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Granville boys swimmers confident in training

Kurt Snyder, Reporter 12:03 a.m. EST December 7, 2016



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(Photo: Michael Lehmkuhle/The Advocate)

GRANVILLE - Colin McDermott closed out his career in style for the Blue Aces' boys swim team, qualifying for the Division II state meet in the 50 freestyle.

It is something Granville senior Aaron Sargent watched and would like to duplicate this season. Sargent's final season began this week after he qualified for the district meet in two individual events and two relays as a junior.

"We are actually spot on," Sargent said. "I am right on track to where (McDermott) was (at the beginning of last season). It's good time to shoot for. (District) just gave a really good insight into how competitive it is."

While McDermott graduated, the Blue Aces have plenty of firepower to challenge Watkins Memorial for the Licking County League title and Columbus Academy for the district title. Senior Rowan Moore qualified for the state meet in the 100 breaststroke.

Senior Daniel Cowan, juniors Tristan Mullins and Kevin Miller and sophomore Logan Rees also were district qualifiers a season ago. The Blue Aces also added sophomore C.J. Travis, who was a district qualifier for Granville Christian in the 100 breaststroke and 200 free, to the roster.

"I feeling very good about our team this year," Sargent said. "I think all of the seniors put in the work during the offseason. We are a pretty well-oiled machine. We are just trying to figure out where the underclassmen fit."

Many of the Blue Aces compete for the Pau Hana swim club, and it has been a smooth transition as new coaches Hillary Stahl and Tyler Paulsen have either coached and swam for Pau Hana coach Teresa Fightmaster.

"(Swimming year-round) helps us stay in shape," Sargent said. "(Fightmaster) helps us drop time consistently. You don't have to get back to where you were for the high school season. Since Hilliary has coached with Teresa, they blend well together. They have the same coaching techniques."

With Granville's roster a mix of veterans and newcomers, Paulsen might be the perfect person to lead the least-experienced Blue Aces. He did not begin swimming at the high school level until his sophomore year at Heath, but he had a successful career for the Bulldogs and at Mount Union.

"We have a bunch of kids that don't really know how to swim yet," Paulsen said. "I was a beginner at one point in time. I was pretty bad. I know what it was like to struggle for the first season. You have to stick with it."

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