

# GATOR BYTES

November 2017



"The race starts long before you step up onto the block"

## The Two Paths of a Swimmer

By Mike Gustafson//Contributor (USA Swimming Website) | Wednesday, October 18, 2017

A long time ago, I was a teenage age group swimmer and I wasn't dropping time. I was frustrated, experiencing that personal time "plateau" every swimmer eventually experiences along the competitive swimming journey.

Then one day, I read advice that caused an immediate change of perspective: "Everything you do and every decision you make will either take you closer to your goals, or farther away."

We often use paths or journeys as metaphors to describe a competitive swimming career. There is a path. Swimmers are on a journey. With any path or journey, there are twists, turns, peaks and valleys. The important thing, we say to ourselves, is to continue marching along that path, continue that journey, even if we can't see what's ahead.

Unfortunately, sometimes that journey leads to unintended destinations: Valleys so deep that those mountain peaks are difficult to see, forks in the road that lead us to burn-out, depression, anxiety, or quitting altogether.

When I heard that advice — that everything we do takes us closer or farther — suddenly, for me, life seemed to click. All decisions were separated into two categories, two paths. A path that led closer to goals, and a path that led farther away.

For example, nutrition. I love pizza. I have an obsession with pizza. Often, I would consume three or four slices of pizza for lunch. Loaded pepperoni pizza, lots of cheese, greasy crust. I knew when eating this pizza that it wasn't healthy (duh) but I figured, "I'm a swimmer, swimmers are supposed to eat a lot, so it's okay."

Obviously, pizza once in a while is no big deal, especially when you're an active swimmer... but eating that much pizza every week was no good. I would justify it, but my body wasn't the healthiest it could be.

Then I heard that advice, I began to analyze not just my Pizza Decision, but all nutrition decisions: Which path was I on? The path taking me closer to a personal best time? Or the path leading me farther astray? (Obviously, that Pizza

## Important Upcoming Dates:

- 11/3/17 Deadline to register for the Senior Meet @ Miami University, Oxford OH
- 11/3/17 Deadline to register for the GTAC Turkey Meet @ BGSU Rec Center
- 11/17-19 Tim Myers Senior Meet @ Miami University
- 11/18-19 GTAC Turkey Meet @ BGSU Rec Center
- 11/21/17 Deadline to register for the BGSC Holiday Invitational @BGSU Rec Center
- 11/23-24 Thanksgiving! No Practice!

For Lunch Every Day Path was diverted.)

Soon, I analyzed other decisions. Not just nutrition, but also how I spent free time, what classes I signed up for, who I hung out with, how I trained, how I slept, how I ate. And what happened was unintended, but I'm so glad it did: I learned how to be mindful.

Mindfulness is being aware of what you're doing, and what's around you. It sounds simple in theory — and there's a lot of buzzwords that involve "mindfulness" — but in practice, mindfulness is quite difficult. Like when you're hungry, and there's nothing else to eat but three slices of pizza.

But when I categorized decisions as a definition of a path — either taking me closer to my goals, or farther away — suddenly, it was harder to actively make poor decisions. It was such a different way of thinking about life, but at the same time, effective.

And once I invested fully in the path leading me closer to goals, I began to drop time. And soon, within a few months, I escaped that strange, mysterious, horrible "plateau."

Competitive swimming is a journey. The path can lead anywhere.

Which path are you on?

## November Birthdays!

Zach C- 11/7  
Junbo C- 11/11  
Emily D- 11/27  
Karter D- 11/3  
Libby G- 11/10  
Joel H- 11/28  
Emme J- 11/19  
Darrin K- 11/27  
Kelsey L- 11/26  
Julia N- 11/3  
Ela O- 11/9



Selena P- 11/8  
Aja P- 11/13  
Madison R- 11/3  
Tucker Z- 11/6

## The History of Swimming: Part 1



*Competitive swimming* in Britain started around 1830, mostly using breaststroke. Swimming was part of the first modern Olympic games in 1896 in Athens. In 1908, the world swimming association, Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA), was formed.

