

Natalie Coughlin Blog from Beijing:

I take the time now to point out an important detail to all of you fellow swimmers out there... My first swims were neither on par with my goals nor with my abilities. I could have mentally given up at that point and claimed that I "missed my taper." Instead I focused more on my technique and relaxing away from the pool, and had faith that the training over the past several years cannot possibly go away overnight. With each swim my body was getting more and more comfortable racing again and my times improved. So the lesson that I hope all of you take away from my experience is that taper is nothing magical. You're not going to miss the taper bus by a couple days. Throughout my 20 years of competitive swimming, I have heard people say that they trained great but just missed their taper. Don't allow yourself to get swept into this line of thinking. If you are about to go into a big competition and don't feel great, don't lose faith because you can turn things around with the right attitude. Many people will disagree with me on this taper thing, but this is what I have learned over the past several years and it's just my opinion. Enough with the boring taper stuff, I just feel like that is an important thing for all swimmers to learn.