

2012 DIVISION I SECTIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Swim team shows spirit



Fremont Ross High School swim team members and Jenesis Salon teamed up for the team's annual purpling of the team members' hair. Pictured from left to right are Graham Moor; Nick Hoffman; Brett Foos; Jarrett Karr; Ryan Schaffer; Chris Hoffman; Braydn Klein; Joe Meyer; Dylan Henry; Jennifer Brooks, hair stylist and Jenesis owner; Tomi Flores, hair stylist; Luke Kingsborough; Collin Michael; Keith Wasserman; and Lorenzo Zumora.

Jennifer Brooks applies purple dye to Graham Moor's hair as part of the Fremont Ross High School swim team's annual purpling of team members' hair. BRENDA

SOULE/NEWS-MESSENGER PHOTOS

SWIMMING

Sectional dedicated to Art Bucci

By **Matthew Horn**
Sports writer

Saturday's Division I sectional swimming championships at Fremont Ross were dedicated to Art Bucci.

Considering Bucci's contributions to swimming in the state, it seemed fitting that Saturday's format was a pilot program Bucci helped re-introduce. Rather than taking the top 32 swimmers in each event from several sectional meets as was the case in years past, 24 competitors had already qualified to districts based on regular season times.

Saturday's meet at the Hawk-Bucci Natatorium determined the remaining eight swimmers to qualify to Northwest districts at the same place and time.

Districts are Saturday at Bowling Green State University.

Bucci, Ken Gipe, Joe Groscoast and Dennis Graves were among those to encourage implementation of a format similar to Saturday's for several years in the 1970s and 1980s before sectionals shifted to several locations. Bucci, current Ross boys coach Phil Moran, Jeff Wobster and Jose Hernandez helped bring the format back as a pilot program this season.

Bucci, who will retire as Little Giants athletic director at the end of the school year after 38 years at Ross, was recognized at the final home meet to be held during his tenure. Bucci coached Little Giants swimming from 1974-1985 and 'Bucci Juice' he distributed to swimmers before races became an enduring staple.

"I was totally surprised," Bucci said. "I had no idea they were going to do that. It's very much appreciated. I feel overwhelmed."

The Ken Gipe Relays were also dedicated to Bucci two weeks ago. "It's nice coming from outside Fremont," Moran said. "Art cares about swimming — not just in Northwest Ohio — and he's shown that his whole life."

Bucci, of course, played a role in the construction of the pool at Ross and was a two-time Northwest Ohio coach of the year. He was OHSSCA coach of the year in 1980 and elected into its hall of fame in 2006-07.

"What makes me happy is I feel I did make a difference," Bucci



Kortni Lagrou of Fremont Ross competes at the sectional swimming tournament at Ross High School. DOUG HISE/NEWS-MESSENGER CORRESPONDENT

said. "I made a lot of good friends — coaches and kids — and touched a lot of lives. This is the greatest return to be honored by peers in the sport you love."

Bucci was known for his willingness to share ideas on things like training techniques as a coach.

"I didn't keep secrets," he said. "I love to see fast swimming and kids succeed."

"Northwest Ohio was a dark horse in swimming for a while. With coaches working together that helped get as many kids from the Northwest District to state as any other district. That's what it's all about."

Kortni Lagrou (200, 500 freestyles) and Emily Moyer (100 freestyle) advanced to districts for Ross's girls based on Saturday's times.

"Qualifying for the next step is a big deal," said freshman Lagrou, who dropped time in both events. "I'm only a freshman and last year I wasn't that great (in my first year competing in the sport). My times improve each meet."

TJ Harkness (50 freestyle), Braydn Klein (500 freestyle), Joe Meyer (100 backstroke), Nick Hoffman (100 backstroke) and

Jacob Berryman (100 backstroke) moved on for the boys based on Saturday's times. Klein shaved 1 minute, 4 seconds in the 500 freestyle.

"The kids swam well," Moran said. "The kids were excited because this meet really meant something to them. They're right here together in one pool. The format works well for younger kids and new kids."

"It's more competitive when the kids know it's all right here and it seemed to get them pumped up. The kids fought for 1-8 and that was a different experience for many of them. Many of them probably didn't finish in the top eight (in the regular season) but they fought for it here."

Megan Hawk (100, 200 freestyles), Danielle Minier (200, 500 freestyles) and Haley Fisher (200 IM, 100 backstroke) qualified to districts for the Little Giants' girls based on regular season times. Sammi Miller (50, 100 freestyles), Holly Fisher (50 freestyle, 100 backstroke) and Moyer (50 freestyle) also advanced.

Laura Duncan and Alesha Overmyer (100 butterfly, 100

breaststroke), and Holly Phillips (100 butterfly, 100 backstroke) moved on. Duncan has the best time in the 100 breaststroke at 1:06.50.

The girls also qualified 200 medley, 200 freestyle and 400 freestyle relays.

Graham Moor (200 freestyle, 100 butterfly), Keith Wasserman and Bobby Carnicom (100, 200 freestyles), and Meyer (200 freestyle) advanced to districts for Ross's boys based on regular season times. Scott Kosakowski and Lorenzo Zamora (200 IM, 500 freestyle), Jerrod Simpson (200 IM, 100 freestyle) and Collin Michael (200 IM, 100 breaststroke) also moved on.

Chris Hoffman (50, 100 freestyles), Josh Eakin (50 freestyle, 100 breaststroke) and Nick Hoffman (100 butterfly) also advanced. Luke Kingsborough (100 butterfly, 100 backstroke), Harkness (100 breaststroke) and Berryman (100 butterfly) moved on.

The boys also qualified 200 medley, 200 freestyle and 400 freestyle relays.

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