**Ancient Times:** 10,000-year-old rock paintings of people swimming were found in the Cave of Swimmers near Wadi Sura in southwestern Egypt. These pictures seem to show breaststroke or doggy paddle, although it is also possible that the movements have a ritual meaning unrelated to swimming. An Egyptian clay seal dated between 9000 BC and 4000 BC shows four people who are believed to be swimming a variant of the front crawl.

More references to swimming are found in the Babylonian bas-reliefs and Assyrian wall drawings, depicting a variant of the breaststroke. The most famous drawings were found in the Kebir desert and are estimated to be from around 4000 BC. The Nagoda bas-relief also shows swimmers dating back from 3000 BC. The Indian palace Mohenjo Daro from 2800 BC contains a swimming pool sized 12 m by 7 m. The Minoan palace of Knossos in Crete also featured baths. An Egyptian tomb from 2000 BC shows a variant of front crawl. Depictions of swimmers have also been found from the Hittites, Minoans and other Middle Eastern civilizations, in the Tepantitla compound at Teotihuacan, and in mosaics in Pompeii.

Written references date back to ancient times, with the earliest as early as 2000 BC. Such references occur in works like *Gilgamesh*, the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, the Bible (Ezekiel 47:5, Acts 27:42, Isaiah 25:11), *Beowulf*, and other sagas, although the style is never described. There are also many mentions of swimmers in the Vatican, Borgian and Bourbon codices. A series of reliefs from 850 BC in the Nimrud Gallery of the British Museum shows swimmers, mostly in military context, often using swimming aids. The Germanic folklore describes swimming, which was used successfully in wars against the Romans. (from Wikipedia)

Next month: Part 2, Early Modern Era

## Coach's Corner

### "Whether Or Not To Dress For The Weather"

Unless you have just moved to the Greater Bowling Green area, you know that the weather can be 65 and sunny when your swimmer gets on the bus (even in November) and when it's lunch time, it could be 25 with a wind chill of 10. Too many swimmers think a sweatshirt will suffice on those days. Au Contraire!

**HAT!** - Keeps you from losing body heat from your head. One should be kept in the side pocket of their swim bag (even just a little beanie cap that goes over the ears).

**GLOVES!** - Keep you from losing body heat from your hands AND helps the finger scanner work the first time at the rec. A pair should be kept in the side pocket of their swim bag.

**SOCKS!** (please don't follow Gary's example) - Keep you from losing body heat from your feet. Proper shoes also provide warmth for your feet.

**Layer it up!** - Prevents swimmers from getting too hot or too cold during the course of the day at school!

Swimmers should dress for the month that it is, not the weather that it looks like from inside your house before school!

-Coach Carolyn

# Ranking the Best Ways to Spend Time at a Swim Meet

By Mike Gustafson//Contributor (USA Swimming Website) | 10/11/17

There are two certainties in every swimmer's career: 1.) The water will be cold, and 2.) there will be week-end-long, never-ending, forever-ongoing, all-day swim meet marathons. You know the kind: You arrive at the prelims competition at 7am, and you don't leave until 2pm. There are 13 heats of the 500 freestyle, and 250 swimmers entered the 50 free. Three days can feel like three years. There is so much down time between events, you swear that you can feel yourself aging inside those natatoriums. You look in the mirror on Day Two, and you don't recognize the person staring back at you, because that person is 30 years older. After your event, which happens to be first, you have roughly six hours trapped at the pool with no escape, no get-away plan, no way out.

How do you spend time? What do you do? You can't just stare at the pool deck tiles for 90 minutes. (And if you do, please stop. You're scaring everyone.) While there are many, many strategies swimmers employ during these weekend-long marathons, here are the best five...

