

Another Undefeated Season!!! You guys are amazing. You won all of your meets despite the challenging competition! Congratulations!

The Mudpuppies did suffered one terrible loss though. Losing Coach Brian hurt a lot. I didn't know what this season would be like without him. But every time I came to a meet, I felt him here. I saw him in each of you.

Coach Brian was so special to this team because he brought his A-game every time he was with you. And, guess what, you all brought your A-game to every meet you attended this summer. It showed. I watched you swimming your hearts out, swimming your fastest. Because of your tremendous effort, you won, and won and won.

Guess who knew you would? Coach Brian. Just before he went to the hospital, he started writing the end of season speech to give to you. He thought he would be here to read it, but I will read it instead. The fact that he wrote this speech before the season even started shows how much he believed in you. Here it is:

Hello Mudpuppies!

What an awesome season in the pool. You all have impressed your coaches and me on many levels. First and foremost, you went 6-0 AGAIN. That is four seasons running. That is crazy. And I love it. This season especially is crazy since we just got moved up 2 divisions from Division 5 to Division 3. I guess you know the teams who swim in Divisions 1,2, and 3. They are all big, experienced and generally win all their meets. This year we changed some of that by holding onto all of these wins. Congratulations! Our great record is

both a blessing and possibly a curse. We get to celebrate our wins and be proud—that's the blessing.

Next year, I predict we will be in Division 2. That, my friends, is the curse. Our opponents will all be super fast. From what I have seen from you all through the past 4 years, that doesn't seem to bother you too much. In fact, it may make you faster! Maybe we should try to get into Division 1 to go even faster!

Our team, the Mudpuppies, performed well in the pool and scored lots of points. We won our meets, but more importantly, we did well in practice to prepare for the meets. We had fun together. We made new friends and reconnected with our summer swim buddies.

We started a new junior coach program under Coach Tricia, which enrolled several awesome junior coaches. They have demonstrated to the coaches their ability to be leaders and mentors in the pool. Our youngest swimmers are benefiting right now. In years to come our whole team will benefit from a pipeline of coaches, senior swimmers, and a real sense of family on the team whenever the oldest swimmers are in the water guiding those younger swimmers. As the years pass, these younger swimmers will get older and will be in the water guiding younger swimmers, and so on. It's a beautiful thing and can only be done by a group like you guys.

The Mudpuppies are an amazing group of families. That goes without saying. We have been growing steadily each year and due to pool size, we have decided to hold off on getting bigger. Does that mean we are limited in what teams in TSA we can beat? No! We can go on to win any meet we swim in. In order to do that, we would have to continue to get fast. We would need speedy swimmers in every age group. We need to build

on what we have by having all of you come back next season and by having as many of you as possible push yourselves physically in year-round swimming. We will also excel by getting our 2015 summer coaches back for 2016. Who absolutely loved having them help us this season? Who wants them back in 2016?

Finally, I want to mention another unifying element that some of our Mudpuppy parents have started. They formed a board to steer our team in the right direction. We can't win meets without you working your hardest and swimming your fastest. We also can't win meets or even have a team without the hard work of our leadership core of parents and our hard working parent volunteers. Let's give them a Mudpuppy round of applause to show how much we appreciate them!

And now, I want all of you to stand up. If this was your first year on the team, sit down. If this was your second year on the team sit down, if this was your third year on the team, sit down. If this was your fourth year on the team, sit down. If this was your fifth year on the team, sit down. If this was your sixth year on the team sit down. The swimmers still standing have been here since the beginning of our team! Let's give them a hand! Now, if you're coming back next year, stand up and cheer!

That is the end of Coach Brian's speech.

I believe that Coach Brian inspired you to swim fast because he saw something special in each of you. And you knew he saw it. His seeing it made it easier for you to believe it was there. Believing in yourself makes all the difference. My wish for each of you is that you can hold on to the feeling Coach Brian gave you that you are special and important. It is true; you are. I

want you to swallow that knowledge and let it spread throughout every part of you, even to your fingers and toes. If you do, you will continue to do great things both in and out of the pool. That is what Coach Brian wanted. He would also want a rousing Mudpuppy cheer. Can you do that?