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## Road to Athens Journal: Tom Malchow



U.S. Open 03 - Tom Malchow won the 200m fly.

**Dec. 24, 2003**

*With the 2004 Olympic Trials in Long Beach, Calif., less than a year away, America's top swimmers have begun preparing for what could be the biggest and most important meet of their careers. Every week until then, two athletes – Olympic veteran [Tom Malchow](#) and up-and-coming hopeful [Mary DeScenza](#) – will share their experiences as they inch closer to the Road to Athens.*

*This week, Malchow takes a break in the Grand Cayman Islands.*

### Journal 8 – Dec. 24, 2003

The opportunities provided me by swimming have been amazing. In my 20-plus years of swimming, I have had to make a lot of personal sacrifices to get to the level I am at, but in return I have had incredible experiences, including traveling all around the world, seeing a lot of cool places and things, and meeting many interesting people. I have had experiences that money could never buy, and that I will never forget.

As I am writing this journal entry, I am returning to cold Michigan from a five-day training camp in the Grand Cayman Islands. The opportunity to escape the rain, snow and freezing temperatures of Michigan in exchange for the sun, sand and outdoor training on a Caribbean Island is a pretty cool Christmas present! The main purpose for my trip was to train with the Cayman National Team and to help them in their quest to continue to build their program. In spite of the work, I managed to eek out a little time for some fun in the sun and to relax. I have always felt that an occasional change in my normal training regime is good, and I cannot think of a finer place to make that change than in the Caymans. The place is paradise!!!

While I was in Caymans my daily schedule stayed very much the same. I had two - two hour workouts each da, and I did an hour of dry land training daily, but doing a tough set in the pool and/or a heavy dry land session outside in the sun with a warm ocean breeze never seems to be quite as taxing. It still hurts, but the pain is soothed away a lot faster.

As I mentioned, it was not all work at this training camp. I explored Grand Cayman in a rented Jeep and took in some of the attractions the island has to offer, including the famous turtle farm, and I even went to Hell! Yes, I said I went to Hell! Hell is a little city near the center of the island that is loaded with sharp black rocks. I would say it was a fun place to visit, but not someplace I would like to stay!!! I also squeezed in a few hours on the gorgeous white sand of Seven Mile Beach and played in the amazing turquoise blue water of the Caribbean Sea.

My stay on Grand Cayman was wonderful, and I would like to thank the Cayman National Team, their coaching staff, and their sponsors for their hospitality. It is an unbelievable place to visit and train, and I would highly recommend it. The only negative is that it is so difficult to leave when you are headed back to another three

months of snow and freezing temperatures.

Oh well, I am headed home to the warmth of the Holidays, and I would just like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Chanukah and a may all of your New Year's goals be met. It has been another very special year for me, and I want to thank everyone who has been a part of it, my parents, my coaches, my friends, and my fans. You are the reasons I have had another memorable year in and out of the water. Without you my journey would not be so complete and fulfilling.

Happy Holidays and God Bless,  
Tom