

1993-1994 State Meet...

Ross diver forges on after father's death

By BOB MARKER
News-Messenger Sports Editor

One of Leslie Hasselbach's closest fans will not see her dive this weekend in the Ohio High School State Diving Championships in Canton.

Cal Hasselbach, Leslie's father, died in a car-truck accident Wednesday morning. The cause of the accident remains unclear.

"I am going to dive," the 17-year-old Ross High School senior said Wednesday afternoon. "That's what my father would want me to do."

Leslie Hasselbach won the sectional meet two weeks ago at Oak Harbor with a record-setting performance and followed it up with a district championship Friday at Bowling Green. She is considered one of the top four female divers in the state, according to Ross diving coach Gil Root.

She will compete in the state meet along with teammate, junior Jennifer Newman. Through tears, she continued.

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"I am pretty religious, but he was too young to have this happen. I guess if it was his time, that is how it had to happen.

"Everything happens for a reason and maybe the reason is for me to win it all for him," she said.

Her mother feels the same.

"Her dad wants her to go compete," Pat Hasselbach, Leslie's mother, said while talking with friends gathered at her Oak Harbor Road home. "He was so excited that she made state."

"She just wants to go down to state and dive for her dad."

The crash came in a year that had belonged to the teen — the state tournament, homecoming queen, cheerleader co-captain, News-Messenger Senior All-Star.

Though winning isn't everything, she wants to win now for her father.

"He would love me if I won it or finished 24th. He just really wanted it for me."

Leslie said in the past year she has grown to understand her father more fully. That may make it a little easier to dive this weekend.

"I am getting my strength from him right now. I have so many memories of him running through my mind, but this past year, he has really shown me what he is all about."

"He has always been there for me — not always in words," she continued, "but he really got excited for me this year, the most he has ever gotten involved and the most supportive he has been ever."

Leslie recounted a memory.

"He called me Lolly because when my brother (Dustin) was younger, he could not say Leslie, only Lolly ... that has been my name ever since."

Leslie said she will not be able to erase



FATHER AND DAUGHTER: Leslie and Cal Hasselbach.

the tragedy from her mind completely as she competes Friday and Saturday.

"When I am diving," she said, "I don't really think about anything else, but I know he will motivate me."

State meet begins Friday

News-Messenger reports

Five divers, led by a Fremont Ross duo, highlight the area contingent which will compete in the Ohio High School Boys and Girls State Swimming and Diving Meet.

Diving begins Friday at Branin Natatorium in Canton with girls preliminaries at 1 p.m. and boys preliminaries at 3 p.m.

There will be five dives before the 32-person fields are trimmed to 20 for semifinals and finals Saturday. Diving begins at 1:30 p.m. Saturday for the girls and 3:15 p.m. for the boys.

Leslie Hasselbach and Jennifer Newman of Fremont Ross lead five area divers into the state meet.

Hasselbach, whose father was killed in a Wednesday morning auto crash, and Newman are coming off a 1-2 finish in the district meet. Hasselbach is a senior and Newman, a junior.

Oak Harbor senior Calli Bodar will also compete in Canton after placing third in the district.

Port Clinton's Mike Chrapkiewicz and Kip Sorgen, the first- and fourth-place finishers at the district, will compete in the boys state meet.

Several Oak Harbor swimmers will compete, led by junior Brian Pointer in the 50- and 100-yard freestyles. Pointer is also teamed with Aaron Hemminger, Ben Wood and Andy Jenkins in the 200-yard freestyle relay.

Oak Harbor's 200- and 400-yard girls freestyle relays will also be at Canton.

The 200 team is comprised of Andrea Lange, Kristy Hamann, Monica Tabbert and Melanie Hamann.

Michelle Hemminger, Lange, Tabbert and Melanie



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison

JENNIFER NEWMAN (left) and Leslie Hasselbach of Fremont Ross will begin diving in the state meet Friday.

Hamann comprise the 400 squad.

