

STATE SWIMMING PREVIEW

Emerging stars

By **MATTHEW HORN**
Sports Writer

Lincoln Fahrbach is a Cadillac in the pool.

And an early model at that.

Fahrbach last weekend became the first freshman boy to qualify in an individual event for Fremont Ross as he did so in the 100-yard butterfly.

And the Little Giants' lot has another freshman, Jacque Fate, who became the

second Ross girl to qualify in an individual event (50, 100 freestyles) and the third to qualify in a relay.

The two young stars will have the opportunity to share the trip to Canton with some of their more vintage teammates, including senior Jake Ickes, who will be making his first journey to state.

Brad Nuhfer and Matt Bachelder round



News-Messenger/Diane Cebula

FRESHMEN Lincoln Fahrbach, left, and Jacque Fate lead the Fremont Ross swim team to this weekend's state meet in Canton. They each qualified in an individual event and a relay.

See **ROSS, B3**

Ross freshman standouts make their teammates proud

Continued From B1

out a 200 free relay and Megan Wasserman, Caley Miller and Jessica Ickes comprise the rest of a girls entry in the same event.

"I worked hard to try to get my teammates there," said Fahrbach, who was more excited about the team accomplishment than his individual achievements. "It's Jake Ickes' last chance at state. I'm just happy about the relay. I'm happy to see my team go.

"Ickes was telling me that he was very happy with what I've done and how I've contributed on the relay," he continued. "I felt very honored."

Last year's 200 free relay missed qualifying by one second after finishing third overall at districts.

"This year, we had the people we needed doing the times we needed to get there," said Ickes of a relay with three new partners. "We have a group of guys that has worked hard all year. We were determined and it worked out."

Ickes said Fahrbach never stood out for his lack of varsity experience.

"I knew coming in that he was going to be really good," Ickes said. "We can count on him to be reliable and not get nervous and help out with the

"I worked hard to try to get my teammates there. ... I'm just happy about the relay. I'm happy to see my team go."

— **Fremont Ross freshman Lincoln Fahrbach**

times we need."

Fahrbach said at no point did his teammates make him feel like a freshman.

"All the guys just treat me like I'm their age," he said. "There's a lot of team unity."

Fate also appreciates her teammates' support.

"My teammates were really good," she said. "They pushed me to do better and didn't care that I was a freshman at all. They've all given me a lot of confidence. They've always been there in a positive way. They congratulate me for my achievements."

Fahrbach has even made a few alterations, shaving his distinctive flowing hair, which had been growing since the seventh grade.

"He had never done that," Little Giant coach Phil Moran said. "It meant a lot to him. When he cut that it was a great example of him showing his teammates what they mean to him. The hair will grow back. The reasons he did it outweighed the look. He talked about the feeling of being bald when he hopped in the water.

He felt fast. A lot of it is psychological."

Moran said the two relays have developed quite a bond, respectively.

"They're only going to be as good as their teammates," he said.

"With those two being freshman, the upperclassmen have helped them get to practice. When you spend that much time with somebody, it's kind of like a family. When you often spend 3½ hours in the water in one day together, you want everybody to excel."

Fahrbach, who kept tabs on the fastest swimmers in the state even as an eighth grader, may have exceeded his own expectations.

"All this year and last year, I've been looking at times," he said. "I always know the times I need to beat to be where I want to be. I wanted to do very well at district and go to state. I knew the fast times at state and the kids that would be my competition there."

"I was really surprised I made it that far and with the times that I went," he contin-

ued. "I didn't expect to do it. I kind of surprised myself. I'm very happy about it."

Fahrbach said he always checks the race lineup for other freshmen, and they go directly to the top of his competitive wish list. If Fahrbach is checking for freshmen, imagine what opposing upperclassmen think when he or Fate outdoes them.

"Some of the other fast people around Ohio know of me and know that I'm there," Fahrbach said.

Fahrbach and Fate both said they are happy simply to experience state their first campaign. That won't always be the case.

"My main goal this year was to get to state, but now that I've made it I want to go all four years," Fate said. "Now that I'm there, it's just really exciting. I just wanted to go in any event. It didn't matter how many or which ones. I'd like to go in the same events (next year) and go a faster time or get a better place."

Josh Fate graduated from Ross in 2000 and Jacque has had a long-standing goal of reaching Canton as he did.

"I've been looking to move on in (the 50 free) for a long time," she said. "I hope to make the finals. I've always wanted to go to state since watching my brother."

"I couldn't hold the tears back. I was in shock. I couldn't believe what I did."

— Ross
freshman
Jacque Fate

Freshman phenomenal at state

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross freshman Jacque Fate stunned herself with an historical third-place finish in the 50-yard freestyle at the Ohio state swimming and diving championships Friday in Canton.

The surprise in the pool, though, was nothing compared to the one in the stands.

Her dad, Dave, cried.



FATE

Fate finishes third in 50 freestyle

"I've never seen my dad cry," the 14-year-old Fate said. "That kind of shocked me."

Fate finished in 24.28 seconds in the 50 free.

Cincinnati Ursuline senior Abby Cooper won in 23.96, and Cincinnati Sycamore junior Amy Krone was second in 24.25.

It was the best state finish by a freshman girl in Ross history and tied for the second-best finish in program history.

gram history.

Molly O'Conner, who swam at the University of Kansas, finished second in the 100 free and third in the 200 free in 1998.

"She had a good day," Ross coach Phil Moran said of Fate. "I was very impressed."

Fellow freshman Lincoln Fahrback finished 24th in the 100 butterfly for Ross.

Moran said the event likely will

prove to be the most difficult at the state meet.