**5. Homework:** I know. Not the most fun way to pass the time. But in many ways, swim meets are just like libraries: It's easy to find a little spot in the stands or on the deck, grab that statistics book, and hammer out your Monday morning homework. This homework strategy usually only works for those swimmers who need a distraction to swim well, or who will worry about an upcoming test so much that it deters from swim performance. But if you can do it, it sure beats



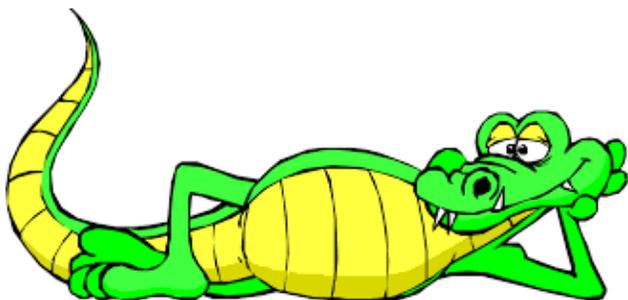
doing homework late on Sunday night, or in the car heading home.

**4. Nap:** Is there anything more glorious than the 30-minute nap post-event? When you're all done for the prelims, but you're still at the pool for another hour? Obviously, you shouldn't nap if your teammates are competing, but if you're just waiting for other teammates to warm-down, shower, and change, a little prelims nap in the corner of the natatorium never hurt anyone.

**3. Swim bag organization:** Your swim bag is likely similar to mine: A black hole of chaos where nothing escapes. Digging to the bottom of your swim bag is like a journey to the center of the Earth, lurking with mysterious creatures and wormholes leading to other dimensions. A swim meet is the perfect opportunity to ask yourself, "Do I really need fourteen half-empty hotel shampoo bottles? Should I just throw away this 10-year-old Clif Bar?"

**2. Euchre:** Euchre probably saved my life as a swimmer. I played euchre every waking minute I could, with friends, with teammates, with strangers from other teams. Then, one day at the YMCA National Championships in Florida, I found out not everyone knows of euchre. If you don't know what euchre is, just know this: It is the greatest card game ever invented, and it is perfect for swim meets. Look it up, and go play.

**1. Cheer:** C'mon. You knew this was coming. Cheering is the best, and most important, way to spend time at these weekend meets. Just like you'd love people cheering for you during your 500 freestyle, get up and cheer for your teammates. Be loud. Be supportive. And know that the most important part about being a teammate is to just show up, and cheer.



## Gator Fact: Are Alligators fast?

Alligators can use their tails to attain speeds of 20 Miles per hour or MORE!

# Energy Drinks for Swimmers: The Good and the Bad

By SwimSwam, March 26th, 2017

If you walk into any gym, training center or vitamin shops, you're likely to see energy drinks being marketed to athletes of all ages. In fact, energy drinks are available in almost every flavor, almost everywhere: the lunchroom, the school cafeteria, the deli, vending machines and almost every convenience store. They're so widely available and make tempting promises, but can they benefit your performance as a swimmer? We'll take a look at the ingredients and the reasons why you may feel you need an energy boost in the first place.

## Do you need an energy drink?

Do you want to drink an energy drink because you enjoy the taste or is it because you feel you need an energy boost? Most energy drinks promise anti-fatigue and stimulation benefits and most fulfill those promises with their primary ingredient, caffeine. If you're feeling a bit drained and find yourself reaching for an energy drink, wondering whether it will give you a boost and help your performance we have a better question for you.

Why are you tired in the first place? The answer is quite simple. It is likely because your body has not recovered effectively, which could mean either insufficient sleep or that it hasn't gotten all of the nutrients it needed to recover effectively. We'll share some suggestions to help you with this at the end of this post.

Your training sessions may be more demanding than usual, you might be missing something in your nutrition plan, or getting too much of something (infamous sugar crash?), extra stress may be affecting your sleep quality, all of which can affect your recovery and leave you feeling tired.

You may want to examine your habits and try to uncover the reason you're tired. If you find yourself relying on energy drinks without trying to solve the problem, you'll only be masking the source of your fatigue. The bottom line is that an energy drink is not going to help you recover, and that won't benefit your body or your performance in the long run.