Also, Melanie Hamann will be swimming in the 50-yard freestyle.

Swimming preliminaries in the medley relay, 200 freestyle,

individual medley, 50 free and butterfly begin at 9:30 a.m. Friday with the finals in those events at 7 p.m. Friday.

Preliminaries in the remaining swim events are 9:30 a.m. Saturday with finals at 7 p.m.

Hasselbach fifth, Newman 13th in state diving

News-Messenger reports

CANTON — Leslie Hasselbach of Fremont Ross is fifth after the first five dives of the Ohio High School State Girls Diving Championship.

Hasselbach, a senior, has 188.7 points while leader Angie Trostle of Oxford Talawanda had 208.25.

Lisa Kalstron of Akron Firestone is second at 206.25, Bridgit Adams of Mentor is third with 190.1 and Amelia Price of Cincinnati Sycamore holds down fourth with 188.75.

"Leslie dove very well," Ross diving coach Gi^{rl} Root said, "and she still has her best six dives left."

Root said the Ross senior is holding up well under the circumstances. Hasselbach's father was killed in a car-truck accident Wednesday morning.

Ross junior Jennifer Newman is 13th with 171.4 and Calli Bodnar of Oak Harbor is 15th with 170.4.

"Both Leslie and Jennifer have a shot at moving up higher," Root said, "because several of the divers above them have run out of DD (degree of difficulty) dives. Both our girls still have their toughest dives left."

In the boys diving, Mike Chrapkiewicz of Port Clinton is ninth and teammate Kip Sorgen 12th. Chrapkiewicz has 178.9 points and Sorgen 175.2.

Leader Joe Cacolici of Mayfield has 213.8.

The final six dives for the girls begin at 1:30 p.m. this afternoon while the boys dive at 3:15 p.m.

Ross diver 7th after tragedy

By BOB MARKER
Sports editor

CANTON — Leslie Hasselbach gave it her best, but found no a dream ending to a tragic week.

The Ross senior finished seventh in the Ohio High School Girls State Diving Meet Saturday at C.T. Branin Natatorium, only three days after her father, Cal, died in a car-truck accident. Teammate Jennifer Newman, was 16th.

Hasselbach sat alone in her thoughts moments after her

'I guess I was pretty strong for the circumstances.'

— Ross senior Leslie Hasselbach, after the state meet

final, nearly perfect high school dive — an inward 1 1/2 somersault. The dive was worth 42 points, but several before it were — for her — subpar.

"She's first in my book. She's a double winner," Ross diving coach Gil Root said. Prior to the

meet, Root felt Hasselbach had a good chance to win the title.

"She was here for her dive. She gave it 100 percent and she's a winner all the way through," Root said.

As she rose, Root gave her a hug, one of many she received

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from well-wishers and competitors. On Thursday, she received cards and letters from the team she dove with this past summer in Cleveland and from her coach in Cleveland.

The tears, for her father and for herself, began to roll as she gazed at the victory stand where the top six divers were being introduced. She was 1.2 points

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News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison
HUGS: Leslie Hasselbach, right, and teammate Jennifer Newman.

Ross divers place 7th, 16th in state

By BOB MARKER
Staff writer

CANTON—Leslie Hasselbach and Jennifer Newman of Fremont Ross finished in the top 16 and Calli Bodnar of Oak Harbor was 17th in the Ohio High School Girls State Diving Meet Saturday.

Angie Trostel of Oxford Talawanda won the title with 438.65 points for her 11 dives. Lisa Kalstrom of Akron Firestone was a distant second with 406.55.

Third went to Bridget Adams of Mentor with 396.35 and fourth was Summer Riley of Newark Catholic with 394.05. Sandy Holmberg of Worthington Kilbourne finished fifth with 393.50 and Amelia Price of Cincinnati Sycamore took sixth with 388.05, narrowly edging Hasselbach's 386.85.

