

Granville boys swimmers transitioning behind seniors

Kurt Snyder, ksnyder@newarkadvocate.com 12:04 a.m. EST December 17, 2014



(Photo: Michael Lehmkuhle/The Sentinel)

The elite swimmers in Ohio have no secrets among each other.

Granville senior Grant Stahl knows the competition, and he has just one thing on his mind. He has been to the Division II state meet each of the past three seasons but never on the podium at the end of the night.

"I don't necessarily look at a time goal," Stahl said. "For me, at the end of the year, I want to be competing for a state championship in the 100 butterfly, and in the 200 individual medley, I want to be up there in a top five spot."

Stahl has had a strong first few swims in his march to late February. He placed eighth in the 200 IM (2:01.99) and ninth in the 100 butterfly (53.94) this past Saturday in the Ned Reeb Memorial at Ohio State University.

In many ways, the Ned Reeb is better than a state preview in December because of the amount of Division I teams participating. Stahl knows what is competition will be in the postseason, and he likely is not too upset it will not include from swimmers from programs such as Cincinnati St. Xavier or Solon. Still, it does not seem to matter to him who is next to him.

"Through club swimming and through my past three years, I know who those guys are," Stahl said. "I just try to keep my head down and do my own thing. You never know what is going to happen at the end of the year. You never know what events they are going to swim or if they get hurt. You have to train as hard as you can, and it has to be your individual race by the end of the season."

Senior Timmy Spichiger was Granville's top finisher, placing second in the 500 freestyle (4:46.00) and fourth in the 200 free (1:46.08). Spichiger had a pair of seventh-place finishes in the distance races in the 2014 state meet.

Freshmen Nathan Demant and Jesse Falar and junior Colin McDermott were the Blue Aces' top finishers in the B flight. With Granville replacing a chunk of its team from a year ago, Stahl was impressed with how the less-experienced Blue Aces handled their first meet in a intense environment.

"It's a good experience for them," Stahl said. "They were going to one of the biggest pools in Ohio. I have trained there and competed there many times, and it is even intimidating for me sometimes. I was at finals, and I was a little nervous. For them, I can't believe what it was like."

Granville's coaches Brandy Frias and Kaylissa Chapman will have several more chances to mix and match before the Blue Aces reach the stretch drive. The Blue Aces host meets at Denison on Saturday and Jan. 2 to showcase their progress.

Stahl is eager to see how the pieces fit down the road.

"You can practice one way, but it is really how you compete in the pool," Stahl said. "That is really what shows at the end of the season. People swim in practice and might not be going all out, but when they are racing, that is when you really find out who is going to make relay spots or be in top spots for sectionals."

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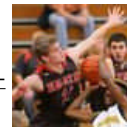
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