## Teen swimmers; take care

Any swimmer who is still developing physically and psychologically should exercise caution with energy drinks. More than 100 mg of caffeine per day in pre-teens and teens has been associated with agitation, anxiety, poor sleep, a rapid heartbeat, increased blood pressure, altered mental states, and in some extreme cases – seizures. None of which do anything to better your performance, or benefit your body.

Besides possibly containing banned substances that might show up in eligibility tests, some energy drinks contain ingredients that can be harmful to young developing athletes. For example, ingredients that are natural and may seem harmless like guarana, which is a natural caffeine, is on the NCAA banned substances list and can cause the same adverse

symptoms as caffeine. So read the labels and be careful about what you're drinking while you're training.

Below we compiled a table showing the caffeine contents of drinks per serving size and the total caffeine per fluid ounce.

Energy Drinks & Well Known Coffees	fl oz	Caffeine (mg)	mg/ fl oz
5 Hour Energy	2	200	100.0
Rockstar Energy Shot	2.5	200	80.0
Redline Energy Drink	8	250	31.2
Starbucks Coffee – Grande	16	330	20.6
Dunkin' Donuts Brewed Coffee	14	210	15
Bang Energy Drink	16	300	18.8
Rockstar Punched	16	240	15.0
Frava Caffeinated Juice	16	200	12.5
Full Throttle	16	160	10.0
Monster Energy	16	160	10.0
NOS Energy Drink	16	160	10.0
V8 V-Fusion+Energy	8	80	10.0
Red Bull	8.46	80	9.5

Source: <http://www.caffeineinformer.com/>

## Make a smart choice

The body's best source of energy comes from glucose, which you get from ingesting the right foods. Your body needs energy, and the best way to get it is from natural glucose stores, which are replenished by eating a diet with the right amount of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins and minerals. Stimulants are not a satisfactory substitute for glucose, as they only give your body a false sense of energy and increase your chances of a caffeine or blood sugar crash mid-race, which is the last thing you want.

If you're going to supplement your well-balanced, food-based diet with the occasional energy drink, make sure to do your research and make a good choice about which energy drink you choose. Often, swimmers confuse energy drinks with sports drinks and liquid supplements, and with marketing tactics it's no wonder. Sports drinks contain small amounts of carbohydrates, minerals, electrolytes and flavorings which are intended to replace the nutrients lost through sweat. Gatorade is one example of a popular sports drink many swimmers drink after a long work out.

If you're looking for something simple to hydrate you effectively, water is still your best choice by far. If you're looking to mix things up a bit, you may want to opt for milk or a natural fruit juice. Staying hydrated is critical for performance and is something that should be central to any nutritional plan. If you're feeling tired or suspect something may be missing from your nutritional plan you might consider a **nutritional shake, like the Nutri-Boost**, which has 100% of the essential nutrients you need to maximize your recovery.

# November 2017

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 Deadline to register for the Senior Meet @ Miami U and the Turkey Meet @ BGSU.	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17 Senior Meet @ Miami U	18 Senior Meet @ Miami U Turkey Meet @ BGSU
19 Senior Meet @ Miami U Turkey Meet @ BGSU	20	21	22 Practice Schedule Changes—Check your group's schedule!	23 Thanksgiving! No Practice!	24 No Practice!	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## November Practice Schedule:

### Sooner-or-Later Gators:

Mon/Tues/Thurs— 5:30 to 6:00pm  
No Practice Nov 23rd!

### Age Group Gold (8-unders):

Mon/Tues/Thurs/Fri— 6:00 to 7:00pm  
Nov 22nd—10:00 to 11:00am

### Age Group Blue (9-12 year olds):

Mon thru Fri— 5:30 to 7:00pm  
Nov 22nd— 10:00 to 11:30am

**We are looking for team social ideas!**

If you think of something that might be fun to do as a team, let one of the coaches know.

### Senior (JH/HS):

Mon-Fri— 3:15 to 5:45pm  
Tues/Thurs— 6 to 7am (HS)  
Nov. 22nd— 8:00 to 10:00am  
No Practice on Nov 23rd and 24th

