

TWISTARS USA GYMNASTICS NEWS

March 2007

Special points of interest:

- Positive Thinking
- Twistars Summer Camp
- Sports Psychology
- Coach FREE Time
- Motown Madness
- Calendar
- Winning and Losing with Style

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DO I REALLY HAVE TO?

You hear it all the time. “I have to go to work”, “I have to go to practice”, “I have to visit relatives”, I have to do my homework”. The obligation attached to “HAVE TO” really puts a negative slant on things.

Isn't it more refreshing and motivating to “GET TO” do something or even better “WANT TO”?

Having to do anything has to lessen the enthusiasm and effort for that activity. Getting to or wanting to comes with automatic vitality.

Looking at this from a realistic viewpoint shouldn't we feel blessed that we have the opportunity to do these HAVE TO obligations. Isn't it great to have a job you get to do? Isn't it great to have family you get to visit.

“Do I HAVE to do my homework”, is something parents hear all the time. NO you get to! It is your opportunity to set the path for the future. Some kids don't GET that opportunity. Ask our Columbian friends how many

kids in Columbia would love to be studying rather than working in the crop fields.

“I have to go to practice”. Isn't it great to have the sup-



port from parents in providing you with opportunity to participate in an extra curricular activity like gymnastics? Nobody really HAS to go to practice... they GET TO. It is something that the family provides as a reward. HAVING TO go to practice signifies punishment and I sincerely hope that practice isn't seen as such.

“Do I HAVE TO do another routine?” “Why do we HAVE to make requirements everyday?” You don't have to. You get to do another rou-

tine, and you GET to make requirements. You get another chance to attain your goals, you GET limited attempts at making yourself a better athlete. Doesn't it feel absolutely wonderful to know that YOU have the ability to challenge your mind and body. Many kids don't have that chance, or even the ability to try. You are special simply because you have that ability. GETTING to use that talent sounds far better than HAVING to use it.

From a sports psychology viewpoint approaching gymnastics from the mind set of GETTING TO do something special will undoubtedly lessen the strains of training. Approaching every attempt in practice as a chance to improve, and to GET BETTER is a strategy that the most successful athletes use. Remembering that you only GET limited attempts to GET BETTER is intelligent training.

“MOM, DO I GET TO GO TO THE GYM TODAY?”

TWISTARS USA SUMMER CAMP

The Annual Twistars Summer Camp will be **PACKED** this year! I know I say this every year.... and every year it is. **BUT** this year considering that all Twistars team members will be on hand, it will be packed more than ever.

As you know boosters club is picking up the tab for 1 week of camp for each Twistars team member. As a show of appreciation for this support, Twistars USA has discounted that week of camp \$45.

In an attempt to spread the numbers equally over the 2 weeks of camp, each training group will be assigned a certain week (no week is "better" than the other). During the "off" week you have a couple of options: a) plan a vacation or b) enroll for a 2nd week of camp (\$275). There will not be team training other than camp during those 2 weeks. Pre-Teams will maintain their normal training schedule through June.

This format has stirred considerable interest in our camp. In the past we have had some disappointment in that visiting clubs want to train with our best athletes and sometimes our best were not on hand. Training with the **BEST** is part of the draw to our camp. Now they will have that opportunity and for this reason camp will be filled to capacity.

Following are your group assignments. If there are extenuating circumstances where one week works better the other (weddings, vacations **BUT** not I want to be with my friend Suzi) please contact me as soon as possible.

WEEK 1- June 18-21- Groups B-E-G-I and Boys (44). WEEK 2- June 25-28- Groups A-C-F-H-J-M (45).

All team members will need to fill out a registration form and have them turned in by April 1. Those planning on doing 2 weeks of camp should sign up **IMMEDIATELY** (do not wait until April



1). Camp T-shirts order information is part of the registration form (\$15).

We do have some great coaches coming in including some of the regulars. Dan Miller, Marco Bravo, Duane Haring, Katie Teft (MSU), Jerry Reighard (CMU), Patty Povee (Splitz), Dave Rawles, Sam Buchalter, Randy Lane (MSU), Nanci Moore (Bay Valley) and more.