HASSELBACH



NEWMAN

Hasselbach, a senior, was diving only days after her father, Cal, had died in a car-truck accident on Ohio 6 while on his way to work in Sandusky.

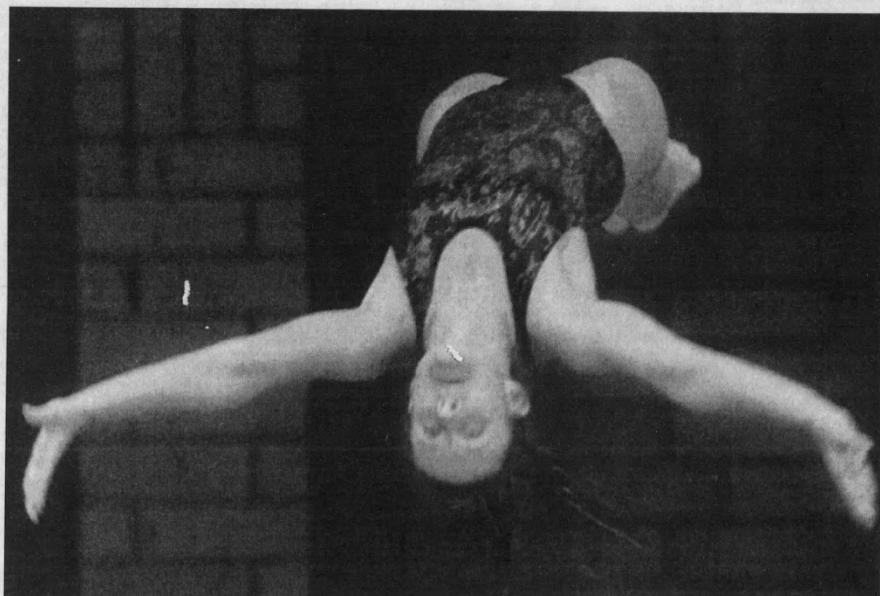
"We made it here under adverse circumstances," Ross diving coach Gil Root said, "but she dove well under the circumstances.

"She was so tickled to be here...she has worked six years to get here."

Root was happy with Hasselbach's last dive, a near perfect inward 1 1/2 somersault that carries a 2.2 degree of difficulty. She scored 42 points, receiving scored that ranged from six to seven by the five judges.

"That dive said, 'Hey guys, I'm here and I'm a competitor,'" Root said.

It was the second state meet for Hasselbach. She was 20th as a sophomore. She was third in the Northwest Ohio District Meet as a junior but only two divers



News-Messenger/Andrew Morrison
LESLIE HASSELBACH soars through the air at state diving meet in Canton Saturday.

advanced to the state meet. Hasselbach won both the sectional and district titles this year, becoming the first Ross girl to accomplish that feat.

Newman was in her first meet, making the final round in 16th place and finishing the same spot with 324.90.

"I was happy to get my 11 dives," Newman said, "but I was not happy with the way I dived in the finals."

Root, though, was happy that Newman accomplished one of her goals.

"Jen was elated that she was second in

the districts," Root said, "and that met her goal. She told me that she had a goal to finish 10th or better down here."

"It was her first time here and 16th place, hey, that's nothing to sneeze at."

Bodnar missed the final cut, finishing with 254 points for eight dives. Newman narrowly edged Bodnar for the finals berth with 254.40 points.

Sorgen had 358.35 for his 11 dives and Chrapkiewicz finished with 354.90.

In swimming, Melanie Hamann of Oak

Harbor was 23rd in the 50 free in 25.57 seconds and the Rockets 200 freestyle relay of Andrea Lange, Kristy Hamann, Monica Tabbert and Melanie Hamann finished 12th in 1:42.47.

The 200 free relay team was the first time the Oak Harbor girls have scored in the state meet.

Brian Pointer of Oak Harbor was 16th in the 50 free in 22.2. The Rockets 200 free relay of Pointer, Andy Jenkins, Aaron Hemminger and Ben Wood was 11th in 1:29.07.