



Kate Overbey, M.E. Lyons YMCA, Ohio

Welcome Parents, Coaches, and Swimmers! My name is Kate Overbey and I am a junior from Anderson Barracudas.

First, swimmers, congratulations for making it to finals. It is an honor to be swimming amongst you this week.

For the past 10 years, I have had the privilege of being a YMCA swimmer. Throughout all of my time on Anderson Barracudas, I've met people, both on my team and off, that I can honestly say are my best friends. I know everybody else here can say the same. The YMCA fosters friendly competition, pushing every swimmer not only to be their best physically, but spiritually and mentally. Tonight, I challenge you to make one new friend. Wish your competitors good luck behind the block, and tell them good job after. Support your fellow swimmers as they support you. Take this opportunity you have been given not only to swim fast but to make memories, and build friendships that will last a lifetime. For those swimming tonight, believe in yourself. Whether this morning was your best or worst swim ever, good luck, and I trust you will reach your goals tonight. My coach, Ed Bachman, after a rough swim, tells me that if I cannot find the joy to race I have to find the desire to do so. That we just have to want it bad enough. This season we have put in countless hours of training, countless early mornings, and countless hard sets for this moment. We are all ready. The only piece left is your desire to achieve your goals. Isaiah 40:31 says "but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." Let the lord empower you. Let you not grow weary as you race tonight, and let the strength given to you by god deliver you to your goals. Let your desire to achieve your goals be stronger than the pain it takes to do so. We have fought through all of this season's challenges and we can persevere through tonight's.

Let us bow our head in prayer:

Dear God,

Thank you for letting us be here tonight to compete, and to support our fellow teammates. Thank you for granting us the opportunity to be role models, competitors, and friends. Thank you for giving us coaches, parents, and teams that support us and keep us going through our darkest days. Give us luck and success tonight, and let us persevere over difficulties. Amen.