

Caps and Goggles are This Summer's 'Must-Have-Accessory'

There are a lot of swimmers here in Maryland. It looks like millions, but it's most likely not. But they're here, and they're all over the place. It's insane; I've never seen so many swimmers and coaches in one building before, not even at States, probably not even at Winters. Living on deck, sleeping in the locker rooms, sprawled out in any free space they can find. Lounging in space you had before you went to warm-up, and now you can't really fight them for it, because that would be "wasting energy" for your event, and your coach spoke specifically against doing that.

My team has light's-out at nine. In the evening. Right after the sun goes down. We're collecting our energy and saving it for our events. Even if we don't have an event that day.

Yesterday I swam the fifty free. I did all right, except that I Swan-dived into the pool at the start. I didn't know that I knew how to do a swan dive. Maybe I should try out for the diving team instead. Today I'm leading-off the four free relay. I'm thinking maybe this time of doing a Jack-Knife or a Blackflip.

Instead of flying in from New York, we rented three vans to drive down, which not many kids on the team liked. The van I was in coming to Maryland left later than the other two. We got here around six-thirty, just in time for dinner. My friend Tony and I were happy, since that meant it was too late for us to practice in the competition pool that day. There was no more talk of taking a plane to Maryland ever since.

My coach drives one of the vans. On Tuesday, he drove a bunch of the guys to trials. At 5:30 in the morning. The sun was not out yet. He wanted to be one of the first teams there, so we could get a good spot. He zoomed off at maybe the fastest I have ever seen him drive, probably the fastest I will ever see him drive in my life. Fifty, maybe even sixty miles an hour at times. Don't laugh, the speed limit's forty for most of the road, and if it weren't for the excitement, he would have driven that. Sometimes, excited coaches can be hazardous to your health.

-Michelle Varga, Flushing Flyers, NY