

TWISTARS USA PRESENTS

# GYMNASTICALLY SPEAKING

February 2014

**TWISTARS USA  
GYMNASTICS CLUB**  
Home of World and Olympic  
Champion Jordyn Wieber  
Home of World and Olympic Head  
Coach, John Geddert

## SERIOUSLY?

I have considered throwing in the towel when it comes to encouraging proper eating habits. Why is it that the idea of establishing healthy eating habits for our athletes is met with such resistance from some adults? Certainly they must understand the importance ...right? Maybe the error lies in assuming anything.

In a country where obesity is reaching epidemic proportions it seems this would be a valuable lesson. Childhood obesity has almost tripled in the past 30 years. Adult obesity (a direct result of poor eating habits established in the younger years) is at 27% in the USA. Almost one third of America ... incredible!

If those statistics don't spark your interest then perhaps more attention needs to be directed at the sport you have chosen for your child. Gymnastics is a weight to strength ratio sport. Being light and strong is not the only key to competitive success BUT more importantly, vitally important for reducing the impact and stress on the body. Proper nutrition of course plays the leading role in maintaining that optimal balance.

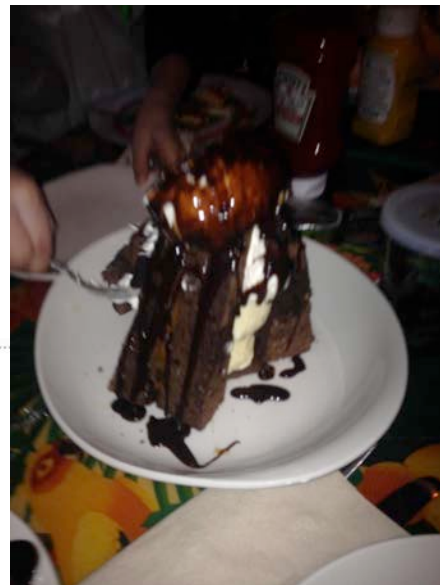
Nutrition also plays the role of catalyst in the life of a serious athlete. Proper nutrition fuels the body to provide the energy needed to endure training at an accelerated pace. It also serves to mend, build and refresh the body's muscular and skeletal systems and fend off illness and fatigue. Few can argue the importance.

So when we stress proper nutrition for our athletes it is not some sort of power play, it is essential for the health and fitness of the athletes we care about.

that time is not at a gymnastics function where doing so would be nothing more than teaching children that rules are not important. No matter how intended the underlying message is one of disrespect to our coaches and program.

Now is there a time and place for a treat every now and then? Absolutely! Nobody would want to deprive children from special occasion celebration treats. But

Throwing in the towel is not my style.



NOT A GOOD CHOICE

PROPER NUTRITION MATTERS

## 10 MOST COMMON NUTRITION MISTAKES

Most have the best intentions when it comes to providing for their children. Nutrition however sometimes takes a back seat to convenience. Here is some advise (the 10 most common nutrition mistakes) from the US Elite Coaches Association Diet expert, Beth Gevirtz.

1- Forgetting the whole foods- Pre packaged snacks are great for emergency “on the go” situations. Try to stay away from processed foods as they are higher in sugar, salt, and added fat.

2- Not enough fruits and vegetables- That sounds like a broken record but it is true. 2 cups of each per day is recommended.

3- Too many artificial sweeteners- These are virtually found in all sports drinks and sodas. Although the research is still fairly new on this topic, all signs point to “not good”. Likewise drinking sugar loaded beverages is a major issue today. Yeh they taste great but have zero nutritional value and add megatons of extra un-needed calories.

4- Eliminating fat altogether- Don’t get caught in the “no fat” diet as these foods are usually higher in sugar (calories) to add taste to compensate for removing the fat. Low fat is a better option.

