

FOCUS: STATE SWIMMING/DIVING MEET

Newman set for repeat in diving

By BOB MARKER
Sports editor

Jenny Newman is making her second trip to the Ohio High School State Girls Diving Championships, but this time it will be more pleasurable.

Newman and teammate Leslie Hasselbach were in the 1994 state meet but two days before the competition, Hasselbach's father, Cal, died in an automobile accident.

"It was rough," Newman, a senior, admitted.

Newman still managed to get all 11 dives and finish 16th. Hasselbach was seventh.

Beside learning how to share the grief of a teammate, Newman's first state appearance was a learning experience.

"I learned," she said, "there are a lot of good divers. I was a little intimidated because they were really good. I know they are



NEWMAN

good this year."

Newman will not be alone on this year's trip. Four Ross swimmers are making the trip, the first time since 1986 that Ross has had swimmers in the state meet. Annie Mears, Molly O'Connor, Addie Baker and Mindy Ickes qualified as individuals and a relay.

Newman, who plans to attend Miami of Ohio next year, finished second in last week's district diving at Bowling Green to earn a spot in the state show. She was second the year before but with a higher point total than this year's meet.

"I had 409 points last year," Newman said, "and only 385 this year, but the judging was a little more difficult this year."

Also, Newman admitted, she dove more consistently last year.

"My first five dives were a little shaky," she explained about this year's district meet. "Once I got into the meet, I was less nervous ... once I got going, I realized what I had to do to get back into it."

She was fifth in the early dives before moving up to third after eight dives and into second on

State schedule

Friday

Swimming

9:30 a.m.—Boys and girls preliminaries in 200-yard medley relay, 200 freestyle, 200 individual medley, 50 freestyle and 100 butterfly.
7 p.m.—Finals in above event.

Diving

1 p.m.—Girls preliminaries
3 p.m.—Boys preliminaries

Saturday

Swimming

9:30 a.m.—Boys and girls preliminaries in the 100 freestyle, 500 freestyle, 200 freestyle relay, 100 backstroke, 100 breaststroke and 400 freestyle relay.
7 p.m.—Finals in above events.

Diving

1:30 p.m.—Girls semifinals and finals.
3:15 p.m.—Boys semifinals and finals.

her 10th dive, passing Ellyn Vreeland of Oak Harbor for the runner-up spot.

She feels her goals for the state meet are realistic.

"Hopefully, I will end up in the top 10 ... I know I can if I have a good meet," Newman said, "I want to have fun, too, but it will be strange knowing it will be my last high school diving meet."

As for the swimmers, Newman is excited.

"It's nice having more people there," she said.



BAKER



ICKES



MEARS



O'CONNOR

Four Aqua Giant girls break state meet famine

By BOB MARKER
Sports editor

It's almost hard to fathom.

Nearly a decade has passed since a Fremont Ross swimmer competed in the state meet.

"That's pretty bad," Ross coach Phil Moran was able to laugh.

Not since Chris Black in 1986 has a Ross swimmer dipped his or her toes into the water of Branin Natatorium in Canton.

That famine ended in resound-

ing style last week in the district meet at Bowling Green. A relay and three and three individuals qualified for the state meet as large entrants.

Diver Jenny Newman, making her second successive appearance, gave Ross five state participants.

"I'm still amazed at our district performances," Moran said Tuesday afternoon while watching the delegation plus alternates work

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■ Rockets sending big delegation, B2

Ross girls end decade-old state meet famine

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out in the Fremont Junior High School pool.

Senior Addie Baker, sophomores Annie Mears and Mindy Ickes, and freshman Molly O'Connor will swim in the 200-yard freestyle relay.

"That was a shock," Moran admitted, "because we were seventh in our district. I don't think they have ever gone that low before. That says something about the great times we had at the district."

Three of the four on that team also qualified for individual events:

■ O'Connor produced a 24.99-second clocking in the 50 freestyle and a 54.18 in the 100 in the district meet.

■ Mears will swim in the 50 freestyle after recording a 24.93 clocking a fourth place in the district.

■ Ickes will be in the 100-yard breaststroke after recording a fourth-place finish in 1:08.86 at the district.

"All of the times are close," Moran said about his delegation's times compared with the other state meet qualifiers, "especially the 50. There might be one or two 23s in there but the rest are all 24s."

Moran said there is little he or

his assistants can do now.

"All we can do is lay the foundation. It's kind of like building a house," he said, "they are the ones who have to build it."

Part of the foundation is attempting to convey to the girls the atmosphere of the state meet. Part of the tuneup is viewing tapes from past state meets.

"They can get an idea of what the place looks like," Moran said.

Today, the Ross swimmers participated in a district warmup sessions before beginning preliminaries at 9:30 a.m., Friday.

"The girls will be excited," Moran said, "but there is little we can do about that. As for me, I am still amazed."

Aqua Giants look ahead to next year

News-Messenger reports

CANTON — The Fremont Ross girls swim team splashed into the state swim meet for the first time in years this season. The goal now is to keep splashing, according to Aqua Gaints coach Phil Moran.

"We were just happy to get out of districts," Moran said Sunday after Ross failed to score a point this weekend in the state swim meet at C.T. Branin Natatorium.

The best finish for the Aqua Giants was 22nd, by Mindy Ickes in the breaststroke and the 200 freestyle relay team.

Molly O'Conner placed 23rd in the 100 freestyle. Her time was 55.35 seconds.

"From Friday's events, I could tell that the kids were past their taper," Moran said. "That was still her second fastest time of the year."

O'Conner touched in 54.18 in the district finals last week.

Ickes and the relay also swam their second-fastest times of the year. Ickes, who finished in 1:08.86 in the district finals, touched Saturday in 1:10.19.

"It's awful hard to do a taper for two weeks," Moran said.

The relay of O'Conner, Addie Baker, Ickes and Mears clocked in at 1:44.85.

"I figured they would be within two seconds of their best time of the year (1:42.95 in district finals)," Moran said. "And that's about where they finished."

Mears and O'Conner failed to qualify for the finals in the 50 freestyle Friday.

"They swam faster in the relay on Saturday than they did in their 50s on Friday," Moran said.