"It was loaded with talented seniors," Moran said.

Fahrback was one of only 10 freshman boys to qualify for an individual event at this year's state meet.

The Little Giants will be busier today.

Fate will compete in the 100 freestyle and is on the 200 freestyle relay. Fahrback is also on the boys 200 freestyle relay.

See FATE, B3

Fate finishes third in 50 freestyle

Continued From B1

"I think I will be more relaxed and ready to go," Fate said.

Fate said having teammates in Canton helped her calm down in between her seventh-place finish in the preliminaries and the finals.

"I'm just glad my teammates were here," Fate said. "I probably wouldn't have done as well without them. They gave me a lot of confidence."

Moran has known for a long time

that Fate was going to make an immediate impact for the Little Giants. But her performance Friday certainly was a surprise.

"I knew she could get (to state) — unless she got sick or hurt," Moran said. "But I didn't expect this."

Neither did Fate.

After the medal ceremony, she was very emotional.

"I couldn't hold the tears back," she said. "I was in shock. I couldn't believe what I did."

She made her dad cry.

Swimming

High School Girls

State results

Division I

Team scores

1. Upper Arlington	147
2. Cin. Ursuline	126
3. Centerville	77
4. Kettering Fairmont	62
5. Akron Firestone	52
6. Cin. St. Ursula	44
7. Rocky River Magnificat	37
8. Cin. Sycamore	36
9. Mason	33
10. Cin. Anderson	31
20. (tie), Broadview Hts. Brecksville ...	16
20. (tie), Fremont Ross	16
20. (tie), Gahanna Lincoln	16

Ross results

50 Freestyle

1, Abby Cooper, Sr., Cin. Ursuline, 23.96; 2, Amy Krone, Jr., Cin. Sycamore, 24.25; 3, **JACQUE FATE, FR., FREMONT ROSS, 24.28**; 4, Jennifer Nemeth, Sr., Mayfield, 24.30; 5, Jen Knight, Sr., Ashland, 24.35; 6, Caitlin Seed, Jr., Hudson, 24.38; 7, Brittney Rohr, Fr., Kettering Fairmont, 24.61; 8, Megan Rupe, Jr., New Philadelphia, 24.83; 9, Ashley Sohngen, Soph., Cin. St. Ursula, 24.63; 10, Sarah Radke, Fr., Cin. Ursuline, 25.03; 11, Samantha Nameth, Fr., Mentor, 25.08; 12, Catherine Cunniff, Jr., Akr. Firestone, 25.21; 13, Lauren Johnson, Soph., Centerville, 25.22; 14, Lizzie Harr, Sr., Whitehouse Anthony Wayne, 25.33; 15, Annie Donovan, Fr., Findlay, 25.34; 16, Amy Billow, Fr., Cin. Mercy, 25.38.

STATE SWIMMING

Young Giants enjoy their time in Canton

Frosh Fate recognized all-Ohio in two events

News-Messenger reports

The most important development for Fremont Ross from this weekend's state swim meet in Canton may be the fact that freshmen Jacque Fate and Lincoln Fahrbach now have no choice but to believe.

No choice but to believe just about anything is possible.

No choice but to believe there are no limitations.

And no choice but to believe in their astounding potential.

Fate was recognized all-Ohio in two events, finishing third in the 50-yard freestyle Friday and 16th in the 100 freestyle Saturday.

"That was definitely unexpected," Little Giant coach Phil Moran said of Fate's performance in the 100. "We knew we'd probably get her there in the 50, but the 100 was extra sweet after barely getting in. I think she's exhausted after the weekend. It's pretty mentally draining. She surprised everybody in the 50 by swimming her best time in the finals."

Moran said he has only had a swimmer notch their best time in the finals four or five times as the Little Giants typically place a great deal of emphasis simply on reaching Canton.

Fahrbach finished 24th in the 100 butterfly Friday.

Fate, Megan Wasserman, Caley Miller and Jessica Ickes comprised a 200 freestyle relay that finished 24th, and Fahrbach, Jake Ickes, Brad Nuhfer and Matt Bachelder made up a boys entrant in the same event that wound up 18th Saturday.

"This was the first year we got boys and girls relays to state together," Moran said. "We tried for 10 years to get two sets down. It looks like we should do pretty well next year."

Of the eight Ross athletes who traveled to Canton, only Jake Ickes is a senior.

"When he was younger, it didn't click — swimming didn't come easy," Moran said. "He's a quiet worker that worked his butt off for four years. He really stepped it up the last three weeks to do what he needed to do to get us there. He will be missed."

Fahrbach said he learned a great deal from this year's experience — especially since Ickes was there to share it.

"I won't be as nervous next time," Fahrbach said. "We had a good relay go. It was a good experience going as a freshman. My teammates really supported me. Jake Ickes made us all less nervous as the team leader."

"I'll try to work harder in the off-season and build muscle," he continued.

Fahrbach was certainly impressed with Fate, who went to sleep early Sunday night after presumably using all of energy over the weekend.

"She swam great," he said. "She stepped up and did what she had to do. She did awesome. As a freshman, it was pretty insane."

And now the future looks extremely bright for the Little Giants.

"Anything is possible," Moran said of Fate. "I think she's finally understanding that. Sometimes, I think the kids underestimate themselves."

Which, after this weekend, may suddenly be less of a problem.

"The boys will just get stronger physically," Moran said. "We have a lot to look forward to."

"Lincoln was ecstatic to get to state," he continued. "Few freshmen do that, and he went in a tough event and held his time. He has a lot of potential, and I think he knows that. Now, it takes a lot of work in the off-season."