5- Cutting out carbohydrates- “Carbs” have almost become a bad word. It is important to realize that the brain runs off carbs! Also, eliminating carbs totally will deprive the body of key nutrients. Try to choose 100% whole grain such as breads, pasta’s, cereals and even potatoes.

6- Being a short order cook- Buckling to the individual favorite tastes of your child only serves to create a pickier eater.

Meals should be well planned (perhaps with choices) and the parent should always be in charge of the menu. As my mom used to say “if you get hungry enough you’ll eat it!” (Not sure I would take it that far.)

7- Offering Unhealthy snacks- Hmmm where have I heard this before... genius! Unhealthy snacks, chips and sweets only serve to make eating healthy less attractive. “Why try meats and vegetables when I can have a pop tart?” Well timed, healthy snacks can play a useful role in the daily diet as meals (the daily calorie limit) broken into smaller portions has been proven to help sustain energy levels. Try snacks that have lean protein as well as (see number 2) fruits and vegetables.

8- Portion control- Studies have shown it takes time for the brain to send the message that you are full. Because of this sometimes we are all too eager to jump in line for seconds. If the main meal is well rounded and plentiful, seconds should not be in an athletes vocabulary. IF indeed there seems to be a need for more, this is an excellent time for (see number 2) fruits and vegetables.

9- Using food as a reward- This may work for your pets, but this is not the greatest idea for your children. Food as a reward can create unhealthy habits in the future. Imagine setting the example “wow if I do something good ... I should eat”. Try a hug, a compliment, money... but not food. ( I was kidding about the money thing).

10- Bad Examples- There is something to be said for do as I say not as I do, but setting a good example at the dinner table will certainly help your child follow suit. Yes it is true you do not have to flip your body, but still proper nutrition is a tough sell when they are eating an apple and you get a chocolate crusted, deep fried ice cream, triple layered cake.

*YA BETTER WATCH OUT  
YA BETTER NOT CRY*

**THOUGHT OF THE DAY:**  
Being a true athlete takes as much effort out of the gym as it does in the gym.



# 10 RULES FOR SUCCESS

Finding success is like trying to open a combination lock. You must have all the information (the numbers) and use them in the proper sequence. Below are 10 rules for achieving success.

## 1-BE DECISIVE-

You are defined by the decisions you make. Your life immediately changes the moment you decide to pursue a goal. Talking about goals does little to set us in motion. Decisive action and commitment is the key to moving forward.

## 2- STAY FOCUSED

Focused goals become a magnet that pulls you and your resources towards it. Once a goal is established let nothing interfere with obtaining it.

## 3- WRITE YOUR GOALS DOWN

Goals should be specific, attainable and measurable. Written goals provide a visual road map to your destination and inspire success. Each major goal may have smaller stepping stone goals that would serve as a check list and keep you moving in the right direction.

## 4- PLAN THE DETAILS

Detailed planning helps establish the pathway to achievement, step by step. Plans should also be written down so remind us where we are at and where we still need to go in order to achieve the goal

## 5- USE EXPERTS

It is important to realize that we can not do it all. Know your weaknesses and involve others that can fill the void. Surround yourself with great people that

can assist you with your ultimate goal. Teamwork makes the dream work.

## 6- WELCOME FAILURE

Failure has an ulterior motive and that is to stop you long enough to learn, re-evaluate, recalculate and re-launch your attempt with greater knowledge and experience. Failure can be frustrating for the short sighted. Those that consider failure a learning experience soon propel themselves forward.

## 7- TAKE PURPOSEFUL ACTION

A good plan will certainly get you started in the right direction but it is purposeful action that seals the deal.

## 8- INSPECT WHAT YOU EXPECT

Paying attention to details will increase productivity, efficiency and eventual quality of your goal. Mediocrity of effort can not be acceptable.

## 9- MAINTAIN PERSONAL INTEGRITY

In other words maintain your commitment to your commitment. Personal integrity is all about keeping your promise to yourself and following through on what ever it takes to accomplish the goal.

