

Ross divers lead squad into district meet at BGSU

By BOB MARKER
Staff writer

Fremont Ross's male divers figure to have the best shot at qualifying for the state meet during the Northwest Ohio District Swim Meet at Bowling Green State University this weekend.

The Little Giants have three divers ranked in the state, according to an unofficial ranking system published in the Northwest Ohio Swimming Newsletter. Ryan Nuhfer, undefeated this season and a state qualifier as a junior last year, is 14th in the state while teammates B.J. Blair and Chad Root are listed in the 27th and 37th spots, respectively.

"They are ranked by their best

scores as of Feb. 13," Ross Coach Tom Thomson said, "but the degree of difficulty is not figured in that."

The girls diving at the Student Recreation Center on the BGSU campus will be at 11 a.m., Friday, with the boys diving at 11 a.m., Saturday. Natalie Albert is the lone girls diver for Ross.

The top two divers and swimmers in each event qualify for the state meet. Divers and swimmers can qualify as at-large entrants if their scores or times are better than in other district meets.

Thomson said that today's practice will determine many events his swimmers will compete in at BG.

"Both the medley and

freestyle relays look strong for both boys and girls," he said. "There are several combinations of swimmers for each team, but I will not select them until Thursday's practice."

"I think both relays could surprise some teams," the Ross coach added. "The kids are looking strong in practice and they have a positive attitude."

They know they have to swim their best races and they will."

Some of the better chances at qualifying for the state meet are Todi Heslet and Ann Wells in the butterfly and Julie Schaaf in the 50 free.

Among the boys are freestyler Mike Mullholand and Brian Schaaf, Rob Penrod in the backstroke and freestyles, Rob

Schaaf in the breaststroke and Steve Schaaf in the freestyles and breaststroke.

Swimming events begin at 4 p.m., both Friday and Saturday. The medley relay, 200 freestyle, individual medley and 50 freestyle events will be completed Friday with the remainder of the swimming events Saturday.

TRADE
IN SALE

DISTRICT SWIMMING: A pair of sixth-place finishes highlighted Fremont Ross's performance in the first day of the district swim meet at Bowling Green Friday. Mike Mulholland finished sixth in the 50 freestyle with a time of 22.68 and helped the medley relay team to that same placing. Rob Penrod, Rob Schaaf and Jason Sprenger joined Mulholland in a 1:46.64 clocking. Steve Schaaf and Julie Schaaf also did well in the 50 free. Steve placed eighth with 22.96 showing, while Julie was seventh in the girls race with a 25.96 clocking. Todi Heslet added a ninth-place finish in the 200 free with a time of 2:04.99 while Penrod was 14th in the boys 200 free in 1:53.40. Girls diving was also held Friday, but Natalie Albert missed the finals by 2.02 points. The districts resume today at Bowling Green State University's Rec Center with boys diving at 11 a.m. and swimming at 4:15 p.m.

Nuhfer, Blair qualify for state competition

News—Messenger Reports

BOWLING GREEN — Two Fremont Ross divers qualified for the state meet and two swimmers earned high school All-America status during the Northwest Ohio District Swim Meet at Bowling State University Saturday.

Ross finished seventh in the boys standings with 78½ points and the girls were eighth with 66. Toledo St. Francis won the boys meet with 330½, well ahead of runner-up Malabar's 151. Northview won the girls title with 225 with St. Ursula second at 167.

Port Clinton was 10th in the boys meet with 10 and the Oak Harbor girls finished 16th with seven.

Four the of the top 10 divers in the district meet were from Ross.

Ryan Nuhfer and B.J. Blair will carry the Little Giants colors in the state meet at Branin Natatorium in Canton.

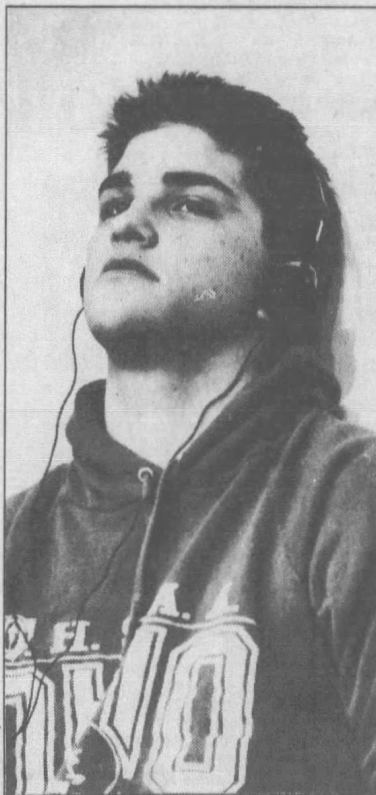
It will be the second trip to the state meet for Nuhfer, a senior. He finished third in the district despite a poor third dive that forced him to play catchup the remainder of the competition.

Blair, just a freshman, was fifth while senior Mike Nighswander was eighth and sophomore Chad Root finished ninth.

Nuhfer's point total for 11 dives of 429.85 established a school record, wiping out the 394 by Scott Heschel. Blair also bettered the old record with 399.50. Both divers won "at-large" berths in the state meet.

Nighswander had 371.45 points and Root 366.25.

Scott Siford of Toledo St. Francis won the diving title, easily outdistancing the field with 574.50 points. Second was Ric Johann of Northview with



News-Messenger/Chris Walker

RYAN NUHFER of Ross listens to music while relaxing between dives Saturday. The Ross senior finished third and earned an at-large berth in the state meet next weekend.

439.70.

Mike Mullholand and Robbie Penrod of Ross earned All-America recognition in the 50 freestyle and 100 backstroke, respectively. Mullholand was sixth in 22.68 seconds in the Friday event while Penrod splashed to a 59.21 in his event Saturday while finishing sixth. Both times met All-America cutoff standards.

The Ross girls freestyle relay team of Todi Heslet, Julie Schaaf, Ann Wells and Jamie



News-Messenger/Chris Walker

CHAD ROOT of Ross is in the middle of a turn during the diving competition Saturday at the Student Rec Center on the Bowling Green State University campus.

Brudzinski set a team record while finishing fourth in 3:57.85. It was the best finish for either boys or girls in swimming events for the Little Giants.

Other top 10 finishes Saturday for Ross included a pair of sevenths by Wells, a freshman, in the butterfly in 1:05.51 and in the 500 freestyle in 5:43.02. Heslet was ninth in the butterfly in 1:06.49.

Oak Harbor's Chawn Oakley placed eighth in the 500 freestyle in 5:44.03.