Please do your best to get your registration information turned in by the deadline date. Remember **ASAP** for those wanting a 2nd week and **APRIL 1** at the latest for all members. **THANKS!**

REGISTRATION

FORM ARE DUE

BY APRIL 1 – BUT

THOSE

WANTING A 2nd

WEEK –ASAP

IMPROVE THOSE STATE MEET SCORES

We are rapidly approaching the championship portion of the 2007 season. Assuming that everyone wants their culminating competition to be one of their best, it is time to focus in on making little improvements.

We have made it a annual strategy at this time of year to set goals for one tenth improvements for each practice. It sounds simple and it works. Image just making a .1 improvement on one event for each of the 15– 35 remaining practices. You do the math. Is this possible? Maybe not but how about half of that amount?

1) ER WORDS– training with the ER idea (not emergency

room) but by making something straighter, higher, faster, quicker, prettier, longer, tighter, etc will certainly add to the score.

2) Listening, Processing, Responding– Coaches give corrections daily. Athletes need to hear the correction, understand it and then respond by giving a focused attempt to make the correction. Sounds simple but it works.

3) ROM– Range of motion. Many of the deductions used by judges are built around the range of motion (or lack of) of skills. Concentrate on improving the ROM of the jumps and leaps (split ROM, tuck posi-



LISTEN, PROCESS and RESPOND

tions, straddle positions etc)

4) FORM– By now you know where your most common form breaks are. Fix them! A bent arm on bars, or leg separation on tumbling is an easy fix IF you focus on them.

FOCUS TO IMPROVE!

AWARENESS– INSERTION– MAINTENANCE

From Questions beyond the Questions

It is agreed that the negative thoughts that run ramped in our minds is the road block to improvement.

In order for us to rid our minds of these counter productive thoughts we must first be aware that they exist. If you are not aware of what they are HOW can you replace them.

- * That is too hard
- * I cant do that
- * I don't have time for that
- * I hate conditioning
- * That is scary

This self talk will keep progress at a snails pace. We must first be AWARE of this negative self talk in order to practice INSERTION (inserting

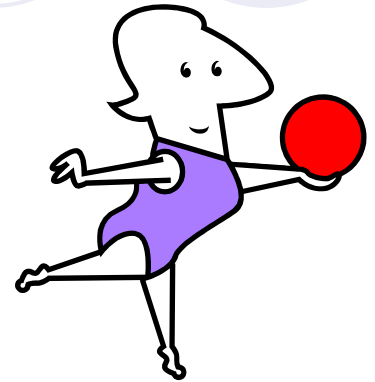
a positive thought in the place of the negative one).

- * That is easy
- * I can do that
- * If I concentrate I will have time to finish
- * Conditioning challenges me
- * That skill is exciting

This may sound simple and actually it is but sometimes the brain is well aware that you don't really believe what you are inserting. This is why most kids give up on this approach. BUT it is OK if you don't really believe it at first. DO IT ANYWAY. The option is to keep playing with negative thoughts. At least if you ACT (pretend) to have positive thoughts you are moving in the right direc-

tion, and eventually YOU WILL start believing them. BAM ... PROGRESS

After displacing the bad thoughts through insertion now it is time for MAINTENANCE. "Repetition is the motor of learning" and change is a process of taking baby steps. It is important that we practice these step daily. Going through the motions once or twice really won't do the job. We must MAINTAIN the process daily. Every time a negative thought enters the brain we must be AWARE. Throw it away and INSERT a better thought and once we have this system in tact, MAINTAIN it on a daily basis



PROGRESS
STARTS WITH
THE BELIEF THAT
PROGRESS CAN
BE MADE

IF YOU THINK YOU CAN

Some of you may have heard this before but since we are on the sports psych theme here is a little poem that hits the target dead center. Keep these words in mind as we head down the final stretch of this competitive season.

If you think you're beaten, You are.

If you think you dare not, you don't.

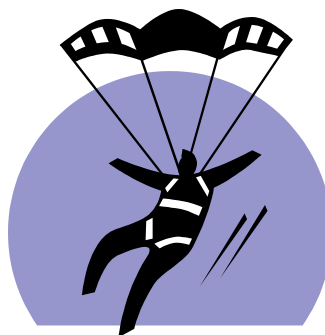
If you'd like to win but think you can't

It's almost a cinch you won't

If you think you will lose, you've lost.

For out in the world we find Success being with a person's will

It's all in the state of mind.



BELIEVE THAT YOU CAN

If you think you're outclassed, you are.