## 10- REWARD YOURSELF

Every worth while goal that is achieved deserves a reward. Rewards in turn serve to motivate us to continue setting, pursuing accomplishing additional goals



### THOUGHT OF THE DAY:

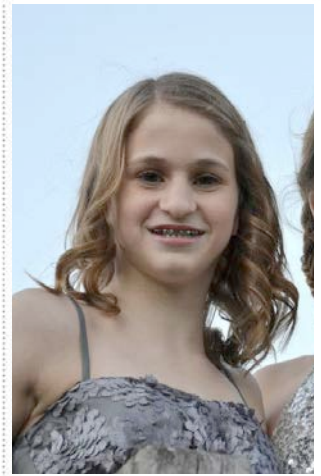
“Winning is not a sometime thing ... we don’t do things right sometimes ... we do things right everyday, every practice! Winning is an all the time thing. Winning is a habit, unfortunately so is losing”

Vince Lombardi





Lucy Jones and Taylor Livingston



FUTURE PITT PANTHER

## JONES EARNS SCHOLARSHIP

### LUCY JONES

Not too many athletes can claim to have participated in only 2 level 10 competitions and have a full ride athletic scholarship offer the next day. Lucy Jones can.

### KNOWING LUCY

Yep, after just her second level 10 competition, the Haslett sophomore impressed the University of Pittsburgh enough to entice an early offer. She gladly accepted. Not only does Lucy get to attend one of the nations finest universities BUT Pitt landed a gem of a young lady who is sure to assist the growth of their gymnastics program. Coach Debbie Yohman and assistant coach Mike Rowe (former Twistars staff member) are thrilled to have Lucy on their list of future panthers.

### LET'S GET PERSONAL

Ok yes Lucy has the nick name Lucifer (see photo on the right), and Oscar ("the grouch") but that must be attributed to her intense desire to achieve. The same desire exists in the classroom as she is number one in

her class at Haslet High. In all actuality Lucy is a wonderful athlete, teammate and friend and someone that always has her sights on becoming a better gymnast. I am sure that is one of the traits that attracted Pittsburgh and a trait that will keep her life on a very productive path.

A two time level 9 national qualifier (placing in the top 3 AA both times) including a national bar title in 2013. This year she has her sights set on level 10 nationals and if desire and work ethic have anything to say about achieving that goal, that chances are very good.

Lucy Jones:  
Set the Twistars  
Record for the  
earliest offer to a  
Level 10.

## LUCIFER



## COMMUNICATE

In order for the coaching staff to do their job to the best of their ability they need to have all the available information. We would love to have the ability to read minds or possess the legendary crystal ball. Decision making would be a much easier but for now we have to rely on good ole fashioned communication.

There is a natural tendency for athletes to avoid communicating with authority figures. This applies to coaches, teachers, and yes even parents. Athletes are a combination of mentally tough and pleaser. This creates a character trait that resembles “10 foot tall and bullet proof”. They will endure pain or frustrations rather than disappointing anyone, especially a coach or parent. This is a good trait for sure BUT there can be a fine line between “tough” and “dumb”.

Sure coaches want their athletes to be tough. We are drawn to athletes willing to run through walls, who stand tall and look you in the eye. But part of

being tough is learning how to communicate. Communication serves to give us information, on how the athlete is feeling (tired, ill, distracted), budding injuries, and fears. If we have the information then we have a better ability to deal with and create a plan to make the most of the situation.

It takes a tough kid to admit that they might have to shut down for a while. It takes a tough kid to squash the feeling that they might be disappointing someone in return for making a decision (to speak up) that in turn will have a better long term impact on their development.

There are some keys to proper communication that may help make it an easier process.

\* Don't wait til it's too late. Let coaches know if something is bothering you when they can do something about it and not after you have pushed yourself over the edge.

\* Communicate with positive posture/body language and not

looking like the proverbial “dog with the tail between the legs”. Address your issue with confidence.

