what Ashley is eating

and what she could do to improve her nutrition.

First, here is a table on carbohydrate recommendations from *the 2016 position paper on nutrition and athletic performance* published jointly by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, The American College of Sports Medicine, and the Dietitians of Canada.

Carbohydrate Recommendations

(kg=kilograms; lb=pounds; g=grams; bw=body weight; d=day; h=hour)

Daily Needs		
Light Activity	Low intensity or skill-based	3-5 g/kg/bw/d <i>or</i> 1.3-2.3 g/lb/bw/d
Moderate	~1 hour/day	5-7 g/kg/bw/d <i>or</i> 2.3-3.2 g/lb/bw/d
High	Endurance (1-3 h/d) moderate to high-intensity	6-10 g/kg/bw/d <i>or</i> 2.7-4.5 g/lb/bw/d
Very High	Extreme (>4-5 h/d) moderate to high-intensity	8-12 g/kg/bw/d <i>or</i> 3.6-5.5 g/lb/bw/d

First, a quick assessment: Ashley needs 350-415 grams of carbohydrate on heavy training days. Her usual intake provides about 285 grams of carbohydrate or about 70% of what she needs. Ashley is on the right track, but needs to add more fuel to each meal and snack. With a few fixes, she can enjoy the foods she likes while boosting nutrition.

Ashley's Usual Food Intake	Nutrition Fix	Benefits
Before Practice 1 cinnamon-brown sugar toaster pastry Banana	Add 8-ounces of low-fat milk Substitute 2 slices of whole grain toast and peanut butter for pastry	Increases carbohydrate, protein, calcium, and B-vitamins. Also, increases fluids and dietary fiber.
After Practice 16-ounces sports drink Sausage, egg & cheese biscuit	If a grab & go meal is her choice, substitute the biscuit for an egg, cheese, and Canadian bacon sandwich on toasted English muffin	Boosts carbohydrate while decreasing fat.
Lunch Macaroni & cheese Green beans Burger, without the bun Water	Don't avoid the bun; add lettuce and tomato (if available) and add 8-ounces of low-fat milk	Increases carbohydrate in lunch meal with the burger bun and milk
Before Practice Bottle of water Handful of cheese crackers	Keep the water and cheese crackers, but add 6-ounces of yogurt and keep a snack of trail mix pool-side to keep energy up during practice	Yogurt adds some protein, as well as carbohydrate to fuel practice
Dinner Spaghetti with marinara sauce 2 pieces of garlic bread Apple juice	Add a large green salad with plenty of veggies; sprinkle Parmesan cheese on pasta; try a protein-enriched whole grain pasta and add turkey meatballs to marinara sauce	Adds carbohydrate and protein for recovery
Before-Bed Snack Bowl of ice cream	Make a smoothie with vanilla yogurt or ice cream, milk, and frozen berries	A smoothie not only increases carbohydrate, but adds another serving of fruit and more protein to help muscle refuel during sleep

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 or 575-224-1825. 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**
Twitter: twitter.com/TaosSharks

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