You've got to think high to rise.

You've got to be sure of yourself

Before you can ever win the big prize.

Life's battles don't always go

To the stronger or faster man;

But soon or late, the one who wins

Is the person who THINKS he/she can!

MY EXPECTATIONS ARE NECESSARY

Setting daily requirements is a necessity in running a structured and disciplined program. Meeting the daily requirements needs to be a priority otherwise they are basically meaningless.

As general tendencies go, IF you have the option of doing something most kids will be less likely to fulfill the expectations 100%. Some will do better than others BUT it is the expectation to complete the assignment as intended that really grows progress. Letting requirements slide (I'll do it tomorrow, or I was only 2 routines short) only leads to establishing a lesser standard.

Having an expectation that assignments be met daily also serves to stimulate a more productive practice. Kids sim-

ply move faster when they know they are expected to finish an assignment in a given amount of time.

Now if our requirements were never ending,, always high in volume and intensity, then our athletes might have a legitimate gripe about finishing each day. BUT we have hard days, light days, days with certain emphasis' (form, small numbers but excellent execution), off days, rest days etc.

I have heard this system described as MEAN. "Sometimes kids just can't", sometimes they are having a bad day" I say YEP and we certainly watch carefully for those situations. BUT M.E.A.N. in my book means **My Expectations Are Necessary** , and what would be

meaner would be to set a standard that not fulfilling expectations is an acceptable practice. You wouldn't want that in school, relationships, or life. We don't want it in gymnastics either.

So, I guess I am asking for a couple of things here. One, for the athletes to realize that requirements are a priority of training and Two, for parents to support the MAKE UP TIME should it be needed.

Thanks!



Meeting the daily requirements is one sure way to grow progress

LEVEL 7 STATE MEET

It is just around the corner. On March 23-24-25 Twistars USA Boosters Club will play host to the LEVEL 7 and PREP Optional State Championships.

This meet has grown to numbers that exceed all expectations. We will have more than 400 athletes on hand for this competition. As always, Twistars want to present a quality event.

The competition has expanded into 7 full sessions THUS we will need to begin on Friday at 12:00. Set up will take place Thursday night from 7-12:00.

To clear any misconceptions as to who is obligated to work this event please note the fol-

lowing. All boosters club members less the first year silverstars and the first year level 4 boys are asked to participate to fulfill their boosters club time commitment.

To clear any misconception as to who should report for clean up on SUNDAY 7:00 pm... that would be those people who sign up for CLEAN UP HOURS. This procedure is different from the invitational in that this meet is one set of equipment and thus does not require a massive work force.

Committee chairs should be organized and ready to present the best state meet ever. Lets go the extra mile to make this meet special.

Sign up Sheets will be up and available Monday March 12-10AM through Friday March 16, 8:00 PM. Please make plans to sign up for your required hours during that time.

A big thanks ahead of time for the extra effort I know you will put forth. Remember this is a boosters club fundraiser which in turn directly effects finances.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Here is your up to the moment, revised, calendar of events.

March 10-11– Mo Town Classic. Rochester Hills. Levels 7-8-9-10.

March 11– Eurostars– Canton Michigan. Level 4s.

March 18– SMQ– Greater Kalamazoo. Levels 5/6

March 24-25– Level 7 States. Catholic Central HS– Lansing

March 31-April 1– Level 8-9-10 States. Michigan Academy, Westland.

April 14-15 SMQ– Level 5– Mills Gymnastics– Southgate.

April 9-10 Regionals– Midland.

April 21-22 Level 4-6 States. Hosted by Mid Michigan Gymnastics in Saginaw.

April 27-29– Level 8 Regionals. DeVeaus Gymnastics, Indianapolis Indiana.

April 27– Elite Regional– Compulsory Meet. Cincinnati Gymnastics Academy, Cincy,

May 4-6– Elite Qualifier, Houston Texas.

May 5-6 Level 5 States. Battle Creek, Branch Gymnastics

May 10-13– Level 9 Eastern Nationals, Kissamee Florida.

May 17-20 Level 10 Nationals, Cincinnati Ohio, GymNation.

May 19-20– Bravo– Twistars Spring Recital. Rec– Level 4

May 31– June3– Elite Qualifier, Houston Texas.