\* Have a plan. If you are communicating a concern you should have an idea of what you need in order to help the situation. This demonstrates a proactive approach and gives the impression that you are serious about making the most out of the situation.

\* Don't cry wolf. In order to be considered trustworthy we have to believe your issues. Crying wolf places doubt about the sincerity of your issue.

\* Communicate in a semi private, one on one conversation. Athlete: “hey coach, can I talk to you?” “My knee has been a little sore lately, do you think I could back off the number of tumbling passes this week?” Coach: “Sure, can you work on your flexibility until it starts feeling better?” “Keep me posted on how it is progressing through out the week”

\* Revisit the issue- Coaches deal with 80 + athletes with reoccurring issues. Make it a habit of revisiting the issue not only as a way of updating the progress but as a reminder of your particular situation.

Logic would suggest that coaches want the best for their athletes and therefore want to know when something might be bothering them. Reality suggests that athletes are not logical in their normal thinking and thus need to be reminded and encouraged to communicate.



USA  
GYMNASTICS

# BOYS REPORT

## MID SEASON RECAP

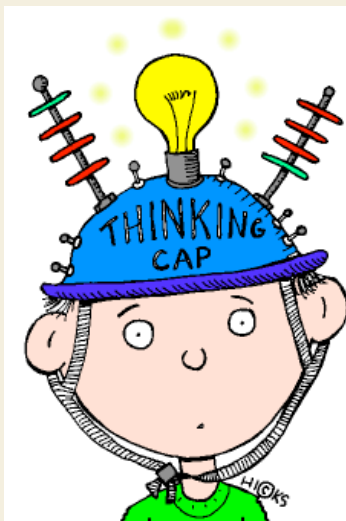
February marks the halfway point for the boy's team this year with 4 of our 8 meets (shooting for 9 with JO Nationals for the optionals) completed. In the first 4, we saw some great individual and team performances and some maybe not so hot. Either way, it motivated the team to get back in the gym and improve their performances each week.

The Windy City Invite was the first real test for our boys to see where they stand in the region. Our Level 8s started things off and put together a good meet. Noah Adams and Dylan Weiss finished 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> All Around, respectively, while Ethan Guthrie contributed 5 scores to the team and Jake Proper led the way on Floor. The Level 10s were up next. Unfortunately it took Kevin and Doug awhile to find their stride, but they did finish well on High Bar and Floor. Kevin caught his release again and got some big applause from the crowd. Saturday morning was the Level 9 boys and was another interesting start. We had some rough warmups on Vault, but

all 3 boys hit when they saluted. However during warmups, on one of his failed attempts, Jake sprained his hand and was unable to compete after vault. Josh and Alex finished up the meet well, with Alex continuing to increase his AA score. Finally, the Level 7s changed things and put together a complete meet. Luke Huisken got his first hit of the year on High Bar and Ryan hit 5 of 6 to place 8<sup>th</sup> AA! The next session was a flashback to last season as the level 5 team from last season was competing together again. Josh Harmon finished 1<sup>st</sup> on PB, 3<sup>rd</sup> on HB, and 5<sup>th</sup> AA! The Level 6s showed their best gymnastics of the season. Mason finished 1<sup>st</sup> on PB and 4<sup>th</sup> AA, Judah was in the top 3 on every event but HB (4<sup>th</sup>) and 3<sup>rd</sup> AA, and as a team they put

together an 88% hit percentage and a new season high! Finishing off the meet was the Level 5s. It was just their 3<sup>rd</sup> meet ever for most of them, but they continued to improve. Cooper was 1<sup>st</sup> on Floor and Vault and was 2<sup>nd</sup> AA against some tough competition. Kellen finished 4<sup>th</sup> on Vault and 8<sup>th</sup> AA, and with Sawyer, Chris, and Jason the older 5s won 3<sup>rd</sup> place team! A great way to finish the meet.

