

1997 State Meet...

Aqua Giants preparing for state

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross swim coach Phil Moran's plan for success at this week's state swim meet is simple: Don't change a thing.

"Keep the routine," Moran said Monday night following the Aqua Giants first practice since Friday and Saturday's district meet in Bowling Green.

"There's not much that we can do. You try not to change a routine," Moran said. Specifically, athletes should eat the same foods they are used to and get the same amount of sleep. "And don't go out and run five miles just because you have a lot of energy."

In the pool, Moran is concentrating on starts, turns and finishes before Friday's start of the state swim meet at the C.T. Branin Natatorium in Canton.

Six Aqua Giants — including the school's first male competitors in 10 years — have qualified.

"They're pretty excited, especially the guys," Moran said. "They've made history."

Hans Schmidlin, Pryde Yost, Eric Luse and Jim Straight

swam the 200 freestyle relay in 1:30.24 Saturday, breaking the school record by more than two seconds. The previous mark (1:32.62) was set in 1991 by Allyn Spanfellner, David Tallman, Chris Schaaf and Kevin Wagner.

"I told them to enjoy (the state meet)," Moran said. "And if they do better, that's great."

The foursome is seeded 22nd out of 24 qualifiers in the relay event.

Mindy Ickes will make her third state tournament appearance for Ross, having finished second in Friday's 200 individual medley at 2:14.99.

Though Ickes is seeded 24th in her event, Moran said that she has a chance to do well because many of the other swimmers will have "tapered," or trimmed their times, as low as they possibly can just to get to Canton. Ickes was not fully tapered, Moran said, and could lower her time by week's end.

The Aqua Giant with the best chance at winning, at least on paper, is Molly O'Connor. After winning the 50 freestyle Friday,

State swim meet

When: Friday, Saturday

Where: C.T. Branin Natatorium

Ross qualifiers: Molly O'Connor (50 freestyle, 100 freestyle); Mindy Ickes (200 individual medley); Hans Schmidlin, Pryde Yost, Eric Luse and Jim Straight (200 freestyle relay).

O'Connor took second in the 100 freestyle the following day, breaking school records in each event.

One record the Aqua Giants will not be breaking is the C.T. Branin attendance marks. With only 4,000 seats available, Ross received 20 tickets, enough for coaches, athletic personnel and parents.

There are diving tickets available and some tickets are sold by individuals outside the natatorium, which is located behind the Pro football Hall of Fame. It is approximately a two-hour drive from Fremont.

"It's almost like the Super Bowl for swimming," Moran said.

Swimmers complete first day of state meet

CANTON — Oak Harbor senior Andy Jenkins placed eighth in the 50-yard freestyle Friday at the 70th annual boys state swimming and diving championships.

The two-day event — which includes the 21st annual girls state meet, held at the C.T. Branin Natatorium — continues today. Jenkins finished with a time of 21.64 seconds.

Oak Harbor's boys team is tied with Canton Central Catholic for 29th place, with 11 points apiece.

Oak Harbor's girls 200 medley relay team of sophomores **Andrea Lajti** and **Lindsey Lange**, freshman **Kelly Van Horn** and junior **Amy Tabbert** took sixth place in 1:50.41.

Oak Harbor is in 11th place with 26 points and Fremont Ross is in a four-way tie for 33rd place with 9 points.

Ross's **Molly O'Connor** placed ninth in the 50 freestyle in 24.51 seconds, her second fastest time ever. It was also the highest state finish ever for a Ross girls swimmer. The Aqua Giants' **Mindy Ickes** was 21st in the 200 individual medley with a 2:16.79.

Ross's 200 freestyle relay team of **Hans Schmidlin**, **Pryde Yost**, **Erik Luse** and **Jim Straight**, the school's first males in 10 years to swim at states, will compete today.

Ross gets glimpse of future with O'Connor

News-Messenger reports

Fremont Ross swim coach Phil Moran hopes a record-setting day at the Ohio Swimming and Diving Championships Saturday will benefit Aqua Giants teams of the future.

Five Ross boys and two girls made the trip to the C.T. Branin

STATE SWIMMING

Natatorium in Canton, where Molly O'Connor finished fifth in the 100 freestyle — the highest ever finish of any Ross girl.

"The kids realize what it takes to get to the state meet ... it takes a lot of hard work and dedication," Moran said, talking specifically of sophomores Pryde Yost and Brett Spicer. "Those guys had a good time, they saw a lot of fast swimming and they realized their times aren't that far off."

O'Connor, a junior, swam the 100 in 52.82, breaking the school record she set just a week earlier at the district meet.

"We really thought she was capable of that time," Moran said. The time also qualified O'Connor for the Junior Nationals East Championships next month in Indianapolis.

On Friday, O'Connor finished ninth. Also Friday, three-time state qualifier Mindy Ickes placed 21st in the 200 individual medley.

The boys 200 freestyle relay team ended its season with a disqualification with a false start.

"They were pretty disappointed," Moran said of Yost, Hans Schmidlin, Erik Luse and Jim Straight. "Took a team effort to get there."

In the girls meet, Oak Harbor came its closest ever to a top-10 finish, scoring 47 points to place 15th.

On the heels of the Rockets' 200 medley relay team's sixth-place showing Friday night, Lindsay Lange cut nearly a second off her preliminary time in the 100 breaststroke to finish in 10th in the final at 1:06.74.

The 200 freestyle relay of Lange, Kelly Van Horn, Melissa Jenkins and Amy Tabbert also had a 10th-place showing, with a time of 1:40.58.

But Van Horn had to get right back in the pool, and she missed the finals of the 100 backstroke by 0.11 seconds, finishing that preliminary in 17th with a 1:00.74.

Andy Jenkins provided Oak Harbor with boys highlights, following his eight-place finish in the 50 freestyle Friday with an 11th-place effort Saturday in the 100 freestyle (47.90).

"Andy had a terrific meet, and to score in two individual events, that's a great way for him to finish up his senior year," Oak Harbor coach Bob Van Horn said.

Senior Nick Lange finished 23rd in the 100 breaststroke in 1:01.91, while the 200 freestyle relay team was disqualified for an illegal exchange.