June 16–Twistars Senior Recognition and Awards Banquet– ALL TEAM members including boys and Silverstars.

MARK YOUR
CALENDARS...
DOUBLE CHECK
TO MAKE SURE
THESE ARE THE
DATES YOU HAVE

COACHES FREE TIME

I need to ask the team membership a favor, and that is to respect our coaching staffs personal time.

It seems that some staff members have been inundated with after hour phone calls. Granted some phone conversations may be necessary from time to time and that is NOT a problem. We want to have open lines of communication.

But phone calls become somewhat intrusive when they are abused.

Actually most concerns can

be addressed quickly either before or after regular training hours. Lets try to save the after hour phone calls for the extraordinary situations.

From the staff point of view it is not a matter of wanting to discuss issues, it is more a matter of limited family time that comes with the coaching territory. I am sure you can understand having to deal with 2-3-4 phone calls each night/day.

On a similar note, lets direct the questions that you might have to the most appropriate

person. Try going to the source of your concern first and foremost. That has proven to be the best way to handle any concern. Discussing beam issues with bar coach, or compulsory issues with the preschool director really isn't very efficient in the total scheme of things. Actually it could be considered somewhat disrespectful in some cases.

This reminder is not meant to close doors, but simply streamline the efficiency of the communication process. THANKS for your cooperation.



MOTOWN MADNESS

Here is the skinny on this weekends Motown Madness meet at Oakland University in the Recreation and Athletic Center. (Maps in your mailbox).

Level 10s check Saturday 2:45. Level 9s check in Saturday at 5:45.

On Sunday the Level 7s check in at 8:00 AM and the 8s check in at 3:00.

Remember to set your clocks ahead 1 hour as it is SPRING FORWARD weekend. Level 7s should certainly take this into consideration when planning their SLEEP HOURS

the night before.

The competition will use Capital Cup format thus you will not need your warm up tank leotard.

All team members should plan on arriving at least 15-30 minutes prior to check in.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT-

There is some smarter than any of us and
that is ALL OF US

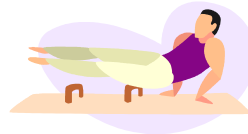


FOOD FOR THOUGHT-

Life is like a car pool lane, in order to get
to your destination quickly, you have to take
some people with you

FOOD FOR THOUGHT-

If I miss 3 days of practice the judges see it,
If I miss 2 days, my coaches see it, If I miss 3
days ... I DARNED WELL BETTER SEE IT!



FOOD FOR THOUGHT-

The dream begins with a person who believes in you, who tugs
and pushes and leads you to the next plateau, sometimes poking
with a sharp stick called TRUTH and REALITY .



WINNING/LOSING WITH CLASS AND STYLE

I am not a big proponent of the old adage "winning isn't everything". I actually think that the person who coined that phrase must have succumbed to the idea of losing.

With that being said however, there are different definitions of winning. IF winning is synonymous with first place then the vast majority of athletes/coaches are LOSERS. This is certainly not the case. Since not finishing in first is inevitable from time to time Twistars members need to adhere to a classy code of conduct when these situation arise. Likewise winning should also be done with class.

TIP #1- WALK THE WALK
If you forget all else, remember to always THINK, WALK, TALK, FEEL classy. Remember you are representing a class organization,, family and sport.

TIP #2- ACCOUNTABILITY Be held accountable.

Coaches and parents are the role models for proper behavior. Children don't learn unsportsmanlike behavior on their own. We should be held accountable for the example that we set.

TIP #3- BE RESPECTFUL.

If you win be proud internally (and certainly somewhat on the exterior) but be sure to be respectful to those who are not in the winning position. Winners act like winners, honorable, dignified, and gracious.

TIP #4- NO EXCUSES The blame for defeat always falls "IN HOUSE" here at Twistars. It is the result of not performing well enough to win and that in itself can be the result of personal performance, inadequate preparation, coaching or just plain unfortunate luck. In



**WINNING AND LOSING
WITH CLASS AND
STYLE**

any case WINNERS do not make excuses. They simply go back to work so as to prevent the undesired result from happening again.

**TIP #5- COMPLIMENT
YOUR OPPONENTS**

Nothing is as disarming as a properly place compliment. Nothing is more motivational that having someone throw WINNING in your face. Make it a habit of congratulating your opponents. Trash talking has no place in gymnastics.