This past weekend, the boys stayed in Michigan for the Athlete Warrior Challenge. Our optionals started things off again, and showed much more focus than the weekend before. Alex finished 4<sup>th</sup> on FX and added another boost to his AA score. Kevin got rid of all but one of his "stupid" mistakes and took 3<sup>rd</sup> on FX and 2<sup>nd</sup> on Horse. It was nice having our 7s and 8s together the next morning. They practice together so they were more comfortable this meet. Ryan placed 3<sup>rd</sup> on PH and Huisken was 4<sup>th</sup> on PB for the younger age group, while Josh H was in the top 3 on everything but PH and a close 2<sup>nd</sup> in the AA! It's tough to place as a team with just 3 guys, but when this group puts







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### MID SEASON RECAP

puts it together they will be strong contenders! The 8s were much better as well. All four of them placed in the top 10 AA; with Proper getting a big jump in his AA, Ethan taking 3<sup>rd</sup> on FX, Noah adding in a double on HB and tying with Dylan for 1<sup>st</sup> on PH, and Dylan also winning FX and 2<sup>nd</sup> AA with a new season high! Once again this year, Michigan Academy is the big competition for our 8s, and had we done better on PB it would have been very close. Our Level 4s got to compete again for the first time since the Twistars meet. Only being

a 3 man team means every score counts, and these boys increased their previous team score by almost 20 points! The 6s didn't look quite so solid this time around. Mason and Judah still placed very well taking 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> AA respectively. The Level 5s were there to finish the weekend strong once again. Kellen placed 2<sup>nd</sup> on V, 3<sup>rd</sup> on HB, and 5<sup>th</sup> AA; Jason placed 2<sup>nd</sup> on HB and 3<sup>rd</sup> on SR; Sawyer was 3<sup>rd</sup> on FX; and Cooper dominated the meet taking 1<sup>st</sup> on FX, SR, PB, HB, and AA with a huge score of 66.3! Together with some crucial scores

from Riley and Chris, the Level 5s took 2<sup>nd</sup> place team!

The Athlete Warrior was the halfway point for our meets this year, but we still have over half of our season's practices left. The boy's will be continuing to work on their form, improve their weak events, and add some bonus skills to their routines. As long as they continue to push themselves a little harder each practice, we will have a very successful championship season.

## HODGE PODGE

### GENERAL INFORMATION-REMINDERS

1- SUPER THANKS- I know we made mention of this in the last newsletter but it bares repeating. THANKS. Thanks to the entire booster club, the president, the chairs and co chairs for the outstanding effort put forth during our annual invitational. OUTSTANDING JOB!

2- NO FOOD OR DRINK- The signs are posted but being ignored. The Summit management has asked us to repeat the message: No Food or Drink upstairs at the Summit. This is an attempt to keep the carpets presentable. Since being totally cleaned in December, there are already several large drink stains in the viewing area. Please note the rule. Thank you.

3- CHAIRS UPSTAIRS- In a previous newsletter and or booster club memo we asked that all personal chairs brought to the Summit be taken with you when you leave. Please do not store your chairs upstairs. Recently we have had a couple stolen (Yep really) and the owner was very upset with us. SORRY but we can not stand guard over something that is not supposed to be there in the first place.

4- UPSTAIRS VIEWING- A friendly reminder (including Silver Stars) that all viewing for team training is from the upstairs viewing area. This is so that the parents of our recreational students have available seating. They can not see the recreational areas from upstairs. Thanks

5- March TBA competition for Levels 3-4-5 is still in the works. We are researching the options but the picking is thin. We will try to make a final decision soon. Thanks for your patience.

6- Meet arrival time- There have been several instances of athletes arriving late to competitions for warm up. Parents should always plan some buffer time so as to arrive 15-30 minutes prior to the scheduled check in time. This insures that the athlete is there on time and allows some time for traffic or weather issues that could slow travel. IT also puts the athlete in a much more relaxed state of mind.