

*Brendan Burns' and Ross Dant's Short Course YMCA National Devotion 2019*

B: Good Evening ladies and gentleman, and welcome to the second night of swimming at the 2019 YMCA Short Course National Championships. My name is Brendan Burns of the Upper Main Line YMCA

R: And I am Ross Dant from Hickory Foundation YMCA Seahorse Swim team

B: we are seniors headed to Indiana University

R: And NC State University this fall.

B: Together we have combined for 18 individual YMCA national titles

R: and 6 YMCA national meet records, with hopefully many more to come this week.

B: We are here tonight to talk about our different yet similar experiences with YMCA swimming.

R: We have swam for our respective teams for over a decade, and through this time, our careers with our teams have shaped our character and taught us many life lessons that we will carry with us throughout our collegiate swimming careers.

B: We have also competed at high level USA Swimming meets but still hold YMCA Nationals near and dear to our hearts. To us this is not just a meet, but something that has profound sentimental value. We could not imagine where we would be as swimmers and people without YNats.

R: To say YMCA nationals is a special swim meet is a gross understatement. When you compete for Team USA there are many opportunities to make friends, and this opportunity needs to be acted upon for the team to succeed. I see this same opportunity to make friends every time I compete at YMCA Nationals. The comradery at YMCA nationals has led to many lifelong friendships, and I will say with certainty that I am not the only swimmer who has experienced this phenomena. There is an aura of friendship and togetherness that surrounds this meet. This meet creates lifelong friendships that otherwise would not happen. Brendan and I are a key example of this. YMCA swimming has given me a team at high level events, and also one of my best friends.

B: And I speak for both of us when I say that we are unbelievably lucky; both to have met each other and to be a part of YMCA swimming. YMCA swim teams are not just swim teams, but communities filled with inspirational mentors and role models that are vital to the team's success and to our upbringing as young men and women. I look at my coaches on UMLY as some of the most selfless and team-oriented people that I have ever met, and I would be lying if I said that



some of their attributes haven't rubbed off on me. I've won individually at this meet, but the national relay titles I've won alongside my teammates are extensively more meaningful. I've always loved relays way more than individual races because I get to share the sheer thrill of victory and achievement with my teammates, rather than with just myself. This feeling is inexplicable and, in my opinion, can only truly be found at YMCA Nationals. There are 2 relays on the schedule tonight, and for those of you who have never been to this meet before, prepare yourself for an atmosphere like no other.

R: In short, YMCA nationals is a special event and even after traveling around the world, this is still our favorite meet ever.

B: And even though we aspire to compete at some of the most prestigious swim meets that our sport has to offer, there will never be anything like you, YNats.

B: Now can you please bow your head in prayer

R: God, let us play well but fairly.

B: Help me to learn something that matters

R: once the game is over.

B: Let competition make me strong but never hostile.

R: Always let me help my opponent up.

B: Never catch me rejoicing in the adversity of others.

R: If I know victory, allow me to be happy; if I am denied, keep me from envy.

B: Remind me that sports are just games.

R: If through athletics I set an example,

B: